



Comey, James not in clear just yet

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“Live Christmas trees are still important. A lot of people like the experience of going out and cutting their trees.”

Joanne Painter

Joanne Painter at her family's tree farm getting ready for opening to shoppers. JUDY D.J. ELLICH/DAILY AMERICAN

Christmas tree farms are open for business

Judy D.J. Ellich The Daily American | USA TODAY NETWORK

Did you know that Pennsylvania ranks third in the nation for the number of Christmas tree farms, about 1,400, according to the Pennsylvania Tree Growers Association. • Yep. It’s true. Walking through the wide corridors between lines of different species of pine trees, some tall, some short, some full, some sparse, is not only a tradition for many families but also an adventure that includes not only cutting your own trees but sharing laughter and hot drinks with others doing the same.

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Visitors can check out this vintage sleigh from the 1800s at Pokey Christmas Tree Farm, near Meyersdale. PROVIDED BY POKEY CHRISTMAS TREE FARM

Experts: Kelly case unlikely to see trial

Trump, Hegseth remarks may be undue influence

Rebecca Morin USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon’s investigation into alleged misconduct by Sen. Mark Kelly faces significant legal challenges over what laws the Arizona Democrat may have violated, as well as President Donald Trump and Secretary of War Pete Hegseth’s influence over the probe, legal experts said.

Trump’s War Department, formerly the Defense Department, is investigating Kelly for “serious allegations of misconduct” after he was among a group of six Democratic lawmakers who put out a video directed at service members telling them they have the right not to obey orders they believe to be illegal, the agency said Nov. 24.

The Pentagon cited the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the body of federal law that governs the U.S. military’s criminal code and justice system, to begin an investigation into Kelly that could “include recall to active duty for court-martial proceedings or administrative measures.” Kelly retired from both the U.S. Navy and NASA, where he was an astronaut, in 2011.

Military retirees remain subject to laws that prohibit actions “intended to interfere with the loyalty, morale, or good order and discipline of the armed forces,” according to the War Department.

But legal and military experts say that Kelly committed “no crime” in the video that would violate articles under the UCMJ, including the articles related to sedition.

“My prediction is it will never make it into a court room and it will be dead on arrival,” said Eugene R. Fidell, who teaches military justice at Yale Law School. “Nothing that Sen. Kelly or the others said or did violates any provision

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Amish communities work with authorities to address crime

Tim Hahn USA TODAY NETWORK

MEADVILLE, PA — Andy Byler spoke slowly in June as he recounted the horrors he encountered when he returned home in February 2024 from scouting roofing jobs with a neighbor and their driver.

He said his two young children ran out of their house, which sits off a winding, dirt-and-gravel road in rural eastern Crawford County, and told him someone had stopped by and killed their mother.

“And I didn’t believe it,” Byler said. Byler shared in a hushed Crawford County courtroom his recollections of the day his wife, 23 years old and pregnant with their third child, was brutally

murdered during the trial of an Erie County man ultimately convicted of the crime.

Byler spoke, facing a packed gallery containing many family members, friends and neighbors from his Amish enclave, the straw hats of the men left in a pile outside the courtroom door. Several other enclave members followed Byler to the witness stand, recounting their bits of information to the jury as state prosecutors laid out their case against the accused.

Before each sat down, they raised their hands and affirmed that what they were about to say would be the truth. A court staffer read to them an oath much different from the one read to the

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Geauga County, Ohio, Sheriff Scott Hildenbrand addresses members of the county’s Amish community during the Amish Safety Day event in July. The annual event is one way county law enforcement builds relationships with its Amish, Hildenbrand said. PROVIDED BY THE GEAUGA COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

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