



## Haley: An unlikely resistance figure

Some Never Trumpers, Democrats are cheering on holdout in GOP race

BY ASHLEY PARKER  
AND DYLAN WELLS

Speaking to influential Republican donors at a private gathering in Palm Beach, Fla., on the last Tuesday of January, Nikki Haley's campaign manager joked that she had hoped to bring the party's bigwigs all "Barred Permanently" T-shirts, but they were back-ordered — a cheeky allusion to Donald Trump's threat that anyone who donates to Haley will be "permanently barred" from his world.

At a rally on Feb. 10 in Newberry, S.C., Haley teasingly touted the shirts, boasting that her team had already sold 20,000, which had raised more than \$500,000 for her operation.

The playful ribbing underscores a newfound reality for Haley in her long-shot bid for the GOP nomination: As the former South Carolina governor has sharpened her rhetoric against Trump, she has emerged — partly purposefully, partly unintentionally — as a key voice in the anti-Trump resistance, articulating a forceful case against four more years of the former president.

In Newberry, Haley staffers passed out mock mental competence tests and stickers featuring a drawing of a chicken with Trump's hair and tie reading, "Trump is too chicken to debate." Haley accused Trump of throwing a "temper tantrum onstage" after her second-place finish in New Hampshire and said he talks

SEE **HALEY** ON **A5**

## Tech firms embrace defense industry

Turn toward battlefield technology marks a shift in Silicon Valley's culture

BY NITASHA TIKU  
AND ELIZABETH DWOSKIN

Hundreds of bright young technologists landed in California on a recent weekend for a two-day hackathon — a quintessential start-up contest in which teams of coders race to build software. But rather than a posh, snack-laden San Francisco office, they'll work in a cavernous 6,000-square-foot warehouse in El Segundo, a refinery town southwest of Los Angeles.

And instead of building mobile apps or AI chatbots, competitors will hack together surveillance tools, electronic warfare systems, or drone countermeasures for the front lines in Ukraine — battlefield technology driving a funding frenzy among tech investors.

"[Build] hard tech for the defense of the West," a hackathon judge wrote on X, encouraging applicants. "Defense, Drones. Gundo," an organizer wrote, using the city's nickname to pro-

SEE **TECH** ON **A14**



MARVIN JOSEPH/THE WASHINGTON POST

**Jay and Teresa Williams with their children Tamar, 3 and JJ, 16 months old. Like his older sister, JJ was born at home, but without medical aid or someone to officially record the event, leaving him without a birth certificate or Social Security number.**

## He was born at home in D.C. But can his family prove it?

For nearly two years, Teresa and Jeff Williams have lived in a state of suspension, unable to plan for their family's future and unable to fully enjoy their young children.

They would love to travel abroad but cannot get a passport for their younger child. They worry that their family's SNAP benefits will be revoked. They lament they've lost about \$5,000 in unclaimed tax credits. And they fear they are one hospital visit away from losing their little boy, JJ.

JJ, born in an inflatable tub in his Southwest Washington living room in August 2022 without any medical assistance, does not exist on paper. Despite his parents' many attempts at

City's rules have left a couple struggling to document their son's birth

BY ELLIE SILVERMAN

certifying his existence, JJ has not been granted a birth certificate, a Social Security number or a single official government document bearing his name.

"It's almost as if we're battling just to keep our family whole," Jeff said.

While home births have been on the rise in the United States in recent

years, a midwife, or doula, often helps with the baby's arrival as well as with the ensuing paperwork. But Teresa and Jeff decided to do it all on their own, and now have to prove that JJ is theirs.

Across the region, rules vary for proving parentage in a home birth. In Maryland and Virginia, a parent typically needs one piece of evidence for categories such as proof of pregnancy and live birth. But D.C. typically requires two pieces of evidence per category. In cases in which there's a Fire and EMS report related to the birth, D.C. Health said it accepts this single document as sufficient proof that the

SEE **HOME BIRTH** ON **A8**

### ELECTION 2024

## Massacre survivors plead with candidates

If GOP hopefuls discuss the nation's carnage at all, they don't address safeguarding access to guns

BY DANIELLE PAQUETTE  
IN CHARLESTON, S.C.

The pastor meant to devote Bible study to the gravity of marriage, but here they were, once again, talking about guns.

"A man shot his girlfriend and then killed himself," one congregant said from the second row of their historic Black church, referencing a clip he'd just seen on the news.

"How do we intercede," a woman to his left chimed in, "when we notice the warning signs?"

The Rev. Eric S.C. Manning, senior pastor at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church — known worldwide as Mother Emanuel — had prayed for the words to counsel his members through America's ceaseless violence. They were all aware, intimately so, that the worst can happen and nothing much changes.

