



On vapes, justices seem to favor FDA

Court hears arguments over agency’s rejection of sweet-flavored products

BY JUSTIN JOUVENAL AND RACHEL ROUBEIN

The Supreme Court appeared sympathetic Monday to arguments that the Food and Drug Administration acted properly when it rejected applications to market fruit- and dessert-flavored liquids for e-cigarettes that the agency says are particularly attractive to young people who risk getting hooked on nicotine.

The justices heard oral arguments in an FDA appeal of a lower-court decision, which found that the agency had unfairly shifted its standards for approving the vaping products while deciding on applications from two companies.

The FDA has rejected applications for more than 1 million fruit-, candy- and dessert-flavored e-cigarettes and liquids in recent years, citing surveys that show vaping has become the most popular form of tobacco product use among young people and that they prefer flavored e-cigarettes.

An e-cigarette, or vape, is a battery-powered device that heats a nicotine-infused liquid, turning it into a vapor that is inhaled. E-cigarettes are generally considered less harmful than traditional cigarettes but still carry health risks.

Justice Elena Kagan and several other justices expressed doubts that the FDA had misled the companies.

“I’m not really seeing what the surprise is here or what the change is here,” Kagan said. “Everybody basically knows that flavors are particularly dangerous in terms of kids starting the use of

SEE VAPING ON A6

In a presidential first, Biden visits Angola



ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

President Joe Biden walks with Angolan Foreign Minister Tête António, right, and James Story, third from right, the U.S. chargé d’affaires in the region, as he arrives Monday in Angola. The visit to the nation is the first by a sitting American president and comes as the United States and China compete for influence in Africa. **Story, A11**

U.S. surges arms to Kyiv, fearing shift by Trump

BY MICHAEL BIRNBAUM, MISSY RYAN AND SIOBHÁN O’GRADY

The Biden administration is engaged in an 11th-hour scramble to provide Ukraine with billions of dollars in additional weaponry, a massive effort that is generating concerns internally about its potential to erode U.S. stockpiles and sap resources from other flash points, officials said.

The lame-duck initiative was spurred in part by Russia’s battlefield momentum and a fear among Ukraine’s fiercest advocates that once President-elect

Some officials wary of impact on American resources, readiness

Donald Trump takes office Jan. 20, there will be an abrupt shift in U.S. policy toward the war.

Yet some in the administration have taken the view that no matter what Washington does, Kyiv’s military will remain outmatched without far more soldiers to sustain its fight. And even as they accelerate arms shipments, there

is growing frustration with Ukraine’s leaders, who have resisted U.S. calls to lower the country’s draft age from 25 to 18.

In recent weeks, Russian forces have captured Ukrainian territory at the fastest pace since 2022, causing alarm in Washington. Administration officials say their end-of-term weapons push — accompanied by President Joe Biden’s decision to green-light missile strikes deep into Russian territory and the deployment of antipersonnel land mines long criticized by human rights groups — can give Kyiv some breathing room. But they are urging Ukrai-

nian leaders to use the moment to expand their military beyond the 160,000 recruits Kyiv says it needs.

“We’re absolutely going to keep sending Ukraine weapons and equipment. We know that’s vital. But so, too, is manpower at this point,” White House spokesman John Kirby said last week. “In fact, we believe manpower is the most vital need they have. So we’re also ready to ramp up our training capacity if they take appropriate steps to fill out their ranks.”

Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday announced

SEE UKRAINE ON A10

Pardon criticism crosses divide

DEMOCRATS CALL IT ‘UNWISE,’ ‘SETBACK’

Biden’s sweeping action adds to fears of abuse

BY MATT VISER AND PERRY STEIN

President Joe Biden faced mounting criticism Monday for his decision to issue a sweeping pardon of his son, with a significant number of Democrats expressing concern that it would undercut faith in the justice system and provide ammunition to President-elect Donald Trump’s efforts to remake it.

In the hours after Biden’s announcement, several Democrats said that while they understood his decision on a personal level to protect his son Hunter — who has lost a baby sister and an adult brother, suffered from addiction and faced relentless scrutiny because of his father’s position — they also worried about the broader signal the pardon may send that the politically connected have rights not available to all Americans.

