



ELECTION 2024

Grieving families clash over politics

Relatives of soldiers killed in suicide bombing advocate for Trump

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF, DAN LAMOTHE AND JOSH DAWSEY

After months of disagreements, a group of military families who lost loved ones in a bombing during the U.S. evacuation of Afghanistan gathered on a Zoom call last December. On the line with them was a 35-year-old Republican operative and Marine Corps veteran who some saw as helpful and others saw as divisive.

The group had taken to calling itself the Abbey Gate 13 Coalition, a reference to the location at Kabul's airport where 13 U.S. troops and 170 Afghans had been killed in a suicide bombing on Aug. 26, 2021, in the closing days of America's longest war, marking a low point in President Joe Biden's term. The relatives participating expressed disgust with the Biden administration's handling of the operation, but the group had started to splinter over disputes that included whether to overtly support Donald Trump, according to interviews with people involved and text messages obtained by The Washington Post.

The group asked the mothers of two Marines killed in the bombing to leave over those disagreements, and the rest signed a formal memorandum of understanding that encouraged secrecy and solidarity, according to several parents involved and a copy obtained by The Post. The group added additional members over the next year, while other families chose to abstain.

The women who left the group, Cheryl Rex and Shana Chappell, said the political adviser, Marlon Bateman, told the family members that they could generate attention and donations by staging "political stunts." Other families on the call deny that hap-

SEE GOLD STAR ON A2



QUDRATULLAH RAZWAN/EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

For Afghan women, new laws erode hopes

Mounting signs of Taliban crackdown as it enforces draconian rules

BY RICK NOACK

As the Taliban begins enforcing new draconian laws, Afghan women say that whatever hopes they once harbored for an easing of the severe restrictions on them have largely vanished.

The new religious code issued late last month bans women from raising their voices, reciting the Quran in public and looking at men other than their husbands or relatives. It requires women to cover the lower half of their faces in addition to donning a head covering they were already expected to wear, among other rules.

Women's lives were heavily regulated by the Taliban-run government before the latest rules were promulgated, and some of the new laws codify restrictions that were already imposed on women in practice. But Afghan women, speaking in phone interviews over the past week, pointed to mounting signs of a crack-down in urban areas, where rules had been less rigorously enforced.

The Taliban's morality police, which is an extension of the regime's most conservative

elements, appears to have been handed an unprecedented amount of power in the capital, Kabul, and elsewhere, women said. While the morality police's white robes were a rare sight in Kabul, they have become omnipresent since late August, several women said.

Officers are roaming bus stops and shopping centers searching for dress-code violations or any women who might laugh or raise their voices. On Fridays, the Muslim holy day, religious police officers disperse women in some parts of Kabul and accuse them of preventing male shop owners from making it to the mosque in time for prayers. Women are an increasingly rare sight on Afghan television broadcasts.

While girls were banned from going to school above sixth grade and women barred from universities soon after the Taliban took power three years ago, some still attended English classes as recently as a few weeks ago. But after the Taliban's morality police issued warnings to male teachers, according to students, many families now refuse to let their daughters participate. Other women have decided to stay

SEE TALIBAN ON A9

Afghan girls attend a primary school class in Kandahar, Afghanistan, on Sept. 8. The education of women and girls has been severely restricted by the Taliban, with girls not allowed to attend school above the sixth grade and women barred from universities.

Trump targeted on golf course in Fla., police say

POSSIBLE SECOND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Secret Service agent saw rifle poking through fence

This article is by Josh Dawsey, Carol D. Leonnig, Devlin Barrett, Mariana Alfaro and Isaac Arnsdorf

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump was unharmed Sunday in what authorities are investigating as another potential assassination attempt, after a man pointed a rifle into a Florida golf course where the former president was playing. Police have detained a suspect whose name has not yet been released.

Sunday's incident occurred while Trump was golfing at his course in West Palm Beach, Fla. Following the usual security procedure, a Secret Service agent moved one or two holes ahead of the former president, 300 to 500 yards away, according to Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw.

