

What's News

Business & Finance

◆ **More U.S. CEOs** last year crossed the once-rare pay threshold of \$100 million annually than in any year since 2021, and nearly a dozen topped \$200 million. **A1**

◆ **Major U.S. stock indexes** ended mixed, with the S&P 500 and Nasdaq retreating 0.4% and 1.3%, respectively, and the Dow rising 0.3%. **B9**

◆ **China imposed trade** restrictions on dozens of U.S. entities, including two producers of rare-earth minerals, extending tensions between the world's two biggest economies. **B4**

◆ **Google is investing** in independent movie studio A24, which released the hits "Backrooms," and "Marty Supreme," as part of a new artificial-intelligence research partnership between the companies. **B1**

◆ **Chevron struck** a 20-year agreement to sell electricity to Microsoft, which plans to build what could become one of the country's largest AI data centers in West Texas. **B1**

◆ **Reflection AI**, a startup building a network of open-source artificial-intelligence models, agreed to rent data-center capacity from SpaceX. **B3**

◆ **Domino's Pizza** said its operations chief Joe Jordan will take over as chief executive as the company strives to reinvigorate sales. **B3**

◆ **EasyJet's board** rejected a third bid from Castlelake, which called on the carrier's shareholders to support its plan to take the airline private. **B3**

◆ **AbbVie agreed** to buy Apogee Therapeutics for about \$10.9 billion to bolster its core immunology business. **B3**

Worldwide

◆ **The U.S. cleared** the way for Iran to sell oil in dollars, including to U.S. buyers, a reversal that came as Vice President JD Vance said Tehran had agreed to allow nuclear inspectors to return as early as this week. **A1, A6**

◆ **A blast tore through** Qatar's key natural-gas facility, leaving 13 dead and injuring dozens, as the exporter tries to restore shipments disrupted by the Iran war. **A6**

◆ **British Prime Minister** Keir Starmer said he would step down following a rebellion in his Labour Party, clearing the way for Andy Burnham to likely become his successor. **A1**

◆ **Investigators concluded** that the 2021 partial collapse of the Champlain Towers South condominium in Surfside, Fla., began roughly three weeks before the building fell. **A3**

◆ **The U.S. Air Force** struck deals for a fleet of drone jet fighters designed to help manned warplanes strike targets deep in enemy territory. **A3**

◆ **Federal health officials** unveiled regulatory reforms aimed at cutting the time it takes to do the first round of testing drugs in people. **A3**

◆ **The FDA agreed** to reverse its rejection of Regenxbio's experimental gene therapy for a rare and fatal brain disease. **A3**

◆ **The Trump administration** stepped up law-enforcement presence at the Reflecting Pool in the capital, as the White House made new claims that vandalism was the chief cause of problems at the site. **A5**

◆ **Died: Alan Greenspan**, 100, former Fed chairman. **A1, A4 ... Clive Davis**, 94, celebrated music producer. **B1**

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This edition of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL was originally published in the United States and reprinted locally for regional distribution.

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U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer hugs his wife, Victoria, Monday at No. 10 Downing St. after he announced his resignation.

U.K. Prime Minister Starmer Quits Amid Labour Party Revolt

Burnham is set to become the country's sixth prime minister in just seven years

By MAX COLCHESTER AND DAVID LUHNOW

LONDON—U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Monday he would step down following a rebellion in his Labour Party, clearing the way for Andy Burnham, a left-wing

former mayor, to likely become the country's sixth prime minister in seven years. Speaking outside Downing Street, Starmer said he would quit as Labour leader but stay on as prime minister to ensure an orderly transition to his successor, a process that could be completed by mid-July. Starmer's decision comes days after Burnham was elected to Parliament on a promise to launch a leadership challenge to oust Starmer and shake up the Labour Party,

which is trailing anti-immigration party Reform UK in public-opinion polls. "The question my party is asking now is whether I am best placed to lead us into the next general election," Starmer said. "I have heard the answer of my parliamentary party to that question and I accept that answer with good grace." British politics has become increasingly unstable in the past decade, starting with the 2016 vote for Brexit that showed new fault lines over is-

suces such as globalization and immigration that started to crack the traditional Labour-Conservative domination of the past century. A succession of shocks—Brexit, the pandemic, the war in Ukraine—together with weak economic growth and a surge in immigration has left many voters disenchanted. Over the weekend, Labour lawmakers ratcheted up pressure on Starmer to make way for Burnham to avoid a protracted intraparty war. Burn-

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The Forces That Broke British Politics

Revolving door of leaders is spinning faster, and dominant parties are losing their grip

By MAX COLCHESTER AND DAVID LUHNOW

LONDON—Nigel Farage has never held a position in the British government. As leader of the anti-immigration party Reform UK, he oversees just eight lawmakers in Parliament. Among voters, he has one of the lowest favorability ratings of any politician. Yet when his upstart party, in May lo-

cal elections, handed the ruling Labour Party its worst drubbing in the postwar period, it turned Prime Minister Keir Starmer's own party against him. A decade after Farage helped orchestrate Brexit, the 62-year-old former commodities trader was positioned to again disrupt the country's political order. "If Starmer goes," he told an aide as the election results rolled in, "that's

the third prime minister I got rid of." Starmer resigned Monday. His likely successor, ex-Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, will be the sixth new face at 10 Downing Street in seven years—a revolving door that started a decade ago with the Brexit-induced departures of David Cameron in 2016 and Theresa May in 2019, and has only sped up, in-

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A \$100 Million Payday For U.S. CEOs Is Back

By THEO FRANCIS AND PETER SANTILLI

The \$100-million-plus CEO is making a comeback, just a year after nine-figure pay packages seemed to be fading. More U.S. CEOs last year crossed the once-rare pay threshold than in any year since 2021—and nearly a dozen topped \$200 million. Their compensation looked like crumbs, of course, compared with Elon Musk's \$158 billion pay package from Tesla, which set a new record and is about 16 times the combined value for all 391 other chiefs in The Wall Street Jour-

nal's annual CEO pay ranking. (Musk's deal could ultimately be worth \$1 trillion.) Still, No. 2 Shankh Mitra reached \$821 million from Welltower, a real-estate investment trust focused on senior housing and healthcare. That lands him one of the biggest executive-pay packages for a public-company CEO during the past decade, data from MyLogIQ show. The last time Musk's compensation set records, in 2018, it paved the way for a surge in so-called moonshot pay packages: massive stock or option awards tied to ambitious, mul-

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Alan Greenspan oversaw a boom, but the 2008 financial crisis caused a reappraisal of his record.

Greenspan, Whose Strong Fed Legacy Was Later Dimmed, Dies

By NICK TIMIRAO

Alan Greenspan, who started life as a shy, only child of a single mother, transcended the role of central banker, exercising extraordinary influence over U.S. finance and commerce and enjoying unparalleled global stature during a period of remarkable prosperity. But by the time of his death, at age 100, the 2008-09 global financial crisis had recast his aura of technocratic omnipotence. Former colleagues and Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman hailed Greenspan as the greatest central banker of all time when he finished 18½ years as

Federal Reserve chairman in 2006. Just two years later, the financial crisis triggered an austere reappraisal of his record. His view that markets could effectively police themselves became a driving force of regulatory policy in the 1990s and early 2000s. Greenspan devoted his professional life to understanding how the U.S. economy worked, first as a private-sector forecaster when the U.S. was emerging as the postwar economic superpower. Later, as technology, global trade and financialization refashioned business, he achieved a level of fame and influence rivaled only by U.S. presidents. Green-

span, the second-longest-serving Fed chairman (just behind William McChesney Martin, 1951-1970), husbanded that power to build up the central bank's political independence. Greenspan was an enigma: a savvy political operator and ladies' man who was also an introvert. He was a skilled saxophonist who devoured books about titans of finance and industry. An adviser to Republican presidents, he got along famously with Democratic President Bill Clinton and his economic advisers.

Please turn to page A4

◆ **Greg Ip: How Greenspan made the Fed famous.... A4**

Bed Bath & Beyond Will Take Your Decades-Old Coupons

* * *

These hoarders never lost hope that their vouchers would be worth something again

By SUZANNE KAPNER

Mary Tierney considers herself a type A personality. "I'm highly organized and I'm not a fan of clutter," said the part-time administrator for a law firm.

Yet tucked away in a closet of her Reading, Mass., home are 125 expired coupons for 20% off at a

Redemption

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U.S. NEWS

Cost of Homeownership Continues to Rise

By Nicole Friedman
And Alana Pipe

For many Americans, the math of homeownership doesn't add up any more.

A home buyer in 2019 could expect to spend about \$20,000 a year on basic homeownership expenses: mortgage payments, property taxes, insurance, maintenance and repairs, data from Intercontinental Exchange and home-services marketplace Angi show.

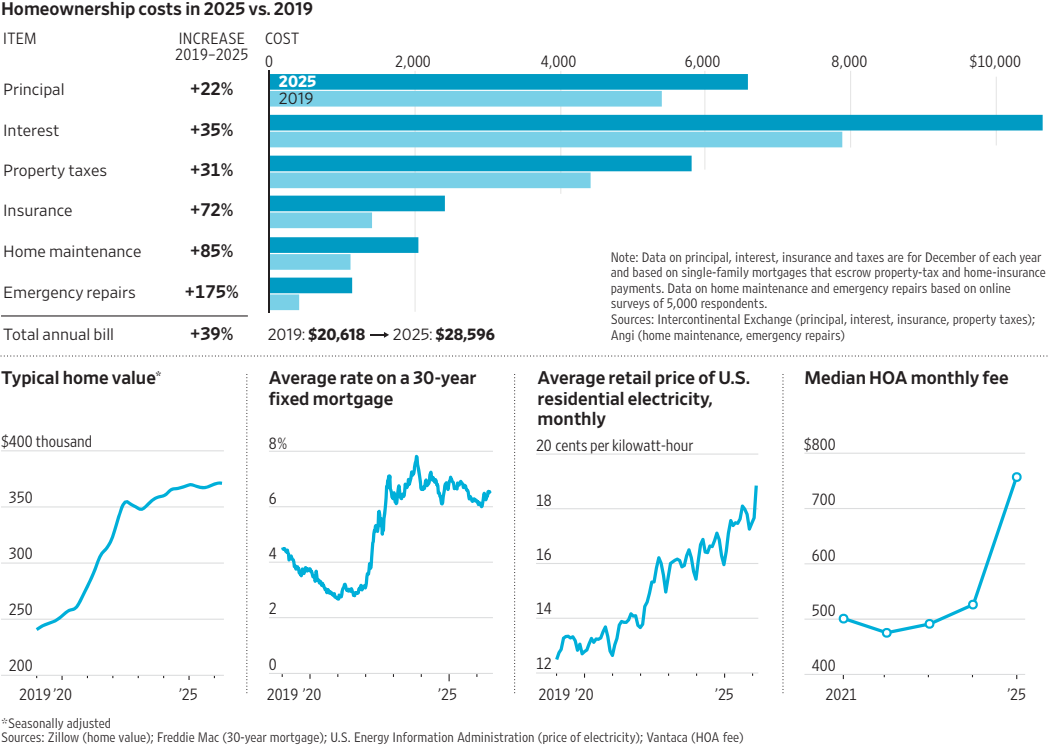
By 2025, that annual bill had risen above \$28,500, outpacing inflation and keeping many would-be buyers out of the market. Homeowners who wish they could sell and move elsewhere are staying put, turned off by the cost of purchasing today.

The affordability challenges are keeping the housing market in a slump for a fourth straight year.

Sales of previously owned homes have held around 4 million a year since 2023, the lowest level in decades and down from a prepandemic norm of between 5 million and 5.5 million a year, the National Association of Realtors said.

That means fewer prospective buyers are accessing homeownership, which has historically been a key wealth-building tool for the middle class.

And many of those who are buying homes are stretching their budgets to do so. Those



new homeowners are vulnerable to falling behind on payments if their incomes drop or they face unexpected jumps in homeownership costs.

After dropping below 3% during Covid, mortgage rates

climbed above 6% in 2022 and have largely held above that level since. That makes a huge difference in a buyer's purchasing power.

A buyer with a \$2,500 monthly budget and a 20% down payment can afford to buy a \$517,500 home at a 3% mortgage rate, real-estate brokerage Redfin said. At today's rate around 6.5%, that same buyer can only afford a \$384,000 home.

Even though rates have climbed, typical home values remain near record highs, according to Zillow, confusing many buyers who have been waiting for prices to fall.

That's because many home-

\$100 Million CEO Pay Is Returning

Continued from Page One

tiyear targets. (The evidence suggests they often don't pay off for executives or investors.)

It took several years for momentum to build then. Now, companies seem to be anticipating a shift.

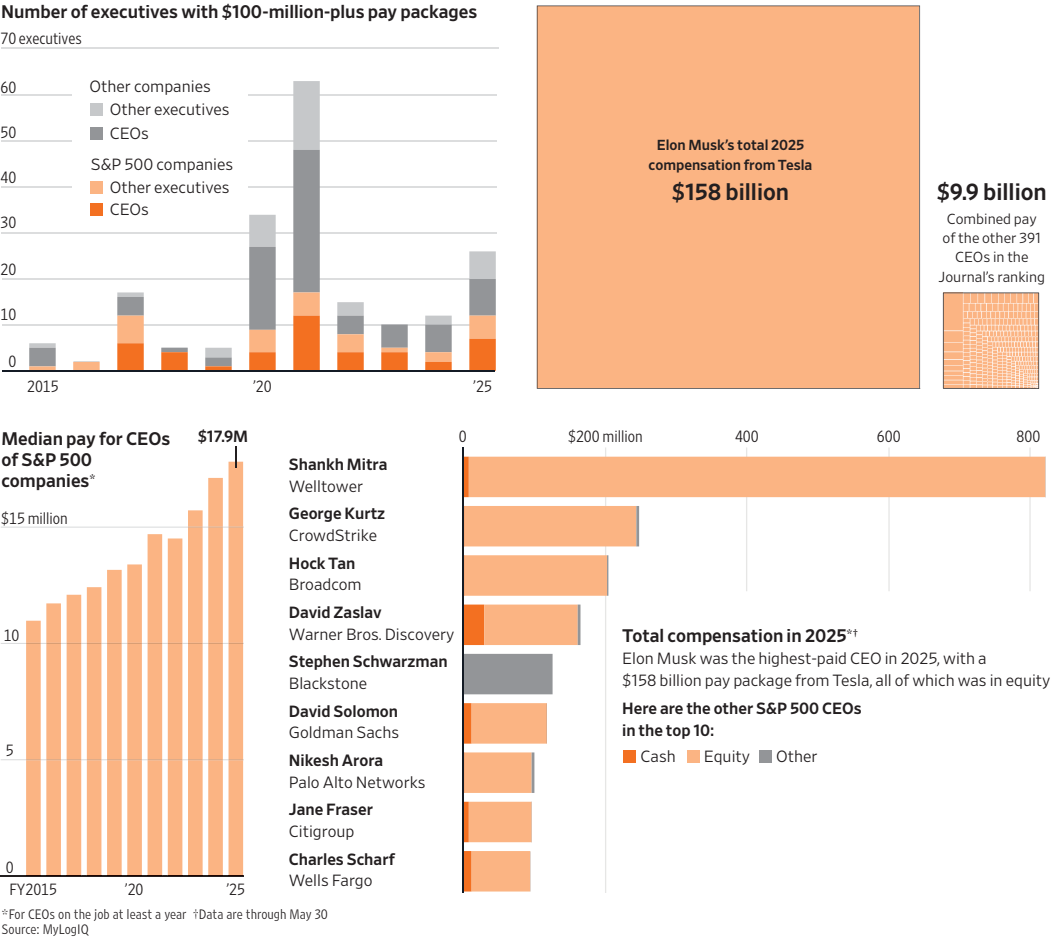
Just over half the CEOs making more than \$100 million last year ran companies outside the S&P 500, meaning they aren't included in the Journal's ranking. They include Dylan Field of design-software company Figma, at \$864 million, and Kaz Nejatian of Opendor Technologies, an online real-estate transaction platform, at \$741 million.

Rising tide

Moonshots weren't the only factor pushing up pay. Overall, median CEO pay rose to nearly \$18 million at S&P 500 companies in 2025, the Journal found in its analysis of MyLogIQ's data. More executives made over \$50 million, and the share making under \$10 million shrank further.

Half the chiefs got year-over-year raises of 9.8% or more.

Most big companies pay their CEOs primarily in stock options or restricted stock, often with strings attached: They receive fewer shares if the company does poorly over



time—or more, if it succeeds. As a result, what executives ultimately reap can vary significantly from the value companies first report. (Often, they wind up with more.)

At Welltower, 99% of Mi-

Mitra stands to receive about half the shares in 2031 as long as he stays, and the rest if Welltower's market value rises 45% and the company's shares beat multiple stock indexes by a wide

enough margin over five years.

Three other Welltower executives also received packages valued at more than \$100 million apiece, making it only the second company in a de-

CORRECTIONS & AMPLIFICATIONS

Indong Kim, vice president of memory sales and marketing at Samsung Electronics, said that shortages have moved from one type of memory chip to another over the past few years. He said: "It's been [high-bandwidth memory] for the last few years, but it's a relatively new thing that companies are moving capacity to NAND. We're

starting to observe that demand for NAND is approaching the level of DRAM," which are types of memory chips. In a Business & Finance article on Monday about higher chip prices, Kim's comments were incorrectly attributed to Harry Yoon, executive vice president for memory marketing and product planning at Samsung.

Readers can alert The Wall Street Journal to any errors in news articles by emailing wsjcontact@wsj.com or by calling 888-762-5450.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
(USPS 664-880) (Eastern Edition ISSN 0099-9660)
(Central Edition ISSN 1092-0935) (Western Edition ISSN 0193-2241)

Editorial and publication headquarters: 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036

Published daily except Sundays and general legal holidays.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and other mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Wall Street Journal, 200 Burnett Rd, Chicopee, MA 01020.

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U.S. WATCH

WASHINGTON, D.C.
Orders Aim to Boost Quantum Computers

President Trump accelerated his efforts to boost the burgeoning quantum-computing industry, signing a pair of executive orders aimed at speeding the development of advanced quantum computers and mitigating the security threats they present.

One of the orders the president signed Monday directs federal agencies, including the Energy Department, to work with the private sector and academics to deploy a quantum computer powerful enough to conduct scientific research by 2028.

Such benchmarks are seen as crucial to showing the technology has real-world applications.

Quantum computers are capable of solving problems much faster than traditional supercomputers, making them a growing priority for countries around the world.

—Amrith Ramkumar

MINNESOTA
DOJ Subpoenas in Crackdown Quashed

A federal judge quashed subpoenas the Justice Department issued to state and local authorities in the administration's immigration crackdown earlier this year, saying the actions were politically motivated.

Chief Judge Patrick Schiltz said in an order unsealed Monday that the Trump administration had wrongly issued six subpoenas to Minnesota Democratic officials, including the governor and attorney general's offices. The Justice Department served the subpoenas in January during its immigration enforcement campaign in the state.

Schiltz, a George W. Bush appointee, said there was "overwhelming evidence that these subpoenas were not issued to investigate, but to harass, coerce, and retaliate."

The Justice Department said Monday it "will continue to act in full compliance with the law to investigate these matters."

—Alyssa Lukpat

LOS ANGELES
Schools Chief Quits Amid Federal Probe

The superintendent of Los Angeles public schools resigned four months after he was put on paid leave during a federal investigation.

Alberto Carvalho's resignation letter dated Sunday made no direct mention of the Feb. 25 search of his home and the Los Angeles Unified School District's headquarters. Two days after the FBI served the search warrants, the district's Board of Education voted unanimously to place Carvalho on leave.

Carvalho denied any wrongdoing earlier this year and had asked to be reinstated as head of the nation's second-largest district. Authorities haven't provided details of the nature of the investigation involving the district.

The school board said Andrés Chait, who has been acting superintendent, will remain in that position until a permanent decision is made.

—Associated Press

IOWA STATE
Alcohol to Be Sold At College Games

Iowa State will add alcohol sales to its concessions for football and basketball games, Director of Athletics Jamie Pollard said on Monday.

Pollard said the decision comes as "athletic departments across the country are facing uncertainty and significant financial pressures from rapidly increasing costs."

Pollard said Iowa State has sought to increase revenue through ticket sales and donations, sponsorship and licensing and by adding new events such as concerts at the school's facilities. The latest change is the addition of alcohol sales at Jack Trice Stadium and Hilton Coliseum.

"Many of our peers have successfully taken this step," Pollard said in a statement released by the school.

Pollard said the alcohol sales will begin this fall. He said beer, wine and prepackaged cocktails will be offered.

—Associated Press

Early Drug Research To Become Easier In the U.S.

By Liz Essley Whyte
And Xavier Martinez

Drug companies have increasingly been doing early research in countries like China and Australia where they say it takes less time and money. U.S. officials are taking new steps to keep those studies at home. Federal health officials unveiled a package of regulatory reforms on Monday with the aim of cutting about six months to a year off the time it takes to do a safety study, which is the first round of testing drugs in people. The move comes as drug companies are actively buying Chinese biotechs, often citing the speed of the country’s regulators.

To help bring investment back into the U.S., the Food and Drug Administration plans to offer companies more clarity about what manufacturing information they should submit in early research phases, how to go about finding the correct dose for patients and a rolling review that allows an application to be evaluated before completion.

The agency will also launch a pilot program designed to speed up early trials, officials said, though the program is still in development.

The agency also reaffirmed a new policy, first made under former commissioner Marty Makary, that one high-quality clinical trial showing a drug works, plus safety evidence and follow-up confirmation, is enough to earn FDA approval for a treatment, versus the two previously expected.

“We’ve been witness to a growing share of phase one clinical trials moving overseas,” acting FDA commissioner Kyle Diamantas said.

As part of the government’s efforts, the National Institutes of Health plans to examine how to speed up clinical trials in the U.S. using new trial designs, artificial intelligence, real-world data and other tools, said NIH director Jay Bhattacharya.

FDA Gives Third Drug Another Chance

By Xavier Martinez

The Food and Drug Administration has agreed to reverse its rejection of **Regenxbio’s** experimental gene therapy for a rare and fatal brain disease, the company said, the latest about-face by the agency under new leadership.

The FDA didn’t respond to requests to comment. Regenxbio shares closed up 16.28% Monday on the Nasdaq.

Another biotech, **Replimune**, reached an agreement with the FDA last month to resubmit its twice-rejected melanoma therapy following pressure from the White House.

Earlier this month, **uniQure** said the FDA had reversed course on its Huntington’s disease gene therapy, clearing a path to file for accelerated approval after previously requesting a new trial.

The U-turns mark a broader retreat from demands, pushed under former FDA vaccines and biotech drugs division leader Vinay Prasad, that rare-disease drugmakers test experimental medicines against placebos to make sure the drugs work.

Companies developing rare-disease drugs want to be able to test their treatments in small patient populations without a placebo group. They said the requirement prolonged development and was impractical for diseases diagnosed in a few dozen patients a year.

Regenxbio’s Navsunli therapy targets Hunter syndrome, a rare genetic disease that causes irreversible brain damage and cell death, usually leading to death in a patient’s teens.

Air Force Buys New Fleet of Drones

Military says the expensive aircraft are necessary for wars of the future

By Marcus Weisgerber

The U.S. Air Force agreed to deals with two companies for a new fleet of autonomous drone jet fighters designed to help manned warplanes strike targets deep in enemy territory.

The contracts with Anduril and General Atomics for larger, faster, more expensive combat drones come as small, cheap, quick-to-build aircraft have reshaped modern warfare in both Ukraine and Iran.

The Air Force says its new drones are needed in battles where manned jets would be at a high risk of getting shot down. They will “change how we project power and generate mass in highly contested environments,” said Gen. Ken Wilsbach, the Air Force chief of staff.

Highly contested environments is a phrase often used by the military for airspace defended by advanced interceptors made by China and Russia.

The Air Force had been evaluating the Anduril and General Atomics drones since 2024. The General Atomics drone, called the FQ-42, is larger than Anduril’s drone,



A YFQ-42A collaborative combat aircraft was developed in partnership with General Atomics.

called FQ-44. One of the differences between the two is that the FQ-42 carries missiles in an internal weapons bay while the FQ-44 carries munitions externally on its wings.

Officials didn’t disclose the financial terms of the deal or how many aircraft were being bought. An Air Force spokeswoman said the cost was classified. The service’s latest budget request includes more than \$1 billion for these specific drones in fiscal 2027, and in excess of \$9.5 billion over the next five years.

The contracts “represent the next critical evolution of air power,” the Air Force said. The drones are designed to fly

alongside warplanes flown by human pilots. But unlike today’s Reaper drones, which must be flown remotely, the new drones are being built to fly autonomously with limited human command.

Air Force officials say they want the drones to cost roughly one-third of a manned fighter. An Air Force F-35 costs roughly \$82.5 million. By comparison, the newest version of the General Atomics-made Reaper, the MQ-9B SkyGuardian, costs about \$30 million.

The military says it plans to buy about 150 of the new drones, which it calls collaborative combat aircraft or CCAs,

by the end of the decade and about 1,000 total.

Buying the drones from two companies will promote “continuous competition” and “drives the best outcomes in schedule, cost, and performance,” said Col. Timothy Helfrich, portfolio acquisition executive for fighters and advanced aircraft.

The Air Force also awarded contracts to Anduril, fellow startup Shield AI and **RTX’s** Collins Aerospace to develop the software that will control the autonomous drones. The terms weren’t disclosed.

Cheap, low-flying drones have had a devastating effect on the battlefield in Ukraine,

Russia and the Middle East. Iranian-made Shaheds, one-way attack drones that crash directly into targets, have damaged or destroyed military facilities across the Mideast. The U.S. has used reverse-engineered Shaheds against Iran. Ukraine struck dozens of Russian warplanes with drones it launched from trucks inside Russian territory.

But the types of drones being purchased by the Air Force are much different. The armed drones could fly ahead of human pilots, scanning the skies for enemy aircraft in areas heavily defended by surface to air missiles.

While Ukraine has demonstrated the need to field large numbers of cheap, expendable drones, the U.S. military also must have devices that can fly much longer distances in different regions of the world, said Caitlin Lee, a drone expert who is director of acquisition and technology policy at Rand, a think tank.

“China’s diverse missile inventory and formidable electronic warfare capabilities can destroy or render ineffective U.S. aircraft on the ground or in the air,” Lee said.

Iran and the Houthis in Yemen have collectively shot down dozens of the propeller-driven Reaper drones in recent months using missiles that can loiter in the sky before homing in on heat from the drones.

Trump to Urge Expanded Munitions Production

President Trump has summoned senior Pentagon officials and the top defense contractors to the White House on Wednesday to discuss ramping

By Lara Seligman,
Marcus Weisgerber
and Drew FitzGerald

up munitions production amid concerns about the supply of U.S. missiles, according to people with knowledge of the internal discussions.

Deputy Defense Secretary Stephen Feinberg notified defense industry leaders this month to prepare for the meeting, which is expected to be contentious, the people said. The event had been tentatively set for June 11 or 12 but was postponed amid negotiations to end the war with Iran, they said.

Trump is expected to urge defense companies to do more to quickly replace America’s missile arsenal, which has been depleted by the war with Iran, the people said. Trump has repeatedly threatened to resume bombing if a peace agreement collapses, but U.S. defense officials have expressed concern

about the rate at which the military has burned through missiles and interceptors.

Speaking in the Oval Office on Monday, Trump lauded defense companies for building new weapons factories. He also touted automakers General Motors and Ford joining the weapons manufacturing front.

“Some of the car companies, if they have any excess capacity, they’re making a deal to build missiles,” Trump said.

Last week, The Wall Street Journal reported that GM was in talks with Lockheed Martin to supply commonly used parts that could help the defense contractor bolster munitions production. The Pentagon has previously approached automakers about playing a larger role in weapons production.

The Pentagon early this year struck handshake agreements with top weapons makers to drastically increase production of critical missiles such as Patriot interceptors and Tomahawk cruise missiles that officials considered lacking even before the war. But the companies have yet to receive full funding for the new deals, as lawmakers and the administra-



A Tomahawk missile was launched in February from a destroyer as part of U.S. military operations against Iran.

tion haggle over the defense spending bill.

“Meetings are great, but they’re not contracts. To do contracts you have to have money and money requires appropriations,” said Tom Karako, the director of the Missile Defense Project and a senior fellow with the Defense and Security Department at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Feinberg and several major munitions suppliers are ex-

pected to attend, including **Lockheed Martin**, **RTX**, **Boeing**, **L3Harris**, **Northrop Grumman** and **Honeywell Aerospace**, the people said.

White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly said the Pentagon has “more than enough munitions, ammo, and stockpiles to serve all of President Trump’s strategic goals and beyond.” But she acknowledged Trump “has urged our defense contractors to constantly produce more made-in-America weap-

ons, which are the best in the world.”

“America’s military is the most powerful in the world and has everything it needs to execute at the time and place of the President’s choosing,” said Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell.

Trump previously summoned defense CEOs to the White House in March, less than a week into the Iran war. After the meeting, Trump said the companies had agreed to boost munitions production. Weapons makers, including Lockheed Martin, RTX and L3Harris Technologies, have pledged billions of dollars in investments as part of their effort to expand munitions production.

Democratic and Republican lawmakers have resisted Trump’s calls to increase the Pentagon’s budget to \$1.5 trillion. But without a military spending bill for the coming fiscal year, the Pentagon can’t finalize the new munitions contracts. The Pentagon in its fiscal 2027 request has asked Congress to approve \$52.9 billion to increase production of 12 “critical munitions”—including interceptors, such as Patriot, Standard Missile and Thaad.

Florida Condo’s 2021 Collapse Started Three Weeks Earlier

By Deborah Acosta

SURFSIDE, Fla.—Federal investigators concluded that the catastrophic 2021 partial collapse of the Champlain Towers South condominium began roughly three weeks before the building fell.

In a report released on Monday, the National Institute of Standards and Technology determined that a structural failure first occurred at two critical garage column connections beneath the pool deck in early June 2021.

That failure trapped the 12-story building in an undetected, slow-motion domino effect that ultimately claimed 98 lives, concluding something that many engineers had long suspected.

Investigators found that when those initial slab-to-column connections failed, the pool deck’s concrete slab began to silently warp and fracture over a 21-day period, progressively shifting immense weight to adjacent columns.

“When building structures are designed and built to required codes and standards, they have margins against failure, meaning they should be able to support much more load than they are expected to bear,” said investigator Judith Mitrani-Reiser. “In the case of



The remains of the Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Fla., in June 2021. The collapse caused the deaths of 98 people.

Champlain Towers South, however, these margins against failure were too narrow from the start.”

On June 24, the pool deck gave way entirely, pulling down a major portion of the building.

The NIST report was released almost five years to the day after the building’s collapse.

The federal investigation revealed that the complex’s vulnerabilities stemmed from its original design, which failed to meet the codes and standards of 40 years ago. The construction itself further deviated from the structure’s original design, which also contributed to the building’s structural weakness.

The addition of heavy land-

scape planters and thick paving stone on the pool deck in the 1990s further stressed the building, adding tons of uncalculated deadweight to the deficient slab. Those additions, coupled with the long-term degradation from corrosion, ultimately caused the collapse four decades after construction.

In the weeks leading up to the disaster, the building exhibited physical warning signs that went undiagnosed, according to the NIST report. Those included a residential sliding glass door popping out of its frame, shifting entry gates that jammed shut, and an increase in water leaking through the garage ceiling hours before the final collapse.

Summer Hoops



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U.S. NEWS



CAPITAL ACCOUNT | By Greg Ip

How Greenspan Made the Fed Famous

When Kevin Warsh told his father in 2006 that he'd been nominated to be a governor on the Federal Reserve, his father, a small-town businessman, replied: "The thing Greenspan runs." Alan Greenspan retired as the central bank's chairman just before Warsh, the current chairman, joined the Fed board. To his father and the public, Greenspan was the Fed. As America's only celebrity central banker, he elevated the Fed to a prominence in U.S. life that it retains to this day. Greenspan aphorisms such as "irrational exuberance" are now part of the vernacular.

The unelected Greenspan was in many ways more influential than the elected people who kept reappointing him. This was first, because he was successful. His predecessor, Paul Volcker, had slain double-digit inflation. Greenspan brought it down to about 2%, and kept it there. He presided over the then-longest economic expansion in U.S. history. Second, he looked like he knew what he was doing. Greenspan understood and interpreted the economy better than anyone.

That was a blessing and a curse. Greenspan basked in the credit for the booms that unfolded under his watch, and chafed at the blame heaped on him for the financial collapse shortly after he left office.

Yet in hindsight, Greenspan's legacy is clear. It wasn't market acumen or grasp of economic theory, but how he combined both with a temperament for navigating relentless political pressure.

Greenspan and me

I started covering the Fed in 2001, late in his tenure. Part of the appeal was observing a celebrity up close. A friend who knew nothing about the Fed was impressed: "You're going to follow Greenspan around?"

At first I was intimidated, but that didn't last. The public (and cartoonists) saw him as inscrutable and humorless. The reality was the opposite. He could write, and speak, with extraordinary clarity and forcefulness. He

had a quick, dry wit, even under pressure. Stranded abroad by the 9/11 attacks, he hitched a ride back on an air force tanker and was at his desk the next day. When a caller asked how he was, he responded: reasonably well, "catastrophe-adjusted."

