

The Free Lance-Star

An edge at East Lake

Henley takes the initial lead at the Tour Championship. **SPORTS, PAGE B1**



Wit and whimsy

Apartment reflects personal style and hosting tendencies. **HOUSE & HOME, PAGE A9**

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SHANNON STAPLETON PHOTOS, POOL

Former President Donald Trump attends the closing arguments in the Trump Organization civil fraud trial Jan. 11, 2024, at New York State Supreme Court.

Court throws out Trump fraud penalty

JENNIFER PELTZ
AND MICHAEL R. SISAK
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A New York appeals court on Thursday threw out the massive financial penalty a state judge imposed on President Donald Trump, while narrowly upholding a finding he engaged in fraud by exaggerating his wealth for decades.

The ruling spares Trump from a potential half-billion-dollar fine but bans him and his two eldest sons from serving in corporate leadership for a few years.

Trump, in a social media post, claimed “total victory.”

“I greatly respect the fact that the Court had the Courage to throw out this unlawful and disgraceful Decision that was hurting Business all throughout New York State,” he wrote.

The decision came seven months after the Republican returned to the White House. A sharply divided panel of five judges in New York’s mid-level Appellate Division couldn’t agree on many issues raised in Trump’s appeal, but a majority said the monetary penalty was “excessive.”



Judge Arthur Engoron presides during closing arguments in the Trump Organization civil fraud trial Jan. 11, 2024, in New York State Supreme Court.

After finding Trump flagrantly padded financial statements that went to lenders and insurers, Judge Arthur Engoron ordered him last year to pay \$355 million in penalties. With interest, the sum has topped \$515 million. Additional penalties levied on some other Trump Organization executives, including Trump’s sons Eric and Donald Jr. — bring the total to \$527 million, with interest.

An ‘excessive’ fine

“While the injunctive relief ordered by the court is well crafted to curb defendants’ business culture, the court’s disgorgement order, which directs that defendants pay nearly half a billion dollars to the State of New York, is an excessive fine that violates the Eighth Amendment of the United States Constitution,” Judges Dianne T. Renwick and Peter H. Moulton wrote in one

of three opinions shaping the appeals court’s ruling.

Engoron’s other punishments, upheld by the appeals court, have been on pause during Trump’s appeal, and the president was able to hold off collection of the money by posting a \$175 million bond.

The court, which split on the merits of the lawsuit and Engoron’s fraud finding, dismissed the penalty in its entirety while also leaving a pathway for an appeal to the state’s highest court, the Court of Appeals. Trump and his co-defendants, the judges wrote, can seek to extend the pause on punishments taking effect.

The panel was sharply divided, issuing 323 pages of concurring and dissenting opinions with no majority. Rather, some judges endorsed parts of their colleagues’ findings while denouncing others, enabling the court to rule.

Two judges wrote that they felt New York Attorney General Letitia James’ lawsuit against Trump and his companies was justifiable

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Court affirms Youngkin’s selective approach to voting rights restoration

LUCA POWELL
Richmond Times-Dispatch

On Wednesday, a federal appeals court determined that Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s case-by-case approach to voting rights restoration does not violate the constitution, a blow to criminal justice and voting rights advocates who say Youngkin’s strategy amounts to se-

lective disenfranchisement.

Virginia is the sole state to retain a Jim Crow-era law permanently stripping the right to vote from a person convicted of a felony. To earn it back, they must petition the Secretary of the Commonwealth Kay Coles James, who previously told legislators her office individually investigates each case before

restoring a person’s civil rights.

The petition system, introduced by Youngkin in December 2022, marked a change from prior governors, who handled the restorations automatically.

Shortly after the change, a Richmond man, George Hawkins Jr., sued Youngkin’s administration. Hawkins, who petitioned to have his rights restored in 2023,

alleged the policy violated his First Amendment rights by introducing an “arbitrary” system for the restoration of voting rights. He remains unable to vote.

On Wednesday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit found no constitutional issue

Please see **VOTING**, Page A3

Two charged with felony murder in infant’s death

KEITH EPPS
The Free Lance-Star

A Spotsylvania mother and her boyfriend have both been charged with felony murder in connection with the death of her 3-month-old son in November, court records show.

Angela Heaven Holloman, 22, and Andrew Jess Phillips, 29, were both indicted this week by a Spotsylvania grand jury. They are also each charged with felony child neglect and felony child endangerment.

According to Sheriff’s Maj. Liz Scott, deputies and rescue workers went to the 12600 block of Orange Plank Road on Nov. 16 in response to a call about an infant having respiratory problems. The infant, Asher Grey Holloman, was rushed to Mary Washington Hospital, where he was pronounced dead after life-saving measures were unsuccessful.

Spotsylvania detectives conducted an investigation that included an autopsy by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner that ruled the infant’s death a homicide. Court records do not state the child’s actual cause of death.

Felony murder is a charge that is leveled when an unintentional death occurs during the commission of another felony offense. It carries a penalty of between five to 40 years in prison, the same as second-degree murder.

Both Holloman and Phillips were arrested this week and are being held in the Rappahannock Regional Jail under no bond.

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California trip postponed after former hotel employee caught stealing in Caroline

KEITH EPPS
The Free Lance-Star

A planned trip to California was put on hold Tuesday after a Ruther Glen man was caught stealing from his former employer, police said.

Caroline Sheriff Scott Moser said deputies went to the Days Inn on Tuesday after the hotel manager reported that more than \$1,500 in cash was stolen from a safe in the hotel office. The manager reported that the safe was in a restricted area of the hotel.

After reviewing surveillance footage with hotel staff, the suspect was identified as 56-year-old Samir Arvind Patel, a former employee at the hotel. Patel was staying at the hotel as a guest at the time.

Moser said deputies quickly located, interviewed and arrested Patel, charging him with grand larceny. Police said he had just over \$700 cash in his possession and told police he had just spent over \$600 arranging transportation to California. He told police he was getting ready to leave when he was apprehended.

Patel was placed in the Pamunkey Regional Jail before being released on bond.

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For more on the forecast, see our daily online videos. **FREDERICKSBURG.COM**

Weather
Mostly sunny and warmer
High 82 • Low 59
FORECAST • B6

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