

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CLXXIV . . . No. 60,353

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2024

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\$4.00

Trump's Eldest Enforces Code Of Stark Fealty

Vetting Cabinet Picks as Informal Adviser

By KATIE ROGERS

WASHINGTON — Ivanka and Jared left the White House behind for a life in Miami. Eric is running the family business. Tiffany got married. Barron is a budding strategist at N.Y.U.

Of all the Trump children, no one has stuck closer to their father's side than Donald Jr., the president-elect's eldest son.

The 46-year-old Mr. Trump has found political power and personal fortune in stoking the flame of the Make America Great Again movement his father started. He has an array of conservative-focused businesses, from a publishing company to a seven-figure annual podcasting deal. Forbes recently estimated Mr. Trump's worth — largely built in the wake of his father's political career after Jan. 6, 2021 — to be around \$50 million.

For that reason, his associates say, he has no plans to join the administration. But he also understands what his siblings and several first-term administration officials learned the hard way: Trying to serve as a gatekeeper for his father is a politically perilous exercise.

In recent weeks, as the president-elect has built out his administration, his son has served as something of a loyalty scanner. As they review candidates at Mar-a-Lago in Florida, the president-elect is concerned with who looks good and who can deliver a message, people around them say. His son is focused on whether they mean what they are saying, and if they present a threat to the MAGA order.

Donald Trump Jr. has championed candidates who not only share the president-elect's views on policy but have also passed the most important purity test: They support the falsehood that he won the 2020 election and play down his decision to encourage a mob to storm the U.S. Capitol two months later.

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Rain? We Hardly Noticed.

Aum Dance Creations, top left, the inflated mascots of Sinclair Oil, top right, and musicians from Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, S.D., above, one of 11 marching bands to perform for the more than three million spectators, who did their best to stay dry. Page A13.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRAHAM DICKIE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

ISRAEL CEASE-FIRE WITH HEZBOLLAH ISOLATES HAMAS

A PAINFUL CROSSROADS

Gaza Militants' Strategy Was to Trap Enemy in a Wider War

This article is by Julian E. Barnes, Adam Rasgon, Aaron Boxerman and Ronen Bergman.

WASHINGTON — Hamas has long believed that a wider war in the Middle East would help deliver the organization a victory in its war with Israel.

But the cease-fire deal to stop the fighting between Israel and the Lebanese group Hezbollah has left that strategy in tatters, potentially removing Hamas's most important ally from the fight, according to U.S. officials.

The agreement is a step forward for the Biden administration, which has tried to contain that wider war and increase pressure on Hamas to make a deal with Israel and release the hostages it holds in Gaza.

But even before the Lebanese cease-fire was announced on Tuesday, Palestinian and U.S. officials said they believed that Hamas's political leadership was ready to make a deal and abandon the strategy formulated by its leader, Yahya Sinwar, who was killed by Israeli forces last month.

After Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, Mr. Sinwar had focused on trying to defeat the country by bringing it into a full-scale war with Hezbollah and Iran. U.S. officials said that as long as that strategy appeared to have a chance, Mr. Sinwar would block any cease-fire deal.

But the Israeli offensive against Hezbollah, which devastated its leadership and stocks of long-range weaponry, and now the cease-fire agreement have left Hamas increasingly isolated.

"Hamas is all alone now," said Tamer Qarmout, a professor of public policy at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. "Its position has been seriously weakened."

And Iran, which supports Hamas and Hezbollah, seems keen to avoid a direct fight with Israel, at least for now. Iran's air defense systems were devastated in an Israeli attack in October, and after the victory of President-elect Donald J. Trump, the Iranians appear to have called off a reprisal attack.

Hamas has reached a painful
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Australia Bans Social Media for Those Under 16

By VICTORIA KIM

Australia has imposed a sweeping ban on social media for children under 16, one of the world's most comprehensive measures aimed at safeguarding young people from potential hazards online. But many details were still unclear, such as how it will be enforced and what platforms will be covered.

After sailing through Parliament's lower house on Wednesday, the bill passed the Senate on Thursday with bipartisan support. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has said that it puts Australia at the vanguard of efforts to protect the mental health and well-being of children from detrimental effects of social media,

Onus Put on Platforms to Forbid Creation of Unlawful Accounts

such as online hate or bullying.

The law, he has said, puts the onus on social media platforms to take "reasonable steps" to prevent anyone under 16 from having an account. Corporations could be fined up to 49.5 million Australian dollars (about \$32 million) for "systemic" failures to implement age requirements.

Neither underage users nor their parents will face punishment for violations. And whether children find ways to get past the re-

strictions is beside the point, Mr. Albanese said.

"We know some kids will find workarounds, but we're sending a message to social media companies to clean up their act," he said in a statement this month.

As with many countries' regulations on alcohol or tobacco, the law will create a new category of "age-restricted social media platforms" accessible only to those 16 and older. How that digital carding will happen, though, is a tricky question.

The law specifies that users will not be forced to provide government identification as part of the verification process, a measure that the conservative opposition said was included after they

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In A.I. Granny, Affable Enemy For Scammers

By ALI WATKINS

Daisy Harris likes birds — there's one outside her window. Her cat is named Fluffy, and she'd love to tell you about her knitting hobby. She likes tea and biscuits. And she just can't seem to figure out this internet thing.

But perhaps you can explain it just one more time?

