

## A career of benefiting from famed last name

Hunter Biden has had a complex relationship with the ‘Biden brand’

BY MATT VISER

Hunter Biden worked for years to cultivate high-level relationships in China, flying to the country with his father on Air Force Two and serving as a board member of a Chinese investment firm. As he did, he understood the new relationships he was building did not come from his charm alone.

“It has nothing to do with me,” he wrote in 2011 about some of his developing connections with Chinese investors, “and everything to do with my last name.”

The blunt acknowledgment, in an email to his close friend and business associate Devon Archer, was a recognition of the built-in advantages the younger Biden had as he grew his Washington-based business. When he was building a new consulting firm during his father’s vice presidency, he — and particularly his partners — showed little hesitancy in using a coveted last name to open doors that could provide financial opportunity.

At times they would hand out books autographed by Joe Biden, emails and interviews show. They would provide vice-presidential cuff links or challenge coins to friends, associates or prospective clients. They secured tickets to White House events, including dinners, holiday parties and the annual Easter Egg Roll, at times strategizing over which business associates should receive them.

House Republicans have launched an impeachment inquiry attempting to show that Joe Biden improperly benefited from

SEE HUNTER BIDEN ON A20

## Car capital grapples with the future of its freeways

BY REIS THEBAULT

LOS ANGELES — When, many geologic eras from now, future Earth beings excavate the remains of this great city, they will be left with an obvious conclusion: Now, *here* is a civilization that loved freeways.

Present-day Angelenos, however, know all too well that the forthcoming fossil record will tell only a partial truth.

Sure, those endless miles of concrete and thick tangles of overpass interchanges were beloved by early planners, politicians and bureaucrats, who pushed their proliferation in the name of progress and profit.

But everyone else, the many millions whose cars inched along atop them and the countless neighborhoods crushed to make way for them? Not so much.

This love-hate dynamic is so ingrained in daily life in Los Angeles that it’s usually barely worth noting. But eight days ago, the devil’s bargain that underwrote the transportation culture here broke down.

A fast-moving industrial fire — reportedly sparked by an arsonist — charred Interstate 10 in downtown L.A., forcing a mile-long closure of one of the busiest freeways in the car capital of the world. In a city already famous

SEE FREEWAY ON A10

## A midwife faces scrutiny after a baby dies



SARAH L. VOISIN/THE WASHINGTON POST

## It’s not the first time

BY AMY BRITTAIN

*Editor’s note: This story includes photos of a deceased baby with the parents’ permission. These images may disturb some people.*

Tori DiVincenzo lay in bed at home, dazed and bleeding. She had pushed for hours under the watch of a veteran midwife, only to deliver her daughter silent and still.

On this November afternoon in 2021, Sophie Rose DiVincenzo was being rushed to a hospital in an ambulance. First responders milled about the house in Calvert County, Md. DiVincenzo’s midwife, Karen Carr, and her assistant drained the birthing pool, stripped the stained bedsheets and ran a load of laundry.

The first-time mother was nude and too weak to stand. Paramedics tried to cover her with a blanket, but she

**Tori DiVincenzo, 31, and her husband, Anthony DiVincenzo, 33, lost their baby, Sophie Rose, during a home birth in Maryland in 2021 with Karen Carr, a midwife, in attendance.**

pushed it off; the weight felt unbearable. Carr, then 65 and with short brown hair, sat on the bed and told DiVincenzo that Sophie was dead.

“I just don’t even know how this happened,” Carr said a few times, according to DiVincenzo’s account. About 16 minutes before the birth, the midwife had reported listening to the baby’s heartbeat.

Later, investigators would probe whether Carr had failed to properly monitor DiVincenzo and her baby. And DiVincenzo would learn that it

was not the first time that Carr had come under scrutiny for her work as a midwife.

Officials in three states and the District of Columbia, including the U.S. attorney’s office for the District, had investigated Carr after home births she attended went wrong. In Virginia, Carr pleaded guilty to two felonies after a baby died in 2010. She served five days in jail and agreed never again to practice in the state. In Maryland, after another infant death that same year, a judge determined that Carr’s decisions during the delivery had “dire consequences.” Officials imposed a hefty fine.

