The Washington Post

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Mostly sunny, chilly 48/33 • Tomorrow: Sunny 57/42 B8 *Democracy Dies in Darkness* FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2021 · $2

ANDRE CHUNG FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Pushing back in a former Klan town

A Black woman seeks justice over law enforcement's handling of a violent traffic stop in Maryland

BY REBECCA TAN

ELKTON, MD. — The windows to the sheriff's department were shuttered. But as Christine Givens paced back and forth outside, a mic in her hand, she knew there were deputies inside who could hear her.

"For weeks now, you've ignored us," she said, her voice clear and steady, cutting through the high winds lashing Cecil County. "We did the right thing by sending you a nice letter and an email and asking you to take a stance."

"But you chose," she said and stopped, turning to squint at the 347-year-old law enforcement agency behind her.

"You chose to be a coward."

On this frigid day in February, about five-dozen people— about half White, half people of color — had gathered outside the Cecil County Sheriff's Office. Residents coming in and out of the building ducked their heads and pretended not to see the crowd. Passing drivers slowed to gawk.

Like Givens, the protesters had seen the video of a Black motorist and three White

Christine Givens leads a February protest in Elkton, Md., over the July incident involving a young African American motorist. Her actions have roiled majority-White Cecil County.

SEE CECIL COUNTY ON A8

Battle lines form over business tax

PROPOSED HIKE A NONSTARTER FOR GOP

Fight threatens a swift deal on infrastructure

BY TONY ROMM

President Biden's plan to raise corporate taxes to finance $2 trillion in federal infrastructure spending has touched off a new battle in Washington, where Democrats and Republicans — and powerful business lobbyists — already are clashing over who should foot the bill.

The early squabbling threatens to undermine the once-rosy prospects for a swift deal on upgrades to the country's roads, bridges, pipes and sewer systems, a goal many policymakers and boardroom executives long have said they share — even if they still can't agree on how exactly to pay for it.

The schisms center on the White House's decision to try to raise rates on major U.S. corporations and unwind some of the core tax cuts adopted under President Donald Trump in 2017, in keeping with Democrats' campaign promises in the past election. The 2017 tax cuts lowered the corporate rate from 35 percent to 21 percent. Biden has proposed raising it to 28 percent. The White House also seeks other tax increases and policy tweaks to ensure companies do not dodge their bills domestically by shifting their profits around abroad.

Democratic lawmakers heralded the White House for delivering on these commitments as part of Biden's new infrastructure plan, arguing that corporations can afford to pay more each year. But Republicans decried Biden's proposal as a nonstarter that threatened to sully negotiations even before talks can truly begin.

SEE BIDEN ON A[illegible]

'Racist highway': Plan addresses harm to communities of color. A16

Military scrambles to hold edge over China

U.S. flying aging planes as Beijing works on hypersonics and AI

BY MISSY RYAN

EVERETT, WASH. — As they conduct bombing and surveillance missions around the globe, today's U.S. military pilots rely on aerial refueling aircraft built as early as 1957, when the Soviet Union dominated American security fears, the average home cost $12,000 and "I Love Lucy" was debuting new episodes.

The cost of keeping those aging jets in the air has grown sharply while the military awaits a next-generation refueling plane whose rollout has been repeatedly delayed by design and production issues.

The Air Force's two-decade effort to field a 21st-century tanker, one of several premier air systems whose development has been beset with problems, is emblematic of the challenges Pentagon leaders face in seeking to maintain the U.S. military's shrinking edge over its chief competitor, China.

The United States, once the world's undisputed military superpower, has been struggling for years to efficiently update its arsenal and field new technology in cutting-edge areas such as hypersonics and artificial intelligence, at a time when some senior officials warn that China could be within five years of surpassing the U.S. military.

Experts point to myriad problems with the U.S. system, including a slow, calcified budgeting process, unwieldy congressional

SEE MILITARY ON A12

Chauvin exceeded justified force, ex-boss testifies

BY HOLLY BAILEY AND HANNAH KNOWLES

MINNEAPOLIS — Derek Chauvin should not have knelt on George Floyd's neck after he stopped resisting, a former supervisor testified Thursday.

Chauvin also did not immediately tell the supervisor that he had knelt on Floyd's neck while restraining him during a police investigation — waiting more than 30 minutes until he stood outside the hospital emergency room where Floyd remained unresponsive to disclose the information.

David Pleoger, who was a supervisor in the city's 3rd Precinct on May 25, 2020, testified that he called Chauvin after getting a call from a concerned 911 dispatcher who was watching a city security camera and saw police holding Floyd on the ground.

"She called to say she didn't mean to be a snitch, but she'd seen something while viewing a camera that she thought was concerning," said Pleoger, a retired sergeant.

In a phone conversation partially captured by Chauvin's body-worn camera, the officer is heard telling Pleoger that the officers "just had to hold the guy down."

"He was going crazy … wouldn't go back in the squad," Chauvin said just before he shut off his body camera.

