



ADAM GRAY/GETTY IMAGES

And the Weather Smiled, Too
James Byrne and his sons Quincy, 5, and Tucker, 4, enjoying the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade on Fifth Avenue on Saturday.

Putin Projects Vision of Glory, and Russians Ignore Messy Reality

By VALERIE HOPKINS
MOSCOW — Vladimir V. Putin's vision of Russia — successful, innovative and borderless — is on display at one of Moscow's biggest tourist attractions, a Stalin-era exhibition center that currently houses a sleek showcase called Russia 2024. The exhibition promotes what the Kremlin portrays as Russia's achievements in the past two decades, roughly the period Mr. Putin has been in power, and his promises for the future after he secures another six-year term in rubber-stamp elections this weekend.

The exhibition is in many ways a microcosm of a country whose people largely — at least in public — avert their gaze from the big and bloody war in Ukraine that Mr. Putin started more than two years ago.

The centerpiece is a grand hall housing pavilions featuring all the Russian regions, including five that were illegally annexed from Ukraine. Visitors to one pavilion are greeted by two LED screens displaying tulip fields that portray the region of Belgorod, which borders Ukraine, as a calm and peaceful place.

That is increasingly at odds with the reality of regular air raid sirens and deadly Ukrainian missile and drone strikes on the city, including one on Thursday that killed two people and injured 19.

At the Crimea pavilion, throngs of visitors pose with men dressed

Kremlin Stages a Vote as a War's Toll Is Felt but Not Spoken Of

as Roman legionnaires next to a video boasting about the bridge connecting the peninsula, which was illegally annexed in 2014, to the Russian mainland. There is no mention of the Ukrainian attack in 2022 that blew a hole in the bridge, or the frequent threats that lead to the closing of the bridge for hours at a time.

It is a cognitive dissonance many Russians have adopted, celebrating the motherland and accepting the government's triumphal narrative — even as Mr. Putin has become a pariah in

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YULIA GRIGORVANTS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The pool where Johnny Weissmuller won gold in 1924 was renovated and will be used this summer.

Paris Puts the Olympic Games on a Climate Diet

By SOMINI SENGUPTA and CATHERINE PORTER
PARIS — How do you produce a global sporting event, with millions of people swooping down on one city, in the age of global warming? That is the test for the Paris Olympics this summer.

The organizers say they're putting the games on a climate diet. These Olympics, they say, will generate no more than half

Innovative Cooling and Solar Panels on Seine

the greenhouse gas emissions of recent Olympics. That means tightening the belt on everything that produces planet-warming emissions: electricity, food, buildings, and transportation, including the jet fuel that athletes and fans burn traveling the world to

get there.

An event that attracts 10,500 athletes and an estimated 15 million spectators is, by definition, going to have an environmental toll. And that has led those who love the games but hate the pollution to suggest that the Olympics should be scattered around the world, in existing facilities, to eliminate the need for so much new construction and air travel. That's why Paris is being watched

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Speaking Out For Landlines In Digital Age

By MICHAEL LEVENSON
When millions of AT&T customers across the country briefly lost their cellphone service last month, Francella Jackson, 61, of Fairview Heights, Ill., said she picked up her well-worn Southwestern Bell push-button landline phone and called her friends "just so we could laugh at the people who could not use their phones."

"Why, isn't it great that we can talk and have a great conversation?" she recalled saying. "We had a good laugh."

Derek Shaw, 68, of York, Pa., said he has an Android mobile phone, but prefers talking on his black cordless landline at home. The sound quality is better, he said, and the phone is easier to hold during long conversations.

Mr. Shaw said that he also likes talking to people face to face rather than on Zoom and never got rid of his vinyl record collection when CDs got hot in the 1990s.

"I've never even thought about giving up my landline," he said. "I'll go kicking and screaming when I have to."

To many, landline phones have come to seem as essential as steamships and telegrams in the smartphone era. But to those who still use them, they offer distinct advantages. Prompted by the

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Trump Allies Are Winning War Over Disinformation

Their Claims of Censorship Stymie Efforts to Tamp Down Election Lies Online

By JIM RUTENBERG and STEVEN LEE MYERS
In the wake of the riot on Capitol Hill on Jan. 6, 2021, a groundswell built in Washington to rein in the onslaught of lies that had fueled the assault on the peaceful transfer of power.