For fellow journalists and me, Greenspan wasn't just a news subject but a bottomless well of insight and ideas. I came away from every meeting with Greenspan smarter. Admonished for not knowing Knut Wicksell's theory of the natural rate of interest, I quickly brushed up. After a discussion of Keynesian prescriptions for preventing depression in the 1940s, he sent me to George Terborgh, an obscure economist with a contrarian and bullish view on American potential.

Of Greenspan's many speeches, one he was especially proud of was a tribute to the Scottish founder of modern economics, Adam Smith, delivered in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, in 2005. It begins: "In the broad sweep of history, it is ideas that matter.... Emperors and armies come and go; but un-

less they leave new ideas in their wake, they are of passing historic consequence."

The speech raised the question: What ideas did Greenspan leave in his wake? Milton Friedman is known for monetarism, John Maynard Keynes for Keynesianism. The essence of Greenspan was distrust of any single "ism." He flirted with every theory while never binding himself to one.

He was less steeped in mathematical models than the Ph.D.s who staffed the Fed and succeeded him. Much of economic activity, he believed, was driven by "animal spirits" that can't be modeled. "Human nature is essentially immutable," was his constant refrain.

This layering of psychology on economics guided many of his decisions: his rapid cuts to interest rates after the 1987 stock market crash and in 1998 when Russia defaulted and a big hedge fund nearly failed.

He was accused of inflating bubbles with this readiness to cut rates. In fact, he was well aware of the risks of low rates. In 1994 he

tightened aggressively to squeeze out what he thought were dangerous imbalances. When he slashed rates in 2003 all the way to 1%, he felt uneasy; it went against his "19th century" aversion to easy money, he later told me: "My inner soul didn't feel comfortable." It's one reason he never took rates to zero. His successors didn't share that hesitation.

The deregulator

His blind spot about risks in the financial system also owed something to a general aversion to regulation. He had hung around with Ayn Rand in the 1950s and 60s and saw free market capitalism as intrinsically moral and government as fundamentally coercive.

The financial crisis tarnished the Fed's reputation, not just Greenspan's. His successors Ben Bernanke, Janet Yellen and Jerome Powell were, like him, competent, nonpartisan technocrats confirmed on bipartisan votes. But confirmation margins have been shrinking. Warsh was confirmed

last month by the narrowest margin since senate approval became a requirement in 1977.

The partisan polarization and populism that have consumed American politics have come for the Fed. President Trump launched an attack with no modern precedent on Fed independence. He has sought to fire a governor, Lisa Cook, ostensibly for mortgage misrepresentations (which she denies) but in reality to gain control over the Fed and interest rates.

In one of his last public acts, Greenspan, along with all other living former Fed chairs, signed an amicus brief asking the Supreme Court to block Trump's effort to remove Cook.

With Trump's demands for loyalty and lower rates hanging over him, Warsh and his colleagues last week unanimously voted to leave rates unchanged. Afterwards, he declined to say where rates might go. In his studied inscrutability Warsh was emulating his role model and the man who came to personify what it means to be a central banker.

Former Fed Chief Dies at 100

Continued from Page One

Greenspan is survived by his wife, journalist Andrea Mitchell. In a statement, she said that Greenspan had died at their home on Monday from complications from Parkinson's disease.

In 1959, the libertarian Greenspan warned of how central banks could allow markets to think the business cycle had been tamed, breeding complacency and risk-taking by investors. His early academic work declared the Fed one of the "historic disasters in American history," according to Sebastian Mallaby's biography, "The Man Who Knew."

But as chairman, he molded the Fed as a bulwark against instability. His perceived inclination to stem market panic earned a moniker, the "Greenspan put"—as if the Fed itself was a put option that insured investors against losses. The Fed cushioned the stock-market crash of 1987 and the 1998 failure of Long-Term Capital Management and was key to a bailout that followed the Mexican debt crisis of 1994.

Greenspan cast a spell over Wall Street whenever he testified in Capitol Hill. With sad brown eyes, he offered drab, wordy pronouncements in a gentle voice. "Since I've become a central banker, I've learned to mumble with great incoherence," he quipped at one of his first hearings in 1987. "If I seem unduly clear to you, you must have misunderstood what I said."

In the 1990s, he reached rock-star heights while the U.S. charted a long economic expansion. Pressed over whether he'd keep Greenspan as Fed chairman during a GOP presidential debate in 2000, then-Sen. John McCain of Arizona said: "Not only would I reappoint him, but if he died we'd prop him up and put sunglasses on him as they did in the movie 'Weekend at Bernie's.'"

OBITUARY
ALAN GREENSPAN
1926-2026



BETTMANN ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

rules but didn't dare tell his mother why: "It was her world that I was escaping," he wrote in his 2007 memoir.

Greenspan excelled at the clarinet and attended George Washington High School. He wasn't allowed to join the Army after doctors found a spot on his lung that looked like tuberculosis. Instead, he took music classes at Juilliard and played in dance bands.

After the war, he earned an economics degree at New York University. A largely self-taught economist, he founded a successful economic forecasting firm in the 1950s. Business clients included Mobil Oil and Alcoa. In 1957, Greenspan burnished his reputation when he warned the chief executive of a large steel company that inventories were oversaturated and a recession was likely. The CEO apologized the following year for ignoring Greenspan's correct prediction.

Business success derailed his studies for an economics Ph.D. at Columbia under Arthur Burns. Over the next two decades, Burns would regularly tease Greenspan over how little progress he had made writing a thesis. (Greenspan earned his doctorate in 1977 after NYU accepted a collection of previously published articles as his thesis.)

Though he advised Richard Nixon's presidential campaign in 1968, Greenspan resisted entreaties to serve in the White House. That is until advisers, chiefly Burns, by then the Fed chairman, prevailed on him in 1974.

Greenspan's Senate confirmation hearing to serve as chairman of the Council of Eco-



BARRY THUMA/AP



DAVID HUME KENNEDY/THE GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY/GETTY IMAGES

nomc Advisers, on the afternoon of Aug. 8, 1974, was a few hours before Nixon announced his resignation.

Greenspan's views had been heavily shaped in the 1960s when he was part of the intellectual circle that gathered every week at the Manhattan apartment of libertarian philosopher Ayn Rand. The two were introduced by a friend of Greenspan's first wife, Joan Mitchell, an art historian from Canada. (Mitchell and Greenspan married in 1952 but divorced after less than a year.)

A bachelor for much of his life, Greenspan dated news-woman Barbara Walters in the 1970s. When a gossip column publicized their relationship in 1974, President Ford forwarded it to his chief of staff with a note: "I don't believe it."

He and Andrea Mitchell began dating in 1984 and became a power-couple fixture. Greenspan overcame his bashfulness in 1987 to ask Nancy Reagan, who frowned on unwed couples at formal events, if his invitation to a White House state dinner could include Mitchell as his guest.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg presided over their 1997 wedding.

The Fed years

When President Reagan tapped Greenspan to succeed Paul Volcker as Fed chairman in 1987, an administration official told the New York Times, "If you think that Volcker was the master of obfuscation, wait until you hear Alan."

Greenspan's reluctance to cut interest rates more aggressively after the 1990-91 recession led to an especially icy re-

The words of Alan Greenspan, shown at left in 1974, were closely watched on trading floors for years, above. Greenspan was congratulated by President Reagan after he was sworn in as Fed chairman in 1987, below left, and at bottom, after being sworn in as chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in 1974, he was joined by, from left: his mother, Rose Goldsmith; President Ford; Ayn Rand; and Rand's husband, Frank O'Connor.



SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

lationship with Treasury Secretary Nick Brady. Years later, Bush blamed Greenspan for his 1992 election loss. "I reappointed him, and he disappointed me," Bush said coldly.

After the election but before Bill Clinton had been sworn in, Greenspan flew to Little Rock to meet the incoming president. The two hit it off immediately. In all, Greenspan was appointed five times by four different presidents.

Greenspan delighted in his ability to keep markets and politicians on their toes by wrapping his views in complex, garbled syntax. He would envision the next morning's newspaper headline as he spoke to Congress. "On occasion, when I realized I'm halfway through a sentence and I don't want to complete that sentence, I would roam off almost irrelevantly, because I didn't care what the transcript said," he said in a 2009 interview with Fed staff.

Despite such inscrutability, Greenspan initiated a decadeslong glaciost, pulling back the curtain on the Fed's mystique. Until 1994, the Fed hadn't announced rate changes. But that February, Greenspan told colleagues he wanted to issue a statement to signal the beginning of a series of rate increases.

Greenspan nurtured his reputation as a policy-setting maestro with two bold calls in the 1990s. The first was in 1994, when the Fed launched a pre-emptive strike on inflation that would push the federal-funds rate target to 6%, from 3%, in one year. Bond investors faced huge losses. California's Orange County went bankrupt. Mexico

devalued its peso. But the U.S. economy achieved a so-called soft landing.

A few years later, Greenspan earned plaudits again for resisting pressure from colleagues to raise rates aggressively as the unemployment rate tested 30-year lows. Greenspan marshaled data to suggest a productivity boom because of personal computing was under way.

A blind spot

Greenspan's faith that self discipline would effectively equilibrate financial markets proved to be his blind spot. "He conducted monetary policy like a maestro," said Alan Blinder, a Princeton economics professor who served as vice chairman at the Fed under Greenspan in the 1990s. But his regulatory legacy was different. "It caused a lot of harm," Blinder said.

Greenspan believed financial institutions had a self interest in not taking risks that would wipe out shareholders; similarly, he thought they had natural incentives to behave ethically to preserve their reputations. Under Greenspan's watch, the Fed didn't blow the whistle on riskier lending practices in which Wall Street used financial alchemy to turn dodgy mortgages into highly rated securities.

Greenspan famously warned in 1996 that the stock market was getting very speculative—exhibiting "irrational exuberance." The Dow Jones Industrial Average proceeded to gain more than 80% over the next three years. Still, he concluded the Fed shouldn't try to prick bubbles with rate increases.

When term limits forced Greenspan to retire in January 2006, the economy was solid, inflation low, and stocks and houses buoyant. But troubles were building. When home prices stopped rising, home building turned down and delinquencies mounted on poorly underwritten mortgages.

In a 2007 interview with The Wall Street Journal, former Fed governor Edward Gramlich said he had privately urged Greenspan to clamp down on predatory lending around 2000. "He was opposed to it, so I didn't really pursue it," Gramlich said.

Fed leaders and other regulators didn't understand risks from innovations such as the securitization of credit. Many blamed the deregulation of and self-regulation by Wall Street, championed by Greenspan and presidents of both parties.

Greenspan thought he received disproportionate blame for the crisis together with undue credit for the economic boom of the late 1990s. "I was praised for things I didn't do," he said in a 2008 interview. "I am now being blamed for things that I didn't do."

—Jon Hilsenrath contributed to this article.

Watch a Video

Scan this code for a video on how Greenspan redefined the Federal Reserve.

U.S. NEWS

Murder Conviction Restored In the Killing of Etan Patz

Supreme Court rules in case of boy who disappeared in 1979 in New York City

By Victoria Albert

The Supreme Court has restored a murder conviction in the case of Etan Patz, the 6-year-old boy whose 1979 disappearance in New York City drew national attention. Pedro Hernandez, a former bodega worker, was convicted and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison in 2017 after he told police that he had lured the child into the store's basement and killed him. But a federal appeals court overturned the verdict in 2025, finding the jury had received instructions about his confessions that "would have unquestionably impacted deliberations." The court said Hernandez should be retried or released. The Supreme Court on



A photo of Etan Patz is held by his father, Stan Patz, and his brother, Ari Patz, in 1985.

Monday reversed that decision, saying the appeals court had exceeded its authority in finding that the jury instructions violated the law. Etan disappeared while walking to his school-bus stop

in New York City on May 25, 1979. The first-grader's body was never found, and the case ran cold for decades. The date he disappeared is now National Missing Children's day. The issue before the court was the timing of Hernandez's confessions to police in 2012, after his brother-in-law told police that he had made statements about Etan's disappearance. He first confessed to police after hours of questioning at his New Jersey home without being read his Miranda warnings, which inform suspects about their rights. Detectives then read him his Miranda rights, and he made a second videotaped confession. His first trial ended in a hung jury. At his second trial, jurors asked the judge whether they had to disregard Hernandez's later confessions if they thought his first confession wasn't voluntary. The judge said no, and the jury subsequently found him guilty of kidnapping and felony murder. Hernandez's lawyers, who said their client had given a false confession due to aggressive police tactics, his mental illness and low IQ, argued that the judge's instructions violated federal law because they ran contrary to a prior case. The Supreme Court disagreed, writing Monday that "no clearly established federal law required the trial court to instruct the jury" about that case. Hernandez attorney Harvey Fishbein said he was "terribly disappointed" that his client wouldn't receive a new trial. "We firmly believe that an innocent man is in jail for a crime he did not commit," Fishbein said. Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg welcomed the decision, saying Etan's murder "changed a generation of New Yorkers." "This office has remained steadfast in its pursuit of justice for Etan and the Patz family and will continue to stand by this important conviction," he said.

Agency Investigates Deadly Tesla Crash

By Ryan Felton

U.S. auto-safety regulators have opened an investigation into a fatal wreck involving a Tesla that crashed into a home Friday evening and killed one person inside. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the top auto regulator in the country, said Monday that it would examine a crash involving a Tesla Model 3 near Houston. The driver of the Tesla told police he was operating with an automated driving assistance system, according to a statement by the Harris County Sheriff's Office. The vehicle left the roadway, "entered through the brick residence at a high rate of speed," and struck a woman who was inside, sheriff's officials said. The woman, Martha Avila, later died from injuries sustained in the crash, officials said. Footage from a home camera that was posted on social media and shared with The Wall Street Journal shows the blue Model 3 speeding up to the house in Katy, Texas, crossing over the yard and driveway, and slamming into the front wall of the home. NHTSA on Monday said it was launching a special crash investigation into the incident. Tesla didn't return a request for comment. In a post on the Elon Musk-owned social-media platform X, Tesla's vice president of AI and software, Ashok Elluswamy, said the driver manually pressed the car's accelerator pedal down and had the pedal pressed even after the crash. The incident marks the latest effort by NHTSA to examine Tesla's suite of advanced driver-assistance technologies. The agency has been conducting a defect investigation of Tesla's system, known as Full Self-Driving (Supervised), which controls driving and steering functions but requires drivers to continuously monitor the road. Defect probes can result in automakers conducting a safety recall. It was unclear whether the driver's vehicle had Full Self-Driving engaged. The Harris County Sheriff's Office, which is investigating the crash, declined to specify.



The National Guard on patrol Monday at the Reflecting Pool.

Trump Claims Proof Of Pool Vandalism

By Lydia Wheeler and Philip Wegmann

WASHINGTON—The Trump administration stepped up its law enforcement presence at the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool on Monday, as the White House made new claims that vandalism was the chief cause of problems at the renovated site. President Trump in the Oval Office said he had photographic proof of someone cutting a 350-foot gash into the pool's bottom coating, but he and others in the administration have provided few details to support those claims and no gash that large was visible earlier in the day. "I saw it," Trump told reporters. "They cut it very violently." The president and other officials began making vandalism claims over the weekend, after problems at the Reflecting Pool appeared to be getting worse, with visible tears in the pool's new flooring and algae blooming despite cleanup efforts. Five people have been arrested for vandalism, and five more were issued federal citations, an Interior Department spokesman said midday on Monday. No public records were immediately available. A White House spokes-

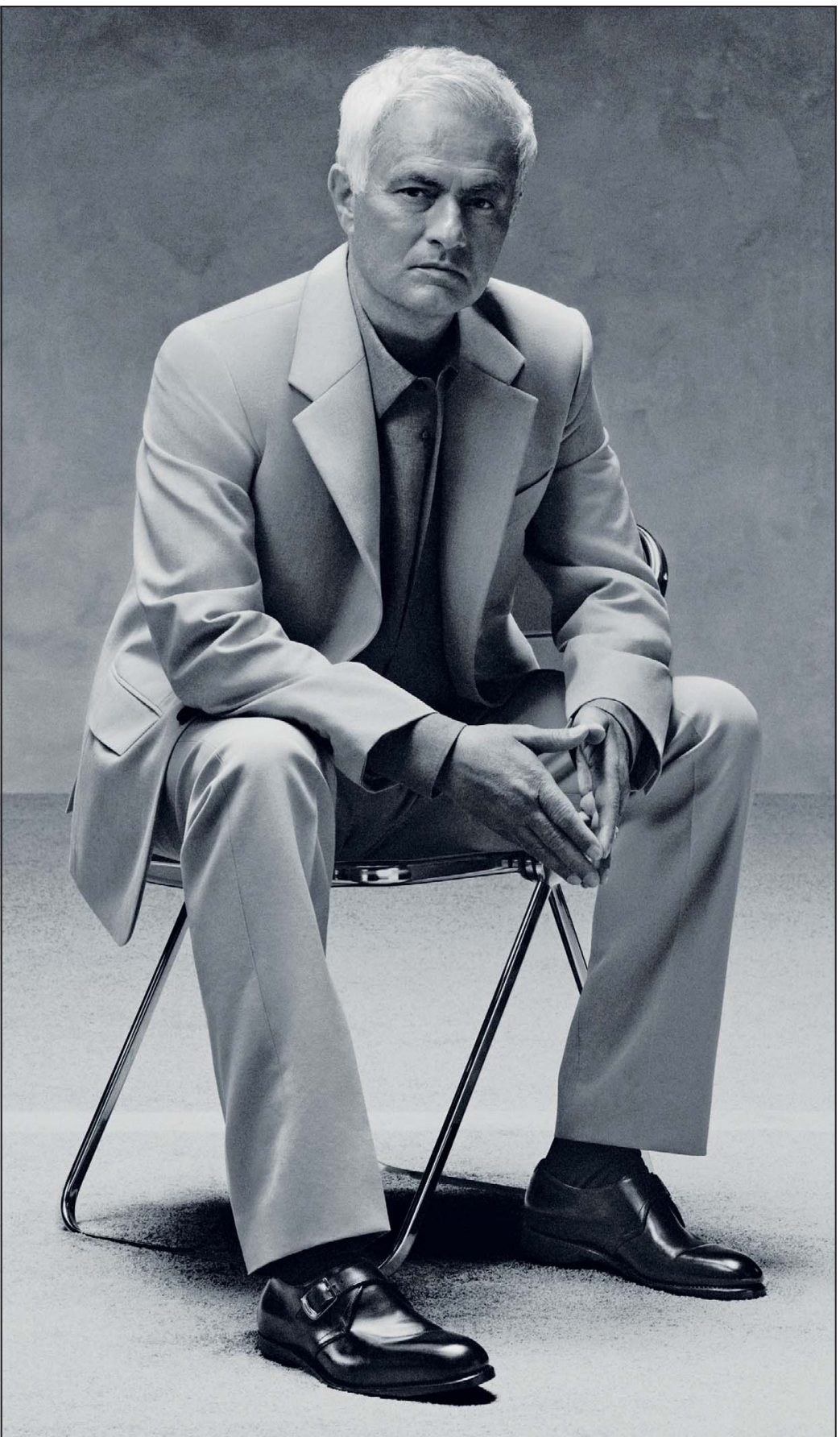
woman declined to provide The Wall Street Journal with copies of the police reports, citing ongoing investigations. A spokesman for U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro in Washington said her office had received only a handful of citations and was reviewing them. The administration spent more than \$16 million to resurface the basin of the pool with an "American Flag" blue color coating and make other upgrades. Within days of the pool's reopening earlier this month, algae blooms had already turned it bright green. National Park Service crews dumped hydrogen peroxide into the water last week and then pieces of the new flooring started breaking loose as crews began vacuuming the pool floor. Trump told reporters on Monday that the contractor who resurfaced the pool wasn't to blame. The developments have set off a wave of allegations and counter-allegations about who or what is to blame. On Monday evening, Trump posted on social media an image of a protester dressed in a frog costume holding a sign that said, "First They Came for the Algae." "Here is another example of a crazy pro-algae (likely paid) protestor," Trump wrote.

ABC Asks Viewers' Help Against FCC

By Joe Flint

ABC is taking its fight with the government to its own airwaves. The Disney-owned broadcast network launched an on-air campaign Monday urging viewers to weigh in against the Federal Communications Commission's early review of its broadcast licenses and a separate investigation of its daily talk show "The View." The FCC has said the license review is tied to an investigation into Disney's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, while its probe into "The View" centers on whether the show violated so-called equal-time rules for politicians. ABC says both

threaten free speech. Under Chairman Brendan Carr, the FCC has taken a more combative approach to its interactions with media companies than prior administrations. The spots about "The View" began airing on ABC stations around the country during Monday's episode of the show. "The View" has welcomed your favorite guests and covered the issues you care about for nearly 30 years," a voice-over says in an ad airing on ABC stations. "Now the FCC wants to control who is allowed to appear on the show." An FCC representative said the messages were part of "a campaign of misinformation" by Disney, misleading viewers about equal-time rules.



LEGENDS, REIMAGINED
JOSÉ MOURINHO

HIGHLY DECORATED FOOTBALL MANAGER

FERRAGAMO

WORLD NEWS

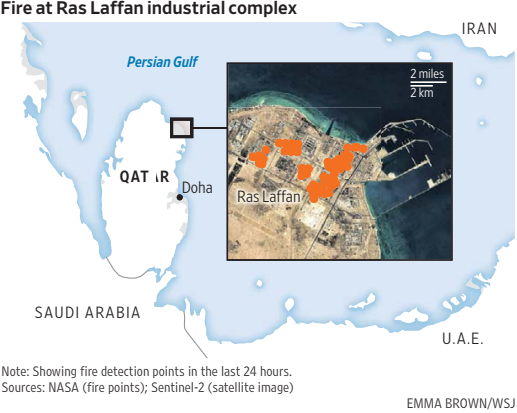
Qatar Gas-Facility Blast Leaves 13 Dead

Authorities say accident occurred during operations to restart facility

DOHA, Qatar—A blast tore through Qatar’s key natural-gas facility, leaving 13 dead and injuring dozens, rattling one of the world’s most important gas exporters as it tries to restore shipments disrupted by the Iran war.

By Giulia Petroni, Farhan Rafid and Georgi Kantchev

Qatari authorities attributed the Sunday blast at the Ras Laffan industrial complex to a technical accident during operations to restart the facility rather than a hostile act. They said it posed no threat to public safety and didn’t affect the country’s ability to export gas. State-owned operator QatarEnergy said the resulting fire was under control. The country’s Interior Ministry said that in addition to the dead, 66 people were injured. The blast hit Ras Laffan’s Barzan gas facility, which supplies Qatar’s domestic market.



An image taken from a video shows an explosion at Qatar’s Ras Laffan industrial zone.

& LNG Research at consulting firm Rystad Energy. Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, Qatar’s minister of state for energy affairs, said on Monday that the Barzan gas facility will be shut until the company assesses the damage. “It will not affect anything regarding exports, it will not affect anything regarding our local requirements,” he said. Efforts to restore production at Ras Laffan are unfolding as U.S. and Iranian officials negotiate the terms of a peace agreement, with mediators saying the two sides agreed over the weekend on a road map to reach a final deal within 60 days. While some Middle Eastern oil was able to bypass the

strait through overland pipelines, Qatari LNG lacked alternative exits. Liquefaction facilities, meanwhile, are highly specialized engineering mega-projects that take years to construct and longer to repair than conventional oil fields. Dominating a sandy stretch of Qatar’s northern coast, Ras Laffan is a sprawling industrial fortress of pipes, flare stacks and loading berths built around the world’s largest artificial harbor. The facility has long been the foundation of Qatar’s wealth and geopolitical clout, turning the small Gulf state into a key supplier of gas to Asia and Europe. Qatar accounted for roughly a fifth of global LNG exports

before the war disruptions and had plans to nearly double capacity to 142 million tons a year by 2030, although analysts expect the war damage to delay some of those plans. The export halt is also weighing on the country’s economy, with the International Monetary Fund forecasting that its gross domestic product will shrink by 8.6% in 2026, the worst contraction in the Persian Gulf region. The incident adds Ras Laffan to a grim history of deadly oil-and-gas accidents, including the 1988 Piper Alpha platform fire in the North Sea, which killed 167 workers and the 2005 BP Texas City refinery explosion, which killed 15 and injured 180.

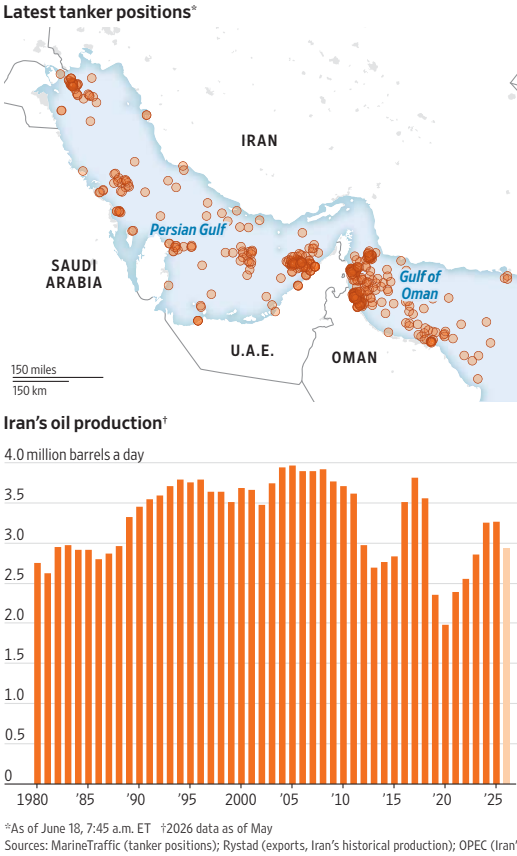
Iran Is Looking To Boost Oil Sales

President Trump’s deal with Iran will allow the Islamic Republic to sell its crude and fuels like diesel on the open market for the first time since 2018.

By Collin Eaton, Benoit Faucon and Emma Brown

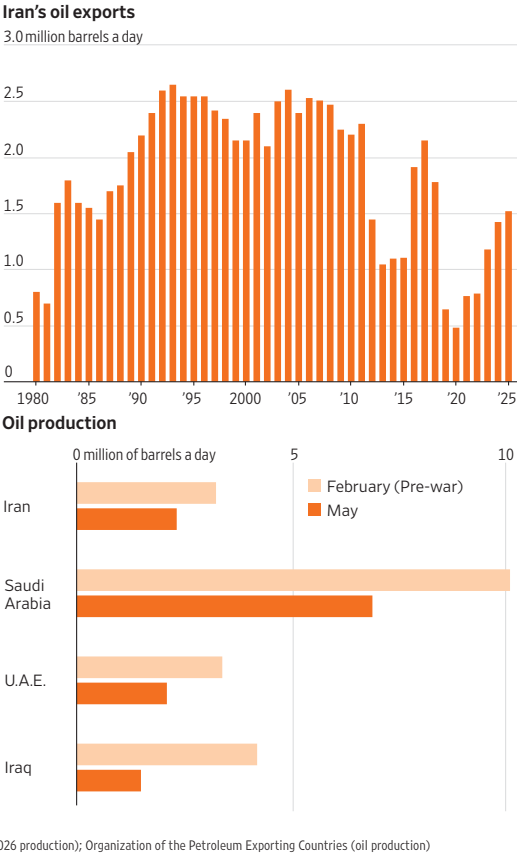
The pact—signed by President Trump and by Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian last week—would let Iran immediately begin selling its oil, waiving sanctions and paving the way for services such as banking, transportation and insurance to facilitate transactions. The U.S. military confirmed that it lifted a two-month blockade that brought Iran’s loadings down to a trickle, roughly 260,000 barrels a day in May, according to Kpler, a commodities and shipping data provider. In the prior three months that ended in April, Iran was about to load 1.85 million barrels a day on tankers, even if those vessels were trapped inside the Persian Gulf. Iran has a long way to go to rebuilding its oil sector, parts of which were pounded by U.S. and Israeli forces. A decade ago, when a nuclear pact with the U.S. lifted restrictions on Iran’s oil sales, it was the world’s fifth-largest

producer, pumping nearly four million barrels a day in 2016. That level was well below what Iran pumped in its oil heyday, before the Islamic revolution in 1979. Crude output peaked at more than six million barrels a day for a few years in the 1970s when Western oil companies, including BP and Total, operated there. Sanctions in the 1980s—and the ensuing brain drain from Iran—caused a long decline in its oil output from which the industry has never fully recovered. Here is a look at what lies ahead: A few tankers filled with Iranian crude crossed the Strait of Hormuz last week, while others that had been hiding their location reactivated their radio signals, analysts and ship trackers said. Those moves came after the Trump administration said Tehran was free to market its oil. Three Iranian-linked tankers carrying five million barrels between them sailed past the U.S. blockade this week, bearing for Southeast Asia, according to Vortexa, which tracks maritime movements. Tehran clinched a deal to sell 10 million barrels—equivalent to five supertankers—to China, said Hamid Hosseini,



the spokesman for Iran’s oil exporters union. The sales are a first step to rebuilding its oil export flows, he said. Over the next few weeks, if the peace deal holds, Iran will load tankers with tens of millions of oil barrels currently stored on Kharg Island, where the country’s oil hub has over

30 million barrels in tanks. Iran can only substantially raise its oil production once storage tanks that are already brimming with crude get drained, analysts said. Finding tankers available to load Iranian oil could prove difficult, at least initially. Many of the Very Large Crude



Carriers, or VLCCs, that ferry two million barrels at a time across oceans have been repurposed to the U.S. Gulf Coast to handle a surge in U.S. oil exports. It could take weeks for those ships to get back to the Persian Gulf—and that is if shippers are persuaded the conflict is truly

over and it is safe to transit the strait. Under the deal, Iran has 30 days to clear mines it dropped into the strait. “The strait is only open when the vessel owners say it is,” said Andy Lipow, president of Lipow Oil Associates in Houston.

U.S. Lets Tehran Get Dollars

Continued from Page One Trump said he would attack Iran again if it failed to abide by the memorandum, even if that meant once again risking global economic collapse. “Nuclear weapon supersedes depression,” Trump said from the Oval Office. “Depression is real bad. Nuclear weapon will cause depression much more quickly.” Trump defended his diplomatic approach to Iran, claiming a deal has led to a massive resurgence in oil trade in the strait and that Iran’s frozen assets would be used to purchase U.S. farm products. Before the war, Iran’s oil exports formed the central target of the U.S.-led international economic campaign to pressure the regime to accept strict limits on its nuclear program. When bombing also failed to deliver that result, and Iran shut the strait, the U.S. in May imposed a blockade of Iranian ports, throttling the regime’s export-dependent economy to try to get it to back down. As part of the interim truce reached last week, the U.S.

lifted its blockade and agreed to let Iran sell oil and get paid for it. But the formal Treasury Department waiver on Monday adds that Iran can be paid in dollars, a boon for the regime, which is in desperate need of foreign exchange. It means Iranian banks can receive payments directly from abroad, allowing the regime to more easily repatriate its oil revenue. The move goes beyond a temporary waiver issued by the Treasury in March that allowed Iran to sell oil already at sea but maintained sanctions on dollar transactions. The waiver suspends decades of crippling restrictions that led Tehran to rely on a shadow network of aging oil tankers to export its crude, most of which went to refineries run by Beijing. The Treasury said Tehran could now legitimately sell oil from vessels under sanctions, effectively legalizing for now its shadow fleet. The waiver also exempts Iranian entities, including its central bank, from sanctions targeting terrorist activities, not just restrictions related to Iran’s nuclear work, said Miad Maleki, a former senior Treasury sanctions official who now works at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a think tank. “It represents a fundamental departure from the Iran sanctions architecture Congress built over the last two decades.” European traders have

reached out to buy Iranian crude following the waiver, said Hamid Hosseini, the spokesman for Tehran’s oil exporters union. But he told The Wall Street Journal that no U.S. companies had contacted him. The Treasury’s announcement came hours after the vice president said that Iran had invited nuclear inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency back to the country, a move he described as a major milestone and the first step in permanently ending a nuclear-weapons program in Iran. Vance suggested that some conversations with inspectors could happen as soon as Monday, but didn’t detail how much access they would have or crucially whether they would be able to

visit sites attacked by the U.S. and Israel last year. There was no comment by the IAEA, whose director-general, Rafael Grossi, is at the talks in Switzerland. One of Grossi’s key goals in attending was to persuade Iran to allow inspectors back to the damaged sites, people familiar with the matter said. Iranian state media reported that Tehran didn’t negotiate over its nuclear file or accept any new commitments during the talks, citing officials familiar with the negotiations. Iranian hard-liners pushed back against the prospect of new visits from nuclear inspectors. Such a move is “against the memorandum of understanding and very damaging,” the Tasnim news agency,

which is affiliated with Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, reported. Iran’s Foreign Ministry declined to comment. The future of Iran’s nuclear program, which the regime claims to be peaceful but which involves highly enriched uranium and other efforts the U.S. and Israel said are consistent with work that would be needed to produce a bomb, is the core matter that negotiators hope to resolve. Washington wants Iran to commit to giving up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, while Iran is seeking sanctions relief for its beleaguered economy and insists it has the right to enrich. Vance said his delegation and the Iranian side, led by Parliament speaker Mohammad Ghalibaf, had moved closer to resolving thorny issues related to Lebanon, where Israel is fighting Hezbollah militants, a conflict that has tripped up the progress toward a permanent peace, and the movement of ships through the strait. Negotiators, he said, had agreed to a mechanism to avoid a new escalation in Lebanon, where fighting flared up in recent days. The first clause of the document agreeing to a temporary U.S.-Iran truce insists on an end to the fighting in Lebanon as a precondition. The vice president said a so-called deconfliction system brokered by Pakistan and Qatar

was designed to ensure Hezbollah no longer attacks Israel—strikes to which he said Israel had felt compelled to respond—by ensuring all sides were engaged with one another. He said he had told Iran to curb its militant proxy, but had also been in constant contact with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and the Emirati and Saudi leaderships. The vice president also confirmed an agreement on a mechanism for communication between the U.S. and Iran in the strait so there wouldn’t be any further disruption or escalation in the vital waterway. After the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran’s three main nuclear sites last June, the IAEA’s inspectors left Iran, where they had maintained a permanent rotating team, because of the danger and haven’t been allowed back on a permanent basis since. Iran has since allowed inspectors back into the country for visits to several Iranian locations, including the country’s Bushehr nuclear reactor, but they have been barred from visiting the damaged sites of Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan. Having inspectors back at those sites would allow the IAEA to get a sense of the extent of damage done by the strikes and whether there is any possibility Tehran could use the locations to begin enriching uranium again.