Sen. Gary Peters (D-Michigan) called it “wrong,” adding that “a president’s family and allies shouldn’t get special treatment.” He added: “This was an improper use of power. It erodes trust in our government, and it emboldens others to bend justice to suit their interests.”

Rep. Jared Golden (D-Maine) wrote on social media that “such a sweeping pardon for a close family member sets an unfortunate precedent that undermines trust in the office of the president.” Sen. Peter Welch (D-Vermont) called it

SEE BIDEN ON A4

Family matters: Trump pardoned an in-law; Clinton, a half brother. **A4**

A long run helps assemble a short piece of art

A man logs 700 miles to make a viral TikTok of a dancing stick figure on a GPS-tracking app

BY SYDNEY PAGE

The video is only 27 seconds long, but it took Duncan McCabe 10 months — and about 700 miles — to make it.

McCabe, an avid runner and animation enthusiast, set out on a journey in January to create a now-viral TikTok of a dancing stick figure. He made it using the popular GPS-tracking app Strava, which connects runners, cyclists, hikers and walkers and allows them to record their routes.

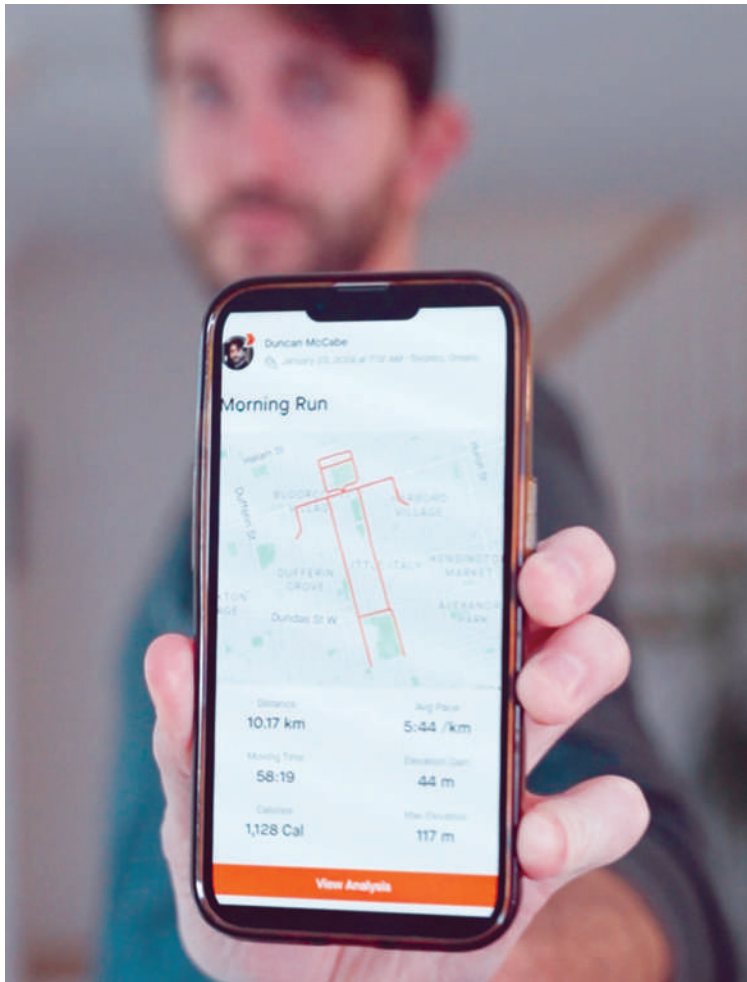
Using Strava’s map function, McCabe recorded 120 runs — and when he strung each of the maps together, it revealed a hat-wearing stick figure dancing to the song “Purple Hat” across the streets of Toronto.

While the dancing man might look bare bones, creating it was complex — and physically demanding. Many of his 120 runs were roughly 6 miles, but some were longer or shorter.

“You need to have a lot of frames per second in order to give it motion,” said McCabe, 32, an Ontario-based accountant.

McCabe’s video is part of a growing movement known as GPS art, which involves using apps like Strava with location-tracking features to create digital drawings over a map of a specific region.

