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## Homecoming Brings Argentina to a Halt

A parade in Buenos Aires to celebrate the country's World Cup victory was cut short as millions of fans thronged the streets. Page B8.

## Older Americans Forgo Boosters Even as Deaths From Covid Rise

By EMILY BAUMGAERTNER

PLEASANT HILL, Calif. — Bonnie Ronk is something of a public health matriarch at the Mt. Diablo Center for seniors in this liberal Northern California suburb.

When Ms. Ronk, a great-grandmother whose red walker bears a sticker saying "El Jefe" (The Leader), tells her peers to pull their masks over their noses, they oblige. When she received both doses of the Covid vaccine and a booster and told others to do the same, they did.

But even Ms. Ronk, 79, has not gotten the latest Covid booster, which was updated to protect against the Omicron variant and has been available since September. She said she didn't know about it.

Across the United States, where

### Immunity Waning Fast, but Many Are Unsure of Their Options

about 94 percent of people 65 and older had their initial Covid vaccines, only 36 percent have received the updated shot, known as the bivalent booster, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Seniors have offered an array of explanations: They were unaware of it, unable to find it or unconvinced of its value.

As the pandemic barrels into its third winter, and Covid hospitalizations and deaths climb once again, medical experts worry that there is no effective plan to update the immunizations of the most

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## In Sprint, Lawmakers Advance \$1.7 Trillion Spending Package

By EMILY COCHRANE

WASHINGTON — The Senate on Tuesday advanced a sprawling spending package that would keep the government open through next fall after senior lawmakers from both parties reached a compromise on billions of dollars in federal spending, including another round of emergency aid to Ukraine.

The roughly \$1.7 trillion legislation would increase federal spending from the last fiscal year, providing \$858 billion in military spending and more than \$772 billion for domestic programs, according to a summary released by Senate Democrats.

Still, it was less than Democrats had wanted and more than several conservative Republicans said they could stomach. With Republican support in the Senate needed for the measure to pass,

### Bid to Avert Shutdown Includes \$40 Billion in Aid for Ukraine

Democrats agreed to forgo a larger increase that would have ensured health, education and other domestic programs that President Biden and his party have prioritized received as much funding as the military budget.

But that was not enough to mollify House Republican leaders or some conservative senators, including Senators Rand Paul of Kentucky and Mike Lee of Utah. They called on rank-and-file lawmakers to oppose the spending package, arguing that it was far too costly and that any final agreement should wait until they as-

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## Zelensky Plans A Daring Visit To Washington

### Plea to Congress After Meeting With Biden

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR  
and EMILY COCHRANE

WASHINGTON — President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine will meet with President Biden at the White House on Wednesday and later deliver a prime-time address to a joint session of Congress, a daring trip abroad designed to reaffirm American support for his country, top American officials said Tuesday night.

The officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of concerns about Mr. Zelensky's safety, said that the risks involved in such a visit — with the wartime leader leaving his country for the first time since Russia invaded in February — are high, and that planning for his arrival was conducted under intense secrecy.

Mr. Zelensky will arrive in the United States 300 days after President Vladimir V. Putin ordered Russian troops into Ukraine and as Congress considers approving nearly \$50 billion in aid to help Ukraine's forces battle Russia next year. That would bring the total of American aid to more than \$100 billion.

"He's a national and global hero — I'm delighted to be able to hear from him," Senator Mitt Romney, Republican of Utah, said Tuesday after hearing of Mr. Zelensky's visit.

His visit to the United States comes as Russia's assault, already nearly 10 months old, heads into a



UKRAINIAN PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SERVICE, VIA APF  
President Volodymyr Zelensky visited Bakhmut on Tuesday.

second, brutal year. Russia's hopes for a quick defeat of Ukraine failed, but have given way to a series of grinding and devastating attacks on civilians that have left major cities without heat or electricity in the bitter cold of Ukraine's winter.

During his meeting with Mr. Biden at the White House, Mr. Zelensky is set to accept the latest American pledge of military assistance: a highly sophisticated Patriot missile battery that senior administration officials said would provide Ukraine with far better defenses against air attacks from Russian missiles and

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## I.R.S. LET TRUMP AVOID TAX AUDITS WHILE IN OFFICE

### 2 YEARS GO UNCHECKED

### House Panel Votes to Make Returns Public, Ending Long Fight

This article is by Charlie Savage, Emily Cochrane, Stephanie Lai and Alan Rappeport.

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service failed to audit former President Donald J. Trump's tax filings during his first two years in office despite a program that makes the auditing of sitting presidents mandatory, a House committee revealed on Tuesday after an extraordinary vote to make public five years of his tax returns.

Mr. Trump filed returns in 2017 for the two previous tax years, but the I.R.S. began auditing those filings only in 2019 — the first on the same day in April the House and the Ways and Means Committee requested access to his taxes and any associated audits, a report by the panel said. The I.R.S. has yet to complete those audits, it said, and the agency started auditing his filings covering his income while president only after he left office.

The revelation could transform the political context of the committee's nearly four-year fight to obtain information about Mr. Trump's taxes and any related audits. Its chairman, Representative Richard E. Neal of Massachusetts, had said the panel needed the data to assess the I.R.S.'s mandatory presidential audit program, but Mr. Trump's lawyers and Republicans called that a pretext for a politically motivated fishing expedition.

