

## What's News

### Business & Finance

The Federal Reserve appears to be on a path to raise interest rates by another 0.75 percentage point this month in the wake of Powell's public pledge to reduce inflation even if it increases unemployment. **A1**

- ◆ **The Fed's Barr** said that the central bank is considering how to more closely scrutinize bank mergers and may beef up the way it requires certain banks to plan for their own demise. **A6**
- ◆ **The export boom** that has powered China's economy through the pandemic decelerated in August, reflecting the impact from rising inflation and slowing growth elsewhere in the world. **A1**
- ◆ **The U.S. reported** a sharp narrowing in the July trade deficit due to weaker demand for imports. **A2**
- ◆ **U.S. stocks rose**, with the Nasdaq gaining 2.1% to snap a seven-day losing streak. The S&P 500 and Dow advanced 1.8% and 1.4%, respectively. **B1**
- ◆ **The judge steering** the lawsuit over the stalled Twitter takeover said Musk can amend his countersuit to incorporate allegations from a whistleblower complaint by Twitter's former security chief. **B1**
- ◆ **Cineworld, the owner** of Regal Cinemas, filed for chapter 11 after a sluggish recovery in theater admissions fell short of the company's financial needs. **B3**
- ◆ **A Google product** that pays publishers to feature their content is almost a year behind its intended launch schedule in the U.S., as negotiations with some media outlets have bogged down. **B4**

### World-Wide

- ◆ **Russia's Putin threatened** to curtail the export of grain from Ukraine and said Moscow is ready to extend its rationing of natural-gas exports and cut off oil and refined products if the West goes ahead with a price-cap plan for Russian crude. **A8**
- ◆ **An unexpected Ukrainian** military offensive in the east near the city of Kharkiv is gaining ground, testing Russian occupation forces that also are under pressure in southern Ukraine. **A8**
- ◆ **Democratic leaders faced** time pressure to slim down their ambitions for a bill that keeps the government funded beyond September, with Ukraine aid likely to survive but other measures seen as less certain by lawmakers. **A4**
- ◆ **Steve Bannon is expected** to face New York state criminal charges following an investigation into a crowdfunding campaign to build a wall along the southern U.S. border, according to people familiar with the matter. **A4**
- ◆ **The second of two brothers** wanted in a stabbing spree in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan that killed 10 people died Wednesday after officers took him into custody, police said. **A18**
- ◆ **Amylyx's drug for ALS** won the backing of FDA advisers who just months ago narrowly recommended against its approval. **A7**
- ◆ **Opponents of a new California** law that could set the minimum wage for the fast-food industry as high as \$22 an hour next year have begun an effort to block it. **A3**

CONTENTS	Opinion..... A3-17
Arts in Review..... A13	Personal Journal..... A32
Business News..... B3	Sports..... A14
Commodities..... A14	Technology..... B4
Equities..... B7	U.S. News..... A2-7
Health & Science..... A14	Weather..... A14
Markets..... B11	World News..... A8-10,18

## Obamas' Portraits Unveiled at the White House



**CLOSEUP:** The official portraits of former President Barack Obama and former first lady Michelle Obama were unveiled at the White House Wednesday. Mr. Obama's portrait was painted by Robert McCurdy and Mrs. Obama's by Sharon Sprung. **A3**

## China Export Boom Sputters As Inflation Tightens Its Grip

By STELLA YIFAN XIE

HONG KONG—The export boom that has powered China's economy through the pandemic decelerated in August, reflecting the impact from rising inflation and slowing growth elsewhere in the world. The slowdown in exports threatens to erode the pillar that has held up growth in the world's second-largest economy, as fresh Covid-19 lockdowns in major Chinese cities are further restraining spend-

ing and the world economy edges closer to recession. China has been struggling to shake off the effects of its zero-tolerance Covid policies and a downturn in the property market. Chinese goods shipments to the rest of the world rose by 7.1% in August from a year ago to \$314.9 billion, the weakest gain since April, China's General Administration of Customs said Wednesday. The result fell below a median forecast of 12.5% among economists polled by The Wall Street

Journal, and decelerated from July's 18% year-over-year gain. Slowing exports partly reflect disruptions in factory production because of temporary power shortages as a severe drought and heat wave swept through central China, though economists expect the impact of that to be short-lived. Recent flare-ups of Covid-19 cases, however, threaten to disrupt manufacturing in more cities as authorities step up restrictions ahead of a Communist Party gathering in Oc-

tober, when President Xi Jinping of China is expected to break with recent precedent and claim a third term. Other economies in the region are showing signs of weakening exports. On Wednesday, Taiwan reported that export growth slowed to the lowest level in more than two years, dropping to 2% in August year-over-year from 14.2% in July. **Please turn to page A2**

## Russia Turns Destroyed City Into a Propaganda Tool

Mariupol, a strategic prize, will host show trial; 'this is their revenge'