Vice President JD Vance said Iran will allow nuclear inspectors.



THE MACHINE

BUILT BY CODE AND THEORY

The modern marketing organization is not underinvested. It is under-connected. The stack is full. The data exists. The talent is there. And still, the **WHEN** work is slow, the handoffs break and the return is hard to prove. Everyone has the same questions. **WHEN** What does it **WILL** take to finally get ROI on my AI strategy? When will I be able to make decisions closer to my customer? **WILL** How about decisions that are closer to my supply chain? Why can't I get my workforce more AI-enabled? How do I save money on my marketing budget, or even better, get more value on my return? The capability **ALL** was never the problem. The coherence was. And every day that gap stays open, it costs you — in speed, in **ALL** revenue, in the ground you lose to whoever moves faster.

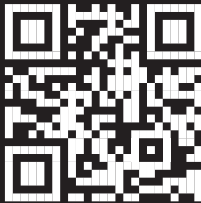
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WORLD NEWS

Latin America Is More Aligned With Trump

A wave of right-wing leaders are on board with U.S. antidrug and migrant policies

By Kejal Vyas
And Michael Amon

The election of Abelerdo de la Espriella as Colombia's new president marks another step in Latin America's transformation into a region more deeply aligned with the political style and policy priorities of President Trump. New leaders are taking power with populist mandates centered on free-market economic policies and iron-fisted security strategies. This pivot is fueled by anti-incumbent sentiment after years of sluggish economic growth and, for some countries, a surge in transnational organized crime. Here is a look at the wave of Trump-aligned Latin American leaders to take power since Trump assumed office.

Colombia's 'Tiger'

Fresh off a razor-thin run-off victory, de la Espriella, is set to take office on Aug. 7. Calling himself "the Tiger," he has promised a total war on



Abelerdo de la Espriella is Colombia's new president.

armed narcotics-trafficking groups. De la Espriella is a U.S. citizen who contributed money to Trump's 2024 campaign, and he got a full-throated endorsement from the U.S. president. With little support in congress, he faces headwinds to cutting ministries and shedding state jobs, as well as his plans to build mega-prisons.

Chile's Crackdown

José Antonio Kast's victory in December was driven by public anxiety over immigration and public safety. Kast

imposed strict border controls and deployed troops to the northern frontiers to halt unauthorized migration. He has combined budget cuts and an expanded police mandate to go after crime syndicates. His disapproval ratings are up sharply.

Bolivia's Free Trade

Rodrigo Paz broke two decades of mostly left-wing rule in the October election. His administration aims to restore foreign investor confidence and stabilize the nation's currency by ending fuel subsidies and currency controls. The government also reopened diplomatic and commercial ties with the U.S. Paz's austerity measures and rising living costs, have stoked protests that have worsened fuel and food shortages. The U.S. says the unrest is led by unions and farmers allied with the previous leftist government.

Venezuela's Pivot

Ostensibly a socialist, Interim President Delcy Rodríguez has supercharged diplomatic and intelligence cooperation with the U.S. since former leader Nicolás Maduro was ousted in a U.S.



Rodrigo Paz, left, congratulated José Antonio Kast at his swearing-in event in Chile in March.

military operation in January. She has purged Maduro loyalists from the government, as she tries to please Trump. The U.S. serves as the de facto gatekeeper for the economy, managing its oil sales and revenues. Rodríguez's administration has overhauled energy and mining regulations to reopen the country to U.S. firms.

Ecuador's Iron Fist

President Daniel Noboa started a second term in May 2025, and has pursued a visible, militarized fight against powerful drug gangs. He has used troops to patrol major cities and take direct control of federal prisons. He treats transnational gangs as terrorist organizations, and bolstered intelli-

gence and security cooperation with the U.S.

Peru's New Heir

Keiko Fujimori secured power by leaning in to the tough-on-crime legacy of her father, Alberto, whose security state was accused of human-rights abuses that led to his downfall. She has pledged to put prisons under military administration and allow judges to remain anonymous for high-profile organized crime trials. Her economic plan promises a deregulatory shock designed to pivot away from Chinese state investment and secure more U.S. partnerships.

Honduras Boosts Ties

Endorsed by Trump, Nasry "Tito" Asfura is moving to re-

verse his leftist predecessor's foreign-policy legacy by restoring formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan and cutting off Beijing influence. He has pledged to deepen U.S. intelligence sharing.

Costa Rica Is All In

Laura Fernández Delgado, elected president in February, has deepened ties with Trump, whom she calls an "unconditional ally." She wants to tighten immigration enforcement with the help of U.S. technology, change laws to deal harshly with rising gang-related crime, and align trade policies with U.S. Her government has increased information sharing with U.S. law-enforcement agencies to combat crime organizations, while accepting U.S. deportees from third countries.

Floating Platform Helps China Control Disputed Atoll

By Mike Cherney

At first, the images were grainy: A speck appeared on satellite pictures at an uninhabited atoll sitting in a highly contested waterway that China claims as its own. The speck was at Scarborough Shoal, a much-contested reef in the South China Sea, a maritime thoroughfare for about a quarter of the world's seaborne trade. Those images raised concerns among the U.S. and its allies that China—which has controlled access to the shoal since 2012 and claims much of the surrounding area—could be setting the stage for a more permanent occupation.

Authorities in the Philippines, which also claims the shoal, then released more detailed photos that showed a rickety-looking platform floating at the shoal. The platform was more than 300 square feet and appeared to have an antenna and Chinese nationals onboard, Philippine officials said. At times it was accompanied by two Chinese vessels. "If it's a precursor to a more permanent presence, or a precursor to other malign activity, then it's worrisome," Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. said in an interview.

Oceanographers at the state-controlled Chinese Academy of Sciences said the platform was a temporary scientific-research facility studying

the shoal's coral reefs. On Wednesday, Philippine officials, who first became aware of the platform at the end of May, said it had been removed. China's foreign ministry didn't respond to a request for comment about whether Beijing planned to build permanent structures at Scarborough Shoal, but officials earlier said the shoal was China's "inherent territory." To analysts tracking the South China Sea, the movable platform went beyond just marine conservation. They said it might be evidence of a renewed push by Beijing to tighten its hold over the shoal, whose triangular-shaped reefs are just 145 miles from the main Philippine island of Luzon.

"What China appears to be doing here is 'salami-slicing' its way toward eventual habitation," said Ray Powell, executive director at the SeaLight Foundation, which tracks so-called "gray-zone activities" in the South China Sea.

Beijing's attention on Scarborough Shoal has increased. Last year, China more than doubled nearby patrols, according to analysis from the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. In August, a Chinese coast guard and navy ship collided during a pursuit of a Philippine vessel, footage of the incident from the Philippines showed.

Beijing declared a nature



Source: PlanetLabs (Scarborough Shoal)

reserve in the area in September. Philippine officials say they have found buoys and more possible antennas there. If China built a military base on the shoal, as it has on other disputed features in the South China Sea, it could pose a threat to U.S. forces in a fight over Taiwan, which Beijing also claims. Using coast guard and navy ships, China has controlled access to Scarborough Shoal since a tense, two-month-long standoff between Beijing and Manila in 2012. The seizure proved an inflection point in Beijing's efforts to assert its claims over much of the South China Sea. The following year, it embarked on an extraordinary campaign of island-building, turning long-submerged reefs

and atolls into military bases capable of hosting missiles and aircraft. Since then, there had been an understanding between Beijing and Washington that any land reclamation at Scarborough Shoal—which would be needed to turn the shoal into a functional military base—would be a red line for Washington, analysts say. For the U.S., any Chinese efforts to physically occupy or expand Scarborough Shoal would come at a delicate moment. President Trump has been working to improve rela-

China appears to be 'salami-slicing' its way toward eventual habitation.



A buoy that the Philippine Coast Guard believes was installed by China at Scarborough Shoal.

tions with Beijing and American officials are eager to avoid tensions ahead of a planned visit by Chinese leader Xi Jinping to Washington in September.

"The fact that we keep seeing new things appear at Scarborough—new buoys, new patterns of ship behavior, and now this—I think speaks to a new phase of creativity that we've seen from Beijing in the last year," said Harrison Prétat, an expert on Asian maritime issues at CSIS. Prétat said Chinese researchers might well

WORLD WATCH



COOL EIFFEL TOWER VIEW: People chilled out Monday in the Trocadéro Fountain in Paris amid a heat wave across France.

TAIWAN

Military Begins Five-Day Drill

Taiwan kicked off a five-day set of military drills on Monday aimed at boosting the island's combat readiness in case of a Chinese military attack. In the city of Taoyuan, home to the island's largest international airport, tanks drove down city streets and highways, videos and photos of the exercise showed, as armored vehicles from the army's 269th Infantry Brigade conducted combat readiness patrols. The Immediate Combat Readiness Exercises are meant to test how rapidly military units can deploy, especially amid a possible sudden escalation of Chinese gray-zone warfare. Gray-zone tactics refer to a range of aggressive moves that vary from navy ship patrols to drone flights, but fall short of direct combat. The exercises, announced Sunday afternoon, are meant to be realistic, the Ministry of Defense said, with an emphasis on "real-time, live-fire and on-site."

—Associated Press

CONGO

Confirmed Cases Of Ebola Top 1,000

Confirmed cases in the Ebola outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo have reached 1,003, including 254 deaths, officials said, as tracing those who had been in contact with patients remains a major challenge. A total of 100 people have recovered in the outbreak concentrated in the Ituri province since it was declared on May 15, Congo's Ministry of Health said on Sunday. At least 365 patients are hospitalized or in isolation, it said. The Ebola outbreak caused by the rare Bundibugyo virus, which has no vaccines or treatment, was the worst ever in its first month. Officials say there could be far more cases and that the peak of the outbreak is still ahead. Contact tracing remains a key issue for local authorities, who have only achieved a 55% coverage rate, the ministry said. Officials have yet to identify the patient zero and trace more than 35,000 people who have come in contact with infected individuals as of last week, authorities said.

—Associated Press

WORLD NEWS

Prime Minister Resigns

Continued from Page One

ham confirmed on Monday he would run for the job, pledging a “positive process of renewal for our party and our country.”

Under Labour rules, any lawmaker can challenge the prime minister by getting the support of at least a fifth of party lawmakers. While someone else could challenge Burnham, he is widely expected to get the job uncontested. Burnham’s main rival, former Health Secretary Wes Streeting, said Monday he wouldn’t run against him. If no one else stands, Burnham would likely be ushered into Downing Street by mid-July.

Starmer’s demise is a remarkable turn for a country that has seen its share of political turnover in recent years, and a first for Labour, which has never ousted one of its own leaders during their first term in power, especially one that is less than two years into a five-year term.

But growing numbers of Labour lawmakers felt that keeping Starmer would lead to a wipeout in the next general election in 2029 and that Burnham, who polls much better with voters, gives them their best shot at keeping their jobs and fending off Reform and its leader, Nigel Farage.

Burnham tried and failed twice to become Labour leader in 2010 and 2015. He was until recently the mayor of Greater Manchester, the U.K.’s second-most-populous metro region, overseeing a budget of £3 billion, equivalent to about \$3.97 billion. Now, in the space of a few weeks, he is set to lead the world’s fifth-largest economy, with a budget of about £1.4 trillion.

Investors are watching for signs that Burnham will try to increase borrowing or raise taxes, which are at a postwar high as a percentage of the U.K.’s economy, as the government seeks to pay for social programs and is under pressure to boost military spending.

He has talked up the idea of “business-friendly socialism” and spoken of the need to decentralize power from London, have greater public control over utilities and re-industrialize left-behind regions of the U.K.

In the past few weeks he



Keir Starmer said on Monday that he would step down.

has tilted toward the center, pledging to abide by the current government’s fiscal rules, and said he would stick with the government’s approach to cutting immigration levels.

Burnham would inherit an economy blighted by low productivity, increasing state spending, rising borrowing costs and an aging population. The future Labour leader will have to take the fight to Farage, who has promised to fix what he calls a “broken Britain.”

A key issue is immigration. Legal and illegal migration soared to record levels after Brexit, in part after the U.K. made it easier for non-European

migrants to enter the country. Labour tightened the rules, but Farage has made political hay by saying Labour won’t go far enough to stop people from entering the country.

Like the rest of Europe, the U.K.’s traditional parties are being challenged by new parties and populists of all stripes. Reform has picked up support from the Tories’ middle-class and Labour’s working-class bases, while the populist Greens have hurt Labour among urban leftists. Across Europe, leaders are seeing their worst poll ratings in decades.

Burnham’s supporters said that the 56-year-old is a savvy

communicator who can better sell Labour and take on Farage.

Burnham’s springboard to power comes after winning a recent special district election in Makerfield, where he beat the Reform candidate handily in what his supporters said is proof he is the man to take on Farage. But the district is a small sample—just 77,000 voters. That could lead to pressure on Labour to call a general election ahead of 2029, if he proves unpopular.

Starmer, elected with the second-largest parliamentary majority since World War II, had vowed to fight any leadership challenge. But he was pressured to resign after May local-election results saw the party lose power in scores of city councils, its worst drubbing in the postwar period.

Starmer promised a politics that “would tread more lightly on voters’ lives” and would be guided by moderate policies aimed at fine-tuning the state rather than overhauling it. But this approach has been less appealing to voters than more populist messages.

Reform, for instance, pledges a bigger crackdown on immigration, and the leftist Green Party pitches much greater spending paid for by taxing the rich. Half of La-

bour’s 2024 voter base subsequently deserted the party.

Starmer’s government did have some notable successes, bringing down inflation as well as cutting legal immigration and hospital waiting lists. Starmer also managed to forge an unlikely rapport with President Trump, though that didn’t spare the country from being hit by U.S. tariffs.

Within weeks, Starmer was beset by missteps, including disclosures that a donor had provided him and his wife with free clothing, and a decision to cut a winter fuel benefit for pensioners. He then passed some of the U.K.’s biggest tax increases in the postwar era despite an election pledge not to do so and increased the minimum wage, crimping business activity.

“The desire not to have an argument means we rarely make an argument, leaving opportunities for progress stalled and delayed,” Jess Phillips, a Labour minister in charge of safeguarding women and preventing violence against children, said in her resignation letter this year. “Decency is vital, calm curiosity is also needed, but so too are fight and drive required. Have a row, push back, make arguments, bring people along.”

The Forces That Broke U.K. Politics

Continued from Page One

cluding the seven-week tenure of Liz Truss in 2022.

It’s a remarkable turn of events for a country that has long prided itself on political stability. Between 1945 and 2016, Britain had just 13 prime ministers and power flipped between Labour and the Conservatives.

Now, prime ministers change on average every 14 months, and there are five or six major political parties in England, plus nationalist parties in power in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Reform has spent the past year leading polls at just under 30%, the first time since World War I that any party other than the Tories and Labour has led for so long.



Nigel Farage is using the chaos to upend a political duopoly.

The upshot: A typical food shop that cost £100 in 2020 costs around £140 today, or \$188. Real wages, meanwhile, have broadly flatlined. The tax burden is at its highest level since World War II.

Immigration skyrocketed under the Tories, even after many Brits voted for Brexit in part to limit the flow of people into the country. One of Labour’s first moves on coming to power was to raise taxes, hurting the economy more. Public services have yet to noticeably improve.

“People are fed up,” says Ros Connors, who heads a local community radio station in Basildon, in eastern England, and gets an earful from listeners about everything from the cost of living to immigration.

But the fracturing of the British political system also has to do with new fault lines. For decades, politics in the U.K. was largely dictated by class: The working class tended to back Labour and the aspirational middle class and wealthy usually voted Tory.

That left-right distinction began to collapse more than a decade ago, when new divisions emerged on globalization, immigration and social issues, echoing the upheaval that gave rise to Donald Trump and populist leaders across much of Western Europe. Like them, Farage has inserted himself into the gap.

‘Somewheres’

The atrium in Reform UK’s London headquarters has the words “Family, Community, Country” emblazoned on the wall over a large map of Britain. Inside a glass office, James Orr, a Cambridge theologian who heads the party’s policy team, explains that Reform aims to redefine politics.

“If you’re still looking at us through the prism of left and right, you’re going to be mys-

tified,” he says.

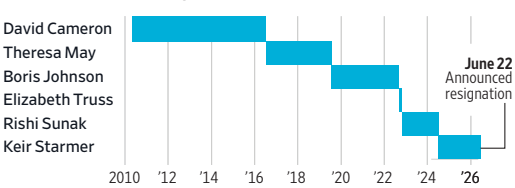
Orr refers to British author David Goodhart’s analysis of how Britain is now split between the “anywheres,” college-educated urbanites who largely benefited from globalization, and the “somewheres,” people who live near where they were born, are often working class and feel alienated by the rapid social changes.

“Somewhere” voters have become disconnected from traditional politicians on questions like immigration and climate change, Orr argues. Reform is pitching a mishmash of policies to win them over.

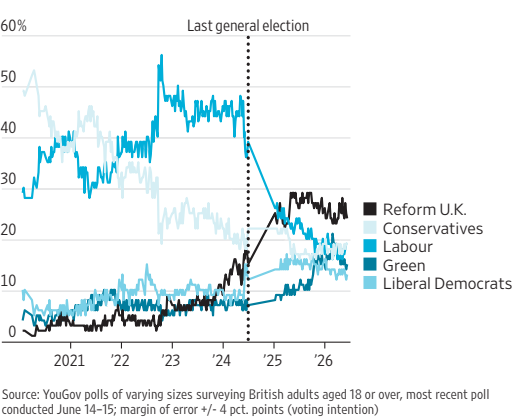
These include a pledge to deport some 600,000 people it says entered Britain illegally and curb legal immigration. While it pledges to trim taxes for the wealthiest, it also backs guaranteed increases to the state pension.

Orr says he went to lunch recently in London with a top lawyer who quizzed him about Iran, Ukraine and Trump. “I am a lot more worried about Kent than I am about Kyiv,” he recalled saying.

Tenures of recent U.K. prime ministers



U.K. voting intention in the general election by main parties



Since Covid-19 there has been a dramatic shift in the way Brits view their own country, according to the British Social Attitudes survey. In 2022, around half of people believed that migrants were good for the economy and enriched cultural life. Last year, following a record influx of migrants, that fell to a third.

After a glut of pandemic government spending, almost 20% of voters now want the government to cut tax and spending, the highest-ever share recorded by the BSA, and up from 6% five years ago. Trust in government to “almost always do the right thing,” meanwhile, has halved to 12%.

Britain is now deeply cleaved between liberals and social conservatives, the poll concluded. Unlike the traditional left-right split, where parties win by pitching to the middle ground, these new groups have “significantly different expectations and perceptions.”

Burnham, who seems likely to take power in mid-July, is framing his own Labour agenda to meet shifting attitudes, saying the party needs to champion “those people, those places that have felt neglected for the past 25 years.”

Pub-crawl to power

Blackpool, on the coast of northwest England, is a window into shifting political alle-

giances. The town, famed for its sprawling seaside resort, overwhelmingly backed Brexit. It voted Tory under Boris Johnson. Then it voted Labour in the last election. Few expect it to do the same at the next.

For the past five years, both Tory and Labour governments have used a picturesque seafront hotel to house hundreds of asylum seekers as they waited for their claims to be processed. The asylum seekers are now being moved out of the hotel, but the episode galvanized voters.

Peter Flynn, a 54-year-old local electrician, likens Reform’s rise to the peasants’ revolt in 1381, when a group of disaffected rebels stormed the Tower of London. “That’s what’s happening right now,” he says. “The general people, normal people, are actually getting off their bottoms and doing something.”

Unlike London, Blackpool didn’t thrive under globalization. In the 1970s, cheap foreign travel decimated its tourism industry. Bed-and-breakfast hotels turned into cheap boardinghouses, attracting Britain’s sickest and poorest. After the 2008 financial crisis, central government funding was slashed.

After Johnson’s election as prime minister in 2019, the town got a pot of cash to spend as part of a general effort to “level up” left-behind

parts of the country. The problem is this takes time to trickle down.

Lynn Williams, Labour leader of Blackpool Council, says the austerity-era budget cuts were followed by the economic own-goal of Brexit. “And who owns that?” she asked, pointing the finger at Farage.

“Why people are struggling and feel they’ve got no hope is absolutely a consequence of all of those years,” she said.

What isn’t to blame in Blackpool, Williams added, are asylum seekers, who usually leave the city soon after their cases have been heard. They also don’t claim subsidized social housing, contrary to what many locals think, she said.

In the Talbot, several patrons said they liked Farage’s straight-talking style and felt the asylum system was unfair on taxpaying Brits.

The government has cut legal immigration sharply over the past two years, but levels are still high by historical standards and tens of thousands of asylum seekers continue to cross the English Channel each year—helping drive more voters to Reform.

Farage, however, remains a controversial figure.

Drinking ciders in the corner of the Talbot was a ladies’ darts team from a neighboring pub. Farage, said Sharon Wells, 66, “is a d—head.” The women, most of whom work for the local government in Blackpool, said they won’t be voting for him, in part because he is too divisive.

New ‘Basildon Man’

Basildon, a town just east of London in Essex, is getting a taste of what life could be like with Reform in charge. For years, “Basildon Man” was political shorthand for the median swing voter. These Brits, who toiled to get ahead in life, left Labour in the 1980s for the more aspirational Tories under Margaret Thatcher and continued to largely mirror national results in the ensuing years.

During the May local elections, Reform took control of Essex County Council, taking it out of Tory hands for the first time in 25 years.

A Ukrainian flag in front of the council building has been replaced with a Union Jack. The Lord’s Prayer will be said at the start of council meetings and “God Save the King” sung at their conclusion. Public libraries have been instructed not to promote events such as Black History Month.

Reform promised to cut wasteful spending to help ensure residents’ council tax doesn’t rise more.

Andy Barnes, a Conservative who used to lead the Basildon council, is skeptical that Reform will find much to trim, given previous budget cuts and the pressures of providing care for an aging population.

“It feels to me like Reform is something that the electorate needs to get out of their system,” said Barnes.

Outside the Basildon council office, Tony Hall, a 70-year-old stall owner, said he was ready to give Farage a go. “We have been invaded.... A whole way of life has changed,” he said.



Blackpool, once a booming tourist town, is now one of Britain’s most deprived urban areas.



Fan Theories Take Flight With New UFO Movie

Spielberg's 'Disclosure Day' strikes chord with group of government skeptics

By ESTHER ZUCKERMAN

When Jordan Flowers saw “Disclosure Day,” Steven Spielberg’s new film about the government covering up proof of aliens, he was pleased to discover the movie might help his cause.

Flowers, 42, is the executive director of the Disclosure Foundation, a nonprofit focused on unidentified anomalous phenomena, or UAPs (formerly known as UFOs). He is a leader in a growing social movement of disclosure advocates, government skeptics who speculate that the country is hiding crucial information about UAPs. He’s among many in the movement who see the movie as a way to bolster support for their theory.

“There was a core message that the American people deserve the truth, which is fundamentally the same principle that we’re fighting for,” he said after seeing the movie.

Since Spielberg’s 1977 film “Close Encounters of the Third Kind,” his movies have explored the question of whether we’re alone in the universe. Now with “Disclosure Day,” the director has shifted his focus toward powerful figures believed to be intentionally hiding evidence that aliens exist from the public. Spielberg did not respond to a request for comment.

Cultural obsession with UFO conspiracies has renewed in recent



years, bolstered by government initiatives and celebrity support. Congress held its first hearing on UAPs in more than five decades in 2022, the same year the Defense Department established the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office, defined as the “authoritative office of the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP) and UAP-related activities.” President Trump ordered the release of government UFO files in February. The Defense Department recently published its third release of UAP files, the first of which came in May.

The Defense Department referenced a May statement from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on a White House website, which said, “The Department of War is in lock-step with President Trump to bring unprecedented transparency

▲ The Defense Department shared images of a UAP near Japan as part of its recent public release of UAP files, the first of which came in May.

regarding our government’s understanding of Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena. These files, hidden behind classifications, have long fueled justified speculation—and it’s time the American people see it for themselves.”

Tom DeLonge, guitarist, vocalist and co-founder of the rock band Blink-182, is among one of the most visible UAP obsessives as a founder of To The Stars, an entertainment company that has done UAP research. DeLonge did not respond to a request for comment.

George Knapp, a 73-year-old

▲ Clockwise from top left: Steven Spielberg on the set of ‘Disclosure Day’; in the movie, which incorporates familiar lore around UFOs, Daniel (Josh O’Connor) and Margaret (Emily Blunt) were both contacted by aliens as children.

Las Vegas television reporter and podcast host whose work also focuses on the paranormal, wrote in an email that “we are a long way” from full government transparency of classified information, but he thinks the movie could turn the tides. “Can a sci-fi movie play a real life role in accomplishing the premise that it explores? We are about to find out,” he said.

White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly described Trump as “the most transparent president in history” and said he “is focused on providing maximum disclosure to the public, who can ultimately make up their own minds about the information contained in these files.”

In the film, Josh O’Connor plays Daniel, a whistleblower in possession of valuable files, who is on the run from a powerful company hired by the U.S. to research alien visitation and technology. Daniel crosses paths with Margaret (Emily Blunt), a meteorologist who starts speaking an alien language on live television, an incident that suggests she awakened long dormant abilities acquired when she was abducted.

David Koepp, who wrote the screenplay based on an original story by Spielberg, referenced real-life congressional testimony and reports from Project Blue Book, an Air Force program which investigated UFOs that was disbanded in 1969.

Koepp is more of an alien skeptic than Spielberg, who recently

told CBS that aliens “are here.” Still, Koepp said, working on the movie shifted his perspective: “The thing that changed in my thinking while working on this is the certainty of government concealment and suppression and coverup.”

Koepp said it was important for Spielberg to incorporate as much of the familiar lore around UFOs as possible, such as the 1947 discovery of debris in Roswell, N.M. In the movie, O’Connor’s character shows his girlfriend (Eve Hewson) footage of Richard Nixon taking a television star to see the bodies of dead aliens, a reference to a long-standing urban legend that Nixon brought actor Jackie Gleason on a secret trip of a similar nature.

Daniel Noah, a film producer, founded SpectreVision Radio, a podcast network that creates content about the paranormal. Noah said he resonated with Spielberg’s portrayal of experiencers, a term referring to people who have encountered the paranormal. He described himself as one such person. On-screen, Daniel and Margaret were both contacted by aliens as children.

Diana Walsh Pasulka, a religion professor at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, said that for some, belief in extraterrestrials is akin to a kind of religion. Spielberg has played a pivotal role in fueling a cultural fascination with aliens, thanks to his decades of films about them, including “Close Encounters” and “E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial.”

Danny Sheehan, 82, the chief counsel for a UAP-disclosure advocacy group, said that he hoped the film might force people in Congress and the Senate to take disclosure more seriously.

“Steven Spielberg, of course, is the great deity of Hollywood right now,” he said.

Tips When Buying Refurbished Phones

By NATALIE KAUFMAN

Cracked your laptop screen? Discovered your phone no longer gets software updates? You’re now facing a stiffer penalty than before, as device prices go anywhere but down.

The global memory-chip shortage that has dogged device makers in recent years—triggered by AI’s voracious appetite for the same silicon found in nearly all consumer tech—has even begun to cause pain for supply-chain heavyweight Apple.

The iPhone maker plans to raise prices in the coming months, Chief Executive Tim Cook told The Wall Street Journal on Wednesday, citing rising component costs tied to memory constraints.

Hardware makers of all sizes will have little choice but to share the burden with consumers—either by raising prices or compromising on components, says Emily Herbert, a senior analyst with Counterpoint Research who leads the firm’s global preowned smartphone service.

That makes the secondary market an attractive starting point for more people than ever before, she says, especially those shopping for their kid’s first phone.

“Not a lot of parents will want to hand a 10- to 15-year-old an almost \$2,000 device,” Herbert says.

Turning to refurbished phones,

laptops and even game consoles can be a great money-saving move, but it presents its own complications, so you need to be vigilant.

Assess your own gadget

It’s often the case that a seemingly spent device just needs a new battery, potentially saving you hundreds of dollars, says Kyle Wiens, chief executive of iFixit, an online tech-repair community.

If you notice your battery dying halfway through the day, it’s worth considering a battery replacement. They are typically cheaper than repairs to a screen or camera, and installing a fresh one can actually improve performance speeds, too.

For iPhones, Apple’s repair page lists replacement-service prices for models going back years. Even if you don’t use Apple’s service, it’s a way to evaluate your cost options.

In case you’re DIY-curious: Performing your own iPhone battery replacement requires patience and deftness beyond many of us, but for other popular electronics, such as a Nintendo Switch, iFixit has clear instructions and even sells the necessary parts.

Choose a marketplace

There’s no shortage of used-tech vendors, but you shouldn’t trust them all equally. Much like browsing for a used car, customers should do



their due diligence—comparing prices across websites and scanning seller ratings before initiating a purchase, says Wiens.

Apple and other big brands have their own refurbished pipelines, and there’s also a mature ecosystem of third-party marketplaces including Back Market, Reebelo and Swappa.

Back Market says it works exclusively with professional sellers who are subject to inventory audits. The company offers warranties on its devices and vets its sellers. It offers free returns for a full refund or exchange within 30 days of receiving an item.

Reebelo also offers 12-month vendor warranties with coverage for some software and hardware defects. The company conducts background checks to vet vendors and rigorous diagnostics to ensure product quality, said Taylor Munguia,

▲ Refurbished phones go through a process where their key features are examined for quality assurance.

Reebelo’s chief commercial officer.

“We do a thorough screening of any merchant that’s selling on our marketplace,” he says. Reebelo also has a 30-day free return policy.

Swappa goes to great lengths to ensure sellers and their gadgets are legitimate and of high quality, says founder and CEO Ben Edwards. Before all listings are posted to the site, they are subject to a photo-verification process. Sellers must also provide relevant device information such as a product’s serial number to prove legitimacy.

That said, Edwards is clear-eyed about the prevalence of scammers in the used-gadget market. Swappa

has evolved its verification processes over the years to guard against new and emerging threats, including the rise of AI-generated images.

If you’re shopping on nonspecialized platforms such as Amazon or eBay, Edwards recommends paying close attention to the seller’s status. Those with plenty of five-star ratings are often a safe bet, he says.

Mind the specs

Before buying a used phone, shoppers should ensure that it is compatible with their wireless carrier, says Michael Fisher, who runs the tech-review YouTube channel MrMobile. For U.S. carriers, you’re typically fine with an “unlocked” phone.

Changing a device might also render your old charging cables and accessories obsolete, he adds. Upgrading to a newer iPhone, for example, might mean ditching Lightning cables for USB-C, which became the norm with the iPhone 15.

If longevity is a concern, Fisher recommends buying from a manufacturer that supports the most recent software updates.

And iPhone shoppers who want the latest features should bear this in mind: Apple Intelligence, including the completely rebuilt Siri, is only on the iPhone 15 Pro and the iPhone 16 and iPhone 17 lines. If you want the most advanced on-device AI capabilities, you’ll need at least an iPhone Air or a 17 Pro.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NIKO TAVENISE/UNIVERSAL PICTURES AND AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT; NIKO TAVENISE/UNIVERSAL PICTURES; UNIVERSAL PICTURES; US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ELISA SCHUPPIER/GETTY IMAGES

PERSONAL JOURNAL.

How to Prevent Personalized Pricing

Businesses using individual customer data to set unique prices is a concern for researchers and regulators

By Jackie Snow

Online shoppers are used to seeing prices change by the hour or minute. But what if the price you get is set for you alone—a measure of what the retailer thinks *you'll* pay based on the data it has about you—including who you are demographically, where you live and what you do online?

