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What's News

Business & Finance

◆ **Nvidia's sales more** than tripled and earnings surged more than eightfold in its fourth quarter, as the semiconductor maker scrambled to meet the demand for its chips that are powering new artificial intelligence systems. **A1**

◆ **Minutes show that** more Fed officials signaled concern at their January meeting about courting entrenched price pressures with premature rate cuts, as opposed to the risks of holding rates too high for too long. **A2**

◆ **HSBC said it lost** \$153 million in the final three months of 2023, chiefly from a big write-down of its stake in Bank of Communications, one of China's largest lenders. **B10**

◆ **U.S. stocks ended** mixed, with the S&P 500 and Dow both adding 0.1%, while the Nasdaq fell 0.3%, declining for a third straight session. **B11**

◆ **Japan's benchmark stock** average broke the all-time intraday high record set more than 34 years ago. **B11**

◆ **Reddit plans to place** a chunk of its IPO shares in the hands of its users, an unusual move that could build loyalty but also comes with risk. **B1**

◆ **The Boeing executive** in charge of the factory that built the jet involved in last month's door-plug blowout is leaving the company amid a broader leadership shake-up. **B1**

◆ **BAE said it expects** sales and earnings will continue to grow as governments boost spending on military equipment amid rising geopolitical tensions. **B2**

◆ **Disgraced cryptocurrency** entrepreneur Do Kwon should be extradited to the U.S. to face trial on fraud charges, a court in Montenegro ruled. **B11**

World-Wide

◆ **The Biden administration** plans to invest billions of dollars in the domestic manufacturing of cargo cranes, seeking to counter fears that the prevalent use of China-built cranes with advanced software at many U.S. ports poses a potential national-security risk. **A1**

◆ **House Democrats** and some Republicans are preparing fallback plans to force a vote on Ukraine aid, with Democratic leaders drafting a special rule that could enable a narrow bipartisan majority to bypass the speaker in coming weeks. **A4**

◆ **A Russian military pilot** who defected to Ukraine, handing over his attack helicopter, was found dead in a Spanish beach town, said Ukrainian officials and a witness who described his killing as a murder. **A10**

◆ **Parents are struggling** to find scarce doses of Beyfortus, a monoclonal antibody that promises to drastically reduce infants' chances of serious illness from RSV. **A3**

◆ **Israel's senior military** lawyer said that troops fighting in Gaza were under investigation for criminal offenses and other misconduct, including the destruction of property, looting, abuse of prisoners and excessive use of force. **A8**

◆ **Former Honduran** President Juan Orlando Hernández went on trial in New York, accused of helping move more than 500 tons of cocaine through his country. **A6**

◆ **A major Alabama** health system suspended in vitro fertilization treatments, days after the state's Supreme Court said frozen embryos qualify as children under a state law. **A2**

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Nvidia Sales More Than Triple

CEO sees AI reaching 'tipping point' as chip maker nears \$2 trillion valuation

By ASA FITCH

Nvidia's sales more than tripled in its fourth quarter, as the semiconductor maker scrambled to meet the demand for its chips that are powering new artificial-intelligence systems.

Chief Executive Jensen

Huang described AI as hitting "the tipping point" and indicated demand for the computing power that underlies AI remained astronomical. "Demand is surging worldwide across companies, industries and nations," he said.

That demand showed up in the company's results Wednesday. Nvidia projected similar sales growth for the current quarter and earnings in the last quarter surged more than eightfold. The results exceeded analyst expectations.

Nvidia's results act as a

bellwether for the strength of the AI boom, as companies like Microsoft, Google and Apple place large bets on the technology and need Nvidia's hardware to drive them.

In addition to ChatGPT, a number of other popular AI products have started to hit the market in recent months, including digital assistants for coding and business from Microsoft. Nvidia transformed itself in the space of three years from a company focused on chips that help videogames run faster to the red-hot cen-

ter of the AI boom.

The company's stock has soared, including a rise of about 8% after its earnings report on Wednesday. Nvidia crossed the \$1 trillion valuation mark in June, and it topped \$1.8 trillion before pulling back in the lead-up to its earnings report.

Nvidia had revenue of \$22.1 billion in its most recent quarter. Net profit was \$12.29 billion.

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◆ **Nasdaq falls, S&P and Dow end higher..... B11**

Aid Slows for Embattled Families in Gaza Strip



WAITING: A Palestinian looks out from a home damaged by an airstrike in Rafah, where Israel has vowed to launch a new military campaign. Aid deliveries in Gaza have slowed to a trickle, as security across the embattled enclave deteriorates. **A8**

Food Takes Bigger Bite Out of Wallets

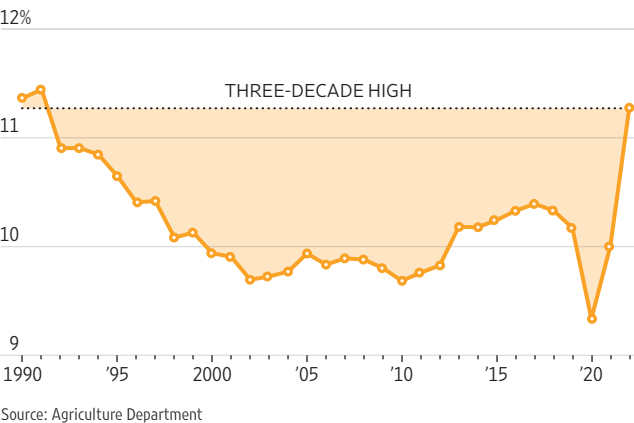
By JESSE NEWMAN
AND HEATHER HADDON

The last time people in the U.S. spent this much of their money on food, George H.W. Bush was in office, "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" was in theaters and C+C Music Factory was rocking the Billboard charts.

