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## EPSTEIN FILES

# Bondi clashes with Democrats

US attorney general dodges questions, lobs insults during hearing

ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, ERIC TUCKER AND STEPHEN GROVES  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Pam Bondi defended President Donald Trump Wednesday as she tried to turn the page from criticism of the Justice Department's handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files, repeatedly shouting at Democrats during a combative hearing in which she postured herself as the Republican president's chief protector.

Besieged by questions over Epstein and accusations of a weaponized Justice Department, Bondi aggressively pivoted and mocked her Democratic questioners, praised Trump over the performance of

the stock market and openly aligned herself as in sync with a president whom she painted as a victim of past impeachments and investigations.

"You sit here and you attack the president and I'm not going to have it," Bondi told lawmakers on the House Judiciary Committee. "I am not going to put up with it."

With victims of Epstein seated behind her in the hearing room, Bondi defended the department's handling of the files related to the well-connected financier that dogged her tenure.

She accused Democrats of using the Epstein files to distract from Trump's successes, when it was Republicans who initiated the furor over the files and Bondi herself fanned the flames by distributing binders to conservative influencers at the White House last year.



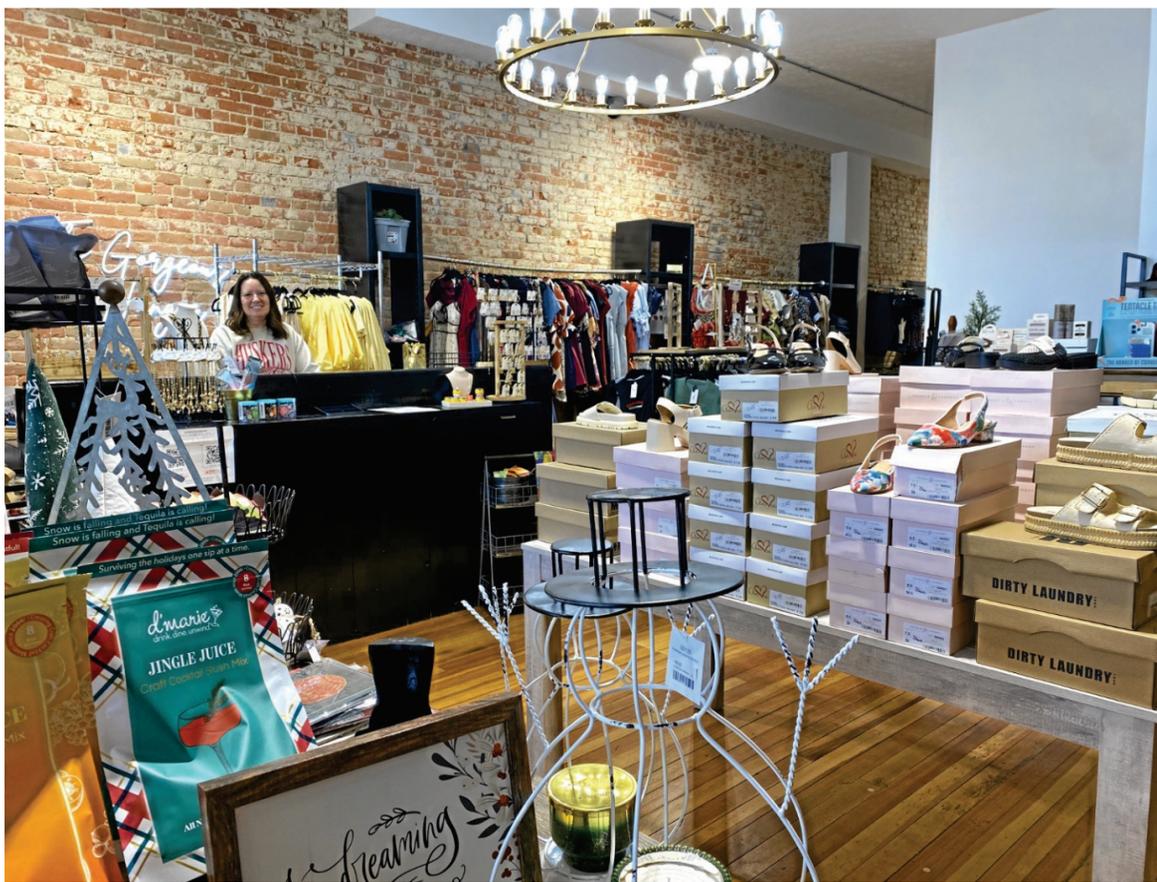
TOM BRENNER, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Attorney General Pam Bondi testifies Wednesday before a House Judiciary Committee oversight hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington as Jeffrey Epstein survivors stand at left.