Businesses have long tracked customers' search behavior and buying history and used that information, along with other factors like a consumer's location, to offer promotions and discounts to motivate purchases. Dynamic pricing, where the same fare or rate shifts for everyone based on supply and demand, also has become common across industries, including airfares and ride-shares. What is different now and concerning to researchers is the possibility that online retailers could use personal data to set a higher *base price* for individual consumers, without their knowledge, when algorithms detect things like urgent need or high disposable income.

Driving the concern is the fact that companies now have access to much more detailed profiles of customers based on information drawn from across the Web, and pricing algorithms make it easier to adjust prices for individuals based on that data. Although companies say they aren't doing it, and lawmakers and regulators are taking steps to limit the practice, some researchers believe it is only a matter of time before online retailers start setting prices based on fine-tuned profiles of individuals.

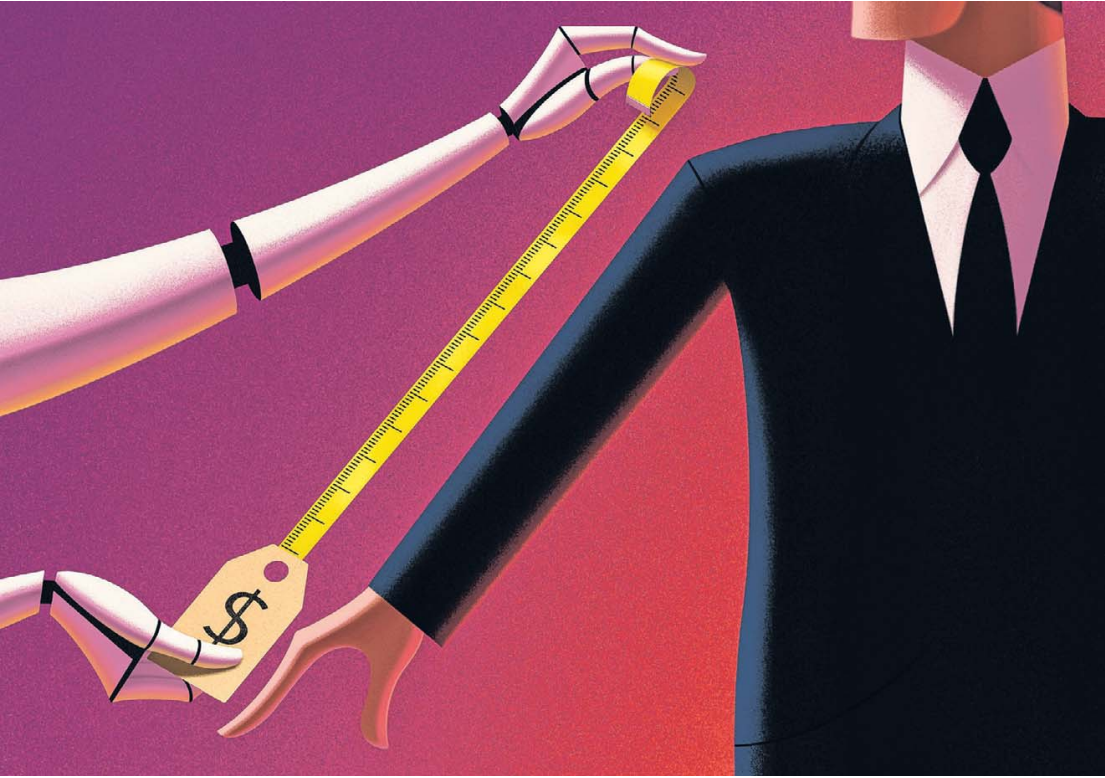
What do shoppers need to know about personalized pricing? And is there anything they can do to protect themselves?

Is it happening?

It is difficult to find more than isolated cases currently. However, many researchers believe personalized pricing will become increasingly common as the technology to make it possible improves.

Companies collect vast amounts of data about consumers already, including browsing history, location, device type, purchase patterns, even how long your cursor hovers over a product. Software that automates price-setting—often driven by artificial intelligence—can help retailers seamlessly turn that data into tailored pricing.

In early 2025, the Federal Trade Commission released initial findings of an investigation into surveillance pricing (another term for personalized pricing). It deter-



mined that companies were selling pricing and consumer-data tools to help retailers across various industries set individualized prices—a strong indication to some researchers that retailers were headed in that direction.

In December 2025, Consumer Reports and Groundwork Collaborative conducted an investigation in which they recruited more than 400 shoppers to log onto **Instacart** simultaneously and fill their carts with identical groceries from the same stores. They found that three quarters of the products showed different prices for different shoppers, with some items varying by as much as 23%.

An Instacart spokesperson said the price variations were the result of randomized experiments, not personalized pricing, and it has since ended them.

What's the concern?

Some regulators worry that retailers could use customers' browsing histories or other personal information to jack up prices even for basic goods such as groceries.

There also is concern that even if companies don't intentionally price based on protected characteristics like race or ethnicity, or age or disability, algorithms can produce the same result. Pricing based on ZIP Code, for instance, often correlates with race. What's more, there are increased privacy and cybersecurity risks when businesses share a lot of customer data drawn from various sources across companies and platforms.

One of the biggest fears is that a company could take advantage of customers' urgent needs to charge them more.

If you use a ride-share service

to take your children to school every morning, for example, the company knows your routine and knows you have somewhere to be at 8:30 a.m. "It would be logical to price that trip higher," says Len Sherman, a Columbia Business School professor. "They have the data."

Most states have price-gouging laws precisely because they've decided there are limits to how much companies can exploit desperate

circumstances. Personalized pricing may raise a similar question, just in everyday shopping. "There's always been that appetite for reasonableness within a market system," says John Yun, a law professor at George Mason University. "I think that's where personalized pricing is butting up against what we consider a reasonable use of supply and demand."

The National Retail Federation, which represents retailers across the country, said it has no evidence any of its members are doing this and sees it as counter to the industry's basic business model.

"Without building customer trust, you have nothing," says NRF Group's Jason Straczewski, vice president of government relations and political affairs.

What's being done

So far in 2026, more than 50 bills across more than half of U.S. states have been introduced addressing a variety of pricing practices that involve analyzing con-

sumer data through AI or other automated tools, according to a recent tally by the global data privacy and cybersecurity group at law firm Covington.

Maryland in April became the first state to ban food retailers and delivery services from using personal data to set higher prices.

In New York, a law took effect in November 2025 requiring companies to disclose when they use personal

data to set prices. State legislators are now pushing to go further, introducing two new bills that would ban the practice outright while preserving loyalty programs and coupons, as well as discounts for veterans and seniors.

In California, a bill currently moving through committee also would ban the use of personal data to set individualized retail prices statewide.

"A ban will be more effective than a disclosure," says Grace Gedye, a policy analyst at Consumer Reports who has been tracking algorithmic-pricing legislation across the country. "A disclosure puts the onus on consumers to figure out what to do with that information. A ban means you're protected by default."

At the federal level, the FTC shut down public comment on its surveillance-pricing investigation in 2025, but the agency's chairman said in April that it is still exploring whether new disclosure rules are needed. It also sought comment on personalized pricing as part of considering new rules on

food-delivery fees.

Separately, the House Oversight Committee launched a personalized-pricing investigation in March, sending letters to a variety of companies, requesting documents about their pricing practices. A committee spokesperson said the investigation is continuing.

What can consumers do?

Though it's difficult to hide your online identity, experts suggest a few steps worth trying, especially for big purchases.

► Compare prices across devices or browsers before committing. The differences may be small but it takes minutes and is worth the check.

► Use incognito or private browsing mode, which prevents cookies from persisting between sessions and makes it harder for sites to recognize you as a returning visitor, though many sites have tracking mechanisms other than cookies.

► Use aggregator sites like Google Flights or Kayak before going directly to a company's own platform. Searching through an aggregator avoids triggering demand signals on a single site, which may keep prices from rising before you are ready to book.

► Some believe a VPN can mask your location and may get you prices calibrated for a different market, particularly for international travel.

You can't eliminate your digital footprint entirely, says France Bélanger, a professor at Virginia Tech who studies cybersecurity and privacy issues, "but managing it is doable."

To be sure, hiding your digital footprint can come at a cost: There are times when you may end up paying more, not less.

That's because personalized pricing cuts both ways. The same tools that can be used to charge you more when you seem desperate also can be used to offer you a discount when you seem hesitant. If a retailer's algorithm detects that you have been browsing a product without buying, it may send you a coupon.

If it knows you are a price-sensitive shopper who compares across sites, it may offer you a better deal to close the sale. Block the cookies, hide your identity, and you may never see that offer.

"If you block your data, you only see the list price," says Ginger Zhe Jin, an economist at the University of Maryland who studies personalized pricing. "And the list price is the highest price you could pay."

Redemption For Coupon Hoarders

Continued from Page One

lievers. The chain's once-ubiquitous blue-and-white coupons are worth something again. The turn of events is providing the ultimate vindication for the die-hards who held on to the coupons long after that made any sense.

The homegoods retailer stopped accepting them in 2023 when it filed for bankruptcy and closed its stores. It relaunched online later that year under new owner Overstock.com, which changed its name to Bed Bath & Beyond. The digital version of the store offered coupons for 20% off a single item but didn't accept the paper coupons that most shoppers had stockpiled.

Now, Bed Bath & Beyond is reopening bricks-and-mortar stores. And the paper coupon is back, with a twist: It's also accepting old coupons.

At the opening of the first stores in Nashville in the fall, staff handed out coupons at the door. "People took selfies with them," said Amy Sullivan, president of the retailer's parent company. "One woman said, 'I never thought I'd see one of these again.'" Another woman brought a Ziplock bag full of old coupons.



That outpouring inspired Bed Bath & Beyond to run a contest to find the oldest coupon. To be eligible, shoppers must bring their old coupons by July 13. The grand prize is a \$100,000 home renovation.

The chain plans to continue to honor expired coupons after the sweepstakes ends.

Marc Hershberg has about 13 coupons stashed away in a drawer in his apartment. He got the oldest in 2014, while at law school in Chicago and brought it with him when he moved to New York City after graduation. The rest date from 2017 and were given to him by his parents when he bought his apartment.

Bed Bath & Beyond stopped accepting the coupons in 2023. The retailer is reopening bricks-and-mortar stores. Shawna May with one of her old coupons.

"I was going to throw them away when they declared bankruptcy," said the 33-year-old entertainment lawyer and Broadway musical producer. "But I thought it was a nice keepsake."

Hershberg, like other coupon lovers, said he had no interest in shopping at the online version of Bed Bath & Beyond. "I want to feel the quality of the towel or bath mat," he said.



The chain is opening 97 co-branded locations with the Container Store, which the parent company agreed to buy in April for \$150 million. Another 200 locations of Kirkland's Home, which it acquired last year for \$10 million, will also be converted to Bed Bath & Beyond stores.

Bed Bath & Beyond got its start in 1971 when founders Warren Eisenberg and Leonard Feinstein opened

their first two stores in the New York City suburbs. To hide the industrial fixtures, they piled towels, linens and bedding to the ceiling, giving rise to the clutter that became a hallmark of the chain.

The company didn't run sales and didn't spend a lot on advertising. Instead, it used a coupon offering 20% off any item. Shoppers stockpiled the dis-

counts because cashiers would usually accept them even if they expired. By 2020, executives said coupons were eating into profits. The company tried to lessen its dependence by introducing a membership model. Two years later, executives acknowledged they had underestimated shoppers' coupon attachment.

Shawna May shopped at the Bed Bath & Beyond store near her home in Middleton, N.Y., so often that the employees knew her by name. All her kitchen gadgets and utensils are from the chain as are her pots, pans, bedding and towels. For her housewarming in 2010, she registered for gifts at the retailer.

"On my birthday, my wish list was always from Bed Bath & Beyond," she said. Everything was purchased with a coupon.

The 37-year-old podcaster kept old coupons in case the store reopened. "Knowing I can use these coupons in a Bed Bath & Beyond store has made my day," she said.

ARTS IN REVIEW

THE ARTS AND THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: THEATER

Our Nation in the Limelight

In serious plays and dazzling musicals, writers, actors and directors have long brought the country’s essence to the stage

By CHARLES ISHERWOOD

Although the settlers who first arrived on the shores of what would become the United States were suspicious of the theatrical art, condemning it for licentiousness, the desire to see human experience reflected in public performance was a need dating back millennia and across many cultures. It was inevitable that theater would ultimately find fertile ground in the new country. And when the American theater grew to maturity, its greatest works explored the American experience and character with enduring insight and depth of feeling, whether in a tragedy derived from classical ideals or a great musical, one of the few truly indigenous American art forms.

A selection of the finest works from the canon that best reflect American culture might begin with Thornton Wilder’s 1938 masterwork **“Our Town.”** It may be the play most widely produced in America over the years, because its portrait of small-town life in New England seems to exemplify the ideals that have underpinned the culture: the importance of tight-knit family life and by extension the family of community.

But on a deeper level Wilder’s play, with its tragic undercurrents, speaks to another fundamental virtue enshrined as an American ideal: the importance of honesty. Every kid learns the apocryphal story of George Washington chopping down a cherry tree and confessing:



“I cannot tell a lie.” Nor could Wilder in his greatest play: Life, he reminds us, is precious but evanescent, and all too often we move

through it without grasping its value and its beauty. Wilder’s drama, in its bracing clarity, exemplifies the role of the artist as truth-teller.

Almost as popular and enduring is **“Death of a Salesman,”** Arthur Miller’s much-revered and much-revived classic from 1949. The play is often seen as a moralizing critique of the pernicious destructive-

ness of capitalism, the soul-destroying “rat race” that Willy Loman so resoundingly loses. But its most famous line—“Attention must be paid”—illuminates its greater significance as a drama upholding the importance of the individual, an idea enshrined in the Declaration of Independence itself. The play has also resonated through the years because audiences—American audiences in particular—see in Willy an emblem of the danger of forgetting that society must serve the individual as much as the individual must serve society; when the balance is destroyed, both suffer.

Opening on Broadway the same year as Miller’s drama was **“South Pacific,”** a musical that reflected a sunnier-spirited view of American enterprise. All of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s most celebrated works brim with the optimism that is among the cherished ideals associated with the American character. But they endure because that optimism is, as a song from the musical has it, a little “cockeyed,” not simplistic or saccharine. Against the implicit backdrop of the heroism of U.S. forces during World War II, the musical explores the persistence of bigotry and xenophobia, most famously in the song “You’ve Got to Be Carefully Taught,” illuminating the idea that racism is not an inherent human trait, but a moral evil inculcated by outside forces.

Considered by many the greatest American musical, **“Gypsy,”** from 1959, paints a scorching portrait of a stage mother, Momma Rose—referred to with a quintessentially American metaphor, as a “pioneer woman without a frontier”—driven to fight for success in the diminishing world of vaudeville for her two daughters, one of whom would become the stripper Gypsy Rose Lee.

The musical, with a celebrated score by Jule Styne and Stephen Sondheim, and a book by Arthur Laurents, takes a sardonic attitude to the idea of ambition—so cen-

Jim Parsons in the 2024 Broadway revival of ‘Our Town,’ above; Audra McDonald in the 2024 revival of ‘Gypsy,’ below; Laurie Metcalf and Nathan Lane in this year’s staging of ‘Death of a Salesman,’ bottom.

tral to the American character and culture. But while hardly sentimental, the show depicts another theme of fundamental importance running through the country’s history: that each generation has a chance to build upon the prior one, and parents have the responsibility to nurture this belief and help bring it to fruition—even if, in Momma Rose’s case, the means do not necessarily justify the ends.

Also opening on Broadway in 1959 was Lorraine Hansberry’s masterpiece **“A Raisin in the Sun,”** a touchstone of American drama. The story of a lower-middle-class black family in Chicago in conflict over how to allocate the money received from an insurance company after the death of the patriarch, “Raisin” explores the racism black citizens faced, and is among the most important works of mid-century art to grapple with the issue.

But in the staunch determination of Lena, the matriarch, to improve the family’s lives by moving into a better neighborhood—an exclusively white one—the play insists on the importance of Lena’s

refusal to sacrifice her honor, and her rights, for monetary gain: “The pursuit of happiness,” as she sees it, has no price tag. And Lena reflects an archetypal American figure central to black culture and pride: the matriarch who, against considerable obstacles, holds together a family and furthers its ambitions through her personal integrity and fortitude.

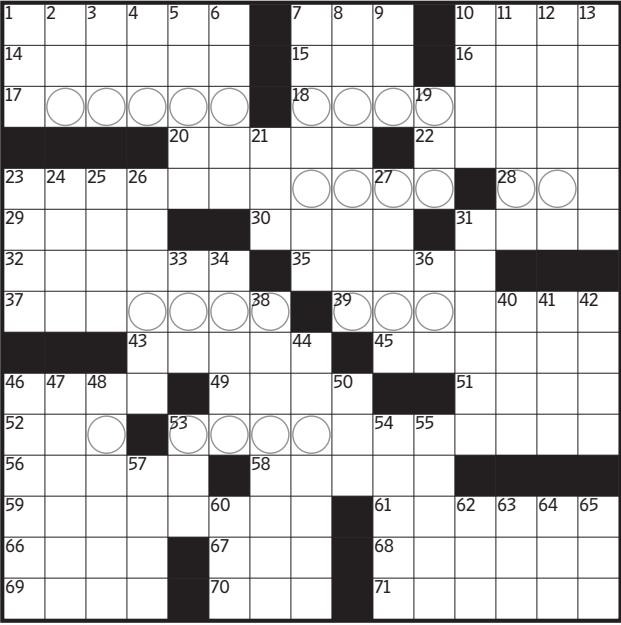
At its premiere in 1975, the dagger-sharp musical comedy **“Chicago”**—with a glittering score by John Kander and Fred Ebb, and a witty book by Ebb and its brilliant director-choreographer, Bob Fosse—was overshadowed by another “show-biz” musical, the more sentimental “A Chorus Line.” But time has proved “Chicago” to be the more enduring and important work. Its depiction of two murderesses who become rival celebrities was prescient. For better or worse, American culture became the predominant one in the 20th century, as movies captured the imagination of a worldwide public, and the fame-worship they inspired became a global phenomenon, to the point that celebrity divorced from talent or accomplishment is now a dubious hallmark of cultures everywhere.

Finally, almost all the plays from August Wilson’s cycle of 10 exploring the African-American experience in the 20th century can be viewed as important contributions to American culture. His 1985 drama **“Fences,”** set in 1957, focuses on the conflicts within a family headed by Troy, once a promising baseball player in the Negro Leagues whose career was derailed when he was imprisoned for a murder committed during a robbery.

He now struggles to keep his family afloat working as a garbage collector. The play’s richness defies simple exegesis, but its story encompasses several currents that run through American history: the dignity of work as opposed to the chasing of chimerical dreams; the importance of redemption and the difficulty of forgiveness; the sustaining love of family, and the grievance of its loss; and, perhaps most important—and harking back to the ideals that animated the country’s founders—the need for all men and women to stand up for their principles.

Mr. Isherwood is the Journal’s theater critic. See more of Arts in Review’s America 250 content at wsj.com.

The WSJ Daily Crossword | Edited by Mike Shenk



PARTIAL COMPENSATION | By Shmuel Schmell

- Across**

1 Time-tested maxim

7 Rockefeller in NYC or Kennedy in D.C.

10 Overly trusting person

14 Break off from the band, say

15 Director Ang

16 “The Simpsons” bus driver

17 Having a sickly complexion

18 Forebear

20 Safe removal?

22 Noun, if it’s not a person or place

23 Chicken dish in a creamy curry sauce

28 Bread choice

29 Tennis great Mandlikova

30 “Good shot!”

31 Use a Kindle
- 32 Discordant-sounding

35 Slam, say

37 Reporter’s lead

39 Last

43 Centipede creator

45 Garlic spreads

46 Smelter’s raw materials

49 Brooklyn basketball team

51 Give a fresh look to

52 Chop

53 Eons

56 Financial wherewithal

58 Sulking sort

59 The Jackal, in “The Day of the Jackal,” e.g.

61 Unions might oppose one, and a hint to the circled letters

66 Queens baseball team
- 67 Pro ____

68 Protectors from splatters

69 Away from land

70 NNW’s opposite

71 Apartment renter

Down

1 Respected pioneers, in slang

2 Mauna ____ (Hawaiian volcano)

3 Online access option

4 Note above fa

5 Hawaiian greeting

6 “Show the crowd your stuff!”

7 Enduring novel

8 Squid feature

9 Camcorder button

10 Have a snack

11 Duds

- 26 Dorothy’s home

27 British pop singer Lewis

31 Shark-riding fish

33 Bar worker: Abbr.

34 Either of two Chinese dynasties

36 Reagan program nicknamed “Star Wars,” for short

38 Early deliveries, informally

40 Designer Cassini

41 Flank

42 Possessive on Chinese menus

44 “My treat”

46 “Hoo, baby!”

47 Possessive on candy wrappers

48 Scrapped cellphones, e.g.

50 Syrup source

53 Pack animal

54 Nation whose rupee bills feature Mount Everest

55 Hang loosely

57 Artemis org.

60 Ave. crossers

62 Jr. and sr., e.g.

63 NYSE listings

64 French article

65 Mao ____-tung

Previous Puzzle’s Solution



► Solve this puzzle online and discuss it at [WSJ.com/Puzzles](https://www.wsj.com/puzzles).

OPINION

China’s Ambitious AI Blueprint



GLOBAL VIEW
By Walter Russell Mead

Haggling in Switzerland’s Bürgenstock Resort Lake Lucerne over the memorandum of understanding between the U.S. and Iran has dominated headlines, but the real news this month is coming out of China.

That news was easy to miss. Couched in the often impenetrable prose of Chinese bureaucrats and prefaced with the ritual genuflections toward Xi Jinping’s expressed vision for his country, “Implementation Opinions on Accelerating the Development of ‘AI+Consumption’ ” doesn’t strike the casual observer as a gripping read.

But as the Claude-enabled translation provided by Bill Bishop’s invaluable Sinocism newsletter makes clear, something important is happening. China is launching a full-scale push to roll out artificial intelligence across its economy and make this sector the foundation of its economic strategy. The text’s 17 points outline a plan to accelerate the rise of AI and reinvigorate the Chinese economy by re-orienting it around the new technologies.

As the bureaucrats put it, their goal is to “fully, accurately, and comprehensively implement the new development concept, give full play to China’s advantages of a super-large-scale market, broad

consumption scenarios, and abundant consumption-data resources, accelerate the demonstration application of new AI products, services, and scenarios, promote the entry of AI into tens of millions of households and tens of millions of shops, cultivate and form new consumption growth points and new momentum, drive the iterative upgrading of new AI technologies and products, open up new AI industries and new tracks, and better meet the people’s needs for a better life.”

The bureaucrats identify key sectors where they will focus. AI-enabled humanoid robots will transform industries like elder care. They envision a “people-vehicle-home” ecosystem that links smart cars, smart roads and smart homes. Brain-computer interfaces, AI-enabled smart glasses, wearables and other consumer products will roll out across the domestic and, increasingly, international markets. China will develop “a solid security line of defense,” which will protect its burgeoning ecosystem from malicious (and foreign) penetration. The current document doesn’t exist in a vacuum. It’s aimed at implementing the August 2025 decree by the State Council (China’s supreme administrative body) that lays out an ambitious 10-year plan for advancing AI and creating a new kind of intelligent society and economy that, the Communist Party hopes, will lead to the realization of the

socialist modernization of China.

Laying out a blueprint is one thing, transforming an economy another, but Western observers would be unwise to scoff. China’s planned economy has enormous and growing problems, but its planners remain extremely effective when it comes to directing investment

Beijing identifies key sectors for creating a ‘people-vehicle-home’ ecosystem.

into favored sectors and creating regulatory structures that favor the kind of investment and development that the party prefers.

Think of solar power and electric vehicles. When Western greens were trying to sell their grandiose plans for the so-called energy transition, they touted the jobs that the new industries would create. But China was able to create markets for solar power and electric vehicles at home by providing subsidized credit and shaping the regulatory climate to favor, for instance, the production and purchase of electric vehicles over fossil-fuel models. Intense competition among Chinese firms to take advantage of these opportunities (plus perhaps the usual contribution of intellectual property theft and reverse engineering), gave Chinese manufacturers a

commanding lead.

The plan is to repeat this strategy on a broader scale with AI. Unlike the Stalinist Soviet planners who built centrally planned industries, the Chinese planners are focusing on creating markets in designated sectors. This sometimes ends badly (think of the massive Chinese real-estate bubble) but often works well in the short to medium term.

China means business, closing more than 12,000 degree programs deemed obsolete and opening more than 10,000 courses on AI, robotics and advanced computing in recent years. If the Communist Party pursues its AI strategy with the focus and total control it has brought to favored economic sectors in the past, we should expect rapid improvements to the underlying capabilities of AI models and the swift integration of technology into consumer-facing industries.

Keeping up with China’s pace will test the U.S. In the Chinese system, Mr. Xi and a few of his associates can impose policies on the entire country. That isn’t how it works here. Developing public support for the next stages of the information revolution so that the U.S. doesn’t fall behind is harder than issuing top-down rules from Beijing.

Building a national consensus around supportive policies for these strategically indispensable technologies will be hard. But the future of human freedom may depend on our getting this done quickly and well.

BOOKSHELF | By Andrew Stark

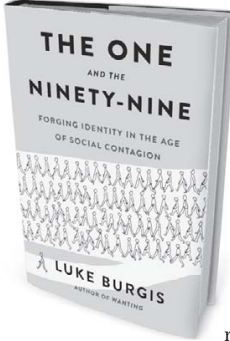
A Study In Selves

The One and the Ninety-Nine

By Luke Burgis
St. Martin’s, 288 pages, \$30

The word “agent,” Luke Burgis observes, is an interesting one. In a certain sense, an agent is someone with the capacity to act on the world and achieve his goals. Agency suggests individual power and competence. But in another sense, an agent is someone who acts not for himself but rather serves another. Think of literary, talent or sports agents. The very word reveals the deep tensions that exist between our own capabilities as distinct individuals and our dependence on others.

In “The One and the Ninety-Nine,” Mr. Burgis claims that “each of us is torn between belonging and differentiation, and few ever learn to manage that tension.” We go along to get along in the groups we inhabit, rarely speaking our true mind—or even developing one—for fear of causing a rupture. The author, a professor of business at the Catholic University of America, cites



everyone from undergraduates making themselves miserable by incessantly comparing job offers to Enron employees stifling their doubts about the company’s mounting fraud scandal. When we behave in this way, Mr. Burgis says, we are “pseudo-selves,” shaped “more by external expectations than by interior conviction.”

Mr. Burgis’s goal is to show readers how to become “solid selves” who can remain connected to others while staying true to their own core principles. His model is Nicholas Christakis, a Yale professor whose wife, Erika, then the head of a Yale residential college, questioned the university’s requirement in 2015 that students avoid potentially offensive Halloween costumes. Mr. Christakis defended his wife before a group of angry students for nearly an hour, vigorously disagreeing with them without ever retreating.

How do we transform ourselves from callow pseudo-selves to rooted solid selves? There is no one set of answers. Sometimes a modest change in routine will work. Mr. Burgis mentions a manager who decided to spend 20% of his time mentoring junior colleagues instead of the mere 2% his employer expected because he found it so fulfilling.

Sometimes we require a period of withdrawal and re-entry. In 2005 Dave Chappelle walked away from a \$50 million deal for “Chappelle’s Show” from Comedy Central. After taking some time off, the author relates, Mr. Chappelle found that performing in small clubs offered a way of working within the world of comedy that “felt true to him—one not driven by industry expectations.” Others might undergo a long slow boil. In his 1978 essay, “The Power of the Powerless,” Václav Havel imagined a Communist-era Czech grocer who decides one day to remove the state propaganda in his store window, a move with the potential to start a chain reaction leading others to take similar small acts of resistance.

Weaving his own story throughout, Mr. Burgis displays a telling eye for irony. In 2005 he started a business selling health-food vending machines but came to feel an increasing sense of inner emptiness. He later joined a seminary in Southern California with the idea of becoming a Catholic priest, and discovered that his first task involved restocking the residence’s vending machine each night—with Fritos, Snickers and Lays.

Modern life presents a fundamental tension: How can we remain connected to others while staying true to our own core principles?

Mr. Burgis’s theological studies took him to Italy, where he was assigned to pastoral ministry in a Rome suburb, visiting a home for men with HIV and AIDS. “Most of them did not have families or friends to care for them,” Mr. Burgis writes. “They were poor, and many had been ostracized.” Though Mr. Burgis encountered hostility from some of the men, he also connected with an older gentleman with whom he bonded while watching a tennis match on television. Mr. Burgis withdrew from seminary after realizing the priesthood wasn’t his calling, but he remains a devout Catholic whose faith centers his academic work in entrepreneurship.

Mr. Burgis’s emphasis on discussing how to transform from pseudo-selves to solid selves misses a few things. Often, our life arcs lead us from one solid self to another. As a young man, Sen. Robert Byrd joined the Ku Klux Klan. By the end of his life he had become, as the NAACP said, a “champion for civil rights.” Byrd’s personal transformation involved migrating from a solid self who truly believed in segregation to a solid self who truly believed in racial equality. This necessitated a deeper kind of personal growth than does the ordinary maturation from pseudo to solid that Mr. Burgis discusses.

Others can maintain two different solid selves at the same time. During the 2004 presidential campaign, Vice President Dick Cheney publicly disagreed with President George W. Bush’s position against same-sex marriage. Yet Cheney also said he respected the fact that the president was the ultimate decider. Mr. Burgis might see Cheney’s behavior as lacking integrity, but the vice president was faithfully navigating two solid selves—one who was candid about his views on marriage, another who felt as strongly that his duty was to support the administration.

By the same token, Mr. Burgis fails to discuss cases where the conflict is between one pseudo-self and another. As national security adviser in the early 1970s, Henry Kissinger seemed to invite criticism from reporters by adopting a dovish position on the Vietnam War in their off-the-record conversations while taking a hawkish stance with President Richard Nixon so as not to lose his boss’s confidence.

Mr. Burgis has written an absorbing book. His focus on the transition from pseudo-selves to solid selves, though, neglects the reality that many of us spend at least parts of our lives journeying between or even cohabiting conflicting solid selves, while others do the same with opposing pseudo-selves. We are large, as Walt Whitman said. We will always contradict ourselves—and will do so in contradictory ways.

Mr. Stark is the author of “The Consolations of Mortality” and “Conflict of Interest in American Public Life.”



MAIN STREET
By William McGurn

Island for the ordination of a son of close friends, we gladly accepted—even though we didn’t really know the ropes.

In many ways, an ordination is like a wedding. There is a Mass, followed by a reception celebrating a lifetime commitment. The new priest, Dillon Scott Vita, is the son of one of my college roommates, Bill, and his wife, Eileen. And because we had been to the weddings of Dillon’s sister and brother, I had to wonder if his ordination would seem a little lonely by comparison.

It didn’t. Dillon’s ordination was the most joyous celebration we have ever witnessed.

On Saturday, we watched Bishop John O. Barres lay hands on Dillon’s head to confer the sacrament of the priesthood on him. I thought of our connection. Dillon’s father and I met 50 summers ago as 17-year-olds at Notre Dame, fresh out of high school. Another college roommate of ours, Jim Bowers, was also there both 50 years ago

and this weekend, with his wife, Becky.

Never in our wildest dreams could we have imagined that half a century after that first meeting we would be standing together before an altar as a young man whom we had held in our arms as a baby freely consecrated himself to serving God.

Over 50 years we have seen a great deal of life together. We’ve traveled together, attended each other’s weddings, and borne our hurts and tragedies together. Our happiness is their happiness and vice versa, and the same for tears.

In all that, we are like most every other group of friends. With this difference. In tracking our friendship over decades, we can also mark our way by the sacraments: marriages, baptisms, First Communions, etc.

Now we can add Holy Orders. The most moving part may have been when the man we now call Father Vita offered a small cloth to his mother. It is the manutergium, the cloth the new priest uses to wipe the sacred chrism oil from his now-anointed hands.

Eileen will be buried with it, and when she comes before the Lord in judgment, tradition holds he will ask her, “I have given you life. What have you given me?” She will answer, “I have given you my son as a priest.”

It was a powerful moment, and all around me even the men were bawling like a bridesmaid at her best friend’s wedding. Including me.

We Catholics need priests. Last year the Journal ran an article about the priest shortage in the U.S.: “Since 1970, the global Catholic population has doubled, but the number of priests has dipped. As aging clergy die, the ranks of those waiting to take their place has

An old friend’s son joyfully joins the Catholic Church’s dwindling priesthood.

dwindled, leaving some parishes with no leader. Seminaries are closing or merging across the Church’s European heartland, which for centuries trained most of the world’s priests and sent them to evangelize the furthest corners of the globe.” The only region in the world where priestly vocations are growing is Africa. Dillon knows this—as do the two men ordained with him on Saturday, the Rev. Patrick O’Brien and the Rev. Nicholas Waldron.

Most stories about the men who become priests these days focus on the newer generation being more

conservative (read: orthodox) than the generation they are replacing. But the defining characteristic of the men we saw on Saturday was something altogether different: joy.

Dillon and his priestly companions are aware of the conflicts within the church and the diminished public respect for the priesthood, yet still they chose a life in service of the Lord. A life that promises them no riches, constant interruptions and often unreasonable demands, without even the comfort of a wife or a child. Still they say yes—freely, cheerfully, wholeheartedly—and the love emanating from the packed pews at the Cathedral of St. Agnes speaks to the hope these men represent.