However, four other investigations were resolved in her favor, either with no criminal charges or, in two administrative cases, with legal victories. Through it all, The Washington Post

SEE MIDWIFE ON A12

## After the worst moment of his life, a new calling

Va. legislator reflects on his quest to fix the mental health system that failed him a decade ago

BY JENNA PORTNOY AND JUSTIN JOUVENAL

State Sen. R. Creigh Deeds (D-Charlottesville) tugged on his earlobe, pointing to scar tissue doctors wanted to remove to mend the damage from an attack that left him physically wounded but gave his life new purpose.

His son, Austin “Gus” Deeds, stabbed him with a knife while in the throes of a mental health crisis 10 years ago Sunday, shortly before the 24-year-old took his own life. A day earlier, a Virginia mental health worker had failed to find an emergency treatment bed for Gus.

It was the worst moment of the Virginia lawmaker’s life, but he decided against surgery to remove the scars that snaked across his face. He didn’t want to smooth them over. He wanted the world to see them.

“The scars to the extent that they remind people I’ve been through something, they will have an idea of the things that

SEE DEEDS ON A6



MICHAEL S. WILLIAMSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

**Virginia state Sen. R. Creigh Deeds (D) in Charlottesville. Deeds’s son, Austin “Gus” Deeds, attacked him while in the throes of a mental health crisis and took his own life on Nov. 19, 2013.**

## Possible freeze to fighting in Gaza

DEAL WOULD FREE SOME HOSTAGES

More humanitarian aid will flow, barring hitches

BY KAREN DEYOUNG

Israel, the United States and Hamas are close to an agreement to free dozens of women and children held hostage in Gaza, in exchange for a five-day pause in fighting.

The release, which could begin within the next several days — barring last-minute hitches — could lead to the first sustained pause in conflict in Gaza, according to people familiar with its provisions.

Under the terms of the detailed, six-page agreement, all parties to the conflict would freeze combat operations for at least five days while an initial 50 or more hostages are released in smaller batches every 24 hours. It was not immediately clear how many of the 239 people believed to be in captivity in Gaza would be released under the deal. Overhead surveillance would monitor movement on the ground to police the pause.

The stop in fighting is also intended to allow a significant increase in the amount of humanitarian assistance, including fuel, to enter the besieged enclave from Egypt.

The outline of a deal was put together during weeks of talks in Doha, Qatar, among Israel, the United States and Hamas, indirectly represented by Qatari mediators, according to Arab and other diplomats. But it remained un-

SEE HOSTAGES ON A9

## Attack leaves community stuck between horror, future

BY WILLIAM BOOTH

EIN BOKEK, ISRAEL — The resort on the Dead Sea looks like what it is: A nice, bright white, banal holiday hotel, with a swimming pool and palm trees, bars and balconies.

This is a disguise. For its current guests, the hotel is a trauma center.

Today the David Dead Sea Resort and Spa serves as way station, as an evacuation camp for members of one of the communities hit hardest by the Hamas surprise attack six weeks ago — one that lost 10 percent of its residents in a single day.

In the hallways, parents in flip-flops and donated T-shirts push strollers. There are many children. They are everywhere. They kick soccer balls in the soaring atrium lobby. They leave their ice cream melting on the couches. No one stops them.

Why? Because the children must be distracted, because the moms and dads — the ones who are not dead or missing — sometimes must go to their rooms and close the drapes. To make more

SEE ISRAEL ON A18

**Northern Gaza:** Israeli intensifies campaign; hospital evacuated. **A11**

**‘New war zone’:** Israeli peace activists tour U.S. campuses. **A16**

### METRO

D.C. has delayed a plan for a homeless shelter at a former GWU dormitory.

### BUSINESS

The real estate industry trembles in the wake of a commissions scheme.



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### TRAVEL

Dolly Parton has opened the HeartSong resort, a ballad to her childhood.

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