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Celebrate Michigan Photo Contest winners

PHOTOS ON 2A

The Detroit News

Tuesday, September 8, 2026 | detroitnews.com

SERVING MICHIGAN SINCE 1873



American rider Chris M. Ewanouski jumps with Condor Du Valdecie during the Traverse City Horse Shows. The event has grown from a four-week regional summer event to a 12-week international destination. PHOTOS BY ROBIN BUCKSON/THE DETROIT NEWS

Traverse City Horse Shows gallop onto world stage

JENNIFER PIGNOLET
The Detroit News
USA TODAY NETWORK

WILLIAMSBURG — Claire Francis returned to the barn beaming from her trail ride with her horse Roland on the grounds of Flintfields Horse Park, the home of Traverse City Horse Shows.

A nice lady had agreed to ride with 13-year-old Claire after Rolland got nervous that they were alone on a hillside trail.

Claire, a Bloomfield Hills resident, had no idea the nice lady who rode with her, and gave

Inside

Traverse City Horse Shows: What to know if you go. 4A



The show has been an economic boon to local communities in Williamsburg and Acme townships, Traverse City and Grand Traverse County. In 2021, the show had an estimated local direct economic impact on the region of over \$120 million, according to a study the show commissioned.

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Old remarks loom over nominee

New details emerge about Smith's past posts on Fauci, public schools

MELISSA NANN BURKE
The Detroit News
USA TODAY NETWORK

New details about the surprise Republican nominee for U.S. House in mid-Michigan are emerging a month after the General Motors retiree scored an upset victory in one of the most competitive districts in the state.



Smith

Flint small business owner Thomas J. Smith's now-deleted social media posts shared memes seeking to "scrap the public school system," supporting efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election, comparing Dr. Anthony Fauci to a Nazi, and saying he should get the electric chair.

The accounts, named for the Jar Head Salsa business that Smith owns, also shared posts opining that President Donald Trump is "playing (and winning) the biggest game of America First-4D chess" with the Iran war and advocating to abolish the U.S. Department of Education "to protect our children from evil," a message embedded next to an LGBTQ flag graphic.

Smith, a fervent supporter of Trump, attended his "Stop the Steal" rally in Washington, DC, on Jan. 6, 2021, though Smith said that he returned to his hotel room afterward and did not enter the U.S. Capitol building or

Please see Smith, Page 7A

Americans bond with AI: 'A friend that I can trust'

GERRIT DE VYNCK, JEREMY B. MERRILL
The Washington Post

Alex Suarez, a 74-year-old retired psychologist who lives in Ocean Shores, Washington, had long been skeptical of artificial intelligence. But when she heard an owl call late at night a couple of years ago, she asked a chatbot whether the birds might be mating. Its answer was rich and complete.

"I was completely floored," said Suarez. Now she discusses art and literature with chatbots and records her dreams with AI, sometimes asking for help analyzing them. "I can speak like I'm speaking to you and it will answer," she said. "That is totally amazing, and it creates some feelings of ... being grateful to a machine."

Please see AI, Page 6A

Auto rivals jump onto multi-energy platform trend

HENRY PAYNE
The Detroit News
USA TODAY NETWORK

ANN ARBOR — The eighth-generation Lexus ES is one of the oldest models in the lineup of Toyota Motor Corp.'s luxury brand. For 2026, the sedan adopts one of the newest innovations in the industry: the multi-energy platform.

Using a common vehicle architecture, the ES offers customers a choice of all-electric and gas-electric hybrid

powertrains. With the ES, Lexus joins Stellantis NV, BMW AG and Mercedes-Benz AG in moving to multi-energy platforms (Lexus uses the term "multi-pathway") as global automakers plan for an unpredictable future of government regulations and diverse global markets.

"Our multi-pathway approach with this vehicle gives us a little bit more flexibility in addressing what the customer is looking for in a vehicle," said Chicago-based Darryl Hurlow, Lexus digital and product field

manager for the central area, in an interview at the ES's media test in Ann Arbor. "We want to be in the electric vehicle space, and we want to be in the hybrid space as well. Because we have that multi-pathway approach, we can address both those needs and shift our production as demand goes."

Indeed, the eighth-generation ES was originally planned as an electric model as U.S. and

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Today's weather
HIGH 80 LOW 68



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