Eating continues to cost more, even as overall inflation has eased from the blistering pace consumers endured throughout much of 2022 and 2023. Prices at restaurants and other eateries were up 5.1% last month compared with January 2023, while grocery costs increased 1.2% during the same period, Labor Department data show.

Relief isn't likely to arrive soon. Restaurant and food company executives said they

Food spending's share of disposable income



Source: Agriculture Department

are still grappling with rising labor costs and some ingredients, such as cocoa, that are only getting more expensive. Consumers, they said, will find ways to cope.

"If you look historically af-

ter periods of inflation, there's really no period you could point to where [food] prices go back down," said Steve Cahillane, chief executive of snack giant Kellanova, in an interview. "They tend to be sticky."

In 1991, U.S. consumers spent 11.4% of their disposable personal income on food, according to data from the U.S. Agriculture Department. At the time, households were still dealing with steep food-price increases following an inflationary period during the 1970s.

More than three decades later, food spending has reattained that level, USDA data show. In 2022, consumers spent 11.3% of their disposable income on food, according to the most recent USDA data available.

Many diners have said they are going out less frequently or skipping appetizers, while buying cheaper store brands more frequently at supermarkets and seeking out promo-

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◆ **Fed signaled unease over premature cuts..... A2**

Resisting a Return to the Office? What If It Smelled Great?

Employers pump in fragrance to make workplaces more spa-like; 'Italian Pine'

By RAY A. SMITH

For the millions of workers who find going into the office stinks, some real-estate executives say they have a remedy: Make the office smell better.

Hines, a commercial landlord with skyscrapers worldwide, has developed a special scent it began quietly pumping into the heating, air conditioning and ventilation system in its Texas Tower headquarters in Houston late last year. It's rolling out the fragrance in more than 20 other office buildings and apartment complexes this year, from Chicago and New York to London and Delhi, India.

Taking cues from luxury resorts such as St. Regis hotels, coupled with research that shows pleasant smells can boost moods, Hines is part of

a growing biophilic trend that aims to make workplaces feel, look and, yes, smell, more like a day at the spa.

Companies already were populating offices with sensory-stimulating design such as greenery, ample natural light and soothing white noise. Now, the office is getting a nose job.

"The amount of clients that are now asking 'How is this weaved throughout the space?—that conversation has definitely increased,'" Natalie Engels, a design director at architecture firm Gensler, says of wellness aspects, including office scents.

Hines is aiming for aromatherapy that can enhance worker well-being, explains co-CEO Laura Hines-Pierce.

"Each note was thought-



A nose for business

INSIDE



PERSONAL JOURNAL

The lifespan of new appliances shrinks, as computerized features grow. **A12**



BUSINESS & FINANCE

Boeing executive in charge of factory to exit after Alaska Airlines blowout. **B1**

Navalny's Widow Faces Tough Road As She Takes Torch

By THOMAS GROVE
AND GEORGI KANTCHEV

After Alexei Navalny recovered from poisoning in 2020, his wife, Yulia Navalnaya, was asked whether her husband should give up his role as Russia's most prominent opposition figure.

"No," she said, without pause. "I fully support Alexei's work, sincerely. Leaving it half done isn't how you do it."

When Navalny died in a Russian prison in the Arctic last week, Navalnaya, who had largely stayed in her husband's shadow, vowed to complete his mission.

With her white-blond hair and dark-blue dress, Navalnaya cut a ghostly figure at a dimly lit table as she promised to succeed her husband, who for years was subjected to what she called sham

U.S. Plans Billions To Replace Chinese Cranes

Investment aims to address fear Beijing is using equipment as a spying tool at ports

WASHINGTON—The Biden administration plans to invest billions of dollars in the domestic manufacturing of cargo cranes, seeking to counter fears that the prevalent use of China-built cranes with advanced software at many U.S. ports poses a potential national-security risk.

By Dustin Volz,
Gordon Lubold
and Doug Cameron

The move is part of a set of actions taken by the administration on Wednesday that is intended to improve maritime cybersecurity. They include a U.S. Coast Guard directive to mandate certain digital-security requirements for deployed foreign-built cranes at strategic seaports, as well as an executive order by President Biden setting baseline cybersecurity standards for computer networks that operate U.S. ports.

Administration officials said more than \$20 billion would be invested in port security, including domestic cargo-crane production, over the next five years. The money, tapped from the \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill passed in 2021, would support a U.S. subsidiary of Mitsui, a Japanese company, to produce the cranes, which officials said would be the first time in 30 years they would be built domestically.

"We felt there was real strategic risk here," said Anne Neuberger, U.S. deputy national security adviser for cyber and emerging technology. "These cranes, because they are essentially moving the large-scale containers in and out of port, if they were encrypted in a criminal attack, or rented or operated by an adversary, that could have real impact on our economy's movement of goods and our military's movement of goods through ports."

The allegation that the Chinese-made cranes pose a national-security risk to the U.S. is "entirely paranoia," Liu Pengyu, a spokesman for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, said in a statement. "We firmly oppose the U.S. overstretching the concept of national security and abusing national power to obstruct normal economic and trade cooperation between China and

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trials, prison sentences and poisoning as he vociferously challenged President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Harnessing an outpouring of support and the resources Navalny built through his Anti-Corruption Foundation, or FBK, Navalnaya wants to spearhead renewed efforts to undermine Putin's rule.

"Putin killed half of me, but my other half won't give up," she said in the nine-minute video statement Monday, casting herself in the league of women who fought on in fierce political battles after their husbands died.

But the going will be tough.

The Kremlin's stringent laws against dissent have enfeebled Russia's opposition,

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◆ **Loved ones call on Moscow to free woman..... A10**