Theologian George Weigel says that a Catholic priest “must understand himself to be what he is: a living icon of the eternal priesthood of Christ and order his life, in all its facets, according to that awesome truth.”

On this past weekend, as Dillon and Messrs. O’Brien and Waldron offered themselves to the Lord, the world’s headlines focused on other things: Iran, the price of oil, President Trump, etc. This isn’t an auspicious time for a bright and hopeful young man to become a priest.

Or is it?

Write to mcgurn@wsj.com.

The Trouble With the Trump Accounts

By Adam Michel

My 1-year-old son qualifies for a Trump Account, and I’ve opened it to claim the \$1,000 government deposit. But I won’t be putting any of my personal after-tax wages in it, and neither should most parents. That is a shame. Trump Accounts are a good idea, poorly executed. A simple reform could make them worthwhile.

Normal investments get taxed twice. You pay taxes when you earn the money as wages, and then any profit you make on the investment gets taxed again at the lower capital-gains rate. Nearly every tax-advantaged investment account—401(k)s and individual retirement accounts, 529 plans for education—eliminates either the wage tax on the way in or the capital-gains tax on the way out.

A traditional IRA lets you make pretax contributions and taxes the withdrawals. A Roth IRA flips it: after-tax dollars in, tax-free out. The result is similar: Tax the money going in or tax it

coming out, but not both. Trump Accounts do both. The accounts accept after-tax dollars from parents and other authorized individuals, but when the child turns 18, they convert to traditional IRAs for retirement. That means the gains (along with the original \$1,000) are taxed at withdrawal as ordinary income rather than at the lower capital-gains tax rate, which

A free \$1,000 is nice, but parents’ funding is double-taxed.

would have applied if the investment weren’t in a Trump Account. You pay taxes on the front end and the high rate on the back end. No deduction, no capital-gains rate, no flexibility.

If you are investing after-tax money for your children, a 529 plan is the better option for education savings. Money goes in after-tax, and qualified withdrawals are tax-free. Recent rule changes make 529s even better by allowing up to \$35,000 to be rolled

into the child’s Roth IRA, freeing the funds from the education restrictions. For general saving, a brokerage account allows the same after-tax contributions and keeps the lower capital-gains tax rate, with no restrictions on when you can touch the money.

The fix is easy: Lawmakers should pick a lane. Make contributions tax-free and then tax the withdrawals. That is how a traditional IRA works. Alternatively, keep the after-tax contributions and make the withdrawals tax-free, like a Roth. Either path would give parents an incentive to add their own money.

While they are at it, lawmakers should drop the lock-up rules and penalties, and instead let the savings roll into a more flexible account at age 18.

Under current rules, if a child withdraws funds before retirement for anything other than a short list of government-approved uses, such as college or a first home purchase, he owes an additional 10% penalty on top of ordinary income taxes. IRS data show lower-income

households are the most likely to pull money out early, and few 18-year-olds will leave it untouched until they turn 59½. A penalty on early access is a tax on flexibility charged to the people who can least afford it.

The better design would be a Universal Savings Account. The owner could pull money out at any time, for any reason, without penalties. Canada and the U.K. have had similar accounts for years. There, simple, multipurpose accounts have allowed people to build personal savings for decades without a dollar of government subsidy. That is what a Trump Account should become when the child turns 18.

The idea behind Trump Accounts is sound, but Congress got the tax treatment wrong. Make contributions tax-free, and I’ll happily fund my children’s Trump Accounts. Until then, the \$1,000 handout is where it stops. The rest I’ll save elsewhere.

Mr. Michel is director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute and author of the Liberty Taxed Substack.

OPINION

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

The Myth of the ‘Maestro’

Alan Greenspan, who died Monday at age 100, is being hailed in the press as a great central banker with the flaw that he didn’t endorse enough financial regulation. That narrative obscures the real success and failure of the man who presided as Chairman of the Federal Reserve from 1987-2006.

The paradox of Greenspan’s career is that he presided over the best and worst modern eras of the Fed. Appointed by Ronald Reagan to replace the great Paul Volcker, Greenspan kept the Fed on the policy path of disinflation. This became known as the Great Moderation as inflation was largely contained while the U.S. economy grew in robust fashion.

This was the era when Greenspan, supported by fellow Fed Governor Wayne Angell, followed a de facto price rule in setting monetary policy. The Fed focused on actual prices in the economy, including commodities, and Greenspan told us more than once that he even kept a wary eye on the price of gold.

Along the way he helped prevent various financial panics from becoming more serious—most notably, the stock market plunge of 22.6% on a single day in October 1987 that became known as Black Monday. The Greenspan Fed pledged to provide adequate financial liquidity, and the panic abated. He is also rightly praised for recognizing that the 1990s productivity boom gave the Fed leeway not to raise interest rates amid faster economic growth.

The bad turn came in the 2000s after 9/11 and the dot-com bust. Influenced by then Fed Governor Ben Bernanke, Greenspan became preoccupied with the risk of deflation. In June 2003 Greenspan cut the fed funds rate to 1% and kept it there for a year, though the second Bush tax cut had passed Congress in May and the economy had begun to surge.

Greenspan tightened money slowly after that, despite rising oil and other commodity prices. Thus was born the great credit mania

of the mid-2000s. These columns warned consistently in that era that the Fed was too easy for too long, and Greenspan let us know in often contentious phone calls that he didn’t like our then-lonely warnings.

Only in 2005 did Greenspan finally say publicly that housing prices had become “frothy.” But by then the credit mania and housing bubble were already long building. The music stopped in 2008, producing the panic that did so much harm to the free-market economy that Greenspan promoted.

The Fed wasn’t alone in feeding the housing bubble, as Congress pressed Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to guarantee subprime mortgages and “liar loans.” To his credit, Greenspan in the 2000s was an ally of the George W. Bush White House in pressing Congress to shore up the capital standards of Fannie and Freddie. But the housing lobby owned Congress, which acted only after it was too late.

Greenspan’s worst moment came amid the financial panic, after he had retired from the Fed, when he blamed the financial meltdown on others. “Those of us who have looked to the self interest of lending institutions to protect shareholders’ equity, myself especially, are in a state of shocked disbelief,” he told Congress in October 2008.

That comment, which received enormous publicity, let the political class off the hook and fed the belief that the panic was a crisis of capitalism that needed more regulation. Greenspan never admitted the failure of monetary policy or of the regulators at the time who had allowed Citigroup and other banks to create the off-balance-sheet vehicles that failed.

The tragedy of this career finale is that it marred what was otherwise Greenspan’s keen lifelong understanding that government can’t fine-tune the economy or create wealth. The press called Greenspan the “maestro.” But he always knew that neither he nor anyone else in Washington conducted the U.S. economy.

The longtime Fed Chairman fed the credit mania that led to the 2008 financial panic.

A quarter of the World Cup squad was born outside of the U.S.

The Supreme Court is expected to rule soon on President Trump’s birthright citizenship order. Win—or more likely—lose, he might take note that the success of the U.S. men’s national soccer team in this year’s World Cup is the product in part of America’s historically welcoming immigration system and automatic grant of birthright citizenship to children born in the U.S.

The U.S. team last week clinched a spot in the knockout round after defeating Australia. A quarter of its players were born outside of the U.S., including Gio Reyna, Antonee Robinson and Sebastian Berhalter (U.K.), Sergiño Dest (Netherlands), Malik Tillman (Germany) and Alejandro Zendejas (Mexico).

Many players are also first- or second-generation Americans of diverse descent. Forward Haji Wright was born to a father from Ghana and mother from Liberia. Striker Ricardo Pepi’s parents immigrated from Mexico. Attacking

midfielder Christian Pulisic’s grandfather was a Croatian emigrant.

Star striker Folarin Balogun, who scored two goals in the opening game victory over Paraguay, was born in Brooklyn in 2001 to a Nigerian mother visiting New York from London. Two months later she returned with him to the U.K. where he

grew up. Under Mr. Trump’s birthright citizenship order, he wouldn’t have automatically received U.S. citizenship since his mom was a temporary visitor. He may not have been eligible for the U.S. team.

As our friend Stuart Anderson noted in a recent piece for Reason magazine, “hiring athletic talent from around the world has enhanced the quality of play and attracted more fans domestically and internationally” for U.S. soccer and other professional sports. America’s World Cup men’s team shows again how bringing in foreign talent can be a win for the individuals and for the country.

Once complete, Micron’s project will consume more power than the entire state of New Hampshire. That means major transmission upgrades will be required. Because New York is forcing natural gas power plants to shut down, energy regulators must ensure Micron won’t strain the grid.

Congress in 2024 passed a law exempting some semiconductor projects from the National Environmental Policy Act’s stringent environmental reviews. But the exemptions don’t apply to Micron’s project. Congress also didn’t pre-empt state environmental rules.

Mr. Schumer has described Micron’s site as “open fields,” but it includes hundreds of acres of wetlands and forestland that are nesting areas for endangered bats. This makes permitting and building more complicated. Trees can only be chopped down when bats aren’t nesting—i.e., from November to March.

To obtain federal and state permits, Micron committed to spend \$1 million to protect the bats and install 10 “bat houses.” The manufacturer also agreed to provide on-site child-care for workers and enter into project labor agreements with unions in return for \$6 billion in federal largesse.

Construction was supposed to start two years ago, but tree clearing didn’t begin until this past January owing to laborious environmental reviews. New York’s draft environmental impact statement numbered more than 700 pages, plus 22,000 pages of supplemental material. Environmental groups sued in January to stop the project, so who knows when it will be complete?

The good news is that Micron has accelerated construction of a manufacturing fab in Boise, Idaho, which is expected to begin producing chips next summer. A Samsung AI chip project in Texas is also supposed to be up and running next year. As usual, New York lags. Americans will pay twice for Mr. Schumer’s political meddling.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fewer People on Food Stamps Isn’t Good News

Regarding your editorial “The Food Stamp Rolls Decline—Hurray” (Review & Outlook, June 8): Recent declines in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participation risk being misinterpreted as reduced need.

Our analysis of participation trends since the budget reconciliation bill became law last July shows that millions of people leaving SNAP aren’t doing so because their economic circumstances have improved. Rather, the law’s stricter time limits, administrative hurdles and pending cost-shift to states, along with inadequate benefits, are pushing eligible households off the program.

That isn’t a success story. It is a warning sign. SNAP is an economic stabilizer for households with children, older adults, people with disabilities and veterans.

SNAP also supports local communities. The National Grocers Association

estimated in 2025 that SNAP supported approximately 388,000 jobs, over \$20 billion in direct wages, resulting in over \$4.5 billion in state and federal tax revenue.

When investments are made in SNAP, real progress is made toward lifting people out of poverty. According to the latest Census-based data, SNAP lifted 3.6 million Americans out of poverty in 2024.

When SNAP benefits better align with increasing food costs, more families stay above the poverty line. When barriers increase, the opposite happens.

Through legislation, Congress should ensure that everyone has the nutrition they need to thrive rather than make it harder for families to put food on the table.

CRYSTAL FITZSIMONS
Food Research & Action Center
Washington

Power Grid Battles Are Won at the Local Level

In his op-ed “On Energy, Democrats Can Learn From Texas” (June 16), Rahm Emanuel proposes a tax on hyperscalers and suggests that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission impose “a 24-month shot clock for permitting approved projects so recalcitrant states and localities can’t stand in the way.”

The diagnosis is right, but the prescription points in the wrong direction. Washington doesn’t site transmission lines. Counties do.

I used to work in the data-center industry, and I can say with confidence that the major fights over energy infrastructure aren’t happening in a congressional committee room. They are happening in a county supervisors’ meeting, where a farmer worried about a transmission easement and a planning board member worried about re-election decide whether a project gets built.

According to the Clean Air Task Force, by mid-2024, local governments

had authority over renewable energy siting in 37 states. Columbia Law School’s Sabin Center for Climate Change Law found that by the end of 2024, at least 450 counties had adopted restrictions on it. A federal shot clock can’t override that authority because it comes from the same constitutional structure that gives states control over land use.

The solution Mr. Emanuel is reaching for already exists, just not in Washington. Iowa generates more than 60% of its electricity from wind, at rates below the national average, in large part because wind developers pay landowners directly and fund local tax bases. Communities that share in the benefits are far more willing to host the infrastructure. That is the model worth scaling, and it starts at the county line, not the Beltway.

SYLVIE LÉGÈRE
Co-founder, The Policy Circle
Wilmette, Ill.

Put Pressure on Russia by Enforcing Sanctions

Oil sanctions on Russia have been an effective tool at tightening Moscow’s budget and forcing Vladimir Putin to choose between funding the war in Ukraine or providing for the well-being of his own people (“Macron Turns Focus to Ukraine at G-7,” World News, June 17). In President Trump’s discussions with foreign leaders at the Group of Seven summit, he indicated he will soon resume enforcing sanctions on Russian oil. Now is the time to dial up the economic pressure on Russia and use oil sanctions to deprive Mr. Putin of the oil revenue he desperately needs to continue his unjust war in Ukraine.

The U.S. temporarily waived oil sanctions and provided Russia with billions of dollars in oil revenue. Despite Russia’s financial reprieve, the Russian military has yet to achieve a breakthrough in Ukraine, and domestic

discontent inside Russia is rising. I have opposed this waiver on the Senate floor, and I urged the administration not to extend the waiver on Russian oil, which recently expired. The price of crude oil in the U.S. has returned to levels last seen in March; sanctions have proved effective at choking off critical revenue for Moscow; and Russia’s economic squeeze will further aid the Ukrainians in the defense of their homeland. Continued sanctions relief for Russia goes against our national interests.

SEN. JERRY MORAN (R., KAN.)
Hays, Kan.

This Time Will Be Different

Regarding your editorial “Trump Stages an Iran Retreat” (June 16): Ronald Reagan said the nine most terrifying words in the English language are: “I’m from the government, and I’m here to help.” I would add to that, in view of the memorandum of understanding about a peace deal with Iran, a more succinct replacement for the most terrifying words: “This time it will be different.”

PETER DODGE
St. Augustine, Fla.

Unionize the Candle Makers

Teamster Keith Hernandez’s alarm over driverless trucks in his letter “Driverless Trucks Take Good Jobs Away From Americans” (June 18) conjures up a similar headline: Edison Introduces Electric Lightbulb—Candle Makers Threatened!

PETER J. COTCH
Naples, Fla.

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Pepper ... And Salt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



“Kommmbucha!
Get your kommmmbucha!”

OPINION

AI Needs Public Quality Testing

By Campbell Brown

I use artificial intelligence every day. It helps me pressure-test arguments, quickly solve problems, and go deep on subjects I might never have explored. So I wasn't surprised when, ahead of the Texas primaries, my sister said she would use ChatGPT to learn about the candidates.

The next decade will likely be defined by the everyday use of AI as it becomes the main way people get vital information. AI won't only point users to sources. It will summarize and explain the world. Already it is so good its mistakes don't look like mistakes. They are presented with such clarity and confidence that we have little reason to doubt them.

I have spent most of my career trying to answer a related question: How do you figure out what is true? I worked as a journalist at NBC News and CNN, and later as head of news at Meta, working with the team that built systems to distinguish credible news articles from fabrications.

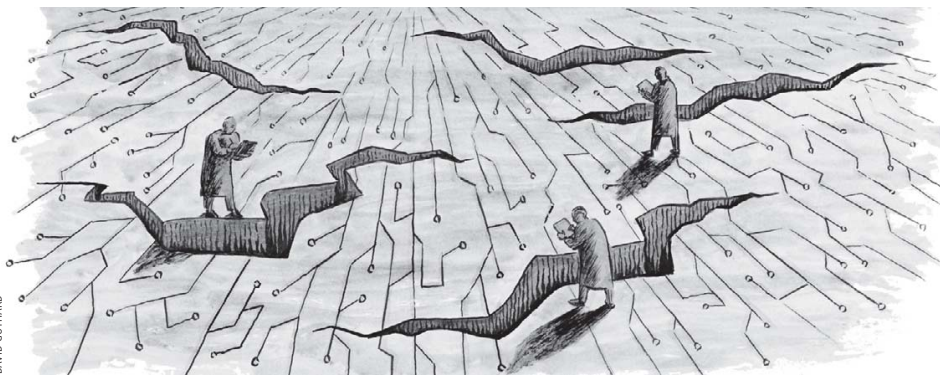
The big issue in social media for two decades was which stories and

As we grow more reliant on these systems, it will be crucial for experts to judge their output reliably.

content were amplified. Systems optimized for engagement rewarded outrage and down-ranked nuance, as trust in these tools eroded.

AI is a far more capable technology for engaging with and understanding the world, which is why getting this problem right matters more, not less. It will require AI companies to open themselves up to scrutiny in ways they haven't in the past.

At Forum AI, we built an independent system to evaluate how the leading AI models handle politically sensitive topics and current events, one of the hardest things for them to get right. We brought together a bipartisan network of people who have spent their careers navigating these questions: intelligence analysts, foreign-



DAVID GOTHARD

policy professionals, journalists, economists and legal scholars. We tested the major AI models on three dimensions this group identified as the foundation of trustworthy information: quality of sources, factual accuracy and whether they present a response with real balance or just the appearance of it.

We found serious gaps: The models misstated public opinion on political topics and attributed quotations to people who didn't say them. AI models gave incorrect answers to questions about mail-in voting and ballot fraud, and named the wrong people when asked who had endorsed whom. On open-ended, contested questions that voters might ask before an election—about gerrymandering, immigration and climate—they often advocated one side.

The most revealing failures were much subtler. When we asked the major models something as basic as what form of government the U.S. has, one of them, Claude Opus 4.7, cited Global Times, a Chinese state-run tabloid.

Accuracy in politics, health, finance and education depends on more than getting a date or a name right. It depends on which sources are selected, which context is included, which perspectives are left out, and whether the strongest version of a competing argument is presented. A model can be technically correct and still mislead.

Trust has become a major barrier to widespread adoption of AI. But trust can be established only by

making these systems worthy of it. That requires something the industry mostly avoids. Model makers grade their own homework. They run their own internal tests and publish blog posts telling us how well they performed. Rarely do they submit to independent evaluation, and even more rarely to evaluation by people with expertise.

If a young person talks to a chatbot about self-harm, I want that response judged by clinicians who have spent decades with patients. A political scientist or an elections lawyer assessing an AI response will catch failures even a brilliant engineer may miss: a skewed source, a misleading frame, a missing caveat.

This is a civic problem, but also an institutional problem. A bank shouldn't rely on an AI tool that gives incomplete financial guidance. A hospital shouldn't deploy a system that misses context in a patient's file. If liability for AI's mistakes lands on businesses, businesses will rely on AI less.

I'm not a disinterested party. Independent evaluation is the work we do at Forum AI, and we hold ourselves to the same standard we're asking of the labs: Our methods and our failures are public for anyone to check.

That standard should apply across the board, and it begins with independent audits: test sets built not from sanitized benchmarks but from questions people actually ask. Ask a model whether a specific over-the-counter medication is safe to take during pregnancy, and you can learn whether it offers the caveats a doctor

would insist on. Ask it to explain a contested ballot measure, and you will see whether it presents both sides fairly.

Then publish the failures. When a model tells a user that a drug interaction is harmless when it isn't or sources a claim about American elections to foreign state media, those mistakes should publicized, alongside the fix and proof the fix worked. Today the public sees the news that a model got safer. It seldom sees what problems had to be solved first.

None of this requires an act of Congress. The open market has given rise to systems of independent evaluation. An electrical product carries a UL mark because Underwriters Laboratories, a private body, has tested it, and because retailers and insurers learned not to trust products that didn't. Carmakers chase a Top Safety Pick from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety because buyers now look for it. No law required either system. Regulation, when it came, mostly ratified what the market had already settled on.

We don't take self-graded results seriously in any other field. A scientist can't peer-review her own study. An athlete can't referee his own match. And a company building systems that increasingly decide what hundreds of millions of people believe to be true cannot be the only judge of whether they can be trusted.

Ms. Brown is a co-founder and CEO of Forum AI.



EDITOR AT LARGE
By Gerard Baker

The path to Rome is well-trodden. Converts to Catholicism have been among the most important contributors to the church's evangelism. In the English-speaking world, the works of St. John Henry Newman, G.K. Chesterton, Thomas Merton, Dorothy Day and others have greatly enriched the intellectual heritage of Catholic life.

The path is still crowded. In recent years it has been followed by Protestants discouraged by the more milquetoast denominations' teachings and attracted to the harder-edged contours of Roman orthodoxy. In an age of political zealotry, often underpinned by religious self-righteousness, a cradle Catholic can't help but wonder about the motivation of some of these new members of the flock. You get the impression that for some it's less about converting themselves to Rome than about converting Rome to them, supplying a more robust vehicle for their unchanging ideas.

My favorite literary example of a cynical attempt at a Catholic conversion is from "Brideshead Revisited," Evelyn Waugh's novel of the redeeming grace of God's love for those who seek him and even those who don't.

Rex Mottram is a ruthlessly ambitious man. Canadian by birth, a successful business career behind him, he moves to Britain to advance quickly in interwar high society and achieve political preferment. He plans to marry Lady Julia Flyte, a beautiful scion of Catholic nobility, to cement his credentials in conservative circles. He must convert to Catholicism to marry and is sent for instruction to a leading Jesuit priest.

Mottram is eager to please but theologically incurious and shows no interest or aptitude for the faith.

Later, recounting his fruitless sessions with his hopeless catechumen, Father Mowbray tells the matriarch how he tried to explain to Mottram the concept of papal infallibility:

"I asked him: 'Supposing the Pope looked up and saw a cloud and said "It's going to rain," would that be bound to happen?' 'Oh, yes, Father.' 'But supposing it didn't?' He thought a moment and said, 'I suppose it would be sort of raining spiritually, only we were too sinful to see it.' "

Like the vice president's religious beliefs, his politics seem rather too conveniently flexible.

JD Vance is far too clever to misgrasp Catholic teaching so entertainingly. In this setting, he'd probably lecture the Jesuit on the evolution of papal authority and explain the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in perfect Yale Law School language.

But there is still something of Rex Mottram about the vice president. No one should doubt the sincerity of his faith. But it isn't unreasonable, given his long, meandering, ideological and political journey, to wonder about the sincerity of this latest departure in his mental odyssey.

In his newly published book, "Communion: Finding My Way Back to Faith," a second memoir after the bestselling "Hillbilly Elegy," Mr. Vance chronicles how he went from evangelical Christian to militant atheist to Catholic.

To lifelong Catholics, the zeal of the fresh convert can be a little unnerving. More steeped in the scriptural and doctrinal strictures than the rest of us, they sometimes seem to have overlooked the simplest of the church's—and Christ's—injunctions, on matters

like love, mercy and charity. They can opine at length on Augustinian ensoulment and its relevance to abortion law or how the Thomist interpretation of the *ordo amoris* sanctions immigration restrictionism. But somewhere along the way a Beatitude or two got lost in the dogma.

Mr. Vance knows this and tries to correct it. He seems to have in mind Catholic social-justice teaching when he makes the case for a Christian approach to running the economy more fairly, and he works hard to reconcile the harsher elements of the populist nationalism he espouses with the ideals of the universal church on issues such as immigration and war and peace. Perhaps it is a zeal for peace-making that has given him a prominent role in the Trump administration's controversial proposal to end the war with Iran.

But the tensions are never far below the surface. This newly minted Catholic seemed to think it was fine to tell Pope Leo XIV that he needs to work harder on his theology. He expresses remorse for some of his less charitable rhetorical flights on his

political journey, but he seems less contrite than concerned about the political effects. You have the sense that whenever his newly Catholic conscience is in conflict with his political priorities, it isn't really a contest. Politics wins every time.

Waugh's Mottram, by the way, was an opportunistic careerist who "flirted with communism and fascism" and ended up as a populist demagogue.

But there's another moment in English literature that elegantly captures the Vance problem. In a scene in Robert Bolt's "A Man for All Seasons," St. Thomas More upbraids his future son-in-law Will Roper, a fierce partisan in the religious wars of the time, whose position on the Reformation shifts almost as much as Mr. Vance's.

"Two years ago you were a passionate churchman," More says. "Now you're a passionate Lutheran. We must just pray that when your head's finished turning your face is to the front again."

That's a prayer for Mr. Vance and his evolving beliefs that all of us, Catholic, or not, surely endorse.

Stuttering Is in the Genes

By Shalom Goodman

My son, Elisha, 2, tried to say a word. I heard his effort before I let myself name it: the repetition, the struggle, the bumpiness my father calls "disfluency."

I have stuttered as long as I have been speaking. On a good day it takes me 10 or 15 seconds to say my own name. Sh. Sh. Sh. Sha. Sha. Sha. Breath. Sh. Shhhhhhalom. Job interviews, food orders and first meetings are each a negotiation between what I want to say and what my body will let me say. About 1% of adults carry a stutter for life. I am one of them. So was my grandfather. So, perhaps, is my son.

Until last summer, no one could tell us why. Then researchers at Vanderbilt and Wayne State, drawing on the DNA of more than a million people, published in Nature Genetics the largest genomewide study of stuttering ever conducted. They identified 57 genomic regions associated with it, sharing genetic architecture with autism, depression and the ability to keep time in a musical rhythm.

For parents like me, the research isn't a curse but preparation. The American Academy of Pediatrics now urges earlier referral to a speech-language pathologist rather than the old "wait and see" guidance. The clinical consensus is unanimous: demonstrate acceptance, minimize reactions and don't let the child feel your anxiety,

because the worry can make stuttering worse. The most important thing I can do for my son is to be less afraid.

I was raised in a Chabad-Lubavitch family, and the teaching I return to is that the Creator does not deal in randomness. Every soul is given exactly what it needs to complete its mission. The research doesn't contradict that worldview but deepens it, letting us meet our children where they are instead of where we feared they would be.

My grandfather Jimmy stuttered until he died at 95. When I told him at 28 that I had gotten a job at his favorite paper, The Wall Street Journal, I held his hand and said, "Grandpa, I'm going to be all right." He died a few months later. I know his soul heard me.

Schools rightly teach children to be careful with words about race, sex and body size. They usually don't teach a class on what to do when a classmate can't get a word out, or teach the teacher to wait.

When I was dating my wife, Lilach, I told her that stuttering is hereditary and that she might have children who stutter.

She didn't hesitate and said words I will never forget: "I'm not worried. If our children stutter, they will have the best role model in the world."

Mr. Goodman is executive director of Collective Kindness, a Jewish charity, and a former editor at the Journal.

Israel Isn't a Party to the Iran Deal

By Avigdor Lieberman

Jerusalem

There is no room for illusions. The deal between Washington and Tehran won't stop Iran from becoming a nuclear power. It will guarantee it.

Israel's current leadership is responsible for not only the worst security disaster in our nation's history, but also our worst diplomatic failure. Senior Israeli officials were ostracized within the White House and not made privy to what was taking place behind closed doors once a cease-fire had been reached. The Israeli position was left completely off the table.

The memorandum of understanding between the U.S. and Iran has fully legitimized Iran's nuclear ambitions and paved the way for a final agreement far worse than President Obama's 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Worse still, the emerging framework is eerily similar to the agreement reached between the U.S. and North Korea during the Clinton administration. We all know how that worked out.

No time can be wasted deflecting blame. Israel must immediately adopt a clear and decisive strategy to confront the dangerous ramifications of this grave diplomatic collapse.

We will continue to defend ourselves against attacks from the Islamic Republic and its terrorist proxies.

First and foremost, we must inform Washington that Israel won't accept any linkage between Iran and Lebanon. We can't allow Hezbollah to return to its previous strength. Likewise, it would be suicidal to wait for the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' forward positions on our northern border to become an existential threat, with thousands of precision-guided missiles pointed at Israel's population centers and infrastructure. We know from experience that sanctions relief in Iran means mass armament in Lebanon. This is something we won't tolerate.

Israel must be clear that if necessary, it will take pre-emptive action against Hezbollah, whenever and wherever required. If Hezbollah launches missiles, drones or unmanned aerial vehicles at Israeli communities, the response must be overwhelming. All of Hezbollah's command headquarters, control centers and logistical infrastructure in Beirut and Baalbek must become targets. There can be no more symbolic strikes and no safe haven for terrorists in Lebanon.

We must also establish a new military equation vis-à-vis Iran. Should the Islamic Republic attack the state of Israel, our forces will destroy Kharg Island as well as the port of Bandar Abbas, including all of their infrastructure.

To address this new reality, the Israeli defense establishment must create a missile corps within the Israel Defense Forces. Right now, to strike Iran, we use U.S. aircraft, U.S.-made munitions and U.S. refueling aircraft. We pass through the airspace of other countries and coordinate with the U.S. We rely on American radars and satellites. Militarily, we are overly dependent on other nations.

Establishing a missile corps and using only Israeli-made missiles would resolve several security issues. It should possess at least 20,000 ballistic and cruise missiles, 30,000 unmanned aerial vehicles and drones, and 24,000 rockets.

This plan was a part of my security doctrine as defense minister. But when I resigned over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision in 2018 to refrain from military action in Gaza while allowing Qatari cash to flow to Hamas, the plan was shelved.

I have no complaints against the Americans. Some Israelis expect U.S. decision makers to act according to Israeli interests. But U.S. decision makers must act according to U.S. interests, not Israeli ones. Responsibility for defending Israel's vital interests rests with Israel alone.

But I understand that some of these policies won't sit easily with the U.S. administration. We must stress to our friends in the White House that Israel is by no means obligated to abide by the memorandum's clauses and any ensuing agreement. This is an agreement between Washington and Tehran, not Jerusalem and Tehran.

Israel must act according to its national interests for the sake of its people and the future of the state of Israel. Our national security isn't a bargaining chip.

Mr. Lieberman is head of the Yisrael Beiteinu party and a candidate for prime minister. He has served as defense, foreign and finance minister.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

PUBLISHED SINCE 1889 BY DOW JONES & COMPANY

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SPORTS

JASON GAY

Serena Williams Gets Serious About a Wimbledon Comeback

A legendary champion ups the ante with her return to the court at age 44

 Now it feels very real. And also quite difficult! Serena Williams returning to tennis at age 44 to play doubles with her sister Venus at Wimbledon was a nice story—a legend of the sport, back on the court four years after her retirement, or *evolution*, or whatever Williams termed it when she hung it up.

Coming back to play doubles is one thing. Far from easy, but a manageable leap. We've seen plenty of older pros succeed when they only have to cover half of the court, and Williams has looked decent in a pair of tune-up matches.

But playing singles? A whole different deal. This comeback is formally on.

Late Sunday Wimbledon made it official: Williams has accepted a wild-card slot to play singles at its tournament, where the main draw begins on June 29.

We don't know when and who Williams will play in the opening round—chances are it's going to be a high seed, as Williams has been absent so long she isn't ranked in singles—but the biggest draw in the women's game is back, back, back.

Serena! You can practically hear the welcome committee at the All-England Club dancing in their bespoke sleeping gowns. Williams's return lifts a tournament that needs stardust in the absence of injured two-time champion Carlos Alcaraz. The winner of 39 major tournament titles—23 in singles, 14 in doubles, and two in mixed doubles—Williams will grace the grass once more.

The drama had been building for a while. Once Williams committed to playing doubles, Wimbledon all but dangled a singles wild card in front of Williams's face.

Would you like? Interested? Eh? Eh?

"Oh my gosh, there's some left?" Williams coyly responded when told that a slot remained. "I better get to practice."

Let's not be *that* shocked. Williams, the mother of two, is merely the latest ultra-successful sports icon to decide that investor meetings, casual golf and downloading episodes of "Bluey" wasn't how she wanted to spend her 40s.

Famous friend Michael Jordan came back. Michael

Phelps crawl stroked away from his first retirement. George Foreman and Muhammad Ali climbed off the couch too many times to mention. Tom Brady retired, then unretired, then retired again, and that dude *still* seems like he wants to put on a helmet and show Raiders fans what a forward pass should look like.

It's the competitor's nature. They want to compete. They believe they can compete. Often the hardest part of being great is staying away.

But tennis is a gauntlet. The list of triumphant comebacks after extended absences is brief. Kim Clijsters is probably the most stirring recent one, returning after motherhood and a two-year layoff and winning back-to-back U.S. Opens, but Clijsters was 26 when she roared back into it. Martina Hingis came back after leaving the game at 22. Bjorn Borg attempted a comeback after his shocking early retirement, but he'd probably like us to forget that ever happened.

Williams hasn't won a major of any kind since 2017. She hasn't won a singles title of any kind since 2020. She left the sport after spending several frustrating years trying to capture her 24th singles major and seize the all-time women's record alongside Margaret Court.

She insists she's not coming back for trophies. Williams, often seen singing the praises of GLP-1 weight-loss medication as a spokesperson for the online health outfit Ro, says she's coming back because she wants her children to see her play.

There's also been the inspiration of seeing her sibling, Venus, competing on tour at 46.

"I don't need to win," Williams said after announcing her doubles return. "I've won more than most people have in their whole lives."

"I don't have anything to prove," she said. "I don't have anything to lose."

Technically, true. Williams's legacy is quite se-

cure. But this is Serena Williams. She's not coming back to have a hit and giggle and then a Pimm's at Centre Court. She doesn't want to get knocked around in a cathedral she once dominated, winning the singles title seven times.

