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Cover boy

Bam Adebayo on the NBA 2K Vice City cover; Giannis gets a Brewers World Series ring



More rain

Wet week forecast for South Florida. **Local & State, Page 3**

Raye's record

Singer ties Grammys mark with 11 noms. **Living, Second 2, Page 11**

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Trump rejects blame for air chaos

By Seung Min Kim, Will Weissert and Mike Catalini
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump bristled Monday at suggestions he's been too focused on White House building projects, and that they might have distracted him during the nationwide grounding of all planes, even insisting, "You don't see me on a scaffold."

Speaking publicly for the first time about the air traffic snarls caused by a router issue in the aging air traffic control system as he left the White House for his trip to Asia, Trump got defensive during a lengthy — sometimes testy — exchange with reporters.

He faulted old technology and Democrats for the incident that caused upheaval at the country's airports — especially his predecessor, President Joe Biden. "I don't take any responsibility" for Friday's ground stop, Trump said, explaining his Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy was in charge.

"What you saw on Friday was very, very old equipment that had a heart attack," the president said. He later noted, "Incredibly, everybody was safe. Nobody was hurt. No crashes, no nothing" but, referring to his administration's efforts to make improvements, he added, "the only responsibility should be, for 40 years they should have done this."

Trump was silent on the chaos until Sunday, when he posted on social media blasting his Democratic predecessor and asking Congress for more money to cover the cost of system improvements.

On Monday, Trump said he was kept up to date Friday

See **TRUMP** on Page A2



Outgoing Broward School Board members Nora Rupert, left, and Lori Alhadeff take pictures after they were honored during a recent meeting in Fort Lauderdale. **CARLINE JEAN/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL**

Ready to say goodbye

Nora Rupert and Lori Alhadeff wrap up yearslong Broward School Board tenures

By Scott Travis
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

The Broward School Board will usher in a new era today, without two of its most familiar and consequential members.

The tenures of the two long-serving board members, Nora Rupert and Lori Alhadeff, officially end at 9 a.m. today when two newly elected board members are sworn in.

Cynthia Dominique will replace Rupert, who has been on the board since 2010, for the District 7 seat in northeast Broward. In northwest Broward, Nicole Morst will take over for Lori Alhadeff, who was first elected in 2018.

Without Rupert and Alhadeff, the most senior board members will now be Sarah Leonardi and Debbi Hixon, who were both elected in 2020.

Rupert and Alhadeff were honored at their final School Board meeting on Nov. 10 with a proclamation, flowers and hugs from colleagues and community members.

"It was a very overwhelming day. I was just trying not to cry," Rupert told the South Florida Sun Sentinel on Monday. "I feel very proud of the work I've done."

Rupert was a teacher who became disillusioned with her school leadership in 2010 and filed to run for School Board. She became known as a fierce advocate for teachers, rank-and-file employees, and special needs and at-risk students. She was also a frequent critic of district mismanagement.

See **GOODBYE** on Page A2

Stem cells — controversy and potential

Florida's expanding health frontier a complicated issue

By Cindy Krischer Goodman
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

During his teen years, Alex Camel-Toueg barely could leave the house due to severe ulcerative colitis symptoms including frequent diarrhea, abdominal pain and cramping.

Hoping experimental stem cell therapy could help, his mother, Jennifer, contacted Dr. Guenther Koehne, chief of stem cell transplantation at the Baptist Health Herbert Wertheim Cancer Institute.

Koehne obtained special permission from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat Alex, and the results after his first infusion were immediate.

"It was almost hard to believe," Jennifer said. "He woke up the next day with energy. He woke up hungry. He didn't have any stomach pain, and over the next few days, everything improved."

Driven by major research universities, high retiree demand, and groundbreaking state laws permitting non-FDA-approved treatments, Florida has become a national focal point for stem cell therapy. For thousands of Floridians willing to pay out of pocket or join clinical trials, the state is a real-time testing ground for regenerative medicine —and a high-stakes tug-of-war between proven science and expensive hope.

THE RESEARCH LANDSCAPE

Across Florida, accredited academic institutions are conducting rigorous, FDA-authorized clinical trials in cardiology, neurol-

See **STEM** on Page A2



Julio Robaina of Miami prepares for his stem cell therapy treatment in Colombia. **JULIO ROBAINA/COURTESY**

Delray holds firm on parade amid DeSantis' criticism

City won't fund St. Patrick's event despite 'malicious compliance' jab

By Abigail Hasebroock
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

Gov. Ron DeSantis has accused Delray Beach of engaging in "malicious compliance" to make a "political point" after city officials opted against hosting next year's St. Patrick's Day event.

The city last week said its decision stemmed from a new state law restricting publicly funded diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

Despite the governor's criticism, city officials on Monday said they still don't plan to fund the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The city also will not fund the annual Pride festival.

Delray Beach City Manager Terrence Moore confirmed the city is moving forward with seeking outside, private funding to pay for the popular St. Patrick's Day Parade. The production costs of the parade are expected to exceed $85,000, which includes public safety, according to the city's downtown development authority.

The decision to pull city funding from the parade was made as a result of a new state law, SB 1134, which takes effect on Jan. 1, and prohibits local governments from funding, promoting or implementing diversity, equity or inclusion initiatives, including through taxpayer money or third-party contractors.

The restrictions include programming and activities designed or implemented with reference to ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.

In a statement on X posted Friday, DeSantis accused Delray Beach of "engaging in 'malicious compliance.'"

"What they are doing is not mandated by Florida law. It's just an attempt to make a political point. ... We've seen these stunts throughout the years."

Delray Beach Commissioner Angela Burns said she disagrees with DeSantis' accusation of "malicious compliance."

"We are following the

See **DELRAY** on Page A4

High prices expected to mute holiday travel

By Mead Gruver
ASSOCIATED PRESS

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — Pricey plane tickets and expensive gasoline are expected to keep some Americans from traveling this Thanksgiving, but not enough to make much difference in airport security lines and highway traffic, AAA said Monday.

The auto club federation predicted that 81.5 million people would travel at least 50 miles from home between the Tuesday before Thanksgiving and the Monday after the holiday.

That's about 121,000 fewer than traveled domestically over Thanksgiving last year, or a one-tenth of a percent decline, AAA said in its annual forecast.

If proven accurate, the small drop would end three years of record-setting Thanksgiving travel that followed the COVID-19 pandemic, according to AAA's calculations.

"After three years of record highs, the number of travelers is slightly lower partly because of higher travel costs this year. But travelers won't notice much of a difference," AAA Travel Vice President Stacey Barber said in a statement.

AAA prepared its forecast weeks before problems with U.S. air traffic control communications and radar feeds Friday prompted the Federal Aviation Administration to impose a nationwide ground stop that lasted more than four hours and disrupted weekend flights.



A couple looks at flight status updates at George Bush International Airport in Houston on Saturday after the Federal Aviation Administration lifted nationwide ground stops. **ASHLEY LANDIS/AP**

See **TRAVEL** on Page A4

TODAY'S WEATHER High 77 Low 73 Complete South Florida forecast on Page B16

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