

Election case in Ga. hurt by claims

Unanswered allegations of misconduct a boost for Trump, co-defendants

BY AMY GARDNER AND HOLLY BAILEY

Among friends and supporters of Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis, a common argument has taken root in response to allegations that a romantic relationship between her and the lead prosecutor on the election-interference case against Donald Trump should disqualify them both.

Even if the accusations are true, these allies say, there is no Georgia law requiring either Willis or Nathan Wade to be bumped from the case. They consider the controversy a distraction fomented by one of Trump's co-defendants with a long record as a GOP opposition researcher. The case is too important, they say. It must go on.

In some ways, however, the damage may already be done.

After nearly two weeks of salacious headlines, Willis has still not denied or directly addressed the accusations. Trump and other critics have willingly filled that vacuum and amplified the most sensational claims. Regardless of what Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee, who is overseeing the case, decides to do — and regardless of whether the accusations are true — Trump has found a new line of attack on the validity of the Georgia case and Willis's decision-making that he

SEE FULTON ON A10

Movement calls Oct. 7 attack a 'false flag'

Groups with ties to Holocaust denial erase history in real time

BY ELIZABETH DWOSKIN

When she first heard about Hamas's Oct. 7 attack on Israel, Mirela Monte was "appalled." The South Carolina real estate agent and self-described holistic healer detests violence and is horrified by war and human suffering.

But as Monte read more in Uncensored Truths, a Telegram group with 2,958 subscribers active on foreign policy and the supposed perils of vaccination, her shock turned to anger. According to the forum, the news reports were wrong: Secretly, Israel was behind the massacre.

Monte now argues the Oct. 7 attack was a "false flag" staged by the Israelis — probably with help from the Americans — to justify genocide in Gaza. "Pure evil," she said. "Israel is like a mad dog off a leash."

The Oct. 7 Hamas terrorist attack is among the most well-documented in history. A crush of evidence from smartphone cameras and GoPros captured Hamas's breach of the border — a

SEE OCT. 7 ON A15

ELECTION 2024

DeSantis ends bid, endorses Trump



MATT MCCLAIN/THE WASHINGTON POST



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST



MELINA MARA/THE WASHINGTON POST

TOP: Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis campaigns Friday in Goffstown, N.H. ABOVE: Former president Donald Trump stops in Manchester and former U.N. ambassador Nikki Haley visits Epping on Sunday. DeSantis quit the race two days before the state's presidential primary.

Poll finds ex-president with clear lead in New Hampshire

BY DAN BALZ, SCOTT CLEMENT AND EMILY GUSKIN

MANCHESTER, N.H. — With the contest for the Republican presidential nomination now a two-person race, Donald Trump holds a clear lead among New Hampshire voters over Nikki Haley, his last remaining challenger, ahead of Tuesday's primary here, according to a Washington

Post-Monmouth University poll.

The poll finds 52 percent of potential primary voters supporting Trump, while 34 percent are backing Haley. In the poll, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is at 8 percent, but the survey was completed before DeSantis delivered his surprise announcement Sunday that he was suspending his campaign.

Haley's support has nearly

SEE POLL ON A9

Trump speeds toward what seems inevitable

BY JOSH DAWSEY, ISAAC ARNSDORF AND MAEVE RESTON

ROCHESTER, N.H. — Former president Donald Trump sped toward clinching the 2024 GOP nomination on Sunday as the endorsement of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signaled further consolidation behind him and a rising sense of resignation among Republicans who hoped

to stop him.

Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.), head of the Senate GOP's campaign arm, reacted to DeSantis's announcement that he was dropping out of the race by calling Trump "the presumptive nominee" and urging Republicans to unite behind him. Trump also picked up the support of Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.), who had previously endorsed DeSantis.

SEE TRUMP ON A7

CAPITAL LETTERS

At a D.C. homeless shelter, two men walk the line

Both men, who struggle with addiction, want to turn their lives around. Central Union Mission is a respite on a bitterly cold night.

BY JUSTIN WM. MOYER

3 p.m.: 29 degrees

LeNard Johnson, 47, has a job interview. He's an IT guy who's worked for the federal government, he says, sometimes with a security clearance. But it's been hard to find work even after spending hours scrolling ZipRecruiter. He needs this virtual interview, at 5 p.m., to go well.

He checks in at the homeless shelter, where he'll change into a suit. The intake manager at the shelter — Central Union Mission, a 170-bed facility in a former school, knows Johnson and waves him through. Tonight, he has a spot in a dormitory with about a dozen other men.

Johnson has been at the shelter every night since he got off a waiting list around Thanksgiving. If he



CRAIG HUDSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Robert Vaughn, left, and LeNard Johnson attend a service this month at Central Union Mission, near Capitol Hill.

misses check-in, he risks losing his bed. The sun is setting, and the first snow in more than 700 days coats the ground.

On a freezing night in a city with nearly 5,000 homeless people, Johnson does not want to be where he found himself last fall during his first extended bout with homelessness — riding the Silver Line from end to end to get some sleep. He has to stay housed. He has to stay sober. He has two kids. Every liquor store is a temptation.

"I'm trying," he says.

5 p.m.: 28 degrees

Robert Vaughn, 69, lines up for dinner at Central Union: Beef stew. Despite his labored breathing — Stage 3 emphysema — he's jubilant. He says he's been sober

for 11 months, one of his longest stretches since he left home around 1967.

Central Union, founded in the 1880s to serve veterans of the Civil War, was a 14th Street landmark until about a decade ago, when it was replaced by boutique condos. Its current location — two blocks from Union Station and across the street from a luxury hotel — serves as a reminder of people in desperate straits who are stranded among policymakers, commuters and tourists at the foot of Capitol Hill.

After years living in other D.C. shelters — "hellholes," Vaughn says — he's in a long-term recovery program at Central Union. He lives in a four-man suite on the shelter's third floor, having graduated from the second-floor dormitory. He's

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IN THE NEWS

The final four The Chiefs and Lions won their divisional-round matchups to join the Ravens and 49ers as the last four teams remaining in the NFL playoffs. D1

Hawaii wildfires Lahaina residents convened for the first time in months to mourn the lives lost and a town forever changed. A3

THE NATION Rep. Elise Stefanik's stumping is generating speculation about a vice-presidential pick. A4
Donald Trump's courtroom behavior in New York holds dangers for him, experts said. A6

THE WORLD The humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is turning childbirth into a nightmare. A12
Volunteers in Russia have evacuated dogs en masse after a region reinstated kill shelters. A13

Iranian-backed militants attacked an air base housing U.S. troops in Iraq, injuring an Iraqi service member. A14

THE ECONOMY Apple came out of two fights with more attention, more power and probably more money, Shira Ovide writes. A18

THE REGION A Virginia bill lays the groundwork for a casino in Tysons Corner that would need to be approved by voters. B1
A Prince George's police officer shot and wounded a burglary suspect during a pursuit that left another officer injured. B1

STYLE Jacqueline Novak's Netflix comedy special is a smart, deeply funny sermon on our absurd notions about the power dynamics of sex. C1
A TikTok creator hosting a book club on a cruise ship has emerged as the trip's breakout star. C1

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