The suggestion of dysfunction in the mandatory auditing program was an early takeaway in what may be a series of disclosures related to the coming release of Mr. Trump's returns. Democrats said it may be several days before thousands of pages of tax filings from Mr. Trump and several associated businesses from 2015 to 2020 become public as they redact sensitive details, like street addresses and bank account numbers.

The party-line vote to release the materials came during the last weeks of Democratic control of the House after Republican gains in the midterm election. The committee invoked a century-old statute that allows it to lawfully make public otherwise confidential tax information involving Mr. Trump, who had defied tradition by refusing to disclose his financial information as a presidential candidate and sitting president.

The vote followed a closed-door debate that lasted more than four hours. It brought to an end a legal and political battle by the House to

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## A Day With a U.K. Ambulance: Painful Waits, Crowded Hospitals

By MEGAN SPECIA

WREXHAM, Wales — Rachel Parry and Wayne Jones, two paramedics with the Wrexham Ambulance Service, pulled up to a hospital in northern Wales with a patient just after 10 one morning in early December.

That's when their wait began. It would be 4:30 p.m. before their patient, a 47-year-old woman with agonizing back pain and numbness in both legs, would be handed over to the emergency room of Wrexham Maelor Hospital. It was more than 12 hours since she had first called 999, the British equivalent of 911.

The delays have grown so bad — and so common — the two paramedics said, that their first interaction with patients is no longer an introduction.

"We start with an apology now," Ms. Parry said. "Every job is, like, they open the front door, 'Hi, we are so sorry we are late.' That has become the norm."

The sight of ambulances lined up for hours outside hospitals has become distressingly familiar in Wales, which last month recorded its worst wait times ever for life-threatening emergency calls. But the problem is far from isolated. Ambulance services in England,



ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

After waiting three hours for an ambulance, Ann Taylor, 79, waited two more to enter the hospital.

Scotland and Northern Ireland are also experiencing record-high waits.

It's a near-crisis situation that experts say signals a breakdown of the compact between Britons and their revered National Health Service: that the government will provide responsible, efficient health care services, mostly free,

across all income levels.

The issue will be cast into sharp relief on Wednesday when ambulance service staff in England and Wales stage the first of two strikes over low wages and deteriorating work conditions. They are scheduled to walk out again next week.

It will be the latest walkout in a period of intense labor strife in

Britain, with a series of strikes planned across the country during the holidays. Nurses are staging their second one-day strike on Tuesday, and rail workers and border control workers at airports will begin several days of strikes later in the week.

Countless harrowing incidents

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## Money for Military Instruction Gets the N.R.A. Inside Schools

By NICHOLAS BOGEL-BURROUGHS and MIKE BAKER

CAPE CORAL, Fla. — Beneath the fluorescent lights of a high school gym, dozens of teenagers took turns firing air rifles at a series of bull's-eye targets, part of a marksmanship competition that drew students from schools all along the Florida Gulf Coast.

The event was better outfitted than many high school competitions, with lights that illuminated the targets, scopes for spotting downrange and a heavy curtain to keep pellets from going astray, thanks to the help of a key sponsor: the charitable arm of the National Rifle Association.

"A lot of the equipment that you see behind me comes from N.R.A. grants," Bryan Williams, a retired Army major who teaches in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Mariner High School in Cape Coral, told the contestants.

That tip of the hat was no casual remark. In order to win N.R.A. sponsorships, records show, military instructors who lead J.R.O.T.C. marksmanship teams at public high schools have repeatedly promised to promote the organization at competitions and

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### Rain and Luck Help California

Unusually early rains helped lead to a quiet fire season in California. "We got lucky," a fire adviser said. PAGE A10

### Border Suits in Supreme Court

The Biden administration acknowledged that ending Title 42 would most likely lead to an increase in crossings. PAGE A11

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

### Afghan Colleges Bar Women

Since taking back the government, the Taliban have reinstated many hard-line stances from the 1990s. PAGE A9

### Covid Medicines in China

Millions are desperate to find fever-reducing drugs and antivirals as infections outpace supplies. PAGE A4

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### Getting to 'It Was Wrong'

Germany returned 20 Benin Bronzes to their rightful home in Nigeria on Tuesday. How an outcome recently thought far-fetched came to pass. PAGE C1



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### Why Panettone Is the New Pizza

The reputation of Italy's national symbol of Christmas has risen, prompting a jostle among Italian bakers. PAGE D1

### Puff Pastry Knows How to Party

Pigs and figs in a blanket, cheesy pinwheels and crunchy twists: The fun starts in the freezer section. PAGE D7

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### Musk May Exit Twitter Job

Elon Musk said that he will resign as the social media company's chief executive if he can find a replacement, apparently heeding the results of a poll of his online followers. PAGE B1

### Wells Fargo Fined Again

The bank agreed to pay a record \$1.7 billion fine and an additional \$2 billion in damages to settle claims that it engaged in an array of banking violations over the last decade. PAGE B1

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### Roxane Gay

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### In the N.B.A., Socks Rule

Zion Williamson rocks an orange stripe. Marcus Smart was almost fined over his socks. And some guys wear them on the wrong feet. (The wrong feet?) PAGE B7



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