By ISABEL COLES

At the Philharmonic Hall in Mariupol, Ukraine, the stage is almost set for a performance this fall casting Russia as liberator of the city it battered into submission three months ago. Where the grand piano used to sit, metal cages have been installed to hold Ukrainian prisoners of war who defended the industrial port city, and now stand accused of its destruction by Mariupol's new rulers. "The hearings will take place in the main auditorium, and the war criminals will be led to it through an iron corridor," a reporter from the propaganda arm of Russia's military said in a recent broadcast. The tribunal, expected to start this month, is a centerpiece of Russian efforts to

mold the city of Mariupol in a new image that reflects its narrative of the invasion: that Moscow is liberating Ukraine from violent nationalists. Moscow has said it won't rebuild other smaller cities in Ukraine's east that stood in the way of its advance and were laid to waste in the fighting. But Mariupol is of particular value to both sides, strategically and symbolically. For Ukraine, it is the site of a heroic last stand by outnumbered troops defending a flourishing Ukrainian city. In Russia's telling, it is restoring the natural order here, adorning the ruins of buildings. **Please turn to page A9**

- ◆ Ukrainian troops advance in the east..... **A8**
- ◆ Putin threatens to abandon grain deal..... **A8**

## Fans Keep Attempting the Famous 'Dirty Dancing' Lift

The 1987 movie still drives people to hoist their partners in the air

By JAMES FANELLI

"Dirty Dancing," the 1987 film about forbidden romance in the Catskills, is a coming-of-age tear-jerker for some viewers. Others cringe at its sappy ballads and over-the-top choreography. This coming weekend, in Lake Lure, N.C., though, the movie will take on a truly higher meaning at an annual Dirty Dancing lift competition. In the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, contestants will wade into a lake to re-create the film's famous scene in which leading man, Patrick Swayze, "Johnny," practices

"Baby," over his head in water. She rests gracefully in the air on his hands, her arms reaching out like a superhero in midflight. In the contest, the couple pose the longest wins—and things look a tad more awkward than in the Hollywood version. "They're just trying to hold on to somebody's clothes for dear life just to keep them up there long enough," says Amanda Jones, a 44-year-old contestant and four-time lift contestant from Raleigh, N.C. Ms. Jones has placed second and third before and is hoisting co-star Jennifer Grey, **Please turn to page A4**

## Bed Bath & Beyond Officials Thought CFO Was Overwhelmed

In the weeks before Gustavo Arnal took his own life, there was growing concern among Bed Bath & Beyond Inc. officials and directors over the demands being placed on the

days while he worked on the company's restructuring plans. He was inundated with emails from individual investors and plaintiffs' lawyers questioning an August sale of some of his holdings in Bed Bath & Beyond, the people said. Mr. Arnal was discussing with the company the possibility of taking a break, the people said. Company officials had calls about the topic before the Labor Day weekend and planned to pick up the discussions after the holiday, some of the people said. On the morning of Aug. 31, Ms. Gove, Mr. Arnal and other executives announced they had secured fresh financing and briefed investors on a major restructuring. Two days later, Mr. Arnal died from a fall at the 57-story New York City skyscraper where he lived with his wife, police said. The medical examiner de-

termined it was a suicide. His death and a shareholder lawsuit alleging wrongdoing at the company have become tabloid fodder. The company is investigating and reviewing Mr. Arnal's emails; company officials have seen no evidence of fraud or wrongdoing, some of the people said. The company has said the suit is meritless and staff are mourning the loss of their colleague. Mr. Arnal's family didn't respond to requests to comment. "I could see the stress on former chief executive of Avon Products, who had dinner with Mr. Arnal and his wife six weeks ago at a restaurant in Manhattan. Mr. Arnal was upbeat and animated throughout the meal, which stretched past 1 a.m., Mr. Zijderveld said. His friend **Please turn to page A10**

## Fed Sets Path for Another 0.75 Point Rate Rise

Ahead of Sept. 20-21 meeting, officials do little to dispel market's hardening expectation

By NICK TIMIRAS

The Federal Reserve appears to be on a path to raise interest rates by another 0.75 percentage point this month in the wake of Chairman Jerome Powell's public pledge to reduce inflation even if it increases unemployment.

Fed officials have done little to push back against market expectations of a third consecutive 0.75-point rate rise in recent public statements and interviews ahead of their Sept. 20-21 policy meeting. Investors in interest-rate futures markets saw a roughly 75% probability on Wednesday that the Fed will raise rates by another 0.75 point this month, according to CME Group.

Major U.S. stock indexes closed higher Wednesday, with the Nasdaq Composite ending a seven-session streak of declines. Oil prices fell to their lowest level since before Russia's invasion of Ukraine. U.S. Treasury yields also declined, with the benchmark 10-year yield closing at 3.264%, from 3.339% on Tuesday.

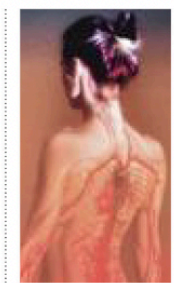
In a speech Aug. 26 in Wyoming, Mr. Powell underscored **Please turn to page A6**

- ◆ **Grip lo:** Dissecting a case for a soft landing..... **A2**
- ◆ **Fed's Barr** signals shift on bank mergers..... **A6**
- ◆ **Canada's** central bank boosts rates to 14-year high..... **A6**

## INSIDE



**BUSINESS & FINANCE**  
Apple's new lineup focuses on safety features. **B1**



**THE FUTURE OF EVERYTHING**  
In the Lab: Seeking new parts for the body. **R1-12**