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# Richmond Times-Dispatch

Saturday, June 27, 2026

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## WORLD CUP



ALLYSE PULLIAM, TIMES-DISPATCH

Aimee Reyes screams "USA! USA! USA!" at a World Cup watch party at Richmond's City Stadium that was host to 3,600 fans on Thursday night. "The people of the world are excited and love each other," said Reyes, who said she didn't know anything about soccer before this year's event, but was decked out in red, white and blue accessories from Dollar Tree on Thursday. "It's a beautiful thing."

# Red, white and roaring

'I'm definitely addicted to the magic':  
 Event gives RVA a reason to gather

AUDREY PACHUTA  
 Richmond Times-Dispatch

Aimee Reyes doesn't know a thing about soccer. Or, at least she didn't a few days ago.

Before Thursday night, when she joined 3,600 others at Richmond's City Stadium for a public watch party as the U.S. men's national team took on Turkey, she had never watched a FIFA match in her life.

Still, like so many others around the globe, the 52-year-old tossed together her finest patriotic outfit and showed up to support the country she calls home. Consider it safe to say she

caught World Cup fever.

"I mean, it's our 250th anniversary," Reyes said. "Go America."

Between June 11 and July 19, soccer fans from all over the world are flocking to North America for 104 matches played at 16 stadiums among men's teams representing 48 countries. The U.S. won games against Paraguay and Australia before falling 3-2 to Turkey to finish group play in a game that didn't really matter for the Americans.

The US will next face Bosnia and Herzegovina in an elimination match on Wednesday in Santa Clara, California.

For some, the World Cup serves as an opportunity to see players they've followed for years compete on the grandest stage. But for others less attuned to the intricacies of the sport, a World Cup summer means more time for community and celebration.

"The people of the world are excited and love each other," said Reyes, who purchased a plethora of red, white and blue accessories from Dollar Tree ahead of Thursday's match. "It's a beautiful thing."

Like Reyes, Brandon Pope, 33, says having the World Cup played on U.S. soil carries a meaning far greater than athletic fanfare.

Huddled with two church friends on the sidewalk above City Stadium's stands, Pope said he feels moved that those

**VIEW:** See more photos from the watch party by aiming your cellphone camera at the QR code and tapping the link. **NEWSVU**

visiting America for soccer have looked beyond divisive politics and enjoyed its more frivolous features, namely ranch dressing, for the first time.

"Maybe that's broader than just America," Pope said. "Maybe everyone's got a little more to offer than we realized."

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■ **ELSEWHERE:** Americans look forward after late loss to Turkey on Thursday night. **Page B1**

## CITY HALL

# Records: 1 charged in \$2.8M scheme

5 co-conspirators are accused of embezzling through 'sham vendors'

SAMUEL B. PARKER  
 Richmond Times-Dispatch

At least one man has been charged and four others are now under investigation in connection with an alleged fraud ring that saw five co-conspirators allegedly embezzling nearly \$3 million from City Hall through fictitious companies, according to court records and transaction documents obtained by The Times-Dispatch through the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

The Times-Dispatch previously reported that officials were investigating millions of dollars' worth of transactions facilitated by Reginald Thomas, a former procurement analyst for the Richmond Fire Department.

Please see **THOMAS**, Page A6

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## STATE BUDGET

# Spanberger proposing 14 changes

RGGI, Oak Hill are among amendments

MICHAEL MARTZ AND DAVE RESS  
 Richmond Times-Dispatch

Virginians would gain a new state park at a presidential home in Loudoun County, members of rural electric cooperatives would receive refunds from greenhouse gas tax proceeds and personal care providers would see faster increases in reimbursements from the state's Medicaid program under amendments that Gov. Abigail Spanberger proposed to the two-year state budget on Friday.

The governor also proposed a one-year delay in enacting a new ban on the open carry of certain assault firearms in public areas. Under her proposal, it would go into effect on July 1, 2027, instead of Wednesday. Under the new

Please see **SPANBERGER**, Page A6

## MIDDLE EAST

# US, Iran trade attacks after ship strike

Israel, Lebanon reach framework deal after talks in Washington

RAMI AYYUB, MAYA GEBEILY AND MICHAEL MARTINA  
 Reuters

WASHINGTON — Iran's Revolutionary Guard said early Saturday it targeted U.S. military positions in the region, in response to a fresh U.S. strike against Iran. It did not provide details.

Earlier, the U.S. military attacked Iran in response to an Iranian drone strike on a cargo ship in the Strait of Hormuz, throwing the fate of the recent interim peace deal between the

two countries into question.

U.S. Central Command said aircraft struck missile and drone storage locations and coastal radar sites. Iranian media said a projectile struck an area around a pier in Sirik, a city on the shores of the strategic waterway.

Elsewhere there were signs of progress, however, as Israel and Lebanon signed an agreement to end the fighting between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah. Both sides framed the deal as an initial step that calls for Hezbollah to disarm and Israel to withdraw troops from Lebanon, but it was not clear how it would be enforced. Hezbollah said it would not cooperate.

Please see **IRAN**, Page A4



MOHAMED AZAKIR, REUTERS

Shi'ite mourners hold placards with pictures of Iranian and Hezbollah leaders as they mark Ashura, the holiest day on the Shi'ite Muslim calendar, on Friday in Beirut, Lebanon.

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**Bolton pleads guilty to mishandling classified documents** PAGE A10

**Weather**  
 Couple of thunderstorms  
**High:** 85  
**Low:** 71  
**Forecast:** A7

<b>A News</b>	Business	A9	<b>B Sports</b>	<b>C Lifestyle</b>
Lotteries	A2	Entertainment	A11	Scoreboard
Opinions	A8	Obituaries	A13	Marketplace
				B2
				B8
				C5
				C6

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