



Clockwise from top left: a polling station in Mariupol, Ukraine, for a pseudoreferendum on whether to secede and join Russia; lines to a Russian checkpoint during an exodus from Moscow's mobilization order; bodies of Russian soldiers as abandoned artillery was towed in Oskil, Ukraine; an arrest by Russian police officers in St. Petersburg at a protest against mobilization.

## Big Chain Sucked Profits Out of a Poor Hospital

By KATIE THOMAS and JESSICA SILVER-GREENBERG  
RICHMOND, Va. — In late July, Norman Gray was rushed by ambulance to Richmond Community Hospital. The 63-year-old was dead on arrival in pain and bleeding incoherently. Blood tests suggested septic shock, a grave emergency that required the resources and expertise of an intensive care unit.

But Richmond Community, a struggling hospital in a predominantly Black neighborhood, had closed its I.C.U. in 2017.

It took several hours for Mr. Gray to be transported to another hospital, according to his sister, Linda Jones-Smith. He deteriorated on the way there, and later died of sepsis. Two people who cared for Mr. Gray said the delay had most likely contributed to his death.

"He should have been able to go to the hospital and get the treatment he needed," Ms. Jones-Smith said. "He should have been saved."

Kinged by public housing projects, Richmond Community consists of little more than a stripped emergency room and a psychiatric ward. It does not have a kidney or lung specialists, or a



Michael and his mother, Annie. "It was a 'Yes, finally' kind of moment," he said of his top surgery.

## Breast Removal Surgery on Rise for Trans Teens

By AZEEN GHORAYSHI  
Michael, 17, arrived in the sleek white waiting room of his plastic surgeon's office in Miami for a treatment he had long anticipated: removing the bandages to see his newly flat chest.

After years of squeezing into compression undershirts to conceal his breasts, the teenager was overcome with relief that morning last December. Wearing an unbuttoned shirt, he posed for photographs.

With his mother and the surgeon, Dr. Siddhi Gallagher, happy to share his heart with the doctor's large following on social media.

"It just felt right — like I'd never had breasts in the first place," Michael said. "It was a 'Yes, finally' kind of moment."

Michael is part of a very small but growing group of transgender adolescents who have had top surgery, or breast removal, to better align their bodies with their experience of gender. Most of these teenagers have also taken testosterone and changed their names, pronouns or clothing style.

Few groups of young people have received as much attention. Republican elected officials

## Russian Draft Pits Ukrainian Vs. Ukrainian

By MARC SANTORA  
KYIV, Ukraine. — In the occupied city of Kherson, some Ukrainian men believe that if they break their own arms, maybe the Russians will not force them into military service. Others are hiding in basements. Some are trying to run even though they are forbidden to leave the city, residents said, and virtually everyone is afraid.

"People are panicking," said Kateryna, 30. "First they were searching our houses, and now the Russians will conscript our men to their army. This is all unlawful but very real for us."

As the Kremlin's conscription drive faced protests across Russia for a fifth day, new signs of resistance, and fear, emerged on Sunday in the territories it occupies in Ukraine as well.

The drive to compel Ukrainians to battle other Ukrainians is part of a broader, if risky, effort by Moscow to mobilize hundreds of thousands of new fighters as its forces suffer huge casualties and struggle to hold off Ukrainian advances in the east and south.

At the same time, a Russian-orchestrated vote is setting the stage for the Kremlin to cleave Ukrainians through an annexation that has been broadly condemned around the world.

The result of the pseudoreferendum underway is expected to be announced on Tuesday. The anticipated outcome: that a majority of people in four Ukrainian regions — Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia — "voted" to secede from Ukraine and join Russia. President Vladimir V. Putin of



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## Migrant Flights Lift the Veil on a G.O.P. Rivalry

By MICHAEL C. BENDER and J. DAVID GOODMAN  
AUSTIN, Texas. — Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida wanted to irritate a set of wealthy, liberal, political elites when he flew migrants to Martha's Vineyard from Texas, delivering them a slice of the humanitarian crisis simmering along the nation's southern border.

But Mr. DeSantis's stunt also annoyed an entirely different group — fellow Republicans in Austin, including some of the allies and allies of Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas.

Publicly, Mr. Abbott has not criticized Mr. DeSantis's migrant flights from his state. "Every

## WIN PROJECTED FOR HARD RIGHT IN ITALY ELECTION

NATIONALISTS TRIUMPH

Meloni Poised to Become the Country's First Female Leader

By JASON HOROWITZ  
ROME — Italy appeared to turn a page of European history on Sunday by electing a hard-right coalition led by Giorgia Meloni, whose long record of bashing the European Union, international bankers and migrants has sown concern about the nation's reliability in the Western alliance.

Early projections based on a narrow sampling of precincts, as well as exit polls, on Sunday night suggested that Ms. Meloni, the leader of the nationalist Brothers of Italy, a party descended from the remnants of fascism, had led a right-wing coalition to a majority in Parliament, defeating a fractured left and a resurgent anti-establishment movement.

