

Carroll County Times

TRUMP WATCH US military again targets a drug boat

President Donald Trump said the U.S. military again targeted a boat allegedly carrying drugs from Venezuela, killing three aboard the vessel.

“The Strike occurred while these confirmed narcoterrorists from Venezuela were in International Waters transporting illegal narcotics (A DEADLY WEAPON POISONING AMERICANS!) headed to the U.S.,” Trump said in a Truth Social post announcing the strike. “These extremely violent drug trafficking cartels POSE A THREAT to U.S. National Security, Foreign Policy, and vital U.S. Interests.”

Trump said the strike was carried out on Monday, nearly two weeks after another military strike on what the Trump administration says was a drug-carrying speedboat from Venezuela that killed 11.

The Trump administration justified the earlier strike as a necessary escalation to stem the flow of drugs into the United States.

But several senators, Democrats and some Republicans, have indicated their dissatisfaction with the administration’s rationale and questioned the legality of the action. They view it as a potential overreach of executive authority in part because the military was used for law enforcement purposes.

Here are more Trump administration headlines from Monday:

TikTok deal: Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced on Monday that the U.S. and China had struck a “framework for a TikTok deal,” after Trump suggested on social media that an agreement was near. Bessent added that Trump and President Xi Jinping would speak on Friday to possibly finalize the deal. **See Page 7**

HBCU funds: The Trump administration is redirecting nearly \$500 million in federal funding toward historically Black colleges and tribal colleges, a one-time investment that is primarily covered by cuts to other colleges serving large numbers of minority students. The Education Department announced the funding boost days after cutting \$350 million from other grants, mostly from programs reserved for colleges that have large numbers of Hispanic students. **See Page 12**

Memphis deployment: Trump on Monday signed an order sending the National Guard into Memphis to combat crime. Trump made the announcement with Republican Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee visiting the Oval Office, calling what’s coming a “replica of our extraordinarily successful efforts” in Washington.

Israel: The U.S. State Department says Secretary of State Marco Rubio will head to Qatar after meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel. The visit announced Monday comes as the region is still reeling from Israel’s strike targeting Hamas leaders in the Qatari capital, Doha. The U.S. has sought to ease tensions between Israel and Qatar, two close American allies. **See Page 8**

— From wire and Sinclair National Desk reports

Eyes in the sky



Sgt. Patrick Kepp demonstrates how their police drones can be deployed Sept. 4. Kepp is part of the Montgomery County Police Department’s Air Support Unit, Special Operations Division which has a Drone as First Responder Program, also known as DFR. **SEE PAGE 5**

Maryland Dems mum on support for Zohran Mamdani besides Van Hollen, Raskin

By Carson Swick and Mennatalla Ibrahim

Days after Sen. Chris Van Hollen endorsed progressive Zohran Mamdani for mayor of New York City and called those in his party who hesitated “spineless,” other Maryland Democrats aren’t exactly lining up to back the Democratic nominee in the Big Apple.

So far, Van Hollen and Rep. Jamie Raskin have praised Mamdani, the

state legislator and Democratic Socialists of America member who shocked the status quo by defeating former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in June’s Democratic Party primary.

But multiple other Maryland Democrats did not respond Monday by deadline to The Baltimore Sun’s requests for comment on Mamdani’s candidacy. Gov. Wes Moore’s office declined to comment in an official capacity and referred ques-

tions to “the political side” — meaning a spokesman for his re-election campaign, who did not reply.

The Sun also reached out to the following elected officials in Maryland, none of whom responded:

- Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott
- Sen. Angela Alsobrooks
- Rep. Sarah Elfreth
- Rep. Kweisi Mfume
- Rep. Glenn Ivey

Turn to Support, Page 2

First Carroll Book Festival in the works for next fall

By Bryna Zumer

With a bevy of bookstores and “high demand” for author events, Carroll County is about to get its first Book Festival.

The county’s library system has just announced plans to host a Carroll Book Festival in the fall of next year.

“Carroll County is a community of readers. They love when authors come into our community and they are able to connect with them,” said Carroll County Public Library spokesperson Lisa Picker, who said the library began talking about hosting a festival five years ago.

Many thousands of people are expected to attend the event on Sept. 19, 2026. Plans include book signings, author panels, a children’s character breakfast, vendors and more at the Carroll County Farm Museum in Westminster.