Around 1:30 p.m., between the fifth and seventh holes, the agent noticed a rifle muzzle poking through the tree-lined chain-link fence surrounding the golf course, Bradshaw said. The agent opened fire and Trump's detail

rushed him to a holding room. The gunman fled in a black Nissan, leaving behind an AK-47-style rifle, two bags and a camera mounted to the fence to record, according to Bradshaw.

"With a rifle and a scope like that, that's not a long distance," Bradshaw said.

It was the second time in just over two months that a man had a high-powered rifle within range of Trump, renewing concerns about Trump's safety in the height of the campaign leading up to Election Day on Nov. 5. The Secret Service has long viewed golf courses as especially challenging because they are open to parts of the public and near heavily trafficked areas. The agency repeatedly denied requests from the Trump campaign for additional security measures at his public events, with officials citing limited resources.

"The threat level is high," Rafael Barros, special agent in charge of the Secret Service's Miami field office, told reporters Sunday. "We live in danger times."

SEE TRUMP ON A5



CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Members of the FBI outside the Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach, Fla., after a man with a gun was seen outside the club while former president Donald Trump was on the course.

A radical idea could save this bird from extinction

There are only 130 Guam kingfishers in captivity, but some will fly free on a different island

BY DINO GRANDONI AND MATT MCCLAIN

IN WICHITA

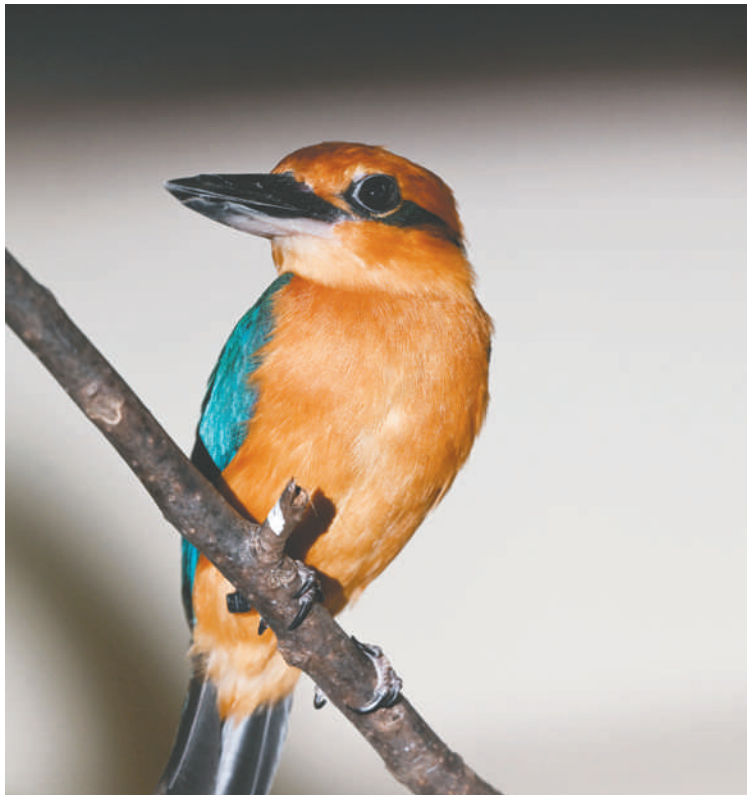
As climate change and other threats destroy the habitats of living things, biologists are beginning to think of doing the once unthinkable: finding new homes for species outside their native ranges.

Here in Kansas — in a beige shipping container tucked between a hay barn and a cattle pasture — one of the rarest tropical birds in the world is getting a second chance to soon fly free in the wild. It's about as far from an island forest as one can get.

For weeks, Erica Royer has been preparing these cinnamon- and cobalt-colored birds for a flight thousands of miles across the Pacific to their new island home.

To get them ready, she's played tropical island noises — rainfall, seabird squawks, the occasional ATV — from a portable speaker while feeding and cleaning her tiny flock, each a member of a species called the sihek, or Guam kingfisher.