That's the general vibe of a chat with Daisy Harris, an A.I.-generated granny unveiled this month by the big British phone company O2, as part of its efforts to curb phone scammers. She doesn't have a badge, or a warrant, or any way to really stop them. But when an unlucky fraudster dials her number, Daisy does have the power to waste unlimited amounts of their time.

There are plenty of human scambaiters out there — people who identify would-be thieves and turn the tables, leading them on meandering conversations that

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Volleyball Team in Grip of Fierce Debate on Transgender Rights

By JULIET MACUR

SAN JOSE, Calif. — On the court, they seem like any other college women's volleyball team. At a recent game, the players moved around the court in staccato rhythm, setting and spiking the ball, springing into the air like pogo sticks to block attacking shots, all in their blue and gold uniforms of the San Jose State University Spartans.

Off the court, though, the team is trying its best not to crumble during an unexpected season of tension and tears, confusion and anger. The players are at the center of a drama playing out over one of the most explosive issues in American life: whether a transgender woman can play on a women's sports team.

It all started in April, when a conservative website said that one of the San Jose State players was transgender, surprising some of the woman's teammates.

Earlier this month, a senior co-captain of the Spartans and the assistant coach filed a lawsuit to stop the transgender athlete from playing in this week's Mountain West Conference tournament, claiming that she violates Title IX rights to gender equity at federally funded institutions.

With a group of 10 female volleyball players, most from teams that play the Spartans, they sued San Jose State's head coach and two administrators. And the Mountain West Conference and its commissioner. And the entire board of trustees of the California



AMY OSBORNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Five teams have forfeited games against San Jose State because of their transgender player.

State University system. All to oust the player from the tournament, the Spartans' program — and from women's college sports.

In the meantime, the transgender volleyball player has remained silent. Teammates other than Brooke Slusser, the co-captain plaintiff in the lawsuit, also declined requests for interviews. The New York Times is not naming the player because she has not publicly confirmed her identity

and declined an interview request through a university spokeswoman.

"We just don't think it's fair that a man is allowed to play," Ms. Slusser, referring to her transgender teammate, said in an interview last week. She called it "a hard decision" to file the lawsuit because she didn't want to "put my team through more than they are already going through."

"But then also imagining my-

self with kids and seeing if they had to play against a man or playing on a team with a man and knowing that I had the place to make a change for that, I couldn't live with myself," she said.

Because of the complicated mess, some of the Spartans no longer talk to one another at practice or outside of games. Todd Kress, the head coach, supports the transgender athlete's partici-

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Family Returns Prized Artifacts To Descendant of Famed Chief

By JULIA JACOBS

The beaten-up suitcase had been in the Newell family for more than a century, passed from dusty closet to dusty closet and pulled out every now and then for guests.

They would unlatch the metal clasps and take out a fringed shirt adorned with careful beadwork, a weathered pair of moccasins and an elaborate headdress that trailed eagle feathers down to the floor.

Passed along with the suitcase was the story told by their 19th-century ancestor, Major Cicero Newell, who said he had received the clothing from the well-known Lakota leader, Chief Spotted Tail, during his stint as an agent for the federal government's Indian affairs office beginning in the 1870s in what is now South Dakota.

The suitcase had been passed down five generations, ending up in the guest room closet of Newell's great-great-grandson, James, a retired salesman living in a

small town in Washington State.

But when it came time for James Newell to think about passing it along again, the sixth generation had a different idea.

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TARA WESTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The items include a headdress.

BUSINESS B1-5

Tech Enforcer Makes Her Exit

Margrethe Vestager, the European Union's antitrust regulator, reflected on a decade of fighting giants. PAGE B1

The Charm of Shopping Small

Interacting with vendors at winter markets makes the holiday experience more fun for some visitors. PAGE B1



INTERNATIONAL A4-11

Meat Market Gets the Chop

Smithfield has an 850-year history in London, back to when medieval traders brought livestock to be sold. The local authority has voted to close it. PAGE A4

Tipping a Glass to the West

Some vintners in Georgia want to break a politically risky dependence on Russia and focus more on high-value European and American markets. PAGE A6

Russia Retaliates in Ukraine

After bombarding Ukraine's energy infrastructure on Thursday, Russia's president suggested that such strikes could be stepped up. PAGE A11

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Feud Over Farm Bill

Democrats and Republicans agree it is time for an update but little else, leaving producers and families on food assistance in limbo. PAGE A12

Ban on Camps, Then What?

After Kentucky barred unsanctioned public camping, outreach workers in Louisville have struggled to help homeless people find housing. PAGE A14

Battle of Influencers

Democrats, badly outflanked online in the election, are now trying to create networks to answer the conservative Turning Point USA. PAGE A19

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Focus on Unknown Movement

"Harmony & Dissonance" is a nervy, masterpiece-studded show that offers an in-depth look at Orphism. PAGE C1

Showtime for Two Princes

Two boys at the School of American Ballet are making their debuts in New York City Ballet's "Nutcracker." PAGE C1



SPORTS B6-10

A Receiver Rises Above

"Therapy changed my life," said Jordan Watkins, who rose from a tough childhood to set records at Ole Miss. PAGE B6

'Dynamic' Duo at Notre Dame

With Hannah Hidalgo and Olivia Miles in the backcourt together, the Irish have become "Point Guard U." PAGE B9

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David Brooks

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