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**An employee pieces together components on an assembly line Aug 13 at GE Appliances global headquarters in Louisville, Ky. The Labor Department reported Friday that U.S. employers added just 22,000 jobs last month, down from 79,000 in July and well below the 80,000 economists had expected.**

JON CHERRY, ASSOCIATED PRESS

## Hiring stalls as employers are reluctant to expand

US added just 22,000 jobs last month; jobless rate ticked up

**PAUL WISEMAN, ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AND CORA LEWIS**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The American job market, a pillar of U.S. economic strength since the COVID-19 pandemic, is crumbling.

Uncertain about where things are headed under President Donald Trump's economic policies, companies grew increasingly reluctant to hire, leaving agonized job seekers unable to find work and weighing on consumers who account for 70% of all U.S. economic activity. Their spending has been the engine behind the world's biggest economy since the pandemic disruptions of 2020.

The Labor Department reported Friday that U.S. employers — companies, government agencies and nonprofits — added just 22,000 jobs last month, down from 79,000 in July and well below the 80,000 economists had expected.



ROBERT F. BUKATY, ASSOCIATED PRESS

**A construction worker carries steel decking July 31 at the construction site of a housing project in Portland, Maine. Construction companies, which rely on immigrant workers vulnerable to stepped-up ICE raids under President Donald Trump, cut 7,000 jobs in August, the third straight drop.**

The unemployment rate ticked up to 4.3% last month, also worse than expected and the highest since 2021.

"U.S. labor market deterioration intensified in August," Scott Anderson, chief U.S. economist at BMO Capital Market, wrote in

a commentary, noting that hiring was "slumping dangerously close to stall speed. This raises the risk of a harder landing for consumer spending and the economy in the months ahead."

Please see **JOBS**, Page A5

## Talk of ICE raid mars county fair concert



BOB ALBERTS FOR THE FLATWATER FREE PRESS

**Mexican band La Fiera de Ojinaga performs at the Chase County Fair in Imperial on Aug. 14. This was the first year the fair booked a band from Mexico, in this community whose Latino population has grown sixfold since 2000.**

Organizers hired Mexican band to perform, but many Latino residents stayed home

**NATALIA ALAMDARI**  
Flatwater Free Press

IMPERIAL, Neb. — In a dusty show barn, kids march out their prize-winning swine as an auctioneer sings out competing bids.

Outside, shrieks pierce this hot August night as families spin in loops on carnival rides.

Every year, the Chase County Fair & Expo draws 10,000 people to this county of 3,764. They come for the classic rite of summer. And for the fair's annual concerts.

This year, for the first time, county fair organizers hired a Mexican band to perform, figuring it made sense in a community whose Latino population has grown sixfold since 2000.

But in the hours leading up to the Thursday night concert, only 300 tickets had sold, low for the grandstand that holds 3,500.

Many local Latino residents had decided to stay home, afraid of what could happen.

"The rumor was that this was bait," Imperial resident Cynthia Almanza said while waiting for the concert to start. "That ICE was going to show up."

And, the local rumor mill alleged, the county sheriff had been the one to make that call.

Please see **FAIR**, Page A2

## State high court rules in La Vista mom's favor

Ryan Larsen, 11, went missing from his elementary school in 2021

**GRACE LEWIS AND DAN CRISLER**  
World-Herald Staff Writers

The Nebraska Supreme Court on Friday reversed the dismissal of a lawsuit brought by the mother of a La Vista boy who went missing from his elementary school in 2021.

The State Supreme Court ruled a Sarpy County District Court judge erred when the judge dismissed Tammi Larsen's lawsuit against the school district. Instead, the state's high court said, the Papillion La Vista school district's sovereign immunity protection had not been established.

Larsen's attorney, Justin Pritchett, praised the Supreme Court's decision.

"The Nebraska Supreme Court made the right and just decision today. The Larsen family will continue to seek answers and to hold the School District accountable to obtain justice for Ryan," Pritchett said in a statement.

A Papillion La Vista Community Schools spokesperson declined to comment on the Supreme Court's decision.

The Supreme Court's ruling now means Larsen's lawsuit can resume in District Court.

On May 17, 2021, 11-year-old Ryan Larsen walked off La Vista West Elementary School property unattended in the middle of his school day.

Ryan, who had been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, Tourette syndrome and absence seizures, was unable to care for himself or make rational choices, and the school was aware of his need for constant supervision, according to court documents.

Please see **LARSEN**, Page A2



THE LARSEN FAMILY

**Ryan Larsen and his mother, Tammi Larsen, in November 2020. Ryan disappeared from his grade school May 17, 2021.**

### Flyer compensation

Trump administration ditches plan to make airlines pay compensation for flight disruptions. **Page A5**

### State ed board

Deborah Neary says she won't seek reelection to the Nebraska State Board of Education. **Midlands**

### Weather

**High:** 70 **Low:** 46  
Partly sunny and nice **Details:** A8

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