This intrigue's been building for months. In early December I saw Williams at a WSJ Tech Live event, and when I asked her about a possible comeback—*Tom Brady did it, blah blah blah*, I said—she politely brushed it away. Little did I know that Williams had re-entered tennis's antidoping pool, a necessary first step in returning to the sport.

She was cheeky when asked about that move in January on the "Today" show.

"I'm just having fun and enjoying my life right now," she said.

"OK, but that's not a yes or a no," Savannah Guthrie said.

"That's not a yes or a no. I'm just going to see what

happens."

"That's a maybe to me."

"That's not a maybe." Reminder to all of us: when someone shows you they're coming back, they're coming back.

Williams's return to doubles has been way too brief to draw any serious conclusions. She entered the Queens Club grass tournament with Canada's Victoria Mboko, where they won their opening round, but then withdrew after Mboko got injured playing singles. In Berlin she paired with Karolina Muchova and lost in the opening round 6-4, 6-4.

That's not a lot of tennis. And now singles for the first time since falling in the third round at the 2022 U.S. Open?

The challenge is obvious. More court to cover, more demands on match fitness, endurance, power. Williams is stepping into a sport that's in the middle of its season, when everyone's been hacking away for months. She's doing it on grass, a fickle surface.

Williams returns to a women's field where the top is still turbulent—No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka has lost 6-0 in the last set of her last two tournaments—but improved 20-somethings and heavy hitters abound. Can she raise her level enough to have a chance of competing?

In her extended prime, Williams could outpower and overwhelm opponents.

When she left, that was no longer the case. Younger players may have worshiped Williams, but many of them were hitting back just as hard.

What is a humane expectation? Just getting out there is an accomplishment—this feels like a tune-up for a U.S. Open run—but surely Williams craves a little more. Winning a match or two would be deeply impressive. Reaching the second week would be bonkers.

Serena Williams is back at Wimbledon, where everyone wants to win. They may have given her a wild card, but nobody's going to give her a break.



Dusty May is leaving Michigan for the Dallas Mavericks.

College Basketball's Miracle Worker Is Heading to NBA

By ROBERT O'CONNELL

When Dusty May led Michigan to the national championship in April, he cemented himself as one of college basketball's most audacious coaches. He had built a champion in the space of a single season, diving into the transfer portal to assemble a superteam out of thin air.

Now, two years after touching down in Ann Arbor and just months after delivering the Wolverines' first national title in 37 years, May is on his way out. On Monday, May jumped to the NBA, agreeing to become the head coach of the Dallas Mavericks.

"I'm never going to comment on any job that I don't have," May had said just days before winning the title. "I think it's well documented how happy I am at Michigan."

May's shocking departure adds to an era of turbulence at Michigan, which will open next season with its third head coach in both football and men's basketball since 2023. (Football coach Jim Harbaugh, facing long-term sanctions for NCAA violations, left to coach the Los Angeles Chargers right after winning the 2023 national title.) But May's exit also underlines the broader reality of college sports in the topsy-turvy 2020s.

During his two-year tenure at Michigan, May was known for pushing the rules of modern college sports to extremes and brushing off any controversy that came with his tactics. Before last season, May took one look at his roster and didn't like what

he saw.

So Michigan dived into the transfer portal—and shelled out more than \$10 million over the entire roster—to remake 80% of its starting lineup. The gambit paid off handsomely. May's new-look Wolverines didn't just win the championship: They blew out their opponents by more than 20 points per game during the NCAA Tournament.

Still, May's approach brought criticism that the Wolverines were simply "Rent-a-Team," mercenaries from every corner of college basketball that had little to do with traditional methods or representing an institution. May bristled at the idea that loyalty to a single place was an absolute virtue.

"Each person, especially now, has their own ambition, personal ambition, group ambition," May said. "It's not a lifetime sentence when you choose."

May's ambitions are now to rebuild a professional franchise that has fallen on hard times. The Mavericks made the wrong kind of headlines in 2025 when they traded away Luka Doncic, one of the NBA's superstars, for a questionable return. Last season, they sank out of the playoffs. But Dallas also has Rookie of the Year Cooper Flagg, an unquestionable bright spot.

As shocking as May's departure was on Monday, there is precedent for things working out just fine.

Larry Brown was the last college coach to leave a championship team immediately, quitting the Kansas Jayhawks shortly after their 1988 championship (and shortly before incoming NCAA probation). He then became the only coach in history to win college and NBA national titles—a feat May will now hope to match.

The Nerviest Race at the World Cup: Iran's Sprint to Leave U.S. Soil

By JOSHUA ROBINSON

Inglewood, Calif.
AT PRECISELY 2 P.M. here on Sunday, the 31 members of Iran's traveling party to this World Cup heard the final whistle and gathered in the center of the pitch. Over more than 90 minutes against Belgium, one of the top 10 sides in the world, Iran's defense had bent without breaking. Its goalkeeper had been heroic.

Most importantly, the country that was so nearly uninvited from the tournament knew it remained alive at America's World Cup.

But as one nerve-racking challenge ended, another was only beginning. Iran was to leave the country immediately—and the next 90 minutes would be just as stressful.

"We don't ask for much," Iran captain Alireza Jahanbakhsh said after the 0-0 draw. "We just ask for the same procedures as the 47 other teams."

Under the terms of the national team's deal with FIFA and the U.S. government, Iran and its skeleton crew of support staff are only allowed on American soil for roughly 24 hours at time. So instead of recovering at a hotel after matches—as the other 47 have the option to do—the team must scramble to the airport and catch a charter flight back to its base camp in Tijuana, Mexico.

After Iran's first match, the players had been rushed out so quickly that they hardly had time

to cool down. The team physio had to finish treating his banged-up team on the plane. "Everything is like a disaster," forward Mehdi Taremi had said.

On Sunday at SoFi Stadium, the whole choreography unfolded again. Iran's players strode out together from the Los Angeles Chargers' locker room and made their way to a bus to LAX. They were due to take off at 4:30—an ambitious target for a game that ended at 2 p.m.

By the time Iran's Airbus A320 was finally wheels-up, it was 5:48.

Thirty-two minutes later, Team Mellì, as it is known, was beyond American airspace and touching down south of the border. They went directly back to the Tijuana Marriott, where they reunited with the members of staff who weren't granted U.S. visas. Together, they had already spent more than two weeks in the hotel, monitored by police and the Mexican National Guard. They have not been allowed to leave, except for matches and practice.

"Such behavior is not suitable for a World Cup," Iran's coach Amir Ghalenoei says. "You invite a team but you don't let in their backroom staff? It just shows that we are an oppressed country."

The U.S. insists that these measures, which also prevent the team from flying in before the eve of a match, are absolutely essential. Andrew Giuliani, the executive director of the White House's World Cup task force, said that some of



Iran played at SoFi Stadium on Sunday before flying back to Mexico.

the staff members who weren't allowed in "had direct ties" to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

"Our national security comes first," he added, noting that plenty of other squads also choose to fly out straight after games.

Iran had been one of the first countries to qualify for this World Cup. But for Team Mellì to make the trip at all, it required an executive order from President Trump, overriding his own ban on travelers from Iran. The squad had been due to base itself in Tucson, Ariz.,

until it found itself in the unprecedented position of going to a World Cup hosted by a country that was actively bombing its compatriots. It took FIFA and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum to step in at the last minute with the Tijuana solution.

"We suffer from mental fatigue as well," midfielder Saeid Ezatolahi said. "You cannot deny that our situation hasn't been the same as the other teams."

And yet, Iran still has a chance to reach the knockout rounds. Despite traveling back and forth

without key staff—relying on extra medics and kit men on loan from FIFA in America—the players have avoided defeat in their first two matches against New Zealand and Belgium. They will advance to the round of 32 if they can beat Egypt on Friday in Seattle.

Giuliani said that the government would consider tweaking its rule to allow Iran to arrive two days before the game instead of one. The sprint back to Mexico, however, would remain unchanged. "The wonderful people of Tijuana, they made us feel at home," Ezatolahi said. "And they've tried to make up for the hurdles that other people have caused us at this World Cup."

For Iran's fans in America, the whole adventure has been one long exercise in historical dissonance. Earlier this month, protesters gathered outside Los Angeles' city hall to argue that the country should be kicked out of the World Cup for killing dissidents back home. Even the members of Southern California's enormous Iranian diaspora in the stands were conflicted: They booed the anthem, cheered for the players, and wielded flags bearing Iran's pre-revolutionary emblems of a lion and sun (which FIFA attempted to ban as a political symbol). Each time, they far outnumbered the Kiwi and Belgian contingents—and it wasn't lost on the players.

"We play for all the Iranians," Jahanbakhsh said. "Inside Iran and outside Iran."

FABRIZIO BENSCH/REUTERS

JAYNE KAMIN-ONCE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nadella Intensifies Critique of AI Giants

In interview, CEO of Microsoft urges more user control, less-costly models

By BRADLEY OLSON AND TINA LI

Satya Nadella helped usher in the AI boom. Now he has a tough message for the companies leading it. The chief executive of Microsoft is joining a growing

effort to take on artificial-intelligence giants OpenAI and Anthropic, outlining in an interview his vision for the next wave of the AI boom, one involving cheaper models, more user control and political messaging that wins the public's trust. Nadella offered a blistering critique of how the race for AI supremacy has taken shape, with a small group of companies capturing the value of the world-changing technology as they make dire prophecies

about safety risks and job losses, insisting they need vast resources for limitless expansion. "You can't say, hey, all white-collar jobs are gone and this could even be a weapon and we will use all the power to build data centers," Nadella told The Wall Street Journal. The public, he predicted, wouldn't tolerate just a few models and companies "doing all of the learning for the world." While he didn't directly



Satya Nadella has joined a growing effort to limit the sway of artificial-intelligence giants such as Anthropic and OpenAI.

name OpenAI, Anthropic or Alphabet's Google—the three companies building the most advanced proprietary models—he made clear that Microsoft is seeking to steer the AI race away from a future dic-

tated and controlled by frontier model builders. In a matter of weeks, Microsoft has rolled out a suite of low-cost models meant to drive prices down for customers. *Please turn to page B4*

Google To Form Alliance With Film Studio A24

By BEN FRITZ

Google is investing in independent movie studio A24 as part of a new artificial-intelligence research partnership between the two companies. The search giant is putting around \$75 million into A24, which released the recent hits "Backrooms" and "Marty Supreme," according to people familiar with the matter. Though Alphabet unit Google is a major player in online entertainment through YouTube, the deal marks the first time it has taken a stake in a studio. A24 last raised funds in 2024, when Thrive Capital led a round valuing it at \$3.5 billion. Google's investment is roughly equal to what Thrive put in at the time, the people familiar with the matter said. A24's revenue has more than doubled in the past two years as it has increased the budgets of films it makes and expanded its businesses like unscripted television, music and theater. Google's DeepMind AI unit and A24 are aiming to create new tools for movie production and distribution. Their alliance is an unusual one between well-known names in industries that have eyed each other warily since the advent of models that can generate audio, images and video. Studios have sued and sent threatening letters to AI companies for alleged copyright violations and filmmakers have decried AI as an enemy of creativity. Disney signed a partnership with OpenAI last year that abruptly ended when the tech company shut down its Sora video tool in March. Netflix recently acquired an AI startup founded by Ben Affleck that can tweak scenes without reshoots. But by and large, mainstream Hollywood has done little with AI thus far. Scott Belsky, an A24 partner who oversees its technology and innovation work, said that is because developers have pushed AI as a way to make movies faster and cheaper, which doesn't appeal to filmmakers. "We think there are better uses that preserve creative control and support risk-taking. *Please turn to page B2*

Chevron To Power Microsoft AI Site In Texas

By JENNIFER HILLER AND COLLIN EATON

Chevron has struck a 20-year agreement to sell electricity to Microsoft, which plans to build what could become one of the country's largest artificial-intelligence data centers in West Texas. The oil company is working with Joulent, an energy company launched by investment firm Engine No. 1, to build a power-generation complex that will supply the data center using natural gas produced from the company's fields in the area. The 2.7-gigawatt campus would be on more than 2,000 acres in Reeves County in the heart of the Permian Basin oil-and-gas field, Joulent said. The companies didn't disclose a cost estimate for what they call Project Kilby. Chevron expects to make a final investment decision on building a gas-fired power plant for the project after it acquires necessary permits later this year. The collaboration between Chevron and Joulent is their first big AI data-center project. It is also the latest example of energy companies capturing demand as tech giants move into natural-gas fields to fuel their AI ambitions, and of the tech industry's willingness to go it alone for power generation. *Please turn to page B4*



Clive Davis with Whitney Houston after her performance at the 2009 Grammy Salute to Industry Icons event.

Hit Maker Reshaped Music Industry

By ANNE STEELE

Clive Davis, the hit-making record producer and music titan who helped develop superstar performers for more than half a century, has died at 94. He died from age-related illness at his Manhattan home on Monday, a representative for the family said. Davis championed a new generation of rock at Columbia Records in the late 1960s before shepherding a slate of stars across R&B, hip-hop, country and pop starting with his own fabled Arista Records. With no musical training, Davis became a potent record executive thanks to his negotiating skills and legendary

"golden ears" for spotting hits. He shaped the careers of artists as a producer and adviser with financial acumen, a taste for popular music across genres and a willingness to encourage creative freedom. He is one of few nonperformers inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Davis recognized a movement that

would change the record business, said former Rolling Stone editor Fred Goodman during the executive's 2000 induction: "Underground, album-oriented rock was giving birth to artists whose creativity, longevity and widespread commercial appeal would at least equal that of established mainstream performers. *Please turn to page B2*

Mars Gives M&M's a MAHA Makeover

By JESSE NEWMAN

TOPEKA, Kan.—M&M's will mark a milestone in the candy's 85-year history in August, debuting a version made without artificial dyes. The bags of chocolate will also be missing two hallmarks: The colors brown and blue. Under pressure from Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and his "Make America Healthy Again" campaign, M&M's maker Mars pledged to offer options for some of its iconic products without those dyes this year. The chocolate giant planned instead to color the foods with dyes derived from natural sources. The task is proving much harder and more expensive than it sounds. Blue and brown are among a half-dozen classic M&M's colors. Mars researchers figured out how to deliver convincing replicas of its red, orange and yellow candies using natural ingredients like beets and turmeric. Blue, which Mars added to the mix in 1995, was a different story. That color was proving arduous to re-create affordably and at scale. The company also couldn't reliably churn out brown M&M's, which, it turns out, include a fair bit of blue. Blame algae. Mars chose spirulina—the high-protein in-



Blue is proving a difficult color to re-create without artificial dyes. Nature makes few truly blue plants and minerals.

gredient often touted as a superfood—as a blue substitute, but it has been gumming up the U.S. factories that produce 600 million M&M's each day. Inside Mars's corporate office in Newark, N.J., employees have spent months debating the plan for natural colors. They mulled launching a three-color mix, with red, orange and yellow M&M's, but the sunset vibes were too

strong. Four colors would be better. But which one could they add? Purple, it found, also required too much spirulina. Pink didn't look right—no "pop" of color, Mars said. Mars could have delayed the rollout until it was able to replicate M&M's full rainbow, but executives wanted to press ahead, said Anton Vincent, who leads the company's North American snacks business. Ex-

ecutives brought their plan to Mars's board, where directors including members of the Mars family—the private, billionaire clan that owns the company—queried them about discussions with consumers and retailers. The brand generates billions of dollars in annual sales, after all. "It was a daunting situation," Vincent said. "You're messing with an 85-year-old icon." Mars's deliberations underscore how demands from the Trump administration's MAHA agenda and its supporters are crashing into scientific and business realities for the nation's biggest food companies. The company pledged in 2016 to cut artificial dyes from all of its human food. But it changed course for candy, saying many consumers weren't worried about the dyes in those products. Kennedy has pushed food companies to remove artificial dyes, blaming them for a range of health problems, especially in children. Food companies have defended their use of the dyes, citing approvals from regulatory bodies. But backlash intensified, with states passing their own bans. Last July, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton launched *Please turn to page B2*



RESTAURANTS Domino's Pizza names a new CEO, Joe Jordan, as it seeks a comeback in sales. **B3**



TECHNOLOGY Lucid plans to lay off about 18% of its U.S. workforce, including its operating chief. **B4**

Charlamagne Exploits The Media Moment

By ANNE STEELE

No one is safe from Charlamagne Tha God. Recently on his syndicated radio show "The Breakfast Club," the outspoken co-host roasted President Trump for having "sucked" all the joy out of New York City by attending the Knicks' Game 3 loss at the NBA Finals. In May, he ripped former first lady Jill Biden for admitting she wondered if her husband was having a stroke as she watched his disastrous

2024 debate performance. Earlier this year, fired HGTV host Nicole Curtis came on the show after Charlamagne blasted her for using a racial slur in a leaked video—to disastrous results for her. Such is the way of "the world's most dangerous morning show." Charlamagne, 47 years old, who brought cameras into the radio booth years before the video-podcast boom, is now one of the most influential voices shaping cul- *Please turn to page B2*

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CoreCivic.....B9	Nvidia.....B3	V
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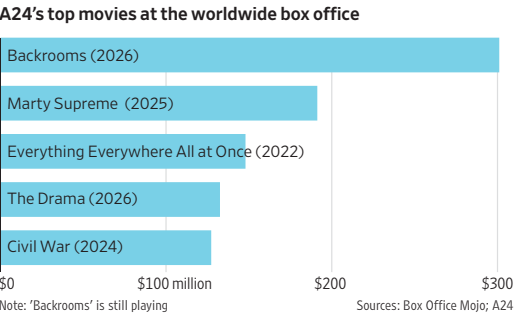
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Google, A24 Form AI Alliance

Continued from page B1 ing,” he said. The new tools “won’t look anything like the prompted generation type of AI that people feel uncomfortable with.” Their multiyear, nonexclusive deal doesn’t give Google access to A24’s data, including its film and television library. The new collaborators hope their partnership will include the studio’s roster of artists, including Timothée Chalamet and “Backrooms” director Kane Parsons. “We believe breakthroughs happen when you get technology into the hands of the best minds in the field,” said Eli Collins, a vice president of product for DeepMind.

A24 and DeepMind have been in talks since before Belsky joined the studio from Adobe last year. His 20-person team, called A24 Labs, is already developing an application for AI-generated storyboards—roughly drawn drafts of a movie that can help identify problems before production begins. A24 has grown rapidly since releasing its first movie in 2013. It now stands alongside Disney as one of the few studios that draws people to theaters based on its name alone. A little more than half of moviegoers consider themselves fans of A24, according to data from research firm NRG shared by the studio. Partnering with Google is a significant and potentially risky move for A24. Its reputation is derived in large part from its alignment with emerging filmmakers and young audiences—exactly the people often skeptical of tech conglomerates and AI’s impact on society.



Hit Maker Reshaped Industry

Continued from page B1 ers and, indeed, ultimately become the mainstream.” Davis’s pre-Grammy charity gala, held the night before the awards every year since 1975, attracted hundreds of artists, executives, politicians and celebrities.

Music man’s start

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1932, Davis moved in with his sister in Queens after becoming an orphan in his teens. He graduated from New York University and received a full scholarship to Harvard Law School. Davis entered the music business as general counsel of Columbia Records, where he became president in 1967. The lawyer-turned-music man transformed the label into a rock ‘n’ roll powerhouse after attending the Monterey International Pop Festival, where he saw the commercial potential of rock and landed Janis Joplin. In addition to signing Santana, Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen, Aerosmith, Pink Floyd and Earth, Wind & Fire, he had a hand in the work of Simon & Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Barbra Streisand and Miles Davis.



Clive Davis in his New York office in 1980.

Davis helped change the way records were sold. Early in his career, most albums were sold in two versions, mono and a more-expensive stereo format—a practice he described as expensive and wasteful in his autobiography. At Columbia, Davis decided to sell both versions of the albums at the higher stereo price, \$4.79, helping lead to the demise of monaural records. He tested variable pricing, offering some albums with high demand—including “The Graduate” soundtrack and Simon & Garfunkel’s “Bookends”—for a dollar more. Both moves proved profitable for Columbia and the artists. Still, Davis recalled, the artists were upset about the higher price tag. “In that countercultural heyday, it struck them as a hard-nosed business, establishment-style decision, which I suppose it

DJ Exploits Media Moment

Continued from page B1 ture and politics. As the lines between podcasts, video and traditional talk shows have blurred, and every hot take gets clipped and spread across the internet, Charlamagne’s approach maximizes the current moment in media. “The Breakfast Club,” originating from New York’s Power 105.1 FM and co-hosted by fellow radio personality DJ Envy and comedian Jess Hilarious, is the top hip-hop and R&B morning show in the U.S. It attracts 7.7 million listeners across more than 100 iHeartMedia stations, according to Nielsen Audio. The podcast version, available on platforms including Apple and Spotify, has topped one billion downloads. Now, the show is dominating Netflix’s nascent push into video podcasting. It is the No. 1 video podcast on Netflix, accounting for more than 40% of the streamer’s total podcast views in the first quarter, according to media-intelligence provider Samba TV. Podcasts have largely become safe spaces for celebrities and politicians on promotional tours. Charlamagne made “The Breakfast Club” the opposite. After Kevin Hart’s roast on Netflix drew outrage for a joke another comedian told about George Floyd, Hart took the hot seat on “The Breakfast Club” to insist he didn’t need to take responsibility for the joke. “Yes, you do,” Charlamagne countered. Beyond “The Breakfast Club,” Charlamagne has expanded his

Mars Gives M&M’s a Makeover

Continued from page B1 an investigation into Mars for alleged deceptive trade practices tied to artificial dyes. A week later, Mars made its new pledge, which the company said was already in the works when the investigation was announced. Across Mars’s offices and plants in New Jersey, Tennessee and Kansas, some 100 employees are working on its natural-color efforts. One-quarter of them are dedicated solely to blue, said Claire Hewitt, a Mars veteran overseeing the multi-million-dollar initiative who has dubbed herself its “chief color officer.” Nature produces few truly blue plants and minerals, making blue the holy grail of natural food dyes, said Paul Manning, chief executive of dye



Charlamagne’s podcast version of ‘The Breakfast Club’ has topped one billion downloads.

media empire to include the “Brilliant Idiots” podcast with Schulz, the Black Privilege Publishing imprint under Simon & Schuster and a film and TV production company. His Black Effect podcast network is home to more than 60 shows and hosts an annual podcast festival. “Some people are more ready for the future when it shows up than others,” Bob Pittman, chief executive of iHeartMedia, said of Charlamagne. His approach to business flips the switch on the classic “Field of Dreams” mantra. “There used to be a time where they would say, ‘If you build it, they will come.’ Those days are long gone,” Charlamagne told The Wall Street Journal. “You got to build it and then you got to meet people where they are.” Charlamagne was born Leonard Larry McKelvey and raised in Moncks Corner, S.C., by a father who worked construction and a mother who taught Eng-

lish. His mother telling him to “read things that don’t pertain to me” led to a love of Judy Blume, whom he considered his white-whale interview (achieved in 2023). He got his start interning at a local radio station, and in 2006 he became second mic to Wendy Williams in New Jersey, where he honed his hard-nosed interview style. “The Breakfast Club” launched in 2010. A series of fiery, unfiltered exchanges sparked viral moments that elevated “The Breakfast Club” to a culture-driving force. In a 2013 interview, Charlamagne called Kanye West “Kanye Kardashian” and told him “Yeezus” was a terrible album. In the run-up to the 2016 election, Charlamagne emerged as a political influencer, interviewing Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Charlamagne challenged then-Democratic primary candidate Kamala Harris in 2019 over her record as a prosecutor and

its effect on Black communities. Harris would go back for more, including a town hall he hosted in 2024 after she took over the Democratic ticket. “I refer to Kamala as a friend, but I’m the friend that’s still going to ask you the hard questions,” he said. Charlamagne turned the cameras on day one of “The Breakfast Club” for the express purpose of sharing it online. Now, Charlamagne and his team are placing a new bet, making full video episodes exclusively available on Netflix. This month, “The Breakfast Club” became Netflix’s first live daily show. Lauren Smith, Netflix’s vice president of content licensing and programming strategy, said as the streaming giant leans further into video podcasts, it tapped “The Breakfast Club” as an established, cultural staple. “Charlamagne and the team don’t just follow the conversation—they help shape it,” she said.



Naturally dyed blue M&M’s are shown in a tumbler at the Mars Wrigley U.S. headquarters in Hackettstown, N.J.

manufacturer Sensient Technologies. Companies have scoured the globe in search of raw materials to create a natural blue food color that can withstand changes to heat, light and pH. They have experimented with juice from jagua, a fruit found in Central and South America, and petals from the butterfly pea flower in Southeast Asia. And they have studied spirulina, an organism that some people affectionately call “pond

scum.” A single chocolate M&M takes 12 hours to make. To do it, Mars blends sugar, cocoa and other ingredients into a mixture that hardens into the candy’s solid core. The “lentils,” as Mars calls them, are then doused in a sugary coating and loaded into huge rotating drums, or pans, to be colored. Inside, M&M’s tumble as a row of sprayers paint the candy shells with dyes like Blue 1.

Spirulina, Mars decided, offered the best match for Blue 1. But the ingredient comes with a host of problems. To get anywhere close to what Hewitt called blue M&M’s “cerulean” hue Mars must use about seven times the amount of colorant. Even then, naturally blue M&M’s are lighter, resembling a robin’s egg. Unlike Blue 1, spirulina arrives at Mars’s doorstep as a powder. It can foam when mixed with a sugary syrup, resulting in a smoothie-like mixture versus a liquid, Mars said. The more-viscous material can clog up factories’ spray nozzles, resulting in spotty, unevenly colored candy. What’s more, spirulina leaves a sticky film akin to dental plaque inside the pipes that snake through Mars’s plants, threatening to build up and cause mold, a food-safety hazard. All this means that Mars must upgrade more than 300 machines across its M&M’s plants to handle spirulina. “It’s the hardest thing I’ve had to do in my career,” Hewitt said.

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BUSINESS NEWS

SpaceX Strikes Data-Center Deal

Reflection AI will rent capacity from Musk company for \$150 million a month

By KATE CLARK

Reflection AI, a \$25 billion-valuation startup building a network of open-source AI models, agreed to rent data-center capacity from **SpaceX**, following similar agreements with Anthropic and Google.

The deal will give SpaceX \$150 million a month in revenue, starting July 1, through the end of 2029, according to a person familiar with the matter. If completed, the deal would be worth \$6.3 billion. Either company may end the contract with 90 days' notice after the first three months.

A Reflection representative

said that “more compute means more runway to build the world’s best open models at scale.” Backed by **Nvidia**, Reflection is establishing itself as an alternative to the growing number of sophisticated Chinese open-source artificial-intelligence models.

Open-source AI models are free to download and modify, as opposed to closed-source models.

The Reflection deal is among the first for SpaceX since its market debut this month, which valued it at \$1.77 trillion. The rocket maker said last week it would buy AI coding company Cursor in a \$60 billion all-stock deal.

On Monday, SpaceX’s shares dropped 16%, its third-straight decline.

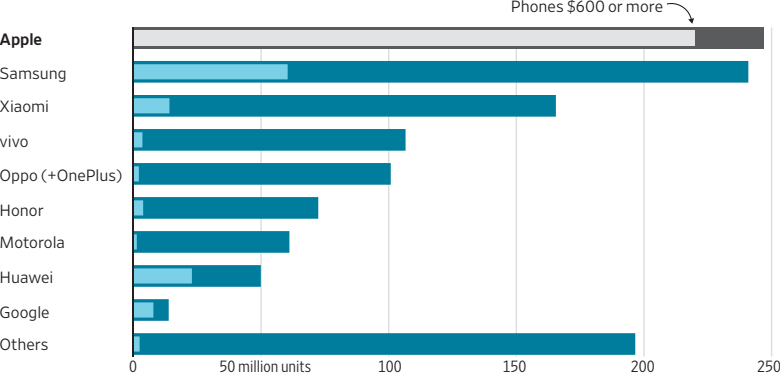
◆ **Heard on Street: Is SpaceX in your index fund?.....B10**



Reflection is establishing itself as an alternative to Chinese open-source AI models.

Why the iPhone’s Pricing Power Is Unmatched

Global smartphone shipments by vendor, 2025



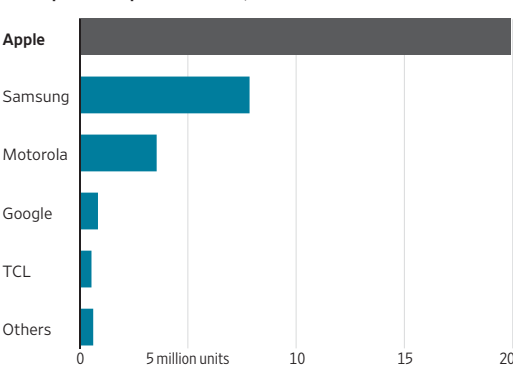
Share of global smartphone gross profits, 2025



The world’s top 10 selling smartphones, 1Q 2026

COMPANY	MODEL
Apple	iPhone 17
Apple	iPhone 17 Pro Max
Apple	iPhone 17 Pro
Samsung	Galaxy A07 4G
Apple	iPhone 16
Samsung	Galaxy A17 5G
Samsung	Galaxy A17 4G
Samsung	Galaxy A36
Samsung	Galaxy A56
Xiaomi	Redmi A5

Smartphone shipments in U.S., 1Q 2026



Sources: Counterpoint Research (2025 shipments and profits, 1Q 2026 top selling smartphones); Omdia (1Q 2026 U.S. shipments)

By JIYOUNG SOHN
AND ANDREW BARNETT

One reason **Apple** can raise product prices so confidently: The iPhone has wiped out the competition for the world’s wealthiest smartphone buyers.

Costlier memory chips prompted Apple Chief Executive Tim Cook to tell The Wall Street Journal that price increases were unavoidable. Fortunately for Cook, no other major smartphone maker has a customer base that can so easily afford a steeper price tag.

Here’s a look at Apple’s near-monopoly with the world’s deepest-pocketed buyers.

Apple has competition on raw volume, representing one in five of the roughly 1.3 billion smartphones shipped last year. That’s a similar market share to **Samsung Electronics** and not far ahead of **Xiaomi**.

But it’s a different story with phones that bring in the biggest profits. The smartphone industry typically defines a “premium” device as one priced at \$600 or above. In that space, Apple controls more than two-thirds of the market.

The iPhone’s dominance grows as the price moves higher. For phones priced at \$1,000 or more, Apple captures more than three-quarters of the market. Only a few rivals exist at that level, such as Samsung’s top-line Galaxy S25 Ultra, Huawei’s Mate X6 and Google’s Pixel 10 Pro XL.

Thanks to its pricing power,

Apple captures the overwhelming majority of the industry’s gross profits.

Most smartphones are sold at razor-thin profit margins, though they provide the manufacturers other benefits. To Samsung, its midtier or budget phones help sustain its affiliates’ components business. A Xiaomi phone can connect to its electric vehicles and other household products. Apple sells mostly high-end devices and its profit margins dwarf everyone else’s. The company didn’t respond to requests for comment.

Apple’s latest iPhones ranked as the industry’s three bestselling smartphone models in the first quarter of this year. Even a year-old model, the iPhone 16, cracked the top five.

Roughly a decade ago, Samsung ran closer to Apple in the U.S. But now iPhones have opened up a wide lead in one of Apple’s cash-cow iPhone markets, with a market share of roughly 60%.

Virtually all Apple’s smartphone peers have recently pushed through price increases because of rising component costs. That sticker shock means shipments in the industry are projected to drop by a double-digit percentage this year. About three-quarters of smartphones shipped worldwide sell for under \$600.

One exception: The premium segment is expected to have modest growth. The forecast predates Apple’s making public its plans to boost pricing.

EasyJet Rejects Takeover Offer From Castlelake

By NINA KIENTLE

EasyJet’s board rejected Castlelake’s third 4.74 billion-pound (\$6.27 billion) takeover bid, but the U.S. investment firm urged the carrier’s shareholders to support its plan to take the U.K. budget airline private after the Middle East conflict hit its shares.

Under the proposal, accepting **easyJet** shareholders would receive 625 pence a share in cash, a premium of around 59% to their closing price of 394.20 pence on May 28, before the U.S. investment firm first disclosed it was considering a bid.

Castlelake said it wants easyJet shareholders to consider the proposal ahead of the Friday regulatory deadline to announce a firm intention to make an offer. The bid follows two previous proposals it made in the last month. Offers at 560 pence a share and 600 pence a share were rejected Tuesday and Saturday, respectively. The latest proposal was rejected by easyJet’s board on Sunday.

EasyJet said its board unanimously rejected the new offer as it still fundamentally undervalues its business and prospects, and advised shareholders not to take action at this time.

Under the offer, the bidding vehicle would be owned 49% by Castlelake and 51% by European Union nationals, and potentially other investors, to comply with EU regulations.

“The board has considerable reservations about the elevated leverage and overall conditionality of the third proposal,” easyJet said.

It described the timing of Castlelake’s approach as opportunistic given that its share price was temporarily depressed due to the situation in the Middle East. There has been turmoil across the airline industry following the outbreak of the U.S. and Israel’s war on Iran, which has driven jet-fuel prices higher, disrupted air routes and weighed on travel demand.

