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## Mayor, Walz targets of probe

### Officials have called for ICE agents to leave city

Michael Loria  
USA TODAY

Justice Department officials launched an investigation into Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey in connection with a suspected conspiracy to impede federal



Walz

immigration enforcement in the state, according to reports by Reuters and The Washington Post. The investigation comes amid a growing feud between Minnesota's Democratic leaders and President Donald Trump. The Department of Homeland Security has sent thousands of officers to the state in what it's calling its "largest immigration operation ever" to combat fraud in social welfare programs that officials say is linked to So-



Frey

mali immigrants. Walz and Frey have called for immigration authorities to leave the state, especially after the fatal shooting of Renee Nicole Good by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer. In a statement, Walz blasted the administration for the reported investigation. "Two days ago it was Elissa Slotkin. Last week it was Jerome Powell. Before that, Mark Kelly. Weaponizing the jus-

tice system against your opponents is an authoritarian tactic," the former candidate for vice president said. "The only person not being investigated for the shooting of Renee Good is the federal agent who shot her." Justice Department officials have said there is "no basis" for an investigation into Jonathan Ross, the ICE officer who shot and killed Good on Jan. 7. The DOJ is instead moving to investigate Good's widow, according to reporting by outlets including The New York

See PROBE, Page 3A



This year's celebrations are bound to be compared to the bicentennial of 1976, an anniversary often remembered for its tall ships and Uncle Sam-slathered merchandise. HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

## Groundhog Day event planned for Jan. 30

Janis Reeser  
AI-assisted reporter  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Washington County Department of Business and Economic Development is reminding residents of the upcoming 2026 Groundhog Day Celebration. The event is scheduled for 5 to 9 p.m. Jan. 30 at the Washington County Agricultural Education Center, 7313 Sharpsburg Pike, Boonsboro, according to a community announcement. The annual winter event is expected to draw more than 350 attendees and showcase Washington County's agricultural community with local food, family-friendly activities and opportunities to shop directly from area farms and value-added agricultural producers. The evening will include live

See GROUNDHOG DAY, Page 3A

## 2025 heat records fuel global warming fears

Hayleigh Evans  
Arizona Republic  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Heat milestones in recent days are raising not only temperatures, but concerns about the widening effects of climate change. In 2025, the United States charted its fourth-warmest year on record, but perhaps the most alarming record set was on the global level: Earth experienced its third-warmest year, according to the Copernicus Climate Change Service.

See HEAT, Page 2A

## Planning for America250

### Communities prepare to share their stories

Karissa Waddick  
USA TODAY

This year, Arizona will ferry a replica of the Liberty Bell through its 15 counties; New Jersey will host a slate of history-themed 5K races; Kentucky will plant a tulip-poplar tree in each of its 120 counties, and Colorado will dazzle nearly 150 of its communities with drone shows. Across the country, Americans will walk into mobile Airstream studios to tell their stories; children will write about what America means to them for a chance to win a historical trip, and

charity organizations will attempt to log the most volunteer service hours in history. These are but a sampling of the dizzying array of initiatives planned to mark the semiquincentennial, the 250-year anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Years of work by national organizations, states, local governments and nonprofits will culminate in what is expected to be a symphony of reflection and celebration across the country. America250, the official commission designated by Congress to organize the commemoration, deliberately planned a wide range of programs – from grand parades and fireworks, to reflective

See AMERICA250, Page 3A



America250 chair Rosie Rios said the initiatives were created to "educate, engage, and unite," the latter of which is no easy task at a time when Americans are deeply divided, particularly over how to tell the country's story. MARC VASCONCELLOS/BROCKTON ENTERPRISE

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