Pleoger testified that he told Chauvin to turn off his camera — which is allowed for a private conversation — and that the call continued, with Chauvin saying Floyd was "combative."

SEE CHAUVIN ON A8

Plant that ruined J&J vaccine had previous FDA violations

BY JON SWAINE AND CHRISTOPHER ROWLAND

In April last year, an investigator from the Food and Drug Administration reported problems he had discovered at a Baltimore plant operated by Emergent BioSolutions, a major supplier of vaccines to the federal government.

Some employees had not been properly trained. Records were not adequately secured. Established testing procedures were not being followed. And a measure intended to "prevent contamination or mix-ups" was found to be deficient.

Soon after the inspection, Emergent's Baltimore plant was given an important role in Operation Warp Speed, the government's program to rapidly produce vaccines to fight the coronavirus pandemic. Emergent was awarded $628 million by the government and also secured deals totaling more than $740 million with Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca to produce coronavirus vaccines for both companies at the Baltimore site.

It emerged on Wednesday that a batch of Johnson & Johnson vaccine was recently contaminated with AstraZeneca ingredients at the Emergent plant, as two federal officials described the problem, a mix-up that spoiled enough raw vaccine for up to 15 million doses.

The FDA report was dated April 20, less than six weeks before Emergent's Warp Speed award

SEE VACCINE ON A4

Before they can open, Nationals are shut down

Baseball hopes to return to normal, but covid postponement shows how fragile season may be

JONATHAN NEWTON/THE WASHINGTON POST

The gates at Nationals Park are closed Thursday. "It was kind of like a dagger in that you were so pumped up to see the Opening Day game and be back in the ballpark," fan Nettie Stewart said.

BY CHELSEA JANES AND ADAM KILGORE

Cast as another milestone for a nation inching toward the pandemic's end, Major League Baseball's Opening Day instead provided an unnerving reminder of the coronavirus's durability Thursday. Three Washington Nationals players tested positive on the eve of their opener, with another player's test still in question but probably positive, postponing a prime-time game against the New York Mets that had been slated for national television.

Across the country, red, white and blue bunting hung in chilly ballparks and over sun-dappled fields, many of them hosting fans for the first time in more than a year. Few days can muster more national optimism. In the nation's capital, though, a scuttled game suggested the return of baseball may not herald a triumphant march to normalcy as much as an awkward stumble.

"It's still here," Nationals Manager Dave Martinez said. "As I said in spring training, we're still in the midst of a pandemic, and people need to still take this seriously. They really do. Unfortunately, it hit us, and we got to take care of our own now. All I can say is: Be

SEE OPENING DAY ON A18

Barry Svrluga: MLB is reminded again that virus has final say. D1

IN THE NEWS

AMANDA VOISARD FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Bittersweet reunions Families visited nursing home residents in person in Maryland and Virginia for the first time in months. B1

California shooting Police said a man who killed four at an office park had a "personal or business relationship" with the victims. A3

THE NATION

In cases of school shootings that were averted, most plotters discussed their plans in advance, a Secret Service analysis found. A2

The Supreme Court sided with Facebook on unwanted text messages and dismissed Florida's long-running complaint against Georgia over the oyster industry. A2

The New York attorney general is scrutinizing the personal finances of a longtime aide to former president Donald Trump as part of her investigation into the Trump Organization. A4

President Biden said he would support players who want to move Major League Baseball's All-Star Game from Georgia over new voting rules. A6

A video of two toddlers being dropped from a border barrier is a reminder of the many dangers migrant children face. A18

THE WORLD

Seven prominent pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong were convicted of unlawful assembly at a 2019 protest during anti-government demonstrations. A10

A Venezuelan military offensive has sent thousands fleeing into Colombia, recharging one of the world's worst refugee crises. A11

Vaccine doses are trickling into the world's poorest nations, but many face acute shortages of health workers to administer them. A12

THE ECONOMY

Travis View, co-host of the "QAnon Anonymous" podcast, publicly revealed that his real name is Logan Strain, creating a dilemma for news organizations. A14

A loophole exempting food delivery apps from displaying calorie counts is contributing to pandemic weight gain, advocacy groups say. A15

THE REGION

Charlottesville may remove a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, the Virginia Supreme Court ruled in a decision that appears to apply to localities statewide. B1

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam (D) said the state will expand vaccine eligibility to those 16 and over starting April 18. B1

A commission seeking to overhaul policing in D.C. is calling for sweeping changes that could affect a broad swath of city government. B1

Northam acted on 522 pieces of legislation ahead of a key deadline, including backing a voting rights bill and one on school reopenings. B1

INSIDE

WEEKEND

Greener pastures
At 446 acres, the National Arboretum offers a bevy of spaces and sights to explore.

STYLE

Suiting up
It's tempting to cheer as Fox News is sued, writes Margaret Sullivan, but there's a downside for other news sources. C1

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