The final results would not be clear until Monday, and it will still be weeks before the new Italian Parliament is seated and a new government is formed, leaving plenty of time for political machinations. But Ms. Meloni's strong showing, with about 25 percent of the vote, the highest of any single party, makes her the prohibitive favorite to become the country's first female prime minister.

While she is a strong supporter of Europe, her coalition partners deeply admire Russian president Vladimir V. Putin, and have criticized sanctions against Russia.

"From the Italians has arrived a clear indication," Ms. Meloni, known for her cross-dressing rhetoric, said in a speech at a measured victory speech at nearly 3 a.m. "For the center-right is going to be the center-right."

After saying that she had suffered from a "violent electoral campaign" filled with unfair attacks, Ms. Meloni spoke about "civic respect" and "reconciling the institutions." She pointed to a victory sign. "We are at the starting point," she said, adding, "Italy choose us, and we will never let it betray it."

The victory, in an election with lower turnout than usual, comes as formerly taboo and marginal

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Giorgia Meloni is poised to be Italy's next prime minister.

## Mysteries in migrant flights by DeSantis

Asylum seekers allege deception in enticement to Martha's Vineyard

By BETH REINHARD, MARIA SACCHETTI and MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE

When Jose joined the migrants behind a McDonald's on a sun-baked San Antonio street earlier this month, he was running out of options. The 27-year-old had survived the perilous trek from Venezuela and safely crossed the U.S.-Mexico border, but now he had no place to go.

Like the others behind the restaurant on Sept. 8, he'd been kicked out of a shelter just three days. Immigration officials had warned them they couldn't work legally yet. No one had any money to get to distant cities where friends or family might help.

That's when a smiling blond-haired woman in a cowboy hat approached. Her name was Perla, she said. And she could fix all their troubles.

It was a pitch Perla had been making to other newly homeless migrants huddled on San Antonio's streets. She drew a rented white SUV and promised food, jobs and transportation.

Jose trusted her. For the first time since coming to the United States, he felt safe. "We thought

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## ELECTION 2022 GOP's focus on crime stirs fears among Democrats

By ANNIE LINNEY and COLBY IRKOWITZ

One Republican commercial casts Mandela Barnes as a "different" Democrat, and points out the unique nature of the recession, which was induced by the pandemic, and the robust federal response, including legislation like the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan of 2021.

"We had a huge shift away from services and into goods that spurred production and manufacturing and very rapid recovery in the U.S. economy," Ms. Barnes told reporters during a trip to Detroit this month. The support for local economies and small businesses included in Mr. Biden's rescue plan, she said, "has been tremendously helpful in restoring the health of the job market and given the shifting spending patterns. I think that's been to the benefit of manufacturing."

American manufacturers, like many industries, have struggled to find raw materials, components and skilled workers. And yet, they have continued to create jobs at a rate that has surprised

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MELINA MARY, THE WASHINGTON POST

## Schools close, wounds open

Amid gentrification and a cost-driven exodus, Black Oakland faces a new affront

By SCOTT WILSON in OAKLAND, CALIF.

There are few sights more poignant than empty classrooms that should be full, playground basketball courts with no games, a "School Crossing" sign where there's no longer a school. Just across the street from the school, a new brick building with a few side streets to class each day. Now they walk farther, along avenues

featuring stripped-to-the-ribs cars and medians full of trash, to a new school with new teachers and new kids they do not yet know.

"We were devastated," said Jenkins, a bus driver who shuttles Facebook employees to and from work each day. "We have begged them not to do this because of the ripple effect it will have on our neighborhood. This was a place that truly supported the lives of Black and Brown children."

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Jaylen Bolden, one of the last students to graduate from Parker Elementary, catches a bus to his high school in Oakland.

## For all the storms, little mitigation in Puerto Rico

By ABEL R. HERNANDEZ

SALINAS, PUERTO RICO — When Linda Rodriguez started building a house in Villa Esperanza, neighbors suggested the lift it because the nearby Rio Nigua rose a few feet during Hurricane Maria — nothing these weathered coastal souls hadn't seen before.

So she built the house four feet off the ground, hoping to mitigate coastal flooding in southern Puerto Rico, where she found an affordable spot in a beautiful community to live out her retirement. Never did she imagine that Category 1 Fiona would bring so much rain that the beams of her white-and-blue-trim home would buckle and slide into a deep mud-hole.

"It was my refuge, my place of peace," said Rodriguez, 50, who along with her husband used nothing these weathered coastal souls hadn't seen before.

"We thought it wasn't going to happen. No one had ever seen



ANABELLE MARQUEZ FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Acely Hofflander assists her husband, Tom, who has Parkinson's disease, by stabilizing his walker. The Hofflanders had to wait four months to get a home-care worker to attend to their needs.

A pummeled coast for Canadian towns, destruction is setting in. A4