

# Files give fresh look at Epstein cell death

Nothing so far challenges widely contested ruling that he hanged himself

BY DEREK HAWKINS

Among the tens of thousands of Jeffrey Epstein files released so far by the Justice Department are documents that provide new details on one of the most discussed aspects of the case — his death in federal custody in 2019.

Epstein, who was indicted in July 2019 on federal sex-trafficking charges, had been locked up in the now-closed Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York for five weeks when, on Aug. 10, at roughly 6:30 a.m., he was found dead in his cell.

He had been denied bail and, at age 66, was facing a potential 45-year sentence if convicted on all charges. The day before his death, federal judges in a separate civil lawsuit had unsealed 2,000 pages of records containing allegations of his sexual abuse of girls and young women.

Six days after his death, New York City's chief medical examiner, Barbara Sampson, whose office had conducted an autopsy of Epstein's body, issued a finding that he had hanged himself.

Ever since, a wide range of people, including members of Congress and some prominent supporters of President Donald Trump, have challenged that conclusion, asserting with no evidence that Epstein was killed and proffering theories about who might have done it.

The documents released so far provide no support for those theories. They do offer additional evidence for the conclusion reached

SEE EPSTEIN ON A7

In the grim shadows of war, the glow of hope



ROMAN PILIPEY/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A woman lights a candle on Christmas at St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv during an airstrike alarm. Hundreds of miles to the east, an old Ukrainian song that Americans know as "Carol of the Bells" was being adapted for just three voices after war displaced the 30-member choir that used to sing it. **Story, A11**

# Pope focuses on global crises in Christmas speech

BY MAHAM JAVAID

In his first Christmas Day address, Pope Leo XIV highlighted conditions in Gaza, saying its inhabitants "have nothing left and have lost everything," as he called for peace talks to end conflicts around the world.

The pope, speaking from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica on Thursday, urged his audience to pray for the leaders of Ukraine and Russia to find the "courage"

Leo calls for peace talks, solidarity with 'the weak and the oppressed'

to engage in direct talks to end the war. His plea comes at a time when the Trump administration has been trying to negotiate a peace deal.

During the Urbi et Orbi ad-

dress — Latin for "To the City and to the World" — Leo, like his predecessor, Pope Francis, spoke about the plights of refugees, those fleeing climate disasters, and victims of religious persecution and terrorism.

He called for "justice, peace and stability for Lebanon, Palestine, Israel and Syria," as well as for all the victims of ongoing conflicts, and he urged his listeners to take responsibility for the state of the world.

"If all of us, at every level, would stop accusing others and instead acknowledge our own faults ... and stand in solidarity with the weak and the oppressed, then the world would change," he said.

The pope highlighted multiple crises during his address, mentioning that he wants to pay particular attention to "forgotten" conflicts, naming those in Sudan, South Sudan, Mali, Burkina Faso and the Democratic

SEE POPE ON A12

# Carney's spelling vs. Canadian identity

Linguists ask prime minister to stop writing with a British accent

BY AMANDA COLETTA

TORONTO — Since taking office in March, Prime Minister Mark Carney has announced new policies on trade, foreign affairs and energy that he has cast as necessary for bolstering Canada's economic resilience amid President Donald Trump's assault on the historically close U.S.-Canadian relationship.

But among linguists and editors here, a different Carney shift is drawing attention: his spelling.

From his earliest days as prime minister, a raft of official government publications — including his mandate letter to the cabinet, social media posts, statements about meetings with world leaders and 493-page budget — are full of words rendered in British, not Canadian, English.

Most prominent has been his predilection for the British "ise" and "yse" endings over the Canadian (and American) "ize" and

SEE CANADA ON A15



SCOTT TAETSCH/GETTY IMAGES

Giving it a good run

Jacory Croskey-Merritt blows by Sam Williams on a carry in the second quarter. The running back finished with 105 yards on the ground, but the Commanders fell to the Cowboys, 30-23. **Story, B7**

# Restaurant's staff saves regular customer after he stopped showing up

BY MAGGIE PENMAN

Chef Donell Stallworth remembers when he first noticed Charlie Hicks almost a decade ago.

The Air Force veteran would come every day to the Shrimp Basket in Pensacola, Florida, where Stallworth runs the kitch-

en. Hicks, who had just retired from a second career as an accountant, would always order a cup of gumbo for lunch and watch baseball on the restaurant's TV.

Stallworth started sitting with Hicks when the kitchen wasn't too busy. The two men would talk about baseball — Hicks loves the

Yankees, Stallworth is a Dodgers fan.

"When baseball was over, we had no more sports he liked so we just started talking about everything else," Stallworth said. "He grew on me, and I grew on him."

One day in early September, Hicks, 78, didn't show up for lunch as usual. One of the manag-

ers, Denise Galloway, had Hicks's number in case of an emergency. She called Hicks and learned that he was sick, so she asked him where he lived and offered to bring him gumbo. Hicks asked her to leave it outside his door because he didn't want to get her sick.

A couple of days went by and

portion of the country bordering Niger, and has become a hot spot for a resurgence in violent extremism and the kidnapping of schoolchildren.

"MERRY CHRISTMAS to all, including the dead Terrorists, of which there will be many more if their slaughter of Christians continues," Trump posted to social media.

The Pentagon said the Nigerian government approved the strikes and worked with the U.S. to carry them out. No further details on how the strikes were conducted were immediately available.

A spokesperson for the Nigerian foreign ministry confirmed the U.S. strike Thursday evening, saying that "precision hits on terrorist targets in Nigeria by air strikes" had been carried out in response to the "persistent threat of terrorism and violent extremism."

"Terrorist violence of any form,

SEE NIGERIA ON A15

## IN THE NEWS

**'No peace'** After the Border Patrol arrived in Louisