



Five things to watch on ‘Hard Knocks’

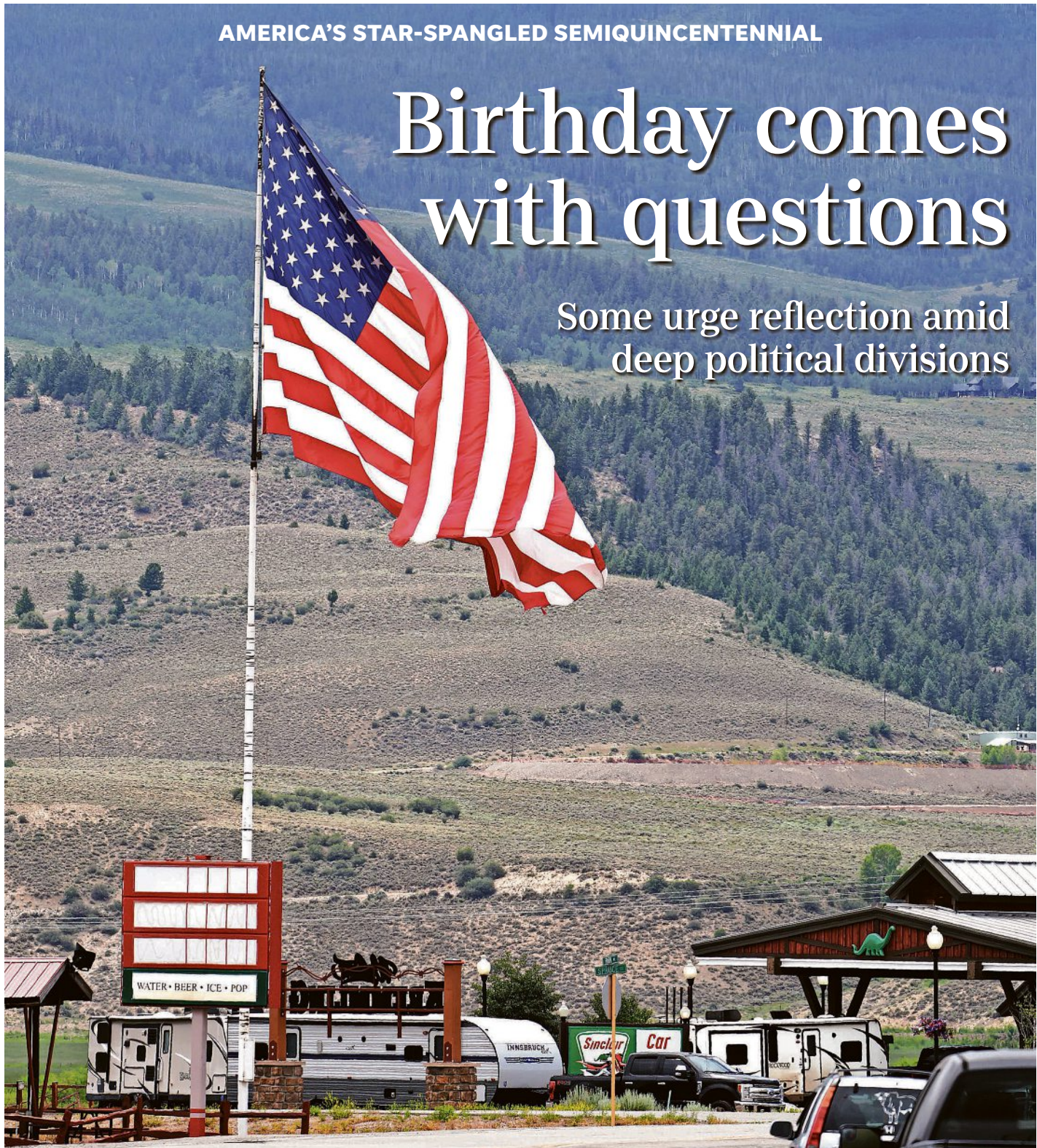
SPORTS, 1B

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A giant American flag waves over the mountain town of Kremmling, Colorado, on Independence Day weekend. Some scholars are urging Americans to spend time thinking deeply about the country's past and future ahead of its 250th anniversary. TREVOR HUGHES/USA TODAY

Trevor Hughes  
USA TODAY

We who call the United States home are preparing to celebrate the country's star-spangled semiquincentennial next year – not just with flags and fireworks but also some serious conversations about history and what it means to be an American.