EasyJet said it remains committed to its medium-term target of generating £1 billion in annual pretax profit and that its board is confident in its standalone strategy.

EasyJet shares rose 2.8% in London on Monday.

Domino’s Taps CEO For Comeback Effort

By HEATHER HADDON

Domino’s Pizza said its operations chief Joe Jordan will take over as chief executive of the world’s biggest pizza company, which is striving to rein-vigorate sales.

Jordan, 53 years old, is set to take over Oct. 1. The Michigan-based chain’s current CEO, Russell Weiner, is slated to transition into the executive chairman role.

Jordan said in an interview that he intended to closely focus on Domino’s operations as the pizza sector slogs through years of anemic growth. Sales increases in the pizza sector have trailed the broader restaurant industry since 2017, not including the pandemic-boosted year of 2020, and pricing battles have cut into

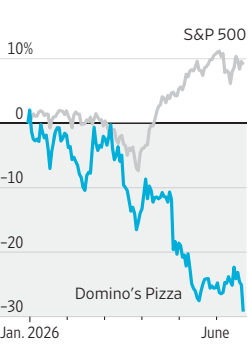
profit margins.

“The one word you will consistently hear from me is consistency,” said Jordan, who also serves as Domino’s U.S. president. He joined the company as vice president of innovation in 2011.

Domino’s has said it has gained market share in the U.S., but in late April the company reported quarterly sales and earnings that trailed analysts’ expectations, and toned down projections for this year’s U.S. same-store sales.

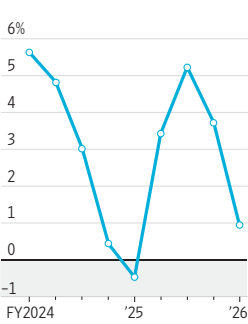
Domino’s shares declined around 2% in aftermarket trading, and its shares are down about 30% in the year to date. **Berkshire Hathaway**, which had built up a position in the stock starting in 2023, completely sold out in May.

Share-price and index performance, year to date



Note: Latest fiscal quarter ended March 22

Domino’s U.S. same-store sales, change from a year earlier



Sources: FactSet (performance); the company (sales)

AbbVie to Buy Biotech Firm Apogee

By COLIN KELLAHER
AND PETER LOFTUS

AbbVie has agreed to buy **Apogee Therapeutics** for about \$10.9 billion to bolster the pharmaceutical company’s core immunology franchise.

AbbVie on Monday said it would pay \$135.11 a share in cash, a 49% premium to Thursday’s closing price of \$90.38 for the Waltham, Mass., biotechnology company. It is one of the industry’s largest deals so far this year.

Shares of Apogee climbed 47% to close at \$132.55, while AbbVie rose 6.3%, its largest percentage increase since October 2025.

For AbbVie, the deal would add Apogee’s experimental drug zumilokibart, a potential rival to Dupixent from **Regeneron Pharmaceuticals** and **Sanofi** as a treatment for moderate to severe atopic dermatitis, the most common form of eczema.

AbbVie has long been dominant in immunology. The company has said sales from its autoimmune blockbusters Rinvoq and Skyrizi will top \$31 billion this year.

Those drugs filled a hole left by Humira, which at one point was the bestselling drug in the world.

Yet AbbVie is facing increasing competition from rivals like **Johnson & Johnson**, which developed a competitor pill—a threat that has pressured AbbVie shares in recent months.

“We have been and continue to be very open to ac-



Apogee will boost AbbVie’s core immunology franchise. An AbbVie lab in 2023, above.

quiring external innovation, really with a major focus for us in immunology, neuroscience, oncology, and obesity,” AbbVie CEO Robert Michael told analysts in April.

“To the extent we see a differentiated asset in any of these areas, whether early stage, late stage, or even on market, we are very willing to pursue it,” he added.

The AbbVie-Apogee deal is the latest in a string of biopharma acquisitions this year, as large drugmakers look to restock their pipelines ahead of patent expirations for blockbuster drugs.

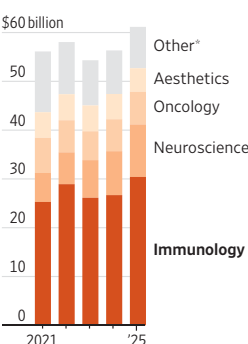
AbbVie doesn’t face im-

minent patent expirations but said the deal would bring it drugs with “mega-blockbuster peak sales potential,” or more than \$10 billion in annual sales.

Citi analysts said the premium AbbVie is paying for Apogee doesn’t seem excessive, given the company’s strong data, a scarcity of high-quality immunology assets and Apogee’s strengthened position after its recent \$1.3 billion financing collaboration with **Blackstone**.

Still, Citi noted that another deal may be needed to broaden the company’s narrative.

AbbVie annual segment revenue



*Includes eye care Source: the company

TECHNOLOGY

China Puts Curbs on Imports of U.S. Firms

U.S. earlier added Alibaba, Baidu to its blacklist of entities linked to military

By KATRINA NORTHRUP

China imposed trade restrictions on dozens of U.S. entities, including two producers of rare-earth minerals, in a sign tensions between the countries haven't eased following the summit between President Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

This month, the Pentagon added a number of Chinese companies to a blacklist of entities it said were linked to

China's military. These included technology giants **Alibaba Group** and **Baidu**, which have denied ties to the Chinese military.

On Monday, China's Commerce Ministry responded by adding 10 U.S. defense firms to its control list, barring exports to those companies of any Chinese-made products with potential military applications.

The inclusion of two U.S. rare-earth producers—**MP Materials** and **USA Rare Earth**—was a pointed statement from Beijing, suggesting China sees an advantage in constraining U.S. capabilities around materials needed for advanced electronics, defense systems and renewable-energy technologies.



China banned exports of Chinese-made products to U.S. rare-earths producers MP Materials, above, and USA Rare Earth.

The controls also targeted other sectors tied to the military: drones, robotics and aerospace.

Rare earths are only one symbol of a broader weaponization of supply chains between

the superpowers, with Washington and Beijing each implementing export curbs and sanctions on the other side's technology and defense industries.

MP Materials, which enjoys financial backing from the Pentagon, is a leading U.S. miner and processor of rare earths. Although USA Rare Earth is less established as a player, both are ramping up capacity in an attempt to break China's stranglehold over the global supply chain.

MP Materials and USA Rare Earth didn't respond to a request to comment.

China's Commerce Ministry said Monday's action was taken to safeguard national

security and fulfill international obligations, such as nonproliferation. The move was a direct tit-for-tat to the Pentagon's expansion of its military companies blacklist, the officials added.

In a parallel announcement on Monday, China's Finance Ministry excluded 46 U.S. companies, including **Lockheed Martin**, **RTX** and **Boeing's** defense division, from China's government procurement.

The ministry excluded products manufactured by U.S.-invested enterprises operating within China, a carve-out that suggests Beijing is seeking to minimize damage to its domestic manufacturing.

Chevron Sets Microsoft Power Deal

Continued from page B1

“Our agreement with Microsoft through Project Kilby represents Chevron’s unique ability to deliver power to AI customers with certainty, speed and at a competitive cost, leveraging Permian natural gas supply, infrastructure and our proven execution capabilities,” said Jeff Gustavson, president of Chevron’s New Energies unit.

The deal cements Chevron’s lead in the race among major oil companies to bank on the data-center boom. Another big contender, Exxon Mobil, late last year joined with NextEra Energy to develop a 1.2-gigawatt gas-fired power plant that could come equipped with carbon-capture technology. At the time, NextEra said the companies were in talks with a potential data-center customer.

Rather than plugging into the Texas power grid, Project

Kilby will have its own on-site power plant fueled by Chevron’s local natural-gas production. It will connect to the power grid at a later date and plans to sell excess generation into the Texas power market.

“The ability to have a firm power resource for the Texas grid is something I think everyone would welcome,” said Chris James, founder and chief executive of Engine No. 1 and Jouleant.

The site is about 20 miles south of Pecos, where Chevron has been producing oil and gas for years.

Jouleant already had been working with GE Vernova, which builds gas turbines in high demand for power plants. Chevron teamed up with them last year and said the companies were in negotiations with a then-unnamed customer that was eventually revealed to be Microsoft.

“AI and cloud are advancing at a pace that requires a new level of coordination between energy and infrastructure,” Noelle Walsh, Microsoft president of cloud operations and innovation, said.

Soaring electricity demand has revealed the limitations

of the power grid and its supply chains.

AI training requires city-size amounts of electricity delivered to a single site, with a high rate of consumption around the clock. That requires complex engineering studies and upgrades in transmission equipment that take years to build and deliver. Wait times for electric service have stretched beyond five to seven years in many places.

The idea that data centers must BYOP, or “Bring Your Own Power,” if they want quicker access to electricity, has taken hold across the industry, though it is a costly and challenging workload to a grid connection, which is considered more reliable.

Developers of about a quarter of all data-center capacity in the works plan to build power on site, said data provider Cleanview. It is tracking 59 such data centers with a combined capacity of about 90 gigawatts—about enough to power Texas on the hottest day of the year.

Project Kilby would start delivering power in late 2028, with a full build-out of the site continuing into the 2030s, James said.

Nadella Slams AI Powerhouses

Continued from page B1

ers bracing from the sticker shock of skyrocketing AI bills. The company released Copilot Cowork, an autonomous AI “agent” allowing users to choose various AI models, including cheaper ones, as they complete long-running tasks.

Microsoft is weighing whether to host a version of DeepSeek, an ultralow-cost AI provider based in China that OpenAI and Anthropic have called out for distilling, or copying, their top models.

Such a step would likely lead to a dramatic rise in use for the Chinese model maker, one that could come at the expense of OpenAI and Anthropic, which are facing the prospect of a prolonged price war.

It is a striking step for Nadella, who has long played the part of elder statesman in the trillion-dollar AI race, to join a growing effort to shift the race

away from the development of top models with ever-expanding capabilities.

Microsoft is one of OpenAI’s oldest partners and has invested billions helping to build the company into the colossus it is today.

After years of tensions, the two companies recently struck a deal that allowed OpenAI to expand its ties to other large tech companies. Microsoft also reached a multibillion-dollar agreement with Anthropic last year.

Nadella said there was room for every company to thrive, and he predicted there would be very successful new companies. A Microsoft spokesman said the company will continue to nurture successful partnerships with OpenAI and Anthropic and that Nadella’s push for an AI reset isn’t a “zero-sum game.”

Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei has made frequent comments about the potential job losses AI could bring, including a prediction last year that new AI systems could wipe out

to use its deep pockets to join the ranks of companies trying to turn models into commodities. Axios earlier reported that Microsoft was considering providing a version of DeepSeek on its Copilot platform.

Nadella’s interview laying out his plans to reshape the AI race follows an essay he published June 14 offering a view of what AI-first companies will look like in the future.

The new model for AI deployment will be more democratized, with societal benefits that are widely shared and where companies avoid dependency on a small group of frontier models, he said in the interview.

Nadella criticized executives who have thought of AI technology as a tool for reducing costs through job eliminations. “No, how about we think about reorganizing the jobs?” he said. Referring to the main unit of measurement for AI output, he said companies must possess both “token capital”—or in-house AI capability—and human capital.

AI companies, he said, must provide a “recipe for how that can be done. Yes, it’s a lot of change management, it’s a lot of displacement, but there is a path,” he said.

Nadella described a vision of AI as a knowledge engine that helps companies leverage their workers and use their data, tapping a spectrum of models at various prices and capabilities. The models are “all hill-climbing inside of a machine you control,” he said.

Fixing what is wrong in the AI race will take more than a better message, he said.

“No amount of just narrative is going to do it because where we are now, we have to sort of walk the walk,” Nadella said, pointing out the need to ensure people feel like they have agency and economic opportunity. “We now have to do the hard work in earning the social permission.”

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CLASS ACTION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
SAN JOSE DIVISION

RETAIL WHOLESALE DEPARTMENT STORE
UNION LOCAL 338 RETIREMENT FUND, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

STITCH FIX, INC., et al.,

Defendants.

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(II) SETTLEMENT HEARING; AND (III) MOTION FOR ATTORNEYS' FEES AND LITIGATION EXPENSES

TO: All persons and entities who purchased or acquired Stitch Fix, Inc. common stock from June 9, 2020 through June 9, 2022, inclusive (the "Settlement Class Period"), and were damaged thereby ("Settlement Class").¹

**PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY:
YOUR RIGHTS WILL BE AFFECTED BY A CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT PENDING IN THIS COURT.**

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED, pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and an Order of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California ("Court"), that the above captioned securities class action (the "Action") is pending in the Court.

YOU ARE ALSO NOTIFIED that (i) Lead Plaintiffs Retail Wholesale Department Store Union Local 338 Retirement Fund, Retail Wholesale Department Store Union Local 338 Health & Welfare Fund, Retail Wholesale Department Store Union Local 338 General Fund, and Retail Wholesale Department Store Union Local 338 Benefits Trust Fund and (ii) Defendants Stitch Fix, Inc. ("Stitch Fix" or the "Company"), Katrina Lake, and Elizabeth Spaulding have reached a proposed settlement of the Action on behalf of the Settlement Class for **\$32,000,000** in cash (the "Settlement"). If approved by the Court, the Settlement will resolve all claims in the Action.²

A hearing ("Settlement Hearing") will be held on **September 24, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.**, before the Honorable P. Casey Pitts, United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of California, either in person in Courtroom 8, 4th Floor of the Robert F. Peckham Federal Building & United States Courthouse, 280 South First Street, San Jose, CA 95113, or by telephone or videoconference (in the discretion of the Court), to determine, among other things: (i) whether, for purposes of settlement, the Action should be certified as a class action on behalf of the Settlement Class, Lead Plaintiffs should be appointed as Class Representatives for the Settlement Class, and Lead Counsel should be appointed as Class Counsel for the Settlement Class; (ii) whether the Settlement on the terms and conditions provided for in the Stipulation is fair, reasonable, and adequate to the Settlement Class, and should be finally approved by the Court; (iii) whether the Action should be dismissed with prejudice against Defendants and the releases specified and described in the Stipulation (and in the Notice) should be granted; (iv) whether the proposed Plan of Allocation should be approved as fair and reasonable; and (v) whether Lead Counsel's motion for attorneys' fees in an amount not to exceed 25% of the Settlement Fund and payment of expenses in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 (which amount may include a request for reimbursement of the reasonable costs and expenses incurred by Lead Plaintiffs directly related to their representation of the Settlement Class) should be approved. Any updates regarding the Settlement Hearing, including any changes to the date or time of the hearing or updates regarding in person or remote appearances at the hearing, will be posted to the website for the Settlement, www.StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com.

If you are a member of the Settlement Class, your rights will be affected by the pending Action and the Settlement, and you may be entitled to share in the Settlement proceeds. This notice provides only a summary of the information contained in the detailed Notice. You may obtain a copy of the Notice, along with the Claim Form, by: (i) contacting the Claims Administrator at StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com; (ii) downloading them from the website for the Settlement, www.StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com, or from Lead Counsel's website www.blbglaw.com.

To be eligible to receive a payment from the Settlement, you must be a member of the Settlement Class and submit a Claim Form *postmarked (if mailed), or online, no later than October 7, 2026*, in accordance with the instructions set forth in the Claim Form. If you are a Settlement Class Member and do not submit a proper Claim Form, you will not be eligible to share in the Settlement proceeds, but you will nevertheless be bound by any judgments or orders entered by the Court in the Action.

If you are a member of the Settlement Class and wish to exclude yourself from the Settlement Class, you must submit a request for exclusion such that it is *received no later than August 27, 2026*, in accordance with the instructions set forth in the Notice. If you properly exclude yourself from the Settlement Class, you will not be bound by any judgments or orders entered by the Court in the Action and you will not receive any benefits from the Settlement.

Any objections to the proposed Settlement, the proposed Plan of Allocation, and/or Lead Counsel's motion for attorneys' fees and expenses, must be submitted to the Court. Objections must be *filed or postmarked (if mailed) no later than August 27, 2026*, in accordance with the instructions set forth in the Notice.

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE COURT, THE CLERK'S OFFICE, DEFENDANTS, OR DEFENDANTS' COUNSEL REGARDING THIS NOTICE. All questions about this notice, the Settlement, or your eligibility to participate in the Settlement should be directed to Lead Counsel or the Claims Administrator.

Requests for the Notice and Claim Form should be made to the Claims Administrator:

Stitch Fix Securities Litigation
c/o A.B. Data, Ltd.
P.O. Box 173030
Milwaukee, WI 53217
1 877 719 7072
info@StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com
www.StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com

All other inquiries should be made to Lead Counsel:

Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann LLP
Rebecca E. Boon, Esq.
1251 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020
1 800 380 8496
settlements@blbglaw.com

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
United States District Court
Northern District of California

BANKRUPTCIES

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION

In re: Hallmark Financial
Services, Inc.,
Debtor.

Chapter 11
Case No.
26-00000 (MW)

NOTICE OF ORDER (I) APPROVING NOTIFICATION
AND HEARING PROCEDURES FOR CERTAIN
TRANSFERS OF AND DECLARATIONS OF
WORTHLESSNESS WITH RESPECT TO STOCK,
(II) DIRECTING THAT ANY SUCH TRANSFER OR
DECLARATION OF WORTHLESSNESS IN VIOLATION
OF SUCH PROCEDURES BE NULL AND VOID
AB INITIO, AND (III) GRANTING RELATED RELIEF
TO: ALL ENTITIES (AS DEFINED BY SECTION 101(15)
OF THE BANKRUPTCY CODE) THAT MAY HOLD BENEFICIAL
OWNERSHIP OF THE EXISTING CLASS OF COMMON STOCK
(THE "STOCK") OF HALLMARK FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.
(PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that, on June 15, 2026 (the "Petition
Date"), the above-captioned debtor and debtor in possession (the
"Debtor") filed a petition with the United States Bankruptcy Court
for the Northern District of Texas (the "Court") under chapter 11 of
title 11 of the United States Code (the "Bankruptcy Code"). Subject
to certain exceptions, section 362 of the Bankruptcy Code operates
as a stay of all acts to obtain possession of property or of from the
Debtor's estate or to exercise control over property of or from the
Debtor's estate.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, on the Petition Date,
the Debtor filed the Debtor's Emergency Motion for Entry of an
Order (I) Approving Notification and Hearing Procedures for Certain
Transfers of and Declarations of Worthlessness with Respect to Stock,
(II) Directing that Any Such Transfer or Declaration of Worthlessness
in Violation of Such Procedures Be Null and Void Ab Initio, and (III)
Granting Related Relief (Docket No. 13) (the "Motion").

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, on June 18, 2026,
the Court entered the Order (I) Approving Notification and
Hearing Procedures for Certain Transfers of and Declarations of
Worthlessness with Respect to Stock, (II) Directing that Any Such
Transfer or Declaration of Worthlessness in Violation of Such
Procedures Be Null and Void Ab Initio, and (III) Granting Related
Relief (Docket No. 63) (the "Order") approving procedures for cer-
tain transfers and declarations of worthlessness with respect to
the Debtor's Stock, set forth in Exhibit A attached to the Order (the
"Procedures").

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, pursuant to the Order a
Substantial Shareholder may not consummate any purchase, sale,
or other transfer of Stock, or Beneficial Ownership of Stock in viola-
tion of the Procedures, and any such transaction in violation of the
Procedures shall be null and void ab initio.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, pursuant to the Order,
the Procedures shall apply to the holding and transfers of Stock, or
any Beneficial Ownership therein, by a Substantial Shareholder or
someone who may become a Substantial Shareholder.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, pursuant to the
Order, (a) a 50-Percent Shareholder may not claim a worthless
stock deduction with respect to the Debtor's Stock, or Beneficial
Ownership of Stock, in violation of the Procedures (b) any such
deduction in violation of the Procedures shall be null and void ab
initio, and (c) any 50-Percent Shareholder that makes any such
deduction in violation of the Procedures shall be required to file an
amended tax return seeking such proposed deduction.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, pursuant to the Order,
upon the request of any person or entity, the proposed notice,
claims, and solicitation agent for the Debtor, Stretto Inc., will pro-
vide a copy of the Order and a form of each of the declarations
required to be filed by the Procedures in a reasonable period of
time. Such declarations are also available via PKCER on the Court's
website at <https://ecf.tnd.uscourts.gov> for a fee, or free of charge
by accessing the Debtor's restructuring website at <https://cases.stretto.com/Hallmark>.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, pursuant to the Order,
failure to follow the Procedures set forth in the Order shall consti-
tute a violation of, among other things, the automatic stay provi-
sions of section 362 of the Bankruptcy Code.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that nothing in the Order
shall preclude any person desirous of acquiring any Stock from
requesting relief from the Order from this Court, subject to the
Debtor's and the other Notice Parties' rights to oppose such relief.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, except to the extent
that the Order expressly conditions or restricts trading in Stock,
nothing in the Order or in the Motion shall, or shall be deemed
to, prejudice, impair, or otherwise a or affect the rights of any
holders of Stock, including in connection with the treatment of
any such stock under any chapter 11 plan or any applicable bank-
ruptcy court order.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that any prob bited pur-
chase, sale, or other transfer of, or declaration of worthlessness
with respect to the Debtor's Stock or the Beneficial Ownership
thereof, or addition with respect thereto in violation of the Order is
prob bited and shall be null and void ab initio and may be subject
to additional sanctions as the Court may determine.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the requirements set
forth in the Order are in addition to the requirements of applicable
law and do not excuse compliance therewith.

Respectfully submitted this 19th day of June, 2026.

GRAY REED, By: /s/ Aaron M. Kaufman, Jason S. Brookner, Texas Bar
No. 24033684, Aaron M. Kaufman, Texas Bar No. 24060067, Lydia
R. Webb, Texas Bar No. 24063758, Emly F. Shanks, Texas Bar No.
24110350, 1845 Woodall Rodgers Frey Ste. 1300 Dallas, TX 75201.
Telephone: (214) 954-4135, Facsimile: (214) 953-1332, Email:
jbrookner@grayreed.com, akaufman@grayreed.com,
webb@grayreed.com, eshanks@grayreed.com, Proposed Counsel to the
Debtor and Debtor in Possession

The last four days of the Debtor's federal tax identification
number are 7375. The Debtor's mailing address is 5400 Lyndon B.
Johnson Freeway Ste. 400, Dallas, Texas 75240.

¹ Capitalized terms used but not otherwise defined herein
have the meanings ascribed to them in the Order or the Motion, as
applicable.

OpenAI has published a series of policy proposals designed to help people see the potential benefits AI could bring. Both leaders have made dire warnings about safety, and Anthropic has found itself in a fracas with the White House over the potential threats of a widespread release of a powerful new model.

Microsoft has trailed its peers in developing its own AI systems. In the latter half of 2025, Copilot subscribers increasingly preferred other options, such as Google's Gemini, according to market-research firm Recon Analytics.

Finding itself without a competitive frontier model, Microsoft has decided instead

Nadella described a vision of AI as a knowledge engine that helps companies leverage their workers and use their data, tapping a spectrum of models at various prices and capabilities. The models are “all hill-climbing inside of a machine you control,” he said.

Fixing what is wrong in the AI race will take more than a better message, he said.

“No amount of just narrative is going to do it because where we are now, we have to sort of walk the walk,” Nadella said, pointing out the need to ensure people feel like they have agency and economic opportunity. “We now have to do the hard work in earning the social permission.”

The electric-vehicle maker aims to streamline its structure.

Lucid to Lay Off 18% Of Its U.S. Workforce

By CONNOR HART

Lucid Group will lay off about 18% of its U.S. workforce, including its chief operating officer, as the company continues to streamline its structure, reduce costs and align production with anticipated demand.

The electric-vehicle manufacturer on Monday said the cuts, which span full-time employees, contractors and hourly production workers, would reduce costs by about \$158 million a year.

The layoffs include the elimination of the company's COO position, held by Marc Winterhoff.

Winterhoff will be eligible to

receive severance benefits, Lucid said. The company expects to record roughly \$32 million in cash charges stemming from the cuts, largely related to severance, employee benefits and employee transition.

As part of the reduction, Lucid said it has eliminated the second shift of production at its AMP-1 factory. The layoffs are expected to be substantially complete by the end of the third quarter.

Lucid employed about 9,000 employees globally as of Dec. 31. That figure doesn't account for a round of job cuts the company had announced in February, at which time it said it would lay off around 12% of its U.S. workforce.

¹ Certain persons and entities are excluded from the Settlement Class by definition, as set forth in the full Notice of (I) Pendency of Class Action and Proposed Settlement; (II) Settlement Hearing; and (III) Motion for Attorneys' Fees and Litigation Expenses (the "Notice"), available at www.StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com.

² Capitalized terms not otherwise defined herein shall have the same meaning as in the Stipulation and Agreement of Settlement dated February 6, 2026 ("Stipulation"). The Stipulation can be viewed at www.StitchFixSecuritiesLitigation.com.

MARK HENZEL/THE REPUBLIC/USA TODAY NETWORK/REUTERS

PRIME DAY DEALS

Now through June 26, shop deals hand-selected by our editors—featuring standout savings from the brands you trust.



SHOP



[wsj.com/buyside prime](https://www.wsj.com/buyside-prime)

WSJ | Buy Side

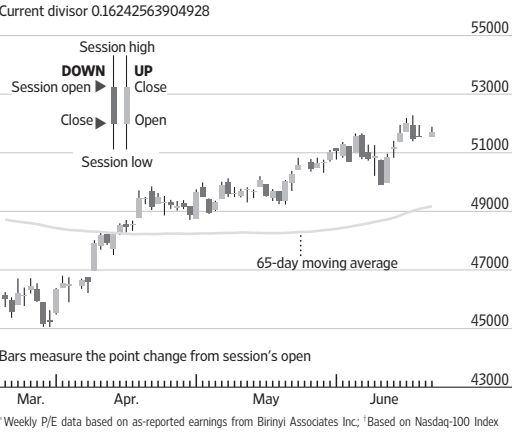
REVIEWS & RECOMMENDATIONS TO SAVE YOU TIME AND MONEY

MARKETS DIGEST

EQUITIES

Dow Jones Industrial Average

51712.71 ▲148.01, or 0.29%	Last	Year ago
High, low, open and close for each trading day of the past three months.	24.65	24.07
	P/E estimate *	21.06
	Dividend yield	1.69
	All-time high	51999.67, 06/16/26



*Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Biriiny Associates Inc; *Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

Major U.S. Stock-Market Indexes

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg	YTD	3-yr. ann.
Dow Jones										
Industrial Average	51887.85	51555.19	51712.71	148.01	0.29	51999.67	42581.78	21.4	7.6	15.1
Transportation Avg	22025.33	21615.29	21795.83	157.94	0.73	23933.14	15067.87	44.4	25.6	13.8
Utility Average	1133.19	1119.84	1127.08	6.65	0.59	1190.23	1037.71	7.2	5.5	7.1
Total Stock Market	74677.79	73994.24	74119.05	-254.19	-0.34	75286.10	59560.62	24.4	9.8	19.3
Barron's 400	1601.56	1591.76	1598.10	7.08	0.44	1598.10	1284.47	24.4	13.1	18.8

Nasdaq Stock Market										
Nasdaq Composite	26561.12	26125.48	26166.60	-351.33	-1.32	27093.90	19630.97	33.3	12.6	24.3
Nasdaq-100	30642.57	30194.25	30347.08	-59.11	-0.19	30660.60	21856.33	38.8	20.2	26.4

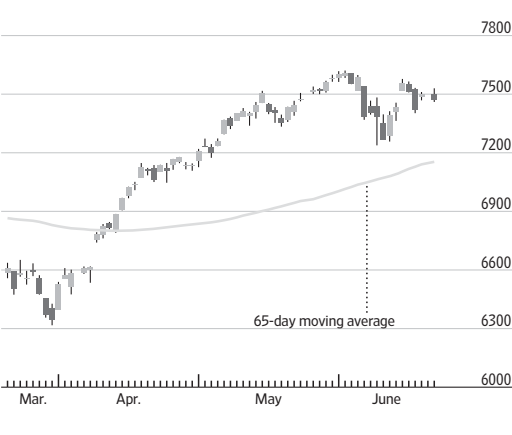
S&P										
500 Index	7530.01	7460.01	7472.79	-27.79	-0.37	7609.78	6025.17	24.0	9.2	19.5
MidCap 400	3812.92	3791.83	3806.69	15.21	0.40	3808.18	3050.55	24.8	15.2	14.4
SmallCap 600	1753.10	1742.08	1744.87	0.76	0.04	1745.26	1312.48	32.9	18.9	13.7

Other Indexes										
Russell 2000	3015.41	2985.09	3004.40	24.64	0.83	3004.40	2132.68	40.9	21.1	17.6
NYSE Composite	23648.74	23499.74	23596.22	96.48	0.41	23704.03	20008.18	17.9	7.2	14.8
Value Line	670.67	665.63	666.41	-2.47	-0.37	676.03	589.26	13.1	6.1	6.1
NYSE Arca Biotech	8045.18	7916.56	7993.86	35.80	0.45	7993.86	5524.32	44.7	11.8	13.6
NYSE Arca Pharma	1160.48	1138.55	1155.00	16.45	1.44	1209.27	881.47	25.6	2.6	9.7
KBW Bank	182.78	180.66	182.35	2.60	1.45	182.35	133.62	36.5	11.1	32.5
PHLX [®] Gold/Silver	343.45	337.76	342.79	-5.24	-1.51	470.37	200.81	65.0	0.1	42.3
PHLX [®] Oil Service	91.75	89.85	91.65	0.69	0.75	109.24	57.56	56.3	25.0	6.7
PHLX [®] Semiconductor	14655.29	14393.89	14634.72	292.94	2.04	14634.72	5244.30	179.1	106.6	60.0
Choe Volatility	17.92	16.49	17.28	0.88	5.37	31.05	13.47	-12.9	15.6	10.2

[®]Nasdaq PHLX

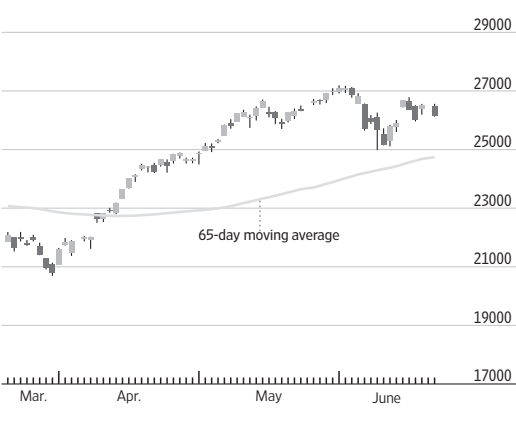
S&P 500 Index

7472.79 ▼27.79, or 0.37%	Last	Year ago
High, low, open and close for each trading day of the past three months.	25.18	23.58
	P/E estimate *	21.99
	Dividend yield *	1.09
	All-time high	7609.78, 06/02/26



Nasdaq Composite Index

26166.60 ▼351.33, or 1.32%	Last	Year ago
High, low, open and close for each trading day of the past three months.	34.47	30.72
	P/E estimate **	26.65
	Dividend yield **	0.56
	All-time high:	27093.90, 06/02/26



Late Trading

Most-active and biggest movers among NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE Amer. and Nasdaq issues from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. ET as reported by electronic trading services, securities dealers and regional exchanges. Minimum share price of \$2 and minimum after-hours volume of 50,000 shares.

Most-active issues in late trading

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	Last	Net chg	After-Hours % chg	High	Low
Schwab U.S. REIT	SCHH	19,515.5	23.80	0.13	0.55	23.88	23.40
Avantis US LC Value ETF	AVLV	15,215.9	91.30	-0.45	-0.49	92.00	91.30
iShares Core S&P 500 ETF	IVV	11,811.7	748.19	0.41	0.05	754.03	747.20
Kenvue	KVUE	9,101.5	18.10	0.24	1.34	18.10	17.81
Invesco QQQ Trust I	QQQ	8,889.6	738.02	0.07	0.01	740.62	737.60
Direxion Semicon Br 3x	SOXS	8,006.7	3.31	0.01	0.30	3.33	3.30
Vanguard S&P 500 ETF	VOO	7,617.6	686.29	0.19	0.03	687.00	686.08
Comcast CI A	CMCSA	7,261.1	22.36	0.04	0.17	22.50	22.25

Percentage gainers...

