



PLAYOFF POISE

AFTER BLOWING A FOURTH-QUARTER LEAD IN THEIR PLAYOFF OPENER, THE DETROIT PISTONS HELD OFF THE NEW YORK KNICKS MONDAY NIGHT TO EVEN THE SERIES AT 1-1. **B1**

VATICAN CITY

Catholics mourn lost voice for the dispossessed

At a time when nationalism, a concept long held in contempt by Francis, is surging again in the West, the church now finds itself at a crossroads.



A portrait of the late Pope Francis is projected onto a water fountain in Lima, Peru, on Monday. Martin Mejia, Associated Press

Anthony Faiola Stefano Pitrelli and Chico Harlan Washington Post

On his last day — Easter, the holiest on the Christian calendar — Pope Francis doubled down on the defining theme of his papacy: mercy. After a private audience with Vice President JD Vance, who represented an American administration Francis had taken to task for its migrant crackdown and aid cuts, the pope’s final speech was read aloud in St. Peter’s Square as the pontiff, in his wheelchair, struggled for breath. “How much contempt is stirred up at times towards the vulnerable, the marginalized and migrants,” the text said, the words read by a surrogate, given Francis’ fragile health. “I appeal to all those in positions of political responsibility in our world not to yield to the logic of fear,” a later passage read, without mentioning names or nations. Francis’ death ends a historic chapter for the world’s largest Christian faith, silencing a champion of the marginalized at a time

“How much contempt is stirred up at times towards the vulnerable, the marginalized and migrants. I appeal to all those in positions of political responsibility in our world not to yield to the logic of fear.”

Pope Francis

when nationalism, a concept long held in contempt by the first Latin American pope, is once again surging in the West. The church now finds itself at a crossroads, plagued by competing visions after the death of a spiritual leader who called out religious hypocrisy as he sought to throw open the faith’s doors, as he put it, to “everyone, everyone, everyone.” “He still was a voice — a moral voice, moral in the sense that he stood up for peace and justice and the dignity of people,” said Brigitte Thalhammer, an Austrian nun who was standing next to a fountain in St. Peter’s Square on Monday. “And I wondered: Who can be that voice now?” “My hope and prayer is that the church will be really different than what’s going on with the world leaders, where the bullies are on the top,” she said. “This is my prayer, that in the conclave they will find someone who can continue this way.” **SEE VATICAN CITY, A3**

ICE STORM AFTERMATH

Electric utility looks to skip paying outage bill credits

The company could owe customers as much as \$1.5 million.

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ALPENA — A Northern Michigan utility is looking to dodge a state requirement to issue \$40 bill credits to customers who went days without power after the catastrophic ice storm in late March. Alpena Power Co. argues the storm that snapped hundreds of thousands of tree branches like twigs and cast the region into darkness was an “act of God” causing widespread blackouts it could not possibly have avoided. Automatic outage credits for customers could total between \$1 million and \$1.5 million, a hefty sum for the power company serving only 16,750 customers in the Alpena area, the utility estimated in an April 17 filing with state regulators. “In my opinion, a storm of this magnitude is beyond the utility’s control, and following utility best practices for ice loading design and vegetation management would not have prevented large scale, long duration outages,” its president and chief operating officer, Ken Dragiewicz, said in the filing. “The outage credits in this circumstance are also unduly economically burdensome when compared to the size of Alpena Power Company.” The utility is requesting the Michigan Public Service Commission issue a temporary waiver giving it a pass from outage credit rules, meant to ensure speedy restoration of electric service after outages and spur accountability for power companies. During blackouts defined as “catastrophic,” like those that struck wide swaths of the northern Lower Peninsula, utilities must issue a \$40 credit after customers go four days without power, or if they experience six or more interruptions in a year. **SEE ICE STORM AFTERMATH, A3**



The storm caused outages that trigger automatic billing credits for customers of some regulated utilities, including Alpena Power Co. MLive.com files

Hummingbird tracker reports birds have been seen in Michigan

The mighty little birds zipped into the state over the weekend.

Justine Lofton jlofton@mlive.com They’re here! It’s time to start looking for tiny, jewel-toned hummingbirds as they make their way through Michigan. Hummingbird Central keeps a map of spring migration sightings as they fly north from January to May. You can see it at tinyurl.com/humtrack. Ruby-throated hummingbirds were first spotted in Michigan over the weekend. As of Tuesday, sightings have been reported in Galien and Bridgman, near the Michigan-Indiana border; Norton Shores, Hudsonville and Grand Rapids in West Michigan; South Lyon, Farmington Hills,

Trenton and Livonia, near Detroit; and Smiths Creek, near Port Huron. With their wings flapping 15 to 80 times per second and hearts beating up to 1,260 times per minute, hummingbirds can travel up to 23 miles a day, the website says. They are experts at using tail winds to conserve energy. They zip northward each spring from their wintering grounds in Central America to their summer breeding grounds across the eastern U.S. and Canada. Hummingbirds prepare for their lengthy, solo migration by gaining 25% to 40% of their body weight, according to Hummingbird Central. They travel by day, flying low

to find nectar sources. Ruby-throated hummingbirds are the only native hummingbird in Michigan, and can be seen throughout the state in deciduous woodlands, forest edges, meadows, orchards and gardens. The species gets its name from the iridescent orange-red throat patch on males. Females are white-throated. Both have a metallic-green hue on the upperparts and pale-gray, faintly scalloped underparts. According to vibirds.com, five other species have made rare visits to the state: rufous, Anna’s, white-eared and broad-billed hummingbirds, plus the Mexican violetear.