Among the celebrations: a massive fireworks display at Mount Rushmore on July 3, 2026, and what organizers

hope will be the single-largest flag-waving celebration in history. And President Donald Trump on July 3 announced he's also planning to host an Ultimate Fighting Championship event at the White House as part of the festivities.

Trump formally kicked off the year-long celebration on July 3 with a boisterous rally at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Trump campaigned on an "America first" platform, and he's long invoked symbols of patriotism during

his rallies, including having Lee Greenwood sing his hit "God Bless the USA," and literally embracing Old Glory.

"This Fourth of July, our magnificent destiny is closer than ever before. We are one people, one family and one united American nation," he said to cheers. "We will fight, fight, fight. We will win, win, win, because we are Americans and our hearts bleed red, white and blue."

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Pharmacy opening downtown this fall

Lena Tzivekis  
York Daily Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK – PENNSYLVANIA

A new, on-site pharmacy is opening in downtown York this fall.

Family First Health, focused on community-based healthcare, will open Family First Pharmacy, an on-site pharmacy, according to a news release.

Located on the first floor of the George Street Center in the heart of downtown York, the pharmacy will be open to all individuals regardless of insurance status or income. Family First Pharmacy will offer prescriptions on a sliding scale for uninsured and underinsured patients, helping to remove cost barriers to needed medications.

"Family First Pharmacy is a direct investment in the health of our community," said Dr. Jason Long, lead pharmacist at Family First Pharmacy. "We know that cost, time, and coordination are some of the biggest barriers to patients filling prescriptions. By offering affordable medications and immediate access in the same place where patients receive care, we're simplifying the process and improving outcomes."

When downtown York's Rite Aid closed its doors in June, the closures raise concerns about "pharmacy deserts," particularly in downtown York, Pennsylvania, where a Rite Aid served many residents. And although Family First Pharmacy is co-located with Family First Health's George Street Center, it is open to the public, ensuring anyone in the community can access pharmacy care close to home.

"This pharmacy is the latest step in Family First Health's continued commitment to address York's health equity gaps through community-driven solutions," said Jenny Englerth, president and CEO of Family First Health.

"As part of Family First Health's nonprofit health mission, the pharmacy continues our legacy of putting patients first and delivering integrated, personalized, affordable care to improve health outcomes in our community."

Key sign of hurricane activity detected as Atlantic warms

Doyle Rice  
USA TODAY

Hurricanes need warm ocean water to form, and water temperatures in a key section of the Atlantic are really starting to warm up.

"One of the biggest changes I've observed in recent weeks is a considerable warming of the so-called Main Development Region (MDR) of the Atlantic above its seasonal averages," WPLG-TV hurricane expert Michael Lowry said in late July in a Substack post.

That's a big change from earlier this season.

"To open the hurricane season in June, waters across this bellwether part of the Atlantic where most of our strongest hurricanes get their start were running average to even below average," he said.

The Main Development Region, located between the Caribbean and Africa, is a region in the Atlantic where many tropical cyclones – tropical storms and hurricanes – form. This area is key because it's where many tropical waves, which can develop into hurricanes, originally form.

The warm water in that key region is just one of the reasons hurricane forecasters are warning that hurricane season could soon heat up.

Warm water everywhere

It's not only the Main Development Region that's warm: Water across the Gulf of America (also known as Gulf of Mexico) and the Caribbean Sea are also above average, scientists said.

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Choppy seas batter Tybee Island near Savannah, Georgia, as Hurricane Milton moves out into the Atlantic in 2024. RICHARD BURKHART/SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS

