



Partly sunny 87/71 • Tomorrow: Partly sunny 93/73 C8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

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ELECTION 2024

Few details from Trump on Jan. 6 pardon vow

‘Case-by-case’ decisions on rioters, but campaign doesn’t specify criteria

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF AND GREG JAFFE

Geri Perna was dining on the Mar-a-Lago patio last year with a few other family members of people who were charged in the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol when Donald Trump visited with them and talked about pardons if he returns to the White House.

Perna started tearing up, she recalled in an interview. Trump placed an arm around her and asked why she was crying, she said.

“The people here all have hope because some day their January 6er is coming home,” she said she told him. “Our January 6er is never coming home.”

Her nephew, 37-year-old Matthew Perna, entered the Capitol that day with a friend and marched through the halls chanting “USA!” He turned himself in to the FBI, told agents he tapped a window with a metal flagpole, and pleaded guilty to charges including disorderly and disruptive conduct. Her nephew’s case was delayed multiple times over 13 months. Matthew’s defense attorney told him that if he pleaded guilty he could expect a maximum sentence of six to 12 months, Geri said.

After Matthew entered his plea, Geri said, prosecutors raised the possibility of adding a sentencing enhancement that could result in multiple years in prison — a move that she described as cruel, unnecessary and capricious. During the wait, he took his own life. The Justice Department did not respond to a request for comment on the matter.

Meeting Geri at Mar-a-Lago, Trump promised to posthumously pardon Matthew, she recalled of their conversation. He assured

SEE PARDONS ON A7

TROUBLE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA



MARTIN SAN DIEGO FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Sailing toward conflict

As several wooden fishing boats embarked from the Philippines one recent morning, more than 40 Chinese navy, coast guard and other vessels steamed toward them from the opposite direction, staging one of the biggest demonstrations of force in the contested South China Sea in over a decade.

The fishing boats were less than halfway to their destination — a ring of reefs and rocks known as Scarborough Shoal — when a Chinese coast guard ship appeared on the horizon. Those aboard the fishing boats, including Washington Post journalists, watched as the Chinese ship cut across the reflection of the setting sun. A second Chinese vessel arrived. Then a third. Before nightfall, the Philippine convoy was encircled.

The Philippines has been waging its most vigorous campaign yet to push

The Philippines turns up the heat over disputed waters but meets a formidable response from China’s large maritime force

BY REBECCA TAN, YASMIN COLES AND MARTIN SAN DIEGO

EN ROUTE TO SCARBOROUGH SHOAL

As Philippine fishing boats head to a ring of reefs and rocks known as Scarborough Shoal, a Chinese coast guard ship appears on the horizon.

Russian warships: Flotilla sails to Cuba in a show of force from Vladimir Putin. A8

back against China’s growing assertiveness in the South China Sea. After Ferdinand Marcos Jr. became president two years ago, he launched a campaign backed by the United States and other allies to resist China’s efforts at projecting military and political dominance over this strategic waterway, which is also claimed in part by six other governments.

But over the past year, the effort by the Philippines has also demonstrated the limits of its power. In China, the Philippines faces one of the world’s largest maritime forces, which has routinely rammed, swarmed and pounded Philippine vessels with water cannons. Manila’s drive to “establish a new status quo” in the South China Sea has been largely dismissed by Beijing, which has doubled down on its claims over the waterway, said Greg Poling, director of

SEE PHILIPPINES ON A14

No way out for ill, hurt in Gaza

ALL EXITS SEALED IN TAKING OF CROSSING

Enclave faces famine as Israel presses offensive

BY MIRIAM BERGER AND HAJAR HARB

JERUSALEM — Palestinians in Gaza already had little chance of escaping the war. Then came Israel’s capture of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt last month, sealing off the last remaining exit.

Israel had permitted tens of thousands of Gazans to leave through Rafah over the past eight months. Some were critically sick or wounded. Others went through an Egyptian company, which facilitated departures for a hefty fee. Foreign countries worked to evacuate dual citizens and their relatives.

The United States, Egypt and Israel are in talks to reopen the crossing — also vital for aid deliveries to the Strip — though little progress has been made. The Israeli rights group Gisha said it successfully lobbied for 18 Palestinian citizens of Israel and residents of Jerusalem to leave Gaza in late May through Kerem Shalom, another southern crossing.

But Israel’s offensive in Rafah, aimed at eliminating Hamas’s last battalions, has dashed any hope of escape for the rest of Gaza’s ill and injured civilians, as the health system collapses and the U.N. warns that more than a million people could face starvation by mid-July. For some, the border closure has already been a death sentence.

