

Full circle

Former college teammates reunite as assistants at Arkansas. — Sports, 1C



Past imperfect

Lakeport Plantation offers a look back at state's history. — Style, 1E

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Election 2026
ARKANSAS
VOTER GUIDE

Election Day The general primary runoff election will be held today in Arkansas.

- Polls open at 7:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m.
- More information is available online at arkansasonline.com/election, or www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections.



Board member Lee Watson (far right) speaks during the Board of Corrections' special meeting Monday at the Department of Corrections headquarters in North Little Rock. (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/Staci Vandagriff)

Governor to oversee corrections secretary

BRETT BARROUQUERE
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

The Arkansas governor's office will oversee the secretary of corrections under a settlement agreement approved Monday between the Board of Corrections and Attorney General Tim Griffin's office.

The settlement, one of two put forth by the attorney general, comes roughly four months after a judge's ruling striking down as unconstitutional two laws orchestrating

the same power shift.

The settlement calls for the board and attorney general's office to ask the state Supreme Court to reverse a ruling by Pulaski Circuit Judge Patricia James, who struck down the laws altering the reporting structure for the secretary of corrections and the directors.

By a 4-3 vote, [the board approved](#) the settlements, with the appointees of Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders voting to approve and three

members put on the board by her predecessor, Gov. Asa Hutchinson, voting no.

One of the approved settlements says Acts 185 and 659 of 2023, which shifted supervision of the corrections secretary to the governor and division directors overseeing prisons and community corrections to the secretary — instead of the board — are constitutional. James struck down those laws as in violation of Article 33 of the

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In the news

■ **Mark Sanford** filed to seek a U.S. House seat hours before the deadline and 16 years after the former governor, congressman and presidential candidate's career took a hit from his 6-day disappearance to visit his Argentine mistress.

■ **Michael Rousseau** said he'll retire this year after the Air Canada chief was accused of lacking compassion after a deadly New York crash for his English-only condolences to a nation where French is also an official language.

■ **Armin Papperger**, CEO of German defense firm Rheinmetall, is taking a few shots at Ukrainian drone technology, likening it to playing "with Legos" and claiming it's built by "housewives" with "3D printers in the kitchen," remarks that Ukraine's president called "strange."

■ **Cruz Monroy**, a Mexican street vendor of the birds he carries in a 10-foot stack of cages on his back, told his sons to abandon their traditional livelihood because of government regulations and animal-welfare activists.

■ **Dan Rauch**, Washington, D.C.'s wildlife biologist, said Mr. President and Lotus appear to be hatching an egg in their golf course nest after the bald eagle pair had an idle year that raised reproductive worries about the 17-year-old male.

■ **Debbie Marland** of Sunshine Farm petting zoo in Necedah, Wis., said she put in "about 37,000 steps per day looking for him" after Chesney the kangaroo was spooked by dogs, scaled an 8-foot fence and went on the lam for three days.

■ **Sarah Cannon**, a spokesperson, said Florida's Tallahassee Memorial Hospital has dropped its bid to evict the patient in room 373 who had refused to leave almost six months after she was discharged, adding that the woman is no longer there.



Travelers walk through TSA security lines at George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston on Monday. (AP/Ashley Landis)

Passengers find airport lines much shorter as TSA is paid

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DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

Frustrating security lines dwindled at U.S. airports Monday, clearing the worst bottlenecks as Transportation Safety Administration officers began receiving back pay for working during the government shutdown.

Checkpoint lines that at times stretched to four hours at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport shrank to waits of 10 minutes or less on Monday. In other previous trouble spots such as Atlanta and Baltimore-Washington

International Airport, travelers were moving smoothly to their flights.

Just days ago at these hubs, nightmarish lines zigzagged across the terminal and even stretched outside it, causing major anxiety for travelers on spring break and leading Atlanta and all three major New York airports to pause their real-time wait trackers. All of those trackers were operating Monday.

TSA officers had been working without pay since Feb. 14, when the Department of Homeland Security's

funding lapsed, setting off a partial government shutdown as Congress failed to resolve a standoff over immigration enforcement. On Monday, TSA employees said they had begun to receive paychecks that covered some of the work they had done during the shutdown.

More than 3,500 TSA officers called out sick on Friday, a 12% absence rate that was the highest of the shutdown so far. But the absence rate, and the lines at airports, have begun to ease since then.

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US threatening Iran's resources over peace deal

Trump vows to destroy vital facilities if war not over soon

COMPILED BY
DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday threatened widespread destruction of Iran's energy resources and other vital infrastructure, potentially including desalination plants that supply drinking water, if a deal to end the war is not reached "shortly."

Iran, meanwhile, struck a key water and electrical plant in Kuwait, and an oil refinery in Israel came under attack. Israel and the U.S. launched a new wave of strikes on Iran, as the war raged with no end in sight.

Trump's new threat came in a social media post. Earlier comments to the Financial Times suggested American troops could seize Iran's Kharg Island oil export hub. Trump has repeatedly claimed to be making diplomatic progress — though Tehran denies negotiating

directly — while ramping up his threats and sending thousands more U.S. troops to the Middle East.

Trump told the New York Post that the U.S. is negotiating with Iran's parliament speaker, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf. The former Revolutionary Guard commander, who has taunted the U.S. on social media, dismissed the talks facilitated by Pakistan as a cover for the latest American troop deployments.

In a social media post, Trump said "great progress is being made" in talks with Iran to end military operations. But he said if a deal is not reached "shortly," and if the Strait of Hormuz is not immediately reopened, the U.S. would broaden its offensive by "completely obliterating" power plants, oil wells, Kharg Island and possibly even desalination plants.

The strait is a crucial

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Turnout of 5%-10% predicted for runoff

MICHAEL R. WICKLINE
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

About 5% to 10% of Arkansas' 1.8 million registered voters are projected by the Arkansas secretary of state's office to turn out and cast ballots in Tuesday's primary runoff election.

In all, 5% of the state's registered voters would be about 90,000 voters, while

10% would amount to roughly 180,000 voters. Monday was the last day of early voting, which started March 24.

The turnout in the 2014 Republican runoff for attorney general was about 4.6% of the state's registered voters, and Republican turnout has trended upward ever since, said Samantha Boyd, a

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WEATHER

LITTLE ROCK

TODAY **TONIGHT**

HIGH
86

LOW
65

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Pine Bluff Commercial under new ownership

BILL BOWDEN
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

The Pine Bluff Commercial will be acquired by Arkansas-based Newsroom Ventures LLC, effective Tuesday. Terms of the sale weren't disclosed.

Roby Brock, CEO and publisher of Newsroom Ventures, said he was "honored to carry forward the legacy" of the newspaper, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1969.

"On behalf of our news organization, we are very excited to be coming to Pine Bluff with a product I hope you find dynamic, informative and truly representative of the community and region," Brock said in a letter to readers to be published Tuesday in the Commercial.

This is the sixth Arkansas

newspaper Newsroom Ventures has acquired since July.

"I think it's important to preserve these local newspapers," Brock said. "They are the primary source of where people at the local level, those small towns, get their news."

Brock said he has a particular fondness for Pine Bluff.

"I worked in Pine Bluff years ago and have always felt an affinity and appreciation for the city and the people who live here," Brock wrote in his letter to readers. "Pine Bluff is a special place and is an important contributor to our state's economy and culture. It is crucially important to continue the strong community news reporting that has been taking

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Furor over fun ban



Clowns shout slogans during a protest against the government's ban on holiday parties at schools during teaching hours, outside the Ministry of Education in La Paz, Bolivia, on Monday. (AP/Juan Karita)