Defiance Tgt 2X Lg RGTI	RGTX	57.9	25.33	2.04	8.76	25.33	23.29
Mammoth Energy Services	TUSK	85.8	3.15	0.23	7.88	3.89	2.92
Inflation	INFQ	1,323.2	15.27	1.06	7.45	15.32	14.05
Defiance Dly Target 2X Lg	SMCX	304.9	14.04	0.69	5.17	14.10	13.34
Dakota Gold	DC	76.3	4.82	0.22	4.78	4.82	4.60

...And losers

Primoris Services	PRIM	256.0	73.45	-34.89	-32.20	108.34	70.00
FreeCast	CAST	574.3	8.59	-1.25	-12.70	9.85	8.10
Defiance Tgt 2x Shrt RGTI	RGTX	227.2	2.93	-0.27	-8.44	3.21	2.93
Defiance Tgt 2x Shrt QBTS	QBTS	62.3	3.60	-0.27	-6.98	3.95	3.60
Defiance Tgt 2x Shrt IONQ	IONZ	574.4	2.15	-0.14	-6.11	2.29	2.15

Trading Diary

Volume, Advancers, Decliners

	NYSE	NYSE Amer.
Total volume*	1,546,763,568	40,718,386
Adv. volume*	743,593,450	7,286,277
Decl. volume*	797,275,699	32,479,095
Issues traded	2,851	301
Advances	1,142	113
Declines	1,638	172
Unchanged	71	16
New highs	126	4
New lows	108	10
Closing Arms*	0.69	1.86
Block trades*	4,381	337

	Nasdaq	NYSE Arca
Total volume*	12,844,298,618	361,389,438
Adv. volume*	8,282,794,868	152,984,834
Decl. volume*	4,492,059,786	206,190,852
Issues traded	5,097	2,599
Advances	2,131	1,134
Declines	2,797	1,414
Unchanged	169	51
New highs	304	241
New lows	236	65
Closing Arms*	0.41	1.34
Block trades*	127,897	3,197

*Primary market NYSE, NYSE American, NYSE Arca only.

(TRIN) A comparison of the number of advancing and declining issues with the volume of shares rising and falling. An Arms of less than 1 indicates buying demand; above 1 indicates selling pressure.

Percentage Gainers...

Company	Symbol	Close	Net chg	% chg	High	Low	% chg
Nexentis Technologies	NXTS	13.00	7.92	155.91	89.79	3.38	-78.2
Definium Therapeutics	DFTX	36.67	12.19	49.80	39.16	6.35	417.2
Apogee Therapeutics	APGE	132.55	42.17	46.66	133.00	34.34	221.9
FG Merger II	FGMC	14.89	4.59	44.56	14.89	9.00	50.9
Wing Yip Food ADR	WYHG	6.59	1.70	34.76	7.50	1.56	23.9
GrShr 2x Long SMCI Daily	SMCL	54.91	13.09	31.30	561.00	25.80	-82.4
Defiance Dly Target 2X Lg	SMCX	13.35	3.17	31.14	151.22	6.48	-84.1
Apolloomics CI A	APLM	22.83	5.33	30.47	42.12	3.66	276.7
Faeth Therapeutics	FTH	23.19	5.37	30.13	36.76	6.33	210.0
America's Car-Mart	CRMT	3.01	0.61	25.42	62.72	1.38	-93.8
FreeCast	CAST	9.84	1.77	21.93	33.00	0.50	...
Sunlands Technology ADR	STG	4.15	0.74	21.70	15.00	2.44	-24.4
RTB Digital	RTB	12.46	2.21	21.56	34.13	3.25	-51.3
RF Industries	RFIL	21.50	3.69	20.72	21.88	4.78	330.9
Horizon Quantum Holdings	HQ	38.39	6.39	19.97	45.00	8.29	170.6

Percentage Losers

Company	Symbol	Close	Net chg	% chg	High	Low	% chg
XIAO+ADR	AIXI	3.06	-3.20	-51.12	62.00	1.62	-93.4
Lichen International	LICN	1.21	-0.96	-44.24	9.49	0.75	-71.3
Sadot Group	SDOT	9.25	-6.93	-42.83	460.00	2.63	-97.0
Julong Holding	JLHL	26.45	-13.24	-33.36	57.95	2.70	...
Direxion SpaceX Bull 2X	LOFF	21.31	-10.48	-32.97	46.68	21.13	...
T-REX 2X Lg SpaceX	SPAX	12.85	-6.25	-32.72	28.05	12.72	...
ProShares Ultra SpaceX	SPCF	21.36	-10.26	-32.45	46.71	21.13	...
Defiance Tgt 2X Shrt SMCI	SMCZ	6.45	-2.97	-31.53	66.70	4.88	-87.7
Ambitions Enterprise Mgmt	AHMA	1.85	-0.52	-21.94	39.50	0.76	...
SL Science Holding	SLBT	4.52	-1.27	-21.93	14.50	3.00	...
BTQ Technologies	BTQ	4.44	-1.24	-21.76	16.00	2.09	79.8
Defiance Tgt 2x Lg AVAV	AVXX	5.96	-1.61	-21.27	73.74	5.87	...
Sow Good	SOWG	3.09	-0.78	-20.16	31.80	1.04	-75.1
Velo3D	VELO	24.31	-5.55	-18.59	31.75	2.81	208.7
Butterfly Network	BFLY	7.27	-1.63	-18.31	8.94	1.32	236.6

CURRENCIES & COMMODITIES

Currencies

U.S.-dollar foreign-exchange rates at 5 p.m. ET

Country/currency	Mon	Mon	U.S. \$	Country/currency	Mon	Mon	U.S. \$
	in US\$	per US\$	(%)		in US\$	per US\$	(%)
Americas				Vietnam dong	.00003799	26320	0.1
Argentina peso	.00071461	6051	0.7	Europe			
Brazil real	.1939	5.1583	-6.5	Czech Rep. koruna	.04724	21.169	2.9
Canada dollar	.7061	1.4162	3.2	Denmark krone	.1529	6.5403	2.9
Chile peso	.001103	906.46	0.7	Euro area euro	1.1429	.8750	2.8
Colombia peso	.000290	3445.14	-8.6	Hungary forint	.003245	308.17	-5.9
Ecuador US dollar	1	1	unch	Iceland krona	.007937	126.00	0.5
Mexico peso	.0576	17.3666	-3.6	Norway krone	.1032	9.6937	-3.9
Uruguay peso	.02500	40.0021	2.4	Poland zloty	.2675	3.7390	4.1
Asia-Pacific				Sweden krona	.1040	9.6178	4.0
Australia dollar	.7002	1.4282	-4.7	Switzerland franc	1.2366	.8087	2.4
China yuan	.1476	6.7749	-3.1	Turkey lira	.0215	46.4600	8.2
Hong Kong dollar	.1276	7.8396	0.7	Ukraine hryvnia	.0222	45.0500	6.4
India rupee	.01057	94.575	5.2	UK pound	1.3250	.7547	1.7
Indonesia rupiah	.000561	17837	6.8	Middle East/Africa			
Japan yen	.006189	161.59	3.1	Bahrain dinar	2.6527	.3770	...
Kazakhstan tenge	.002052	487.33	-4.0	Egypt pound	.0201	49.7377	4.3
Macau pataca	.1238	8.0770	0.7	Israel shekel	.3367	2.9703	-6.8
Malaysia ringgit	.2410	4.1497	2.3	Oman sul rial	3.2407	.3086	0.2
New Zealand dollar	.5714	1.7501	0.7	Qatar riyal	2.7995	.3847	-0.2
Pakistan rupee	.00359	278.235	-0.7	Saudi Arabia riyal	.2664	3.7644	0.1
Philippines peso	.0164	61.053	3.6	South Africa rand	.0610	16.4032	-1.0
Singapore dollar	.7732	1.2934	0.6				

Futures Contracts

Metal & Petroleum Futures						
	Open	High	hi lo	Low	Settle	Chg
Contract Open interest						
Copper-High (CMX) -25,000 lbs.; \$ per lb.						
June	6.3365	6.3540		6.3365	-0.0180	2,145
Sept	6.4000	6.4665		6.3475	-0.0195	122,979
Gold (CMX) -100 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
June	4138.80	4216.40		4134.80	4181.90	-42.20 654
July	4144.40	4216.10		4139.40	4185.70	-43.60 5,950
Aug	4163.90	4238.10		4151.40	4202.70	-43.20 264,654
Sept	4181.30	4245.30		4180.70	4217.60	-43.20 632
Oct	4197.10	4262.70		4188.00	4232.80	-43.10 18,482
Nov	4200.00	4201.00		4200.00	4249.70	-43.00 241
Palladium (NYM) - 50 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
July	1202.50	1210.00	▼	1202.50	1257.10	-17.40
Sept	1256.00	1296.50		1256.00	1270.90	-18.20 16,160
Platinum (NYM) -50 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
July	1682.10	1682.10	▼	1682.10	1670.30	-34.90
Oct	1670.00	1724.90		1670.00	1690.40	-35.20 32,823
Silver (CMX) -5,000 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
June	70.310	70.950		68.760	65.527	-0.728 6
Sept	64.095	67.720		64.095	66.065	-0.738 53,518
Crude Oil, Light Sweet (NYM) -1,000 bbls.; \$ per bbl.						
July	78.93	78.96		74.45	74.82	-1.78 20,255
Aug	78.00	78.14		72.54	73.86	-1.99 273,905
Sept	76.75	77.10		73.28	73.03	-2.08 197,547
Dec	74.50	74.50		70.63	70.99	-1.50 217,415
Jan'27	70.50	70.85		68.46	68.69	-1.00 141,706
Dec	69.25	69.37		67.44	67.63	-0.89 149,993
NY Harbor ULSD (NYM) -42,000 gal.; \$ per gal.						
July	3.2325	3.2452		3.0882	3.0931	-0.342 29,342
Aug	3.1800	3.2002		3.0511	3.0569	-0.285 63,212
Gasoline-NY RBOB (NYM) -42,000 gal.; \$ per gal.						
July	3.0377	3.0424		2.9484	2.9870	-0.079 41,251
Aug	2.9271	2.9479		2.8593	2.8795	-0.222 89,517
Natural Gas (NYM) -10,000 MMBtu.; \$ per MMBtu.						
July	3.280	3.335		3.234	3.253	.020 56,295
Aug	3.323	3.377		3.262	3.279	.003 190,001
Sept	3.277	3.326		3.218	3.234	-.001 221,875
Oct	3.323	3.355		3.249	3.266	-.002 152,887
Jan'27	4.499	4.529		4.441	4.453	-0.018 134,599
March	3.231	3.257		3.197	3.205	-0.007 118,013
Agriculture Futures						
Corn (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
July	417.50	418.00		411.25	411.50	-6.00 314,455

Dividend Changes

Company	Symbol	Yld %	Amount New/Old	Frq	Payable/ Record
Increased					
Allstate 5 1% Deb. 2053	ALLPB	7.2	4487/44368	Q	Jul15/Jul01
ATN International	ATNI	4.2	29/275	Q	Jul08/Jun30
BitMine Immr 95% Pfd A	BMNP	0.4	1056/10058		Jul10/Jun30
Cross Timbers Royalty Tr	CRT	6.2	0442/02962	M	Jul15/Jun30
Delta Air Lines	DAL	0.9	215/1875	Q	Jul30/Jul09
Energy Svcs of America	ESOA	0.7	04/03	Q	Jul15/Jun30
Investar Holding	ISTR	1.6	12/11	Q	Jul31/Jun30
Northeast Community Bncp	NECB	3.1	25/20	Q	Aug06/Jul07
Parke Bancorp	PKBK	2.3	20/18	Q	Jul17/Jul03
Permian Basin Royalty Tr	PBT	1.3	0247/02035	M	Jul15/Jun30
Permianville Royalty Tr	PVL	9.8	017/014	M	Jul15/Jun30
PermRock Royalty Trust	PRT	13.2	0305/00266	M	Jul15/Jun30
SR Bancorp	SRBK	1.1	06/05	Q	Jul15/Jun30
Two Harbors Pfd C	TWOPC	9.4	5651/55899	Q	Jul27/Jul10
Virtus Duff & Phelps	DPRE	3.0	0901/06357	M	Jun29/Jun22
World Kinect	WKC	2.5	23/20	Q	Jul16/Jun30
Stocks					
Alight	ALIT		120		/Jul01

Cash Prices |

wsj.com/market-data/commodities

Monday, June 22, 2026

These prices reflect buying and selling of a variety of actual or "physical" commodities in the marketplace—separate from the futures price on an exchange, which reflects what the commodity might be worth in future months.

Monday			Monday			Monday		
Energy						Food		
BMLithium Carbonate, EXW China, +99.5% -v-w			21075			Beef, carcass equiv, index choice 1-3,600-900 lbs.-u select 1-3,600-900 lbs.-u		
BMLithium Hydroxide, EXW China, +56 % -v-w			22650			Broilers, National comp wtd. avg.-w		
BMLCobalt sulphate, EXW China, >20.5% -v-w			13098			Butter, AA Chicago-d		
BMLNickel Sulphate, EXW China, >22% -v-w			4847			Cheddar cheese, bbl, Chicago-d		
BMLFale Graph te, FOB China, 100 Mesh, 94-95% -v-m			425			Cheddar cheese, blk, Chicago-d		
						Milk, Nonfat dry, Chicago-lb-d		
Metals						Coffee, Brazilian, Comp-y		
Gold, per troy oz			Fibers and Textiles			Coffee, Colombian, NY-y		
Engelhard industrial			Burlap,10-oz,40-inch NY yd-nw			Eggs,large white,Chicago-u-w		
Kruggerand,wholesale-e			Cotton1,1/16 std lw-mdMphs-u			Flour,hard winter KC-p		
Maple Leaf-e			Cotlook 'A' Index-t			Hams,17-20 lbs,Mid-US fob-u		
American Eagle-e			Hides,hvy native steers piece fob-u			Mid-US fob-u		
Mexican peso-e			Wool,64s, staple, Terr del-u,w			Minnesota fob-u		
Austria crown-e						Pork bellies,12-14 lb MidUS-u		
Austria phil-e						Pork loins,13-19 lb MidUS-u		
Silver, troy oz.			Grains and Feeds			Steers,Tex.-Okla.Choice-u		
Engelhard industrial			Bran,wheat middlings, KC-u-w			Steers,feeder,Okla.City-u-w		
Handy & Harman base			Corn,No.2 yellow, Cent IL-bp,u					
Handy & Harman fabricated			Cottonseed meal-u-w			Fats and Oils		
Coins,wholesale \$1,000 face-a			Hornim feed,Cent IL-u-w			Degummed com oil, crude wtd. avg.-w		
Other metals			Meat-bonemeral 50% pro Mnpls-u-w			Grease,choice white,Chicago-h		
Platinum,Engelhard industrial			Oats,No.2 milling,Mnpls-u			Lard,Chicago-u		
Palladium,Engelhard industrial			Rice, Long Grain Milled, No. 2 AR-u-w			Soybean oil,crude,CentIL-l-u-w		
Aluminum, LME, \$ per metric ton			SoybeanMeal,CentIL,railton48%-u-w			Tallow,bleach,Chicago-h		
Copper,Comex spot			Soybeans,No.1 yllw IL-bp,u			Tallow,edible,Chicago-u		
Iron Ore, 62% Fe CFR China-s			Wheat,Spring14%-pro Mnpls-u					
Steel, HRC USA, FOB Midwest Mill-s			Wheat,No.2 soft red,St.Louis-u					
Battery/EV metals			Wheat - Hard - KC (USDA) \$ per bu-u					
			Wheat-No.1soft white,Portld,OR-u					

KEY TO CODES: A=ask; B=bid; BP=country elevator bids to producers; C=corrected; D=CME; E=Manfra,Tordella & Brookes; H=American Commodities Brokerage Co; K=bi-weekly; M=monthly; N=nominal; n.a.=not quoted or not available; P=Seoland Publishing; R=SNL Energy; S=Platts-TSI; T=Cotlook Limited; U=USDA; V=Benchmark Mineral Intelligence; W=weekly; Y=International Coffee Organization; Z=not quoted. "Data as of 6/19

Source: Dow Jones Market Data

Borrowing Benchmarks | wsj.com/market-data/bonds/benchmarks

Money Rates

June 22, 2026

Key annual interest rates paid to borrow or lend money in U.S. and international markets. Rates below are a guide to general levels but don't always represent actual transactions.

Inflation				Week				Week			
May Index	Chg	From (%)		Latest	ago	—52-WEEK—		Latest	ago	—52-WEEK—	
level	April	26	May			High	Low			High	Low
U.S. consumer price index											
All items	335.123	0.63	4.2								
Core	336.846	0.31	2.9								
International rates											
	Latest	Week	—52-Week—								
		ago	High	Low							
U.S. consumer price index											
Japan	2.125	2.125	2.125	1.875							
Policy Rates											
Euro zone	2.40	2.15	2.40	2.15							
Switzerland	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50							
Britain	3.75	3.75	4.25	3.75							
Australia	4.35	4.35	4.35	3.60							
Overnight repurchase											
U.S.	3.65	3.68	4.45	3.49							
U.S. government rates											
Discount											
	3.75	3.75	4.50	3.75							

Key Interest Rates

Data are annualized on a 360-day basis. Treasury yields are per annum, on actively traded noninflation and inflation-indexed issues that are adjusted to constant maturities. Data are from weekly Federal Reserve release H.15.

Week Ended				Week Ended			
Jun19	Jun12	High	Low	Jun19	Jun12	High	Low
Federal funds (effective)							
	3.62	3.62	4.33	3.62			
Commercial paper							
Nonfinancial							
1-month	3.68	3.67	4.33	3.61			
2-month	3.67	3.70	4.32	3.58			
3-month	3.68	3.67	4.33	3.62			
Financial							
1-month	n.a.	3.67	4.32	3.60			

BIGGEST 1,000 STOCKS

How to Read the Stock Tables

The following explanations apply to NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and Nasdaq Stock Market listed securities. Prices are consolidated from trades reported by various market centers, including securities exchanges, Finra, electronic communications networks and other broker-dealers. The list comprises the 1,000 largest companies based on market capitalization.

Underlined quotations are those stocks with large changes in volume compared with the issue's average trading volume.

Boldfaced quotations highlight those issues whose price changed by 5% or more if

[illegible]

Exchange-Traded Portfolio

Largest 100 exchange-traded funds, latest session

Monday, June 22, 2026					Closing Price					Closing Price				
ETF	Symbol	Closing Price	%	YTD (%)	ETF	Symbol	Price	%	YTD (%)					
AvantUS\$CValue	AVUV	122.38	0.31	20.00	SPDRGoldMini	GLDM	89.22	-6.2	-2.9					
CapGrpDivYield	CDGV	48.85	-0.29	11.90	SPDR Gold	GLD	384.59	-0.65	-3.3					
DimenUS\$CoreEq2	DFAC	44.19	-0.02	0.16	SchwabIntEquity	SCHF	28.29	0.21	17.17					
InvnsNasdaq100	QQQM	303.90	-0.09	20.02	SchwabUS BrdMkt	SCHB	28.88	0.31	10.10					
InvnsQQQ	QQQ	737.95	-0.25	20.01	SchwabUS DivC	SCHD	33.49	0.09	1.24					
InvnsSP500Value	RSP	209.61	0.22	9.4	SchwabUS\$LC Grw	SCHL	31.88	-0.38	-1.26					
IShBtwn	IBIT	36.50	-0.47	-26.5	SEnergyEquity	XLE	54.06	1.26	2.6					
IShBrdUSDHYGCapBd	UHSY	69.89	0.04	0.00	SFinS&I	XLF	53.70	0.59	-2.9					
IShCoreDivGrowth	DGRO	74.88	0.08	7.9	S\$HtGrSel	XLI	150.06	0.08	-3.8					
IShCoreMSCIEAFE	IEFA	97.39	0.10	8.9	SInidSel	XLV	181.80	0.74	17.17					
IShCoreMSCIEM	IEMG	86.60	0.43	27.9	SSSPDRBgtI-3M	BIL	91.57	-0.00	0.00					
IShMSCIIntDev	IEV	89.69	0.15	8.7	S\$GrdCrdn	DUX	33.48	0.00	0.00					
IShCoreMSCITotInt	ITOT	103.95	0.23	14.8	SSSPDRDev	SPW	51.14	0.06	0.05					
IShCoreSP500	IUV	747.78	-0.31	9.2	SSSPDR\$P500	SPYM	87.61	-0.32	9.9					
IShCoreSP500M	IVV	747.78	-0.31	15.3	SSSPDR\$P500C	SPYC	116.54	-0.71	11.11					
IShCoreSP500	IJR	143.26	0.09	19.2	SSSPDR\$P500V	SPYV	60.73	0.21	6.6					
IShCoreSP500T	ITR	163.32	-0.32	9.8	SSIMSPDR\$P500	SPV	744.39	-0.31	9.9					
IShCore\$PUSGrw	IUSG	187.27	-0.75	11.5	SSTechSec	XLT	192.15	0.49	33.33					
IShCoreUSAggBd	AGG	98.63	-0.27	-1.3	VangGdCrdn	VGC	11.46	0.00	0.00					
IShCoreUSInvSdBd	IVS	45.99	-0.28	-1.2	VanESemicon	SMH	66.87	1.37	8.5					
IShEdgeMSCISAMom	NTUM	34.92	-1.98	37.9	VangGdScal	VBR	238.83	0.18	12.5					
IShEdgeMSCISASqua	QUAL	215.83	-0.03	8.7	VangGdExtMkt	VXF	204.84	-0.10	1.5					
IShEdgeMSCISASqua	QVCL	78.47	-0.29	2.9	VangDivdApp	VV	235.41	0.09	7.9					
IShBox\$IGCgCapBd	LOH	108.78	-0.27	-1.3	VangDivFSEA\$UAW	VEU	85.23	0.37	10.5					
ISMBS	MBB	94.25	-0.24	-1.0	VangDivFSEDevMkt	VEA	72.39	0.23	11.1					
ISMSCIACWI	ACWI	157.59	-0.10	11.4	VangDivFSEEM	VEM	61.24	0.33	0.00					
ISMSCIEAFE	EFA	104.58	0.16	8.9	VangDivEurope	VGE	76.23	0.11	15.5					
ISMSCIEM	EEM	71.21	0.59	30.2	VangDivGrowth	VGM	55.90	-1.24	5.5					
ISMSCIEAFEValue	EFV	76.82	0.23	0.00	VangDivHiv	VYM	158.39	0.11	10.0					
ISNatMunBd	MUB	107.32	-0.01	0.2	VangDivInfoTech	VGT	120.51	0.39	27.9					
IS\$RUS100	RUSS	109.10	-0.13	13.3	VangDivIntermBd	BIV	76.24	-0.25	-2.9					
IS\$RUS100	IWB	105.95	-0.36	9.0	VangDivIntCorpBd	VCT	81.29	-0.23	-1.1					
IS\$RUS100Grw	IWG	121.76	-1.16	2.9	VangDivIntermTree	VIT	58.69	-0.25	-2.9					
IS\$RUS100Val	IWD	243.53	0.56	15.8	VangDivIntTrea	VITC	58.00	-0.40	0.00					
IS\$RUS200	IWM	298.18	0.88	21.1	VangDivMegaGrwth	MKG	87.34	-1.39	5.5					
IS\$SP500Grw	IWE	136.89	-0.78	11.1	VangDivMCI	VO	80.45	0.44	10.0					
IS\$SP500Value	IVE	226.83	0.20	7.0	VangDivRealEst	VNQ	96.59	1.08	9.9					
IS\$SeniSec	SOXX	655.01	24.17	5.5	VangRuss100Grwth	VUNQ	125.30	-1.24	2.9					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangRuss100Val	VNO	68.60	-0.29	9.9					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Bond	BSV	77.18	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.00	VangST Div	VSD	44.84	-0.12	-1.1					
IS\$SeniTreastBd	SOFT	50.00	-0.04	0.										

New Highs and Lows

The following explanations apply to the New York Stock Exchange, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and Nasdaq Stock Market stocks that hit a new 52-week intraday high or low in the latest session. % **CHG**-Daily percentage change from the previous trading session.

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HEARD ON THE STREET

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS & COMMENTARY

Does Your Index Fund Have SpaceX?

Fretting over the answer isn’t likely to boost returns whether you avoid big IPOs or not

Being a passive investor means you don’t pick stocks. But you still have to pick an index. And different indexes have different approaches to huge new listings.

Following the addition of **SpaceX** after its initial public offering to many stock indexes last week, passive investors are suddenly faced with a stark choice in benchmarks. Do they want one that now includes Elon Musk’s newly listed company with a rock-eting valuation, or one that doesn’t?

Surprisingly, the diverging approaches might not make a huge difference for investors who focus on broad-based investment vehicles that keep costs low.

Among some of the largest exchange-traded funds, the **Vanguard Total Stock Market ETF** tracks an index that will now include SpaceX. But the giant ETFs tracking the S&P 500 index won’t have it.

Investors could be on either side of this. Maybe they feel that they are missing out on great companies like SpaceX if their index doesn’t have them. Or they might want to avoid overhyped debutantes until the dust settles on the latest IPO boom.

This is a variation on a basic question passive investors face. Should they aim to replicate the whole market, or just the bulk of it? Vanguard’s total-market ETF tracks an index with almost 3,500 companies, and which can add IPOs after just a few days of trading. The S&P 500 tracks not only larger companies, but waits much longer after an IPO and has profitability criteria for inclusion.

The reassuring news for passive investors is that in recent years, it hasn’t made a huge difference in returns.

For comparison’s sake, consider Vanguard’s total-market index ETF versus its S&P 500-tracking ETF. Over the past decade through



Many stock indexes added Elon Musk’s SpaceX following the company’s initial public offering last week.

Thursday, the S&P 500 ETF has returned an annualized 15.6%, according to FactSet data. The total-market index ETF has returned 15.1%.

That isn’t a huge gap. And it is just one precise interval. Any variation within that span, or depending on when you entered and exited, could easily have generated a different outcome. Over the past two years, for example, the total market ETF has returned an annualized 18.9% versus about 18.5% for the S&P 500 ETF.

Investors who are skeptical of IPO hype aren’t crazy. Newly listed companies in the U.S. historically have, on average, a poor market-adjusted track record in their first couple of years from where they end trading in their first session.

Looking at the most-recent IPO boom year, 2021, the S&P 500 in-

dex outperformed several major total-market indexes, according to FactSet data.

Case closed then? Not quite. IPO vintages vary just like anything else.

In 2012, when **Meta Platforms**, then Facebook, went public, that year’s IPOs from their first-day closing price on average outperformed the broader market over the next three years, according to data compiled by University of Florida finance professor Jay Ritter. In 2012 and 2013, the S&P 500 index’s annual returns trailed several total-market benchmarks, according to FactSet data.

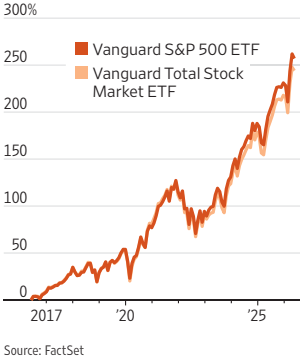
The types of companies going public matters, too. IPOs of very large companies, with \$1 billion or more in inflation-adjusted, past-year sales pre-IPO, on average historically from 1980 to 2024 just

about matched the market’s performance over three years from their first-day closing price, according to Ritter’s data. And IPOs of unprofitable tech companies with \$100 million or more in inflation-adjusted past-year sales actually beat the market by more than 11% over three years, on average.

Of course, in any given year, across a vast market, with IPOs usually representing just a sliver of companies, it is quite difficult to attribute any broad index’s performance to having or not having new listings. The point is just that it is difficult to predict any of these outcomes, especially over the shorter term.

Could SpaceX’s sheer size and magnitude change the calculus? It has already traded at prices that make it one of the U.S. market’s largest stocks.

Performance of Vanguard exchange-traded funds



However, SpaceX’s limited float will curtail its index impact. Most indexes adjust a company’s market value by how much of it is freely available to trade. SpaceX initially sold less than 5% of its stock in its offering.

That will rise as more shares are freed up for sale. But according to estimates by Morningstar analyst Zachary Evens, SpaceX’s float is unlikely to exceed 50% after a year. The percentage that is floating can also depend on the degree of insider selling, as well as new stock issuance by the company.

The bottom line for a self-styled, passive investor who actively moves in and out of different indexes for near-term performance reasons, or to avoid (or include) a certain stock? They will find themselves in the same stock-picking and market-timing quandaries they had initially set out to avoid—with potentially little ultimate benefit.

How much you should invest, how you should spread funds across asset classes and how much you should pay managers, are far more consequential decisions.

—Telis Demos

Strategy’s Chairman Keeps Rolling the Dice

The history of American business is filled with founders who took huge risks.

Walt Disney mortgaged everything, convinced “Snow White” would be a hit. Steve Jobs made gutsy bets on the Macintosh, iPod and iPhone. Most audacious of all was **FedEx**’s Fred Smith who literally gambled with the carrier’s last few thousand dollars to cover its fuel bill.

But none of them can touch Michael Saylor, chairman of bitcoin hoarder **Strategy**, formerly called MicroStrategy.

The distinction is how much smaller those other companies were at the time. When Jobs unveiled the iPod, Apple was worth less than two-tenths of a percent what it is today. Strategy had grown huge by last summer—more valuable than **GM** and **Target** combined—when Saylor said he was

Strategy Perpetual Preferred, par value \$100



Source: FactSet

“willing to disagree with the lawyers and the bankers and conventional investors.”

He decided to enhance the com-

pany’s frenetic bitcoin buying by selling variable-rate perpetual, cumulative preferred stock. The ticker is STRC—dubbed “Stretch.” It’s an appropriate nickname.

Strategy tries, but doesn’t promise, to keep the security at par of \$100 a share so it can keep selling more. The coupon has been raised seven times to 11.5% and more than \$10 billion has been issued in less than a year.

Ads on Saylor’s social-media feed show a woman living off dividends on an exotic beach. But owners essentially are being paid with new investors’ money—a situation that can’t continue.

Stretch fell as low as \$82.53 last week, raising its effective yield to 14%, typical of highly risky junk debt. Combined payments on various preferred shares are substantial and the business produces hardly any of its own cash.

Yes, Strategy has oodles of bitcoin, but selling could backfire. The one time it did, the cryptocurrency’s price fell sharply. It could dilute shareholders by selling more stock, now down three-quarters from its peak, to service the dividends.

It also could raise Stretch’s dividend again to nudge its price back to par and sell more. That would make its cash-flow issue even dicier, though.

Simply halting Stretch’s dividend is legal, but a nuclear option. Because it’s cumulative, future payments would mushroom. Preferred stock is senior to common stock in bankruptcy. Strategy shareholders, who once inexplicably paid a multiple of

its bitcoin value, would surely figure out there’s a growing liability between them and their cryptocurrency.

There’s a reason no large company has tried this financing

\$90B

Strategy’s market value has fallen this much since last July

method before: It works until it doesn’t. Strategy’s market value is down \$90 billion since last July.

Visionaries gamble when they have little to lose and lots to gain, not the inverse. Saylor doesn’t seem to have grasped that: Strategy already crashed 99% once under his leadership.

What’s alarming is how many people went along for the ride this time. It says something about this frothy moment in markets.

—Spencer Jakab

MONEY & INVESTING

Spotlight on Stocks

AbbVie

The pharmaceutical company agreed to buy Apogee Therapeutics for about \$10.9 billion. AbbVie shares advanced about 6%, while the biotech company’s stock shot up more than 40%.

Alphabet

The tech giant’s shares dropped about 6%, poised for their sharpest fall in more than a year, after the announcement late last week that two key AI researchers were leaving the company.

SpaceX

Shares of Elon Musk’s rocket company dropped 16%, marking the stock’s third straight session of declines since it began trading publicly last week.

Intel

Shares of the tech giant climbed 5%. The stock rallied at the end of last week after President Trump said that Apple agreed to work with it to design and build chips in the U.S.

easyJet

The budget airline’s shares rose 3% in London after it rejected a third, \$6.3 billion takeover bid from U.S. investment firm Castllake.

Lucid Group

The EV manufacturer said it would lay off about 18% of its U.S. workforce. Its shares finished nearly 4% lower.

Babcock International

The London-listed defense and nuclear-equipment group reported a decline in full-year pretax profit. Shares slid nearly 6%.

Arcosa

Shares leapt more than 6% after building-materials supplier CHR said it would buy Arcosa.

TUESDAY’S EVENTS:

◆ Economic data: ADP weekly employment data, S&P Global preliminary PMI data, Johnson Redbook Retail Sales Index, Richmond Fed manufacturing index

EARNINGS EXPECTED:

FedEx, Carnival

Getty Images share price



Source: FactSet

Getty Images Shares Leap

Shares of **Getty Images** nearly doubled after the company disclosed a display agreement with OpenAI.

The stock jumped 88% to \$1.14 Monday.

Under the partnership agreement, Getty said its licensed content libraries will appear across OpenAI search and discovery experiences within ChatGPT.

—Connor Hart

ICE, OKX Form Crypto Venture

New York Stock Exchange owner Intercontinental Exchange and crypto exchange OKX are teaming up to launch digital financial products like tokenized securities.

The companies said Monday that they were setting up a 50-50 joint venture, called OKXICE, that will be co-chaired by former Governor of New York Andrew Cuomo and ICE Senior Vice President of Futures Markets Trabue Bland. Cuomo has worked with OKX since 2023, including representing and advising the exchange.

In an interview, Cuomo said the joint venture has already started working on oil-futures products and that its first order of business is to get licensed as a futures commission merchant and broker-dealer. Ultimately, OKXICE’s goal is to offer fully tokenized securi-

ties, pending regulatory clarity.

The joint venture comes after ICE made a roughly \$200 million investment in OKX earlier this year in a deal that valued the exchange at \$25 billion.

Founded in China in 2013, OKX is one of the world’s largest crypto exchanges. The platform has been expanding its U.S. presence after agreeing to pay more than half a billion dollars last year to resolve a federal investigation.

—Vicky Ge Huang



Andrew Cuomo.