

What if Biden were tested — clinically

The president has rejected the idea, but experts say cognitive exams have merit.

By Karen Kaplan

It seemed like a sensible suggestion for assessing the capabilities of an 81-year-old man seeking voters' approval to remain in the White House until January 2029.

To reassure the American people, ABC's George Stephanopoulos asked President Biden, would he be willing to take a cognitive test and share the results with the American people?

Biden demurred. In carrying out his duties as leader of the free world, he said, "I have a cognitive test every single day."

Though the president dismissed the suggestion, medical experts said the idea of having Biden — along with his 78-year-old challenger, former President Trump — take some kind of cognitive exam had merit.

"Let's give it to both of them," said Dr. Louise Aronson, a geriatrician at UC San Francisco.

Kevin Duff, a neuropsychologist at the Oregon Health & Science University's Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, likened the proposal to the long-standing

[See Cognitive test, A9]

In the spotlight at NATO summit

The president, who has long prided himself on his diplomacy skills, has a world stage. **WORLD, A3**



THE L'AUBERGE CARMEL hotel is among at least 18 properties bought by developer Patrice Pastor over the last decade. His presence has become a source of intrigue in moneyed Carmel-by-the-Sea, Calif.

Too rich: Buying spree, with charm offensive, riles Carmel

Why is a billionaire from Monaco snapping up prized properties?

By Hailey Branson-Potts
REPORTING FROM CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA, CALIF.

People call it "the Pit."

It's a massive, unsightly hole in the ground — the site of a construction project in downtown Carmel-by-the-Sea whose previous owners ran out of money six years ago, leaving behind nothing but concrete, rebar and hard feelings.

In 2020, the Pit was purchased by Patrice Pastor, a billionaire real estate developer from Monaco, for \$9 million.

Last year, he plopped down \$22 million for a much prettier property: Cabin on the Rocks, the only oceanfront home ever designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

And in mid-June, he got approval from the California Coastal Commission for his "visionary plan" to restore public access at Rocky Point, a sea-

[See Carmel, A5]



PASTOR IS RESTORING public access at Rocky Point, a coastal gem in nearby Big Sur that he purchased in 2021 for \$8 million.



ETHAN SWOPE Associated Press

BURNING IN CALIFORNIA

The Thompson fire rages in Oroville last week. The now-contained blaze arrived amid a heat wave that has set some all-time records. **CALIFORNIA, B3**

WHO says climate poses risks for people of all ages

By Hayley Smith

As the planet continues its streak of record-breaking heat, the World Health Organization has issued urgent warnings about the ways in which climate change is affecting the most vulnerable members of society at almost every stage of life.

Pregnant people, newborns, children, adolescents and seniors are all facing serious health complications from global warming, yet the needs of each group have been largely neglected, researchers argue in a series of papers published recently in the Journal of Global Health.

"These studies show clearly that climate change

is not a distant health threat, and that certain populations are already paying a high price," read a statement from Anshu Banerjee, the WHO's director of maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and aging. "While awareness of climate change has increased, actions to safeguard the lives of those at

[See Climate, A7]

How mall murder suspect avoided prison last year

L.A. prosecutors defend plea deal for man now accused of killing tourist in O.C.

By Richard Winton and Matthew Ormseth

The alleged leader of a crew accused of armed robbery and charged with killing a New Zealand tourist last week outside Newport Beach's Fashion Island mall had been placed on probation for stealing a Rolex at gunpoint in Santa Monica.

He avoided prison time in that case after Los Angeles County prosecutors agreed to a three-year suspended sentence, according to interviews and records reviewed by The Times.

Leroy Ernest McCrary, 26, now faces a special-circumstances murder charge that could carry the death penalty, after authorities allege he ran a car over Patricia "Trish" McKay, 68, during a July 2 robbery.

Orange County prosecutors say McCrary and two other men targeted McKay's husband, former Bank of New Zealand Chair Douglas McKay, for his high-end watch.

McCrary and the other

defendants have not yet entered pleas, and their attorneys could not immediately be reached for comment.

The Fashion Island slaying is renewing interest in the Rolex theft in 2022.

Santa Monica Police Lt. Erika Aklufi said surveillance video in that case showed McCrary putting a handgun to the head of a man on Broadway. He and an accomplice demanded the man's watch, she said.

McCrary's DNA also was recovered from the victim's shirt, which he'd grabbed during the robbery, police said.

Prosecutors charged McCrary, who had been arrested by L.A. police the following month, and Donta Baker with robbery in the Santa Monica case based on the DNA evidence, according to court records reviewed by The Times.

Before that, McCrary had been convicted in a 2020 case of making criminal threats, a felony.

Prosecutors agreed to a plea deal that spared him prison time in the Santa Monica case, court records show. McCrary pleaded no contest on April 26, 2023, to one count of robbery and was sentenced by Los Angeles County Superior Court

[See Suspect, A6]

LAUSD phone ban divides teens

Students voice praise and disapproval over the coming end of screen time in classes.

By Jaweed Kaleem

Since William Schnider got his first iPhone in sixth grade, it's become an extension of his very being. By day, it's nestled in his right pants pocket; by night, it's within arm's reach. He rarely talks to people on his phone, instead communicating via Instagram groups, TikTok memes and texts. He syncs his calendar to his parents' phones.

So when William, a 17-year-old rising senior at Van Nuys High School, learned that cellphones would be banned across L.A. public schools, he instantly scoffed — like so many others.

"I don't see how it will work," he said. "I don't see how it's fair. Is this necessary?"

Yet after the initial shock and an absolute "no" is voiced by many teenage students, more nuanced thoughts emerge: Maybe we are falling into social media and cellphone addiction. Maybe all the distractions and the obsession with "likes" are bad for us. Maybe we need some relief.

The Board of Education's 5-2 decision to ban cellphones by January 2025 aims to change the behavior of a generation of students and will be one of the most consequential and closely watched shifts in schooling since students were forced to go to class online — many by phone — more than four years ago at the onset of the pandemic.

Details, such as how the rule will be enforced and where the phones will be stored during the school day, will be worked out in the coming months. But the goals are clear. School leaders say they want to combat classroom distractions that are impeding learning and to reduce the dangers of social media addiction. At this point, the leaders say, a

[See Phone ban, A6]

Newsom, Harris stump for Biden

The California governor and the vice president hit the road to rally support for the president. **NATION, A4**

Ultra-runner, bear collide

With a mile left in his 50-mile adventure, Jon-Kyle Mohr meets a formidable, furry obstacle. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Strike vote by Disney workers

Move scheduled for July 19 comes after a series of labor claims against the Anaheim resort. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather
Patchy fog, then sun. L.A. Basin: 94/65. **B6**

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