



Partly sunny 84/65 • Tomorrow: T-storm 84/64 **B6**

Democracy Dies in Darkness

SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2024 • **\$3**

U.S. labor market blows past forecasts

As hiring remains strong, unemployment rate inches up to 4 percent

BY LAUREN KAORI GURLEY

Employers added 272,000 jobs in May, reflecting a booming labor market that continues to fuel the economy with workers benefiting from wages that are outpacing inflation.

But the unemployment rate ticked up to 4 percent, ending a 27-month stretch of historically low unemployment — the longest in 50 years.

Job creation accelerated from the previous month, rising above the average monthly level of growth so far this year, which was already strong, after a period of cooling for part of 2023.

“The American middle class is seeing their economic standing improved. The strong wages and improving living standards are the main takeaway from this very strong jobs report,” said Joe Brusuelas, chief economist for the accounting firm RSM US.

Average hourly wage growth accelerated sharply in May, to \$34.91, up 4.1 percent from the previous year. Wages have consistently beaten inflation for nearly a year, boosting American workers’ standard of living after years of wages falling behind inflation.

In a new milestone, 78 percent of women ages 25 to 54 had or were looking for jobs — the highest level since record keeping started in the 1950s. Higher wages

SEE **JOBS** ON **A12**

Two trips paid for by friend, says Thomas

Supreme Court reports also show 6-figure book payments for 3 justices

BY ANN E. MARIMOW, JUSTIN JOUENAL AND TOBI RAJI

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has disclosed for the first time visits to Bali and to a private club in California in 2019 that were paid for by his friend and benefactor, Texas billionaire Harlan Crow, according to financial disclosures released Friday for eight of the nine justices.

The required annual reports, covering activity in 2023, show three justices — Brett M. Kavanaugh, Neil M. Gorsuch and Ketanji Brown Jackson — received six-figure book payments.

Jackson also accepted four tickets worth nearly \$4,000 from Beyoncé to one of her concerts, and two pieces of art worth \$12,500 to display in the justice’s chambers.

“Justice Jackson is ‘Crazy in Love’ with Beyoncé’s music. Who isn’t?” said court spokeswoman Patricia McCabe.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor reported a star turn as a cartoon character on the PBS children’s show “Alma’s Way,” an animated series about a Puerto Rican girl and her family from the Bronx. The justice was paid about \$1,900

SEE **JUSTICES** ON **A5**

Sign of the times



CRAIG HUDSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Guard Caitlin Clark autographs the jersey of Olivia Egan, 9, on Friday before her first game in D.C. as a pro. The rookie tied her career high with 30 points, including the game-winning free throws, as the Indiana Fever defeated the Washington Mystics, 85-83, before a sold-out crowd at Capital One Arena. **Story, D1**

With regrets and gratitude, Strasburg leaves D.C.

BY BARRY SVRLUGA

The movers had been at Stephen Strasburg’s house for a couple of days this week when the guys came to help crate up the family’s art. A newly retired baseball player can’t move from McLean back to San Diego without hauling some framed jerseys.

On Tuesday afternoon, one of the movers looked at one of those jerseys and suddenly realized whom he was helping.

“He kind of got emotional,” Strasburg said Tuesday night. “It hits you. All these people who stop you, who just say, ‘Thank

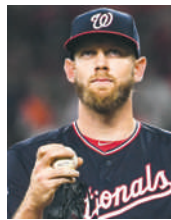
Ex-Nationals ace weighs his achievements against what might have been

you,’ it makes you realize that, yeah, maybe it didn’t meet your personal expectations. But people saw it. They saw the work that went into it, and they saw: You had an impact.”

It has not been an easy or straight road for Strasburg to get his mind to that space. Maybe he’s even convincing himself now. Ca-

reers that end on terms other than your own can be hard to process, even tormenting. He knows the realities: After being named the World Series MVP and helping the Washington Nationals — the only team he had ever known — finally, memorably, bring home a championship, he signed a seven-year, \$245 million contract under which he was barely able to pitch.

Over calamari and salmon at a white-tablecloth restaurant, Strasburg sighed.



Strasburg

“When you’re dealing with a lot of emotions and inner turmoil, to where it’s like — I wouldn’t say I was really beating myself up, but I didn’t feel good about it,” he said. “I felt like I — you know, I failed. I didn’t accomplish what was asked of me.”

Also true: From his milestone debut June 8, 2010 — 14 years ago Saturday — through his dominant 8½-inning performance in Game 6 of the 2019 World Series, Strasburg appeared in 248 games

SEE **STRASBURG** ON **A8**

‘Unusual’ cancers emerge after the pandemic

Doctors are asking if covid is to blame for rare diagnoses. It could be years before they get answers.

BY ARIANA EUNJUNG CHA

ROCK HILL, S.C. — Kashyap Patel looked forward to his team’s Friday lunches. All the doctors from his oncology practice would gather in the open-air courtyard under the shadow of a tall magnolia tree and catch up. The atmosphere tended to the lighthearted and optimistic. But that week, he was distressed.

