



## Aces, Liberty top list of early 2026 WNBA power rankings

SPORTS, 11A

# The Marion Star

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026 | MARION, OHIO | MARIONSTAR.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Lauf credits success as physician to farming



Jason Lauf is a physician with Midwest Internal Medicine Associates. PROVIDED BY SARAH BIBLER

**Drew Bracken**  
Special to the Marion Star  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Jason Lauf owes his success to his upbringing. "Growing up, I spent most of my time outdoors with my two brothers and a cousin who was raised like a third brother," Lauf said. "We raised all sorts of animals, and I participated in the local 4-H club where I

did livestock, woodworking, amongst other projects. I was also very active in sports. I played soccer, swimming and tennis through high school.

"My parents instilled hard work from an early age. But I never dreamed I would be doing what I am today. My initial dream job was to go into agricultural engineering and work on tractor design."

See LAUF, Page 3A

## Patel sues The Atlantic, claiming false reporting

### FBI director denies allegations of drinking, absences

**Jana Winter**  
REUTERS

FBI Director Kash Patel filed a defamation lawsuit against The Atlantic and its reporter Sarah Fitzpatrick following the publication of an article on April 17 alleging the director had a drinking problem that could pose a threat to national security.

The magazine's story, initially titled "Kash Patel's Erratic Behavior Could Cost Him His Job," cited more than two dozen anonymous sources expressing concern at Patel's "conspicuous inebriation and unexplained absences" that "alarmed officials at the FBI and the Department of Justice."



Patel

The article, which The Atlantic subsequently titled "The FBI Director is MIA" in its online version, reported that during Patel's tenure, the FBI had to reschedule early meetings "as a result of his alcohol-fueled nights" and that Patel "is often away or unreachable, delaying time-sensitive decisions needed to advance investigations."

In The Atlantic's story, the White House, the Department of Justice and Patel denied the allegations. The article included a statement from the FBI attributed to Patel, "Print it, all false, I'll see you in court - bring your checkbook."

"The Atlantic's story is a lie," Patel said in an interview with Reuters. "They were given the truth before they published, and they chose to print falsehoods anyway."

"We stand by our reporting on Kash Patel, and we will vigorously defend The Atlantic and our journalists against this meritless lawsuit," The Atlantic said in a statement.

Patel's complaint says that while The Atlantic is free to criticize the leadership of the FBI, "they crossed the legal line" by publishing an article "replete with false and obviously fabricated allegations designed to destroy Director Patel's reputation and drive him from office."

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, seeks \$250 million in damages.

The lawsuit alleges The Atlantic ignored the FBI's denials and did not respond to an April 17 letter from Patel's lawyer Jesse Binnall to senior editors and The Atlantic's legal department asking for more time to refute the 19 allegations the reporter told the FBI's

See PATEL, Page 2A

## Answers sought after Louisiana massacre

### Man kills 8 children; 7 were his own

**Christopher Cann, Makenzie Boucher and N'dea Yancey-Bragg**  
USA TODAY NETWORK

SHREVEPORT, LA - Residents of this historic riverfront city remained shaken a day after a gunman opened fire April 19 and killed eight children in the nation's deadliest mass shooting since January 2024.

They were looking for explanations - and authorities were trying to provide them, piecing together information on the tragedy.

Police said the suspect, identified as Shamar Elkins, also shot the mother of his children and another wom-

an, both of whom survived with serious injuries. Elkins then fled the scene on foot and stole a car at gunpoint, leading to a police chase that ended with officers shooting him dead, according to police.

The victims killed were Jayla Elkins, 3; Shayla Elkins, 5; Kayla Pugh, 6; Layla Pugh, 7; Markaydon Pugh, 10; Sariah Snow, 11; Khedarrion Snow, 6; and Braylon Snow, 5, the Caddo Parish Coroner's Office said. Seven of them were Shamar Elkins' children.

"I just don't know what to say - my heart is just taken aback," Shreveport Police Chief Wayne Smith said on April 19, adding that the attack was unlike anything he had ever seen in his more than four decades in law enforcement.

See MASSACRE, Page 2A



The Pugh and Elkins families gather while grieving the shooting deaths of family members on April 19 in Shreveport, Louisiana. Eight children were killed and two women injured. BRANDON BELL/GETTY IMAGES

### Subscriber-only eNewspaper

The eNewspaper is an electronic copy of your print newspaper. Enjoy every page by going to marionstar.com/enewspaper or scan this code on your mobile device. You will also find late news and sports in the bonus sections. Check it out today!



Volume 149 | No. 136  
Subscribe 877-424-0210  
©2026 \$1.50



0 40901 50512 9