

Carroll County Times

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TRUMP WATCH

Epstein's former girlfriend: Trump did not act in 'inappropriate way'

Jeffrey Epstein's imprisoned former girlfriend repeatedly denied to the Justice Department witnessing any sexually inappropriate interactions with Donald Trump, according to records released Friday meant to distance the Republican president from the disgraced financier.

The Trump administration issued hundreds of pages of transcripts from interviews that Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche conducted with Ghislaine Maxwell last month as the administration was scrambling to present itself as transparent amid a fierce backlash over an earlier refusal to disclose a trove of records from the sex-trafficking case.

The records show Maxwell repeatedly showing Trump with praise and denying under questioning from Blanche that she had observed Trump engaged in any form of sexual behavior. The administration was presumably eager to make such denials public at a time when the president has faced questions about a long-ago friendship with Epstein and as his administration has endured continued scrutiny over its handling of evidence from the case. **See Page 3**

Here are more Trump administration headlines from Friday:

Bolton probe: The FBI on Friday searched the Maryland home and Washington office of former Trump administration national security adviser John Bolton as part of a criminal investigation into the potential mishandling of classified information, a person familiar with the matter said. Bolton, who emerged as an outspoken critic of Trump after being fired in 2019 and fought with the first Trump administration over a scathing book he wrote documenting his time in the White House, was not in custody Friday and has not been charged with any crimes, said the person who was not authorized to discuss the investigation by name and spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity. **See Page 5**

Defense firing: Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has fired a general whose agency's initial intelligence assessment of damage to Iranian nuclear sites from U.S. strikes angered Trump, according to two people familiar with the decision and a White House official. Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Kruse will no longer serve as head of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, according to the people, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Tariff impact: Trump, on his Truth Social platform, celebrated a new Congressional Budget Office update on the impact that tariffs would have on reducing the deficit. The CBO on Friday issued a new blog post that states tariffs will lower deficits by a combined \$4 trillion over the next decade. The latest update is an increase from its last projection in June, which predicted deficits would be reduced by \$2.8 trillion over 10 years.

— From Associated Press reports

Abrego Garcia released from Tenn. jail



Kilmar Abrego Garcia, center, leaves the Putnam County Jail in Cookeville, Tennessee, on Friday. **BRETT CARLSEN/AP**

“Today, Kilmar Abrego Garcia is free ... He is grateful that his access to American courts has provided meaningful due process.”

— Sean Hecker, attorney in Abrego Garcia's criminal case in Tennessee

El Salvador native reportedly headed to Maryland

By Dan Belson and Jeff Barker

Kilmar Abrego Garcia, the Maryland man incarcerated since his mistaken deportation in March, was released Friday from jail in Tennessee and was said to be traveling to Maryland, his lawyer said.

“Today, Kilmar Abrego Garcia is free,” Sean Hecker, an attorney in Abrego Garcia's criminal case in Tennessee, said.

Abrego Garcia, an El Salvador native who lived with his family in Prince George's County until his deportation, became a flashpoint in President Donald Trump's immigration agenda after being sent in March to a Salvadoran mega-prison. Facing a court order, the Trump administration brought him back to the U.S. in June, only to detain him on human smuggling charges.

“He is grateful that his access to American courts has provided meaningful due process,” Hecker said.

A Friday order from U.S. Magistrate Judge Barbara D. Holmes required Abrego Garcia's release by 5 p.m.

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Only 3 teacher slots left to fill before start of school

CCPS says it will be ready for 1st day of classes on Sept. 2

By Shaela Foster

With less than two weeks left before a new school year begins, Carroll County Public Schools has only three teacher posi-

tions still vacant.

The first day of school is Sept. 2. The school system said students and parents should not expect any staffing differences or disruptions at the county's 39 schools.

The school system said that by the start of the school year it will have hired around 105 teachers with an

effective hiring date of the first day of school.

As of October 2024, the school system had a total of 1,792 teachers, according to staff data submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education. The data is taken over a one-year span, October to October.

Hiring for Carroll County is an almost year-round

process as the school system continuously recruits for teachers, connecting with potential candidates and completing interviews during the school year and into the summer.

“CCPS has continued to recruit teachers and staff who are highly qualified and dedicated to our commitment to build the future,”

the school system said in an email.

The minimum teacher salary in Maryland must be \$60,000 by July 2026, according to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, a statewide multibillion-dollar education reform package.

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Christine Hong, Montgomery County chief of the Department of Health and Human Services to End and Prevent Homelessness, and Kate Stewart, Montgomery County Council president, talk outside Progress Place, a Silver Spring facility that provides services to unhoused people. **KIM HAIRSTON/STAFF**

State could see influx of homeless from DC that would strain shelters

By Jeff Barker

SILVER SPRING — The encampment near the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., was cleared of its homeless residents on Aug. 14, leaving brown patches in the grass outlining, like shadows, the spots where their tents had stood.

It wasn't clear where the dozen or so members of the

makeshift tent city — as well as many more displaced in President Donald Trump's push to send homeless people “far from the capital”—would go.

Many could end up in Maryland, advocates for the region's homeless population say, straining county budgets and shelters already at capacity. Among those bracing for a possible influx is the

state's largest county, Montgomery, which says its 10 shelters are already full.

Montgomery County has about 1,200 homeless people, most of them in shelters, according to Christine Hong, who oversees the county's homelessness services. She said about 150 to 170 are unsheltered on a

Turn to Homeless, Page 2

Ocean City rental restrictions, beach tents, wind turbines

Mayor Meehan weighs in with his stances

By Todd Karpovich

OCEAN CITY — For nearly four decades, Ocean City Mayor Richard Meehan has been involved in the beach town's politics. First elected to City Council in 1985, he became council president in 1990 before stepping into the mayor's chair in 2006 following the resignation of Jim Mathias Jr. He's now the longest-serving mayor in the city's history.

In a conversation with The Baltimore Sun, the Republican and graduate of the University of Baltimore reflected on the issues facing Ocean City, including the controversial ban on some short-term rentals that was shot down in a referendum, the battle against wind farms for energy and police presence in a town

that attracts 8 million visitors annually.

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Voters rejected a ban on short-term rental housing in some areas. Where did you stand?

I think that the issue was probably misinterpreted by many. What we wanted to do was restrict short-term rentals in two areas of town — our R1 single-family residential areas and our mobile home areas. These are areas where we have numerous year-round residents.

Our residents should have their right to enjoy the quiet peace and tranquility of those neighborhoods. We realize we're a resort town, but our residential communities are important. We have about 9,400 licensed short-term rentals. This would have only affected about 350 of those rentals. Those that are on the bayside, in those

Turn to Meehan, Page 2



Meehan

Erin moves out to sea as it batters the East Coast

Strong winds and waves from Hurricane Erin have battered Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard as dangerous rip currents continue to threaten from the Carolinas to New England. **Page 6**

Judge cites law in halting 'Alligator Alcatraz' plans

A judge has put a stop to further expansion of the immigration detention center built in the Florida Everglades and dubbed “Alligator Alcatraz,” ordering operations wind down within two months. **Page 6**

Food crises authority announces famine in Gaza

The world's leading authority on food crises says the Gaza Strip's largest city is gripped by famine, and that it is likely to spread without a ceasefire and an end to restrictions on humanitarian aid. **Page 7**

■ **TALK TO US:** The Carroll County Times welcomes reader submissions responding to our coverage or highlighting an issue. Letters should be 350 words or fewer and submitted online at baltimoresun.com/cctletters or sent to cctletters@baltsun.com. Include your name, address and phone number.