Picker said the library system has been seeing “great success” with its author events, noting that



During an event sponsored by the Carroll County Library, author Brad Meltzer and illustrator Christopher Eliopoulos signed a book for 8-year-old Hannah Henry of Columbia. **DOUG KAPUSTIN/ FOR CARROLL COUNTY TIMES**

more than 5,000 people attended 48 author events sponsored by the library system last year.

Among the many recent author events was a sold-out reading by bestselling author Brad Meltzer in January 2024; other

Turn to Festival, Page 2

Carroll leaders say state schools leader is stripping away local control

By Lily Carey

In a joint letter sent to the Maryland State Board of Education on Monday, state delegates who represent Carroll and Frederick counties urged immediate withdrawal of a proposal to expand the state superintendent’s power to overrule local Board of Education decisions.

In June, the state BOE approved an emergency regulation that would allow Carey Wright, the state superintendent of schools, to stay an appeal for an unlimited amount of time. In the past, if someone filed an appeal of a local school board decision with the state Board of Education, the state superintendent could stay or delay the appeal for up to 60 days before making a decision.

Emergency regulations, which don’t require a public notification before passage, can only remain in effect for up to 180 days. Since this change took effect on July 23, it will remain in effect until January 19, 2026.

However, in August, the state BOE filed a proposed regulation that would



Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of schools, is in the center of a local versus state oversight debate. **LLOYD FOX/STAFF**

permanently grant the state superintendent the power to stay local actions for an indefinite period.

In a letter to Wright on Monday, state Sen. Justin Ready and state Dels. Christopher Bouchat, April Rose and Chris Tomlinson wrote that the move “would strip elected local boards of their autonomy.”

“(This decision) seems to signal a foundational shift in governance that disregards election results and local public input, instead furthering the concentration of power in the hands of a statewide, appointed principal who is not even

directly appointed by the governor, much less elected by the voters,” the letter states.

The letter, authored by the five Republicans, comes amid ongoing tension between Wright and the Somerset County Board of Education.

Wright’s office instituted the emergency regulation after the Somerset board tried to replace that county’s Superintendent of Schools Ava Tasker-Mitchell, who is Black, with a white interim superintendent. The state superintendent

Turn to Leader, Page 2

FBI chief says DNA on items in Kirk case

Vance subs as host of activist’s show, casts blame for violence

By Jesse Bedayn and John Seewer
Associated Press

OREM, Utah — DNA on a towel wrapped around a rifle found near where conservative activist Charlie Kirk was assassinated matched that of the 22-year-old accused in the killing, FBI Director Kash Patel said Monday.

Investigators also have used DNA evidence to link the suspect, Tyler Robinson, with a screwdriver recovered from the rooftop where the fatal shot was fired, Patel told Fox News Channel on Monday.

Authorities in Utah are preparing to file capital murder charges against Robinson as early as Tuesday in the killing of Kirk, a dominant figure in conservative politics who became

a confidant of President Donald Trump after founding Arizona-based Turning Point USA, one of the nation’s largest political organizations.

Vice President JD Vance, who counted Kirk as a close friend, served as a substitute host on Monday for Kirk’s talk show on Rumble, a streaming platform.

“Please join me as I pay tribute to my friend,” Vance wrote on social media.

Kirk, who brought young, conservative evangelical Christians into politics, was shot Wednesday while speaking at Utah Valley University in Orem during one of his many campus stops. The shooting raised fears about increasing political violence in a deeply polarized United States.

Officials have said Robinson carried a hatred for Kirk and ascribed to a “leftist ideology” that had grown

Turn to DNA, Page 2

New spot for Taneytown taco fans in works

A new Taco Bell location may be coming to Carroll County. The Taneytown Planning Commission will review the site plan for a 2,118-square-foot Taco Bell store. **Page 3**

Scammers posing as Balto. Co. sheriff’s deputies

Phone scammers are targeting Baltimore County residents by posing as members of the Sheriff’s Office and threatening arrests or sanctions if requests aren’t met. **Page 4**

Bear sighted near Prettyboy Reservoir

A bear was sighted near Prettyboy Reservoir in Baltimore County on Monday by a woman who tripped and fell, resulting in minor injuries. **Page 4**

READER POLL

Should former Gov. Larry Hogan enter race for Maryland governor?

Vote at baltimoresun.com/cctpoll or by scanning this QR code with your phone. The Carroll County Times reader poll is an unscientific survey in which website users volunteer their opinions on the subject of the poll.



■ **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.