"We want them to get used to



MATT MCCLAIN/THE WASHINGTON POST

A Guam kingfisher, or sihek, at the Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal, Va. The species was brought into captivity in the 1980s, after almost becoming extinct.

the sounds," said Royer, an aviculturist with the Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute.

With only about 130 left in captivity, siheks are extinct in the wild. Soon, these nine young kingfishers reared here at the Sedgwick County Zoo will fly free in forests.

However, they are not going back to their native Guam. Instead, Royer and her team are sending them to a completely different Pacific island — one they hope gives their feathered kind a better chance at survival.

Translocating a plant or animal to a brand-new spot is a dramatic step meant to save them from disappearing from the face of the Earth for good. Allowing a species to live in nonnative habitats, the logic goes, is better than losing it altogether. With hundreds of thousands of species threatened with extinction, many may need to be moved to be saved, compelling biologists to face some of the most profound ethical questions in wildlife conservation:

Which plants and animals need to be moved to be saved?

SEE BIRDS ON A6

Daniels is surviving, thriving for Commanders. It's Week 2.



Barry Svrluga

The reason the Washington Commanders could celebrate a bizarrely frustrating 21-18 victory over the decidedly mediocre — and we're being generous here — New York Giants on Sunday is that a kicker who was unemployed last week booted seven field goals. The reason the Commanders needed a previously jobless kicker to boot those seven field goals: Franchise quarterback Jayden Daniels and the offense ventured into the red zone 1 billion times (numbers approximate) only to stumble and tumble when they arrived.

There are no bad wins in the National Football League, certainly not for a franchise that owns a brand new front office and coaching staff and a roster that could be described as overhauled — if that wasn't understating its status by such a wide margin.

"Feel blessed," Daniels said. "Can't really complain. It wasn't the prettiest game. But a win is

a win." Also: He survived. It appears that will be a weekly quest. We'll get to that struggle, because it's going to be a Monday-through-Saturday discussion point from now till January.

But first, a reminder: There haven't been many wins around here. This was the first since Nov. 5, 2023, the first at home in more than a calendar year. The Giants may end up being awful. (Safe bet.) The Commanders may end up with more losses than wins. (Another safe bet.) For this new regime of General Manager Adam Peters and Coach Dan Quinn to gain confidence from the fan base, there have to be days that end like this — with a game-winning field goal as time ran out. In Washington, a win is a win, even if it engenders more relief than exaltation.

"It's been a loooooong process," said Brian Robinson Jr., the running back who acted the part of bell cow with 133 yards on 17 carries.

That's the best way to put it. And there's a loooooong way to go as well.

SEE SVRLUGA ON A12

IN THE NEWS

2024 Emmy Awards "Shogun" and "Hacks" win top honors as the television academy hands out its annual awards. C1

Musk's misleading claims The billionaire's posting of false rumors about the election on his social media network X have alarmed local officials across the country. A13

THE NATION Sen. JD Vance doubled down on false claims about Haitian immigrants in Ohio. A3 A rabbi went through job loss and family rifts after protesting for a cease-fire in Gaza. A4

THE WORLD New videos show the immediate aftermath of execution-style killings last year in Sudan. A8 Yemen's Houthis militia claimed responsibility for a missile attack targeting Israel. A9

THE ECONOMY Phone companies may tout "free" or steeply discounted iPhone 16s, but Shira Ovide says to think before taking them up on the offer. A11 An Indigenous business in Colombia asked the government to revoke Coca-Cola's trademark on "coca." A11

THE REGION Johns Hopkins Health System agreed to pay a total of \$150,000 to disabled patients over alleged ADA violations. B1 Parents in Maryland asked the Supreme Court to hear a case involving storybooks with LGBTQ+ characters. B1

Some students at a Maryland elementary school could get at least \$13,000 if they graduate from high school. B1

SPORTS Lilia Vu's birdie on the 18th hole helped the United States win the Solheim Cup for the first time since 2017. D1

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