This Wednesday meeting used to convene in the basement before a white supremacist showed up one June night in 2015 and opened fire, killing nine people. Now Republican presidential candidates and their backers



GAVIN MCINTYRE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**The Rev. Eric S.C. Manning, senior pastor at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, in December.**

crisscrossing South Carolina ahead of the state's primary this Saturday seemed to be exhibiting what the 56-year-old pastor called a "lapse in memory."

Since the start of January, the United States has counted six mass killings, its rate of firearm-wrought bloodshed outpacing every other wealthy nation by far. The candidates vying for the GOP nomination, if they address the carnage at all, make no mention of safeguarding access to the weapons used in attack after attack after attack.

Donald Trump and Nikki Haley's comments on the campaign trail have troubled Manning and others close to Mother Emanuel, many of whom have lobbied for stronger background checks, a policy shift most Americans support, only to meet resistance from conservative leaders. The familiar disappointment crept back last month when, just as the Republican contenders were descending on Iowa for its caucuses, a teenager not far from Des Moines staged the first school rampage of 2024. Meet-and-greets resumed before the dead were buried.

SEE **GUNS** ON **A6**

## Tehran wary of direct conflict

URGES PROXIES NOT TO PROVOKE U.S.

Iran-backed militias held fire after Baghdad strikes

BY SUSANNAH GEORGE,  
DAN LAMOTHE,  
SUZAN HAIDAMOUS  
AND MUSTAFA SALIM

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES — Iran, eager to disrupt U.S. and Israeli interests in the Middle East but wary of provoking a direct confrontation, is privately urging Hezbollah and other armed groups to exercise restraint against U.S. forces, according to officials in the region.

Israel's brutal war on Hamas in Gaza has stoked conflict between the United States and Iran's proxy forces on multiple fronts. With no cease-fire in sight, Iran could face the most significant test yet of its ability to exert influence over these allied militias.

When U.S. forces launched strikes this month on Iranian-backed groups in Yemen, Syria and Iraq, Tehran publicly warned that its military was ready to respond to any threat. But in private, senior leaders are urging caution, according to Lebanese and Iraqi officials who were briefed on the talks. They spoke to The Washington Post on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive conversations.

U.S. officials say the message might be having some effect. As of Saturday, Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and Syria hadn't attacked

SEE **IRAN** ON **A13**

## Hundreds risk arrest to mourn Navalny

People pay respects at memorials across Russia as hundreds are detained

BY FRANCESCA EBEL

MOSCOW — Ahead of the third day of mourning for Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who died suddenly in an Arctic prison, activists sent out safety tips for Russians wishing to lay flowers at memorials that have sprung up across the country, from St. Petersburg in the northwest to Magadan in the Far East, in the capital, Moscow, that was Navalny's beloved home — and even in the Russian-occupied city of Luhansk in eastern Ukraine.

"Bring your passport. Keep a copy of the hotline for detainees. Bring water, a fully charged phone, and a powerbank," one post stated. Navalny's team, now operating in exile, also offered to pay any fines meted out to protesters.

Navalny, who was the most prominent challenger of President Vladimir Putin, was

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**Trump:** Former president remains largely silent on Navalny's death. **A9**

### IN THE NEWS

**Transatlantic allies** European leaders are increasingly aware of the need to engage Donald Trump and his allies on security, but they are struggling mightily to do so. **A13**

**Border enforcement** Texas Gov. Greg Abbott announced plans to build a National Guard "forward operating base" in Eagle Pass. **A7**

**THE NATION** Democrats are looking to Nebraska to shore up President Biden's blue wall. **A3**  
**The EPA** may delay rules aimed at speeding the transition to electric vehicles. **A4**

**THE WORLD** In the darkest of times in Ukraine, a photographer captured stories of love and loss. **A10**  
**A South Korean** company offers its employees \$75,000 for the birth of a child. **A12**

**THE ECONOMY** Apple's App Store is a digital nanny state, Shira Ovide writes. Do we like it that way? **A15**

**THE REGION** The D.C. Council and the mayor allowed an emergency declaration over the opioid crisis to expire, prompting a scramble to award funding. **B1**

**A D.C. woman** was charged with murder in the 2022 fentanyl death of her 3-year-old. **B1**  
**Virginia Democrats** released their spending blueprints, teeing up a budget fight. **B1**  
**Biographers** of George Washington often bring up his apparently well-muscled thighs. **B1**

**STYLE** The rise of weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic has led to a new marketing push for companies to partner with plus-size influencers, creating new rifts and existential questions. **C1**  
**Can you run** for president as an openly, unabashedly old man? **C1**

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