It was 2021, a year into the coronavirus pandemic, and as he slid into a chair, Patel shared that he’d just seen a patient in his 40s with cholangiocarcinoma, a rare and lethal cancer of the bile ducts that typically strikes people in their 70s and 80s. Initially, there was silence, and then one colleague after another said they’d recently treated patients who had similar diagnoses. Within a year of that meeting, the office had recorded seven such cases.

“I’ve been in practice 23 years and have never seen anything like this,” Patel, CEO of Carolina Blood and Cancer Care Associates, later recalled.



KATE MEDLEY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Kashyap Patel of Carolina Blood and Cancer Care Associates visits with caregiver Meggie Sullivan about her husband’s diagnosis.

Asutosh Gor, another oncologist, agreed: “We were all shaken.”

There was other weirdness, too: multiple patients contending with multiple types of cancer arising almost simultaneously, and more than a dozen new cases of other rare cancers.

Increasingly, Patel was left with an unsettling thought: Could the coronavirus be inflaming the embers of cancer?

The uptick in aggressive, late-stage cancers since the dawn of the pandemic is confirmed by some early national data and a number of large cancer institutions.

Many experts have mostly dismissed the trend as an expected consequence of disruptions to health care that began in 2020.

But not everyone.

The idea that some viruses can cause or accelerate cancer is hardly new. Scientists have recognized this possibility since the 1960s, and today, researchers estimate 15 to 20 percent of all cancers worldwide

SEE **CANCER** ON **A7**

Biden revs up election message

DRAWS AN IMPLIED CONTRAST TO TRUMP

Normandy speech offers a defense of democracy

BY CLEVE R. WOOTSON JR., TOLUSE OLORUNNIPA AND ISAAC ARNSDORF

POINTE DU HOC, FRANCE — President Biden returned to Normandy on Friday to hail the U.S. Army Rangers who scaled the cliffs of this seaside town eight decades ago in defense of freedom and democracy, part of a speech aimed at a U.S. audience that echoed the central themes of his reelection bid.

One day after meeting with World War II veterans and declaring during a D-Day commemoration that “democracy is never guaranteed,” Biden leaned more heavily into one of the domestic aims of his visit to France: to draw a sharp contrast with his predecessor and chief political rival, Donald Trump.

“My fellow Americans, I refuse to believe — I simply refuse to believe — that America’s greatness is a thing of the past,” Biden said in an implicit reference to Trump’s “Make America Great Again” campaign slogan.

Biden began his remarks by recounting the harrowing experiences of the 225 Army Rangers who stormed the pivotal heights

SEE **D-DAY** ON **A4**

Hunter Biden prosecutors probe timing of drug use

Daughter testifies about texts during period when gun was bought, owned

BY PERRY STEIN, DEVLIN BARRETT AND MATT VISER

WILMINGTON, DEL. — Hunter Biden’s daughter Naomi was supposed to be a sympathetic witness who would humanize her father and show that he seemed to not be abusing drugs when she saw him one day in October 2018.

At first, that strategy seemed to work as the 30-year-old answered questions from Abbe Lowell, a lawyer for Hunter Biden. But when prosecutors cross-examined Naomi Biden, they introduced a series of text messages between her and her father that cast doubt on whether he was still using drugs during a critical period of time in which he purchased and owned a gun in mid-October.

Biden’s lawyers hope jurors will take a nuanced view of substance abuse and addiction when they begin deliberations — which could happen as soon as Monday or Tuesday — and consider that the president’s son might have been clean in the time period when prosecutors say he lied on a gun-purchase

SEE **TRIAL** ON **A6**

No rescue: The president says he would not pardon his son. **A6**

IN THE NEWS

A likely exit Israeli opposition leader Benny Gantz is expected to resign if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fails to put forward a postwar plan. **A10**

Hot weather’s toll Punishing temperatures test Phoenix’s strategy to reduce heat-related deaths, after hundreds last summer. **A3**

THE NATION Scientists are using sonar technology to map a quake zone in the Pacific Northwest. **A2** **Donald Trump** has laid the groundwork to expand executive power to cut federal spending. **A4**

Mark Meadows and other Trump allies pleaded not guilty in Arizona to alleged bid to subvert 2020 results. **A3** **Eugene Meyer**, Federalist Society president and CEO, announced his retirement. **A2**

THE WORLD After North Korea sent trash balloons across the border, activists in the South replied with K-pop. **A9** **A floating pier** off Gaza that broke apart in high seas has been repaired, the Pentagon said, and humanitarian aid will resume within days. **A10**

THE ECONOMY Korea’s keh and Latin America’s tanda are among the crowdfunding financing alternatives to help with business and daily life. **A11** **Democrats** are ramping up their battle with drug companies with a new tactic: challenging their patents. **A12**

THE REGION Despite two polls showing Trump tied with President Biden in Virginia, the blue state is still seen as a stretch. **B1** **Owners of** commercial property in Prince George’s will be allowed to request youth-curfew zones after a bill passed this week. **B1**

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The Washington Post
Year 147, No. 53876

