



LaFleur finds value despite Packers’ struggles vs. Jets

SPORTS, 1B

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Debris from houses damaged on North Apache Avenue in Auburndale are piled onto the yard of Cheryl Klawitter after the tornado. Klawitter’s house, along with about five other homes on the street, was severely damaged.

GARY C. KLEIN/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN FILE

Auburndale tornado of 1985

Twister hit without warning, causing millions in damage

Karen Madden
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

AUBURNDALE – It was a Monday evening 40 years ago when a tornado hit the community, destroying homes and causing millions of dollars in damage.

The tornado came without warning to the people in Auburndale on Aug. 12, 1985, according to newspaper reports written after the storms hit that day. The tornado touched down about 7:15 p.m. A National Weather Service meteorologist in Milwaukee later said a tornado warning for Wood County was issued at 7:50 p.m.

The Marshfield dispatchers said they tried to call the Auburndale Fire Department to warn them about a pending line of storms heading toward Wood County, but the phone lines weren’t working, according to newspapers at the time. Officials later theorized that the phone didn’t work because the Auburndale Fire Department was responding to a report of a lightning strike or because the lines were down. One report stated the sirens has been taken down by that time.

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This was the scene at the Wiskerchen Trailer Park in Auburndale the morning after an EF2 tornado hit the village on Aug. 12, 1985. The remains of one mobile home and damaged remnants of others can be seen amid uprooted trees.

MARK SEWELL/WISCONSIN RAPIDS DAILY TRIBUNE FILE

The tornado destroyed 58 dwellings and damaged 40 farm buildings, according to the reference guide. The Apache Gardens subdivision and the Wiskerchen Trailer Park in Auburndale both received substantial damage. The total damage estimate was \$5.5 million.

Law opens HSAs up to more Americans

Medora Lee
USA TODAY

Beginning in 2026, more people than ever will have access to almost every financial adviser’s favorite way to save.

Thanks to new provisions in President Donald Trump’s recently signed tax and spending law, more people will be able to benefit from the triple tax-advantaged health savings account, experts say. The law, dubbed the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” by Trump, opens up HSAs to tens of millions more Americans by allowing more Affordable Care Act insurance plans, direct primary care arrangements and plans with telehealth coverage.

HSAs are a favorite savings vehicle among financial advisers because contributions are tax-free, money grows tax-free, and if used for a qualifying expense, withdrawals are tax-free.

“Together, the benefits of pretax contributions, tax-free earnings and tax-free withdrawals for qualified medical expenses can add up to significant savings over the course of a family’s life if they are healthy and let the funds accumulate,” said Richard Pon, a certified public accountant in San Francisco. “So, think of the HSA as a piggy bank for medical expenses that can grow similar to an Individual Retirement Account.”

The HSA changes made in the law “represent the most significant HSA expansion in nearly two decades,” according to health and benefits platform Lively. “Individuals, employers, and brokers should start planning during the 2025 open enrollment period to take full advantage of the new rules.”

ACA plans that are HSA eligible

Bronze and catastrophic plans will be HSA eligible starting in 2026. These lower-premium, higher-deductible plans were excluded because they didn’t meet the requirements for an HSA.

Many Bronze plans didn’t qualify as a high-deductible health plan because they cover nonpreventive services such as prescription drugs and office visits before meeting a deductible. Catastrophic plans also didn’t qualify for the same reason and because their maximum out-of-pocket limits are typically higher than what’s permitted.

During the open enrollment period

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Agencies ordered to scrub records on COVID vaccine

Josh Meyer
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The Trump administration has ordered all federal agencies to scrub any records related to workers’ COVID-19 vaccination status and other compliance with pandemic mandates.

The order rescinding vaccine record retention requirements was announced

in an Aug. 8 memorandum by Scott Kuper, the director of the Office of Personnel Management in a memo to all federal department and agency heads. They have until Sept. 8 “to report their compliance,” Kuper wrote.

“Effective immediately, federal agencies may not use an individual’s COVID-19 vaccine status, history of non-

compliance with prior COVID-19 vaccine mandates, or requests for exemptions from such mandates in any employment-related decisions, including but not limited to hiring, promotion, discipline, or termination,” Kuper wrote in the memo to all heads and acting heads of federal departments and agencies.

Kuper said the move was part of the Trump administration’s broader effort to reverse “many harmful policies” of former President Joe Biden’s administration.

“Things got out of hand during the pandemic, and federal workers were

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