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Food banks will feel fallout for months



When the USDA announced in late October that there would be no SNAP benefits in November, it was the first time federal food aid had not arrived in the program's more than 60-year history. GARY C. KLEIN/SHEBOYGAN PRESS

Many Americans used up reserves during closure

Sarah D. Wire
USA TODAY

The Missoula Food Bank & Community Center in Montana doubled its food order for the first two weeks of November to help handle a flood of requests

and will spend "far and above" more than what its has budgeted this month, said Executive Director Amy Allison. A half-dozen other food banks across the country have similar stories: They've carved massive holes in their budgets over the past six weeks as they've tried to keep up with demand sparked by the federal government shutdown. It hit at the same time layoffs and rising prices had already

boosted the number of people seeking help. And now they're facing the rest of the year having already pleaded with every donor on their list to give as much as possible. "The fallout is going to be huge, and I don't think we can even really wrap our heads around that yet," Allison said.

See **FOOD**, Page 2A

ACA subsidies could reshape midterms

Nathan Layne
REUTERS

BECKLEY, WV – For Larry Jackson, a Donald Trump-backing Republican hoping to unseat his party's incumbent in a West Virginia congressional primary next year, the fight in the U.S. Congress over Affordable Care Act subsidies is both personal and political ammunition. Jackson, 42, says steep ACA premium hikes facing West Virginians – estimated

by one think tank to average nearly 400% per enrollee next year – highlight the stakes of the expiring subsidies. It's an issue he plans to spotlight in a broader cost-of-living message for his campaign to unseat Rep. Carol Miller, who has not committed to keeping them in place. The elevation of ACA subsidies as an electoral issue among Republicans in one of the nation's most reliably conservative states a year before Americans go to the polls for midterm congressional

elections underscores the issue's potential potency. Jackson, a business owner, has relied on the ACA to provide health insurance for his family of eight. Without the enhanced subsidies, due to expire at the end of December, his monthly premium is set to quadruple to \$1,850 a month. Democrats' refusal to approve discretionary funding for federal agencies until

See **MIDTERMS**, Page 2A

Alligator Alcatraz spoiling the view

Facility threatens park's 'dark skies' status

Chad Gillis
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK

From Cape Lookout National Seashore in North Carolina to Joshua Tree National Park in California, some spaces are meant to be left in the dark. Big Cypress National Preserve outside of Naples, Florida, is one of those places, but the reality is a detention center known as Alligator Alcatraz is causing light pollution in one of the first designated "dark skies" locations east of Colorado.

The stars are still there, so is the Milky Way – but now there's light pollution coming from the detention center. "The first night I went out, wow, you could see the light pollution from 18 miles away," said Miami area photographer Anthony Sleiman, who shoots Big Cypress night shots regularly. "If you go deep into Big Cypress, if you look east (from the Naples side) you will see the light pollution from Miami, but you can see the detention center is separate," Sleiman said. "And this is in one of the darkest places in Florida."

He's one of many photographers who ply the Big Cypress during new moon phases, meteor showers and other astronomical events in hopes of capturing the perfect Milky Way photo. Big Cypress is also the first national preserve, and it was formed after Miami proposed the world's largest airport at the site in the 1960s. Set aside in 1974, the Big Cypress National Preserve is located mostly in eastern rural Collier County and abuts directly to Everglades National Park. The Big Cypress National Preserve was one of the darkest places in the United States, one of 18 National Park Service properties with an International Dark-Skies Association designation. Sleiman said the location of the detention center itself was once one of the premier nighttime photography spots in all of south Florida.

See **DARK SKIES**, Page 3A

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