Social media companies suspended Donald J. Trump, then the president, and many of his allies from the platforms they had used to spread misinformation about his defeat and whip up the attempt to overturn it. The Biden administration, Democrats in Congress and even some Republicans sought to do more to hold the companies accountable. Academic researchers wrestled with how to strengthen efforts to monitor false posts.

Mr. Trump and his allies embarked instead on a counteroffensive, a coordinated effort to block what they viewed as a dangerous effort to censor conservatives.

They have unquestionably prevailed.

Waged in the courts, in Congress and in the seething precincts of the internet, that effort has eviscerated attempts to shield elections from disinformation in the social media era. It tapped into — and then, critics say, twisted — the fierce debate over free speech and the government's role in policing content.

Projects that were once bipartisan, including one started by the Trump administration, have been recast as deep-state conspiracies to rig elections. Facing legal and political blowback, the Biden administration has largely abandoned moves that might be construed as stifling political speech.

While little noticed by most Americans, the effort has helped cut a path for Mr. Trump's attempt to recapture the presidency. Disinformation about elections is once again coursing through news feeds, aiding Mr. Trump as he fuels his comeback with falsehoods about the 2020 election.

"The censorship cartel must be dismantled and destroyed, and it must happen immediately," he thundered at the start of his 2024 campaign.

The counteroffensive was led by former Trump aides and allies who had also pushed to overturn the 2020 election. They include Stephen Miller, the White House policy adviser; the attorneys general of Missouri and Louisiana, both Republicans; and lawmakers in Congress like Representative Jim Jordan, Republican of Ohio, who since last year has led a House subcommittee to investigate what it calls "the weaponization of government."

Those involved draw financial support from conservative donors who have backed groups that promoted lies about voting in 2020. They have worked alongside an eclectic cast of characters, including Elon Musk, the billionaire who bought Twitter and vowed to make it a bastion of free speech, and Mike Benz, a former Trump administration official who previously produced content for a social media account that trafficked in posts about "white ethnic displacement." (More recently, Mr. Benz originated the false assertion that Taylor Swift was a "psychological operation" asset for the Pentagon.)

Three years after Mr. Trump's posts about rigged voting machines and stuffed ballot boxes went viral, he and his allies have

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RACHEL BUJALSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Bibifatima Akhundzada behind the wheel with Gil Howard, who has taught some 400 women from Afghanistan how to drive.

Afghanistan in Their Rearview, Mr. Gil in Their Passenger Seat

By MIRIAM JORDAN
MODESTO, Calif. — Bibifatima Akhundzada wove a white Chevy Spark through downtown Modesto, Calif., on a recent morning, practicing turns, braking and navigating intersections.

"Go, go, go," said her driving instructor, as she slowed down through an open intersection. "Don't stop. Don't stop."

Her teacher was Gil Howard, an 82-year-old retired professor who happened upon a second career as a driving instructor. And no ordinary instructor. In Modesto, Calif., he is the go-to teacher for women from Afghanistan, where driving is off limits for virtually all of them.

In recent years, Mr. Howard has taught some 400 women in the 5,000-strong Afghan community in this part of California's Central Valley. According to local lore, thanks to "Mr. Gil," as he is known in Modesto, more Afghan women likely drive in and around the city of about 220,000 than in all Afghanistan.

For many Americans, learning to drive is a rite of passage, a skill associated with freedom. For Afghan immigrants it can be a life-

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SUNDAY BUSINESS

Billionaire's Pursuit of Respect
The longtime corporate agitator Nelson Peltz feels misunderstood. Could admittance to the Walt Disney Company's inner sanctum change that? PAGE 4

ARTS & LEISURE

Welcome, Sadness
The new album by Adrienne Lenker, the singer-songwriter behind Big Thief, is a model for staying soft, and open, in an often cruel world. PAGE 7

SUNDAY STYLES

A Designer Breaks Her Silence
Phoebe Philo transformed two brands before walking away from the fashion industry. Now she's back with her own clothing line. PAGE 11

METROPOLITAN

Set Apart in the Hudson Valley
Members of the Bruderhof, an enclave modeled after first-century Christian communities, try to navigate the outside world from a distance. PAGE 1

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HOWIE LONG

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Slip-ins
NOW IN
WIDE FIT

No Bending Over. No Touching Shoes. No Kidding.

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