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## DOWNTOWN BEATRICE

# A NEW SPACE TO HANG



CHRISTINA LYONS, DAILY SUN STAFF WRITER

Kandice Jurgens stands behind the counter at Gorgeous Hanger. While the location at the Mercantile Building is closing, the boutique at 713 Court St. is celebrating its first year at the location.

## Gorgeous Hanger boutique celebrates first anniversary at 713 Court

CHRISTINA LYONS  
Daily Sun staff writer

Gorgeous Hanger has had two locations in Beatrice for the last year; however, after Sunday there will only be the 713 Court St. store.

Kandice Jurgens said she opened Gorgeous Hanger with a partner in 2017. At that time, they had been doing pop-up locations and then a small permanent store in downtown Beatrice for a couple of months.

"I think in 2018 we opened at the Mercantile Building," she said. "We were in a couple of the spaces

in the building. It really is kind of sad to leave there, but we weren't seeing as much traffic in that store and couldn't keep both. It was just too much."

The boutique at 713 Court has been open for almost a year and sees more shoppers.

"This space is gorgeous. It's very modern yet still has the older aesthetics. There is so much natural light coming in the windows," Jurgens said.

Years ago, The Pink Elephant, a used furniture store, occupied the space. Craig and Casey

Zarybnicky own and remodeled the building, allowing Jurgens the opportunity to help design the space.

The store offers name-brand women's clothing and shoes, some children's clothing, home decorations, gifts and accessories. There is also a variety of licensed Husker apparel available. In addition, the store carries the pretzels from Southwest Airlines, which she said are popular.

"Everything changes constantly

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# Milke defense rests after one witness

ROB SCHLOTTERBECK  
Daily Sun editor

The defense in Christopher Milke's first-degree murder trial called one witness Wednesday morning before resting its case in Gage County District Court.

Milke, 53, is accused of shooting and killing 52-year-old Tammy Leslie in the Beatrice home that they shared in September 2024, along with other charges.

If found guilty of murder, he faces the possibility of life in prison. He has pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

In Wednesday's testimony, defense attorney Timothy Noerrlinger called on Mariana Ward, a fingerprint expert with the Nebraska State Patrol's crime lab.

Ward described for the jury how fingerprints and other prints are formed by friction ridges on a person's fingers, hands and feet, and the process of testing evidence for fingerprint impressions.

Noerrlinger asked Ward about a report she made after examining four bullet casings that were entered as evidence in the trial. Ward said she was unable to find any latent fingerprints on the casings.

A prosecution witness earlier this week testified that those casings were ejected from the Taurus 9mm handgun the state says was used to kill Leslie.

Noerrlinger asked Ward if she had been asked to search for fingerprints on the four fired bullets recovered at Milke's and Leslie's house; she said she was not asked to do so.

Noerrlinger also asked if there was any request to look for fingerprints on the kitchen knife with an 8-inch blade found under the bed in the room where Leslie was killed and on the Taurus handgun and its magazine. Ward said she was not asked to test those items.

On cross examination by Michael Jensen, a deputy attorney general acting as a special prosecutor for the Gage County Attorney's Office, Ward said just because an item didn't have fingerprint evidence didn't mean no one had touched it, and that a lot of factors



Milke

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