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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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ELECTION 2024

Haley gains ground as alternative to Trump

Former U.N. ambassador rises in Iowa and N.H. but faces hurdles ahead

BY DYLAN WELLS,
HANNAH KNOWLES
AND MAEVE RESTON

HOOKSETT, N.H. — Nikki Haley has in many ways pushed past Ron DeSantis to become the top alternative to Donald Trump, interviews with voters and operatives as well as polling data show — shifting the dynamic of the Republican presidential race less than two months before the first nominating contest.



Nikki Haley

Trump remains in control, holding a wide lead in state and national surveys as he centers his campaign on stoking grievances, vowing revenge against critics if returned to power and using the four criminal indictments he faces as a rallying cry. But the jockeying in a tier below the former president has moved, with Haley pulling even with DeSantis for a distant second in all-important Iowa and holding sole possession of that spot in recent surveys of New Hampshire and her home state of South

SEE **HALEY** ON A4

ANALYSIS

Power still lies with a select few in Big Tech

OpenAI and X promise populism but are shaped by desires of two men

BY DREW HARWELL

The mutiny inside OpenAI over the firing and un-firing of chief executive Sam Altman, and the implosion of X under owner Elon Musk, are not just Silicon Valley soap operas. They're also reminders: A select few make the decisions inside these society-shaping platforms, and money drives it all.

The two companies built devoted followings by promising to build populist technology for a changing world: X, formerly known as Twitter, with its global village of conversations, and OpenAI, the research lab behind ChatGPT, with its super-intelligent companions for human thought.

But under Musk and Altman, the firms largely consolidated power within a small cadre of fellow believers and loyalists who deliberate in secrecy and answer to no one.

Musk has run X as a fiefdom, boosting far-right supporters, antagonizing advertisers and attacking advocacy groups. And

SEE **TECH** ON A12

The Washington Post spent a year following one Richmond high school trying a host of strategies to protect children from gun violence. Are they working?



PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This school tried to keep kids safe. Then graduation ended in gunfire.

On a cold day last January, 17-year-old Tristan Bailey walked into history class to find a woman he didn't know sitting in his friend's usual seat.

The woman, a Richmond Public Schools instructional specialist named Tess Short, had dressed like a teen: in jeans, a hoodie and pink Converse. She was there, the teacher explained, because Bailey's childhood friend Jaden Carter had been shot to death the day before behind the school baseball fields.

"Jaden," Bailey remembers his teacher saying, "he passed away."

Bailey went blank, unable to believe it — and later, in a phone call to his mother, unable to stop sobbing. But for Short, who planned to sit in Jaden's seat through every class he would have taken, it was just another day at work.

BY SABBY ROBINSON,
HANNAH NATANSON
AND MORIAH BALINGIT
IN RICHMOND

Huguenot High School Principal Robert Gilstrap walks among paramedics and other first responders as they treat gunshot victims, including one of his students, following a shooting at the school's graduation ceremony this summer.

It's her job to do this: After a student dies, she follows in their footsteps, lacing up sneakers, pursuing their class schedule, comforting their friends and directing people to mental health services as needed. That day, she had left her official Richmond badge at home and dressed as a student — to put high-schoolers at ease.

The Richmond district created Short's role, which looks nothing like what schools have traditionally done, as part of a step-by-step, intricate response officials here have developed to handle an increasingly unmanageable load of pain, violence and trauma.

Virginia's capital is facing an epidemic of youth gun violence. In the past three years, almost 30 Richmond students died in gunfire, according to the school system. The

SEE **SCHOOL** ON A6

Aviary netting can't stop these star-crossed lovebirds

Two Brazil macaws — one wild, one captive — have been faithful partners for over 20 years

BY TERRENCE MCCOY

RIO DE JANEIRO — One recent afternoon, a smitten blue-and-yellow macaw grabbed a clawful of carrots and banana and took flight. He flapped to the top of the aviary at the Rio de Janeiro zoo and latched onto the netting. Just beyond, on the other side of the enclosure, was his love — the only wild macaw in a city that hasn't seen a free one of their kind in two centuries.

