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SPORTS, 1B

# WINNER’S STRIDE



John Korir repeats as the men’s Boilermaker 15K winner with a time of approx. 42.47 on Sunday, July 13. This is a little slower than his winning time last year of 42.11. Visit [uticaod.com](https://uticaod.com) for photos and results from the Boilermaker. PROVIDED BY DAN DELOACH

# Lawsuit: Officials wrongly killed Peanut the squirrel

Jeanine Santucci  
USA TODAY

Mark Longo fondly remembers waking up in his south-central New York home to the pitter-patter of little feet. They didn’t belong to a cat or dog, but to a squirrel named Peanut who stole the hearts of the Longo family and

many others around the world. But officials say local laws meant that Peanut should not have been kept as a pet. On Oct. 30, 2024, officials with the state’s Department of Environmental Conservation raided Longo’s home in Pine City and confiscated Peanut and a raccoon named Fred, both of which Longo said he’d rescued and was tak-

ing care of. Both animals were euthanized, shocking social media followers who had grown to love them. Rabies concerns supercharged the conflict, as raccoons can carry the deadly disease in New York and are illegal to keep as pets. To test an ani-

See LAWSUIT, Page 4A

# Trial begins for man charged in shooting

Casey Pritchard  
Utica Observer Dispatch  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Rome man on trial for allegedly opening fire in the Sangertown mall was back in court July 11 for oral arguments. Malachi Wynder, 20, was arrested March 2 after an incident the day before, in which police say he shot and injured a man at Sangertown Square in New Hartford. The incident led to the entire shopping center being shut down when Metro SWAT responded and multiple people were ordered to shelter in place during a few tense hours. Wynder has been charged with second-degree attempted murder, first-degree reckless endangerment, second-degree criminal possession of a loaded firearm, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon, first-degree attempted assault, first-degree criminal use of a firearm, third-degree criminal possession of a firearm, second-degree possession of a controlled substance, third-degree possession of a controlled substance, two counts of second-degree possession of a weapon, and two counts of second-degree use of drug paraphernalia. Attorney Cory Zennamo, who is representing Wynder, presented his oral arguments to Judge Michael Nolan, citing issues in the Oneida County District Attorney’s case and charges he said should be dismissed. Zennamo argued several points, from the wording of charges against Wynder, to whether or not he possessed the gun that was used, and that he was acting in self-defense. The Oneida County District Attorney’s Office said the charges against Wynder were sound, as was the process of the grand jury. Zennamo argued that the Oneida County District Attorney’s Office did not articulate “... any facts that make the face of the indictment sufficient,” for the attempted murder charge. “The first charge, attempted murder in the second degree, alleges that [Wynder] on or about March 1 in the town of New Hartford, with the intent to cause the death of Jordan Freeman, did attempt to cause the death of Jordan Freeman,” Zennamo said. Zennamo said there had to be “... some facts” about how Wynder ac-

See TRIAL, Page 2A

# What documentation is required for Medicaid?

David Robinson  
New York State Team  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Paying attention to the documentation required to apply for and sustain Medicaid coverage in New York is more important than ever under President Donald Trump’s tax cut and government spending bill.

That’s because the federal bill includes a \$1 trillion reduction in spending over the next decade for Medicaid, the state-federal government insurance program for low-income Americans. And a big chunk of those cuts involve imposing a nationwide Medicaid work requirement that takes effect

See MEDICAID, Page 3A

# House GOP committee probing whether NY ‘unlawfully abused’ Medicaid

David Robinson  
New York State Team  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Republican-led congressional oversight committee has launched an investigation of allegations that New York “unlawfully abused taxpayer funds” connected to Medicaid.

The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform noted it was probing reports and a lawsuit that alleged “New York has been withholding or clawing back Medicaid funds from localities and low-income hospitals in order to buoy its failing balance sheet.”

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Volume 209 | No. 163  
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