People around the world have



ANDREA MORALES

Duncan McCabe shows one of dozens of images for his video made in Strava, which allows runners and cyclists to map their routes.

made a stiletto, a strawberry, a donkey and a fire-breathing dragon — all by traversing a predetermined route by foot or bike.

What sets McCabe’s work apart is that it is in motion. Rather than just one piece of static GPS art — which typically involves mapping out a route ahead of time in a particular shape, then executing the ride or run — McCabe’s video is a compilation of many runs, requiring extensive planning.

McCabe was not deterred by the time commitment or the difficulty of mapping the routes.

“If I have a long-term vision, I’m willing to work for a very long time,” said McCabe. “Each piece of art is a frame, and if you combine them, you can turn frames into motion.”

McCabe described himself as a “video guy” and said he enjoys making short films of friends and family as a hobby. He took his first stab at Strava video art last year, when he turned 430 miles of running into a 30-second clip of several animals (including a shark, a giraffe and a dinosaur) moving around on top of a map of Toronto.

“The inspiration for that broadly comes from Strava art. ... I have a lot of respect for the stuff that’s come before me,” said

SEE GPS ART ON A18

Top DOJ officials call for career staff to stay

Trump’s vows of revenge clash with desire to keep ‘institutional backbone’

BY PERRY STEIN AND YVONNE WINGETT SANCHEZ

Attorney General Merrick Garland and top Justice Department officials are encouraging career staffers to remain in their jobs through the next administration, stressing that institutional knowledge is important as new leaders take hold, according to people familiar with those conversations.

The weeks since President-elect Donald Trump’s victory have been filled with uncertainty and tumult for many of the more than 100,000 individuals who work at the nation’s largest law enforcement agency, according to people familiar with the situation, many of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss information that has not been made public.

As top officials inside the Justice Department have led meetings about transition protocols, Trump and his allies have continued their vows to fire career

staffers and seek retribution on those they consider their political enemies.

Trump’s initial announcement that he would nominate as attorney general former congressman Matt Gaetz (R-Florida), an outspoken loyalist with limited legal experience, was met with angst and shock throughout the department, the people familiar with internal conversations said.

Gaetz’s abrupt withdrawal from consideration amid sex-trafficking allegations — and the subsequent nomination of former Florida attorney general and Trump loyalist Pam Bondi — brought some relief, those people said, tinged with uncertainty over whether Trump would erase existing firewalls between the White House and the Justice Department’s criminal investigations.

Then, on Saturday night, Trump announced that he wanted to replace FBI Director Christopher A. Ray with Kash Patel, a Trump loyalist who has dismissed the bureau’s investigations around Trump as political and has vowed to dismantle the FBI. Bureau directors are supposed to serve 10-year terms that span presidential administrations, so Trump would have to

SEE JUSTICE ON A2

IN THE NEWS

Syrian forces regroup Russia and Iran are lending support to Bashar al-Assad’s regime after rebels’ surprising major advance. **A9**

Ex-officer on trial A former D.C. police lieutenant charged with obstruction of justice was acting as a “double agent” for the Proud Boys, federal prosecutors said. **B1**

THE NATION Donald Trump’s pick for ambassador to Israel marks a high point for an evangelical project. **A3**
California lawmakers opened a special session to prepare for expected anti-Trump lawsuits. **A7**

THE WORLD In Tyre, a devastated Hezbollah stronghold in southern Lebanon, some locals are questioning the cost of war. **A8**
Who are the key players fighting in Syria’s bloody conflict? **A11**

THE ECONOMY Intel announced the retirement of its CEO, raising new questions about the struggling chipmaker’s future. **A13**
The Biden administration announced export restrictions aimed at slowing China’s pursuit of advanced chip technology. **A14**

THE REGION Sen.-elect Angela Also-brooks formally resigned as Prince George’s County executive, setting the stage for a special election. **B1**
The husband of a missing Virginia woman was charged with murder in a case that has drawn international attention. **B1**

STYLE This holiday season, the White House is largely sticking with the tried-and-true, in terms of aesthetics and messaging. **C1**
HEALTH & SCIENCE The U.S. women’s soccer team offers a case study in embracing “positive discomfort” to unlock potential. **E1**

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The Washington Post
Year 147, No. 54054