She beckoned to him. He went to her. On opposite sides of the netting, they rubbed beaks. He passed her his food. They clung together, grasping claws, and wouldn't let go.

Every day for more than two decades, zookeepers attest, the wild macaw has flown to the Rio de Janeiro zoo where dozens of her species are kept captive — including her partner.

In the animal kingdom, blue-and-yellow macaws are among the most faithful. They can live into their fifties, but when one finds a partner, it's for life. The

SEE **BRAZIL** ON A16



TUANE FERNANDES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Canindé macaw Julieta, left, visits Romeo this month. Julieta, a wild bird, has been coming to see Romeo, who lives in the aviary at Rio de Janeiro's zoo, every day for two decades.

Fighting pause set to start today

DAY-LONG DELAY IN IMPLEMENTING DEAL

First 13 hostages slated for release by Hamas

BY STEVE HENDRIX,
SUSANNAH GEORGE,
HAZEM BALOUSA
AND LOUISA LOVELUCK

JERUSALEM — A temporary pause in hostilities between Israel and Hamas, and the release of hostages and Palestinian prisoners, will begin Friday, Qatari officials said — as a day-long delay left the families of captives to endure another day of waiting, those in Gaza to face another day of deadly airstrikes and officials on tenterhooks after weeks of fraught negotiations.

Qatar's Foreign Ministry said Thursday that the planned four-day pause — the first cessation of violence in almost seven weeks — will begin at 7 a.m. local time Friday. The first group of hostages, 13 women and children, will be transferred at 4 p.m. the same day, with additional hostages released in batches for a total of 50 over the four days.

Ahead of the much-anticipated pause, Israel's military said it carried out more than 300 strikes in Gaza in the past day.

SEE **ISRAEL** ON A9

Local fallout: Immigrant rights group's posts on war draw ire. **B1**

Many pin blame on U.S. for Gaza ruin

Fury over involvement drives boycotts, protests across the Middle East

BY HANNAH ALLAM
AND MOHAMAD EL CHAMAA

CAIRO — The entire front page of a Lebanese newspaper this month displayed President Biden's face superimposed over pictures of dead Palestinian children, under a headline declaring "Western genocide."

In Egypt and some Persian Gulf states, once-bustling Starbucks and McDonald's outlets sit empty thanks to a boycott of U.S. brands. And in Beirut, Tunis and other Arab capitals, protesters have marched on U.S. diplomatic missions, sometimes burning American flags, to vent their fury at the staggering death toll in Gaza.

The prevailing view throughout the Middle East is that while Israel is doing the fighting, this is an American war. Without the diplomatic cover and high-tech munitions provided by the United States, the reasoning goes, Israel wouldn't be able to carry out the massive operation it launched in Gaza to "eradicate Hamas" that a U.N. official this

SEE **GAZA** ON A9

IN THE NEWS

Love and loss in Ukraine They met through a dating app. They were engaged in a bomb shelter. They died in a missile attack. **A8**

Red Kettle Campaign Facing a decline in donations, the Salvation Army has adapted its charitable initiative to include digital payment options and cryptocurrency. **B1**

THE NATION **An unassuming man** surprised his small town with a \$3.8 million donation after his death. **A2** **President Biden's** resistance to a cease-fire in the Israel-Gaza war may alienate young voters. **A3**

THE WORLD **The World Bank's** new leader, Ajay Banga, faces challenges in bridging the divide between rich and poor countries and navigating their differing approaches to climate change. **A10**

THE ECONOMY **In an unusual** shift, the unemployment rate for recent college graduates is higher than for the general population. **A11** **Some parents** and manufacturers are working to eliminate plastic waste and to give old toys new life as the holidays approach. **A12**

THE REGION **Virginia Democrats** began laying out their legislative agenda, setting up a fight with Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin. **B1** **Some Virginia** inmates may be released earlier after a change in the way officials award good behavior credits. **B1**

STYLE **New York's** Adult Survivors Act is set to expire Friday, prompting a slew of sexual assault lawsuits against celebrities. **C1** **WEEKEND** **Fill your holiday** calendar with a list of dozens of seasonal happenings in the D.C. area.

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