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Naples Daily News

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NAPLES PRIDEFEST

New date brings smaller crowds

Drag shows inside, colorful, bubbly events outside

J. Kyle Foster Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News | USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Music, colors, dance, joy and entertainment were the themes of Naples PrideFest 2026 at Cambier Park in Naples. • Usually held in June during Pride Month, the April date during cooler weather and the end of tourist and snowbird season brought out fewer people this year, perhaps because of all the competing events, including the U.S. Open Pickleball Championships being held at East Naples Community Park.

For the second year, the accompanying drag shows were held inside at the Norris Center, just behind Cambier Park – an order from the City of Naples. Yellow police tape marked playgrounds and athletic courts off limits during the eighth annual event.

The main stage outside in the park teamed with entertainment – singing and dancing from local children and adults as a bubble machine churned to create a moving backdrop. Food trucks, jewelry, drink, art and clothing vendors served as the event’s perimeter.

See PRIDEFEST, Page 4A

Vincent McCana and Reggie Little embrace as they watch the entertainment at Naples PrideFest on Saturday, April 18, at Cambier Park in Naples. J. KYLE FOSTER/FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS AND NAPLES DAILY NEWS

AI looks for waste in health care costs

Congresswoman fights Medicare pilot program

Anne Geggis
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Artificial intelligence is being brought in to ferret out “wasteful” health care spending for a retiree benefit that’s long been exempt from efforts to hold down costs and a Florida congresswoman is vowing to fight it.

Starting in January, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) launched a pilot program so that select services provided through traditional Medicare insurance be AI-reviewed to determine if the expense is medically necessary, a process known as preauthorization.

It’s called WISer, or Wasteful and Inappropriate Service Reduction. And, given the new expansion of AI into

See MEDICARE, Page 6A

Pakistan tries to get peace talks going again

Progress uncertain after U.S. seizes Iranian ship

Kathryn Palmer, Adrianna Rodriguez and Francesca Chambers
USA TODAY

Iran is considering attending peace talks with the United States in Pakistan, a senior Iranian official told Reuters on April 20, following moves by Islamabad to end a U.S. blockade of Iran’s ports, a major hurdle for Iran to rejoin peace efforts.

However, the official stressed that no decision had been made.

With a two-week ceasefire set to expire on April 22, a senior Iranian official said Tehran was “positively reviewing” its participation but no final decision had been made. The

See TALKS, Page 5A

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