Fidaa Ghanem, 44, was diagnosed with lymphoma in late February; she and husband Maher, 46, had at first attributed her weight loss to war stress and food

SEE GAZA ON A16

Pier sidelined: U.S. to once again suspend humanitarian aid. A17

In Oklahoma House, they are alone but resolute

After Mauree Turner’s historic election, bigger hurdles awaited the nonbinary lawmaker

BY MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE

OKLAHOMA CITY — They’re a striking outlier on the floor of the Oklahoma House: the only masked face, the only hijab-covered head, in one of the reddest state capitols in the country.

Rep. Mauree Turner sits at their desk as other legislators chat and work the cavernous Greco-Roman chamber. Conversations hush as a chaplain appears to deliver the invocation on this early spring morning. Quoting Philipians and Jesus, he urges lawmakers to care for themselves so that they can best serve the people.

“At the end of the day, we’re human,” he says. “We have limited mental and emotional capacity.”

This is Turner’s dilemma.

Being the nation’s first Black, Muslim, nonbinary state lawmaker, let alone the first in Oklahoma, was never going to be easy. Turner realized that from the start. Yet it took time to grasp how isolating, debilitating and toxic the legislature would become for them. And how, one day, they would reach their limit.

“The whole place feels like wildfire,” Turner says.

Not just because of the threats that began after their election in



NICK OXFORD FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Rep. Mauree Turner embraces an attendee of a rally for a student whose death was ruled a suicide.

2020 and the nonstop misgendering by colleagues and staffers. The Republican House majority censured them in the aftermath of an LGBTQ protest. After winning reelection in 2022, they were moved to a windowless

sixth-floor office, a former closet known as “the attic.” Two other novice Democrats of color were also located there.

In the face of all this, Turner remained resolute, even defiant. For their official head shot, they

wore their lip ring, a paisley headscarf and mustard-yellow overalls. If they showed up in a sweatshirt, Republicans warned that their votes would be pulled for not adhering to the dress

SEE OKLAHOMA ON A18

Leaked documents reveal safety issues at One Medical

Amazon-owned call center failed to expedite seniors’ emergency care

BY CAROLINE O’DONOVAN

Since Amazon acquired the primary-care service One Medical, elderly patients have been routed to a call center — staffed partly by contractors with limited training — that failed on more than a dozen occasions to seek immediate attention for callers with urgent symptoms, according to internal documents seen by The Washington Post.

When one patient reported a “blood clot, pain and swelling,” call center staff scheduled an appointment rather than escalating the matter for medical evaluation, according to a note in an internal incident tracking spreadsheet dated Feb. 19.

Over the following two days, clinical staffers flagged four more call-center errors involving elderly patients with urgent complaints, including stomach pain and blood in stool, a spike in blood pressure, an insect bite and sudden rib pain, according to the internal spreadsheet.

The call-center incidents were among dozens flagged by doctors, nurses and assistants at One Medical Seniors between Feb. 19 and March 18 in the documents, a year after Amazon acquired the primary-care service. One Medical began routing elderly patients to the call center in Tempe, Ariz., staffed partly by newly hired contractors with limited training and little to no medical experience, according to internal documents seen by The Post and interviews with four current and former One Medical workers.

Since Amazon formally acquired One Medical in February 2023 in a \$3.9 billion deal, the company has alarmed patients and employees by eliminating free rides, shortening appointments and laying off staff. Now evidence of potentially life-threatening situations at the Tempe call center is raising fresh concern that Amazon’s frugal approach to health care may be imperiling patient safety.

“There were a lot of things slipping through the cracks,” said a former One Medical employee, who like others interviewed for this article spoke on the condition of anonymity to avoid professional retaliation.

With its devotion to “customer

SEE AMAZON ON A5

METRO

A Virginia community is inflamed after the return of Confederate names.

SPORTS

Bryson DeChambeau takes the lead into final round of the U.S. Open.



ARTS & STYLE

Wu-Tang rapper Method Man is jazzed by acting, plots next steps.

BOOK WORLD

“Imperial Island” isn’t a usual take on the effects of British colonialism.



TRAVEL

Beauty, death and drama: Live bird cams are nature’s soap opera.

BUSINESS

Which states make the most money from sports betting? And lotteries?

COMICS.....INSERT
OBTUARIES.....C5
OPINION PAGES.....A22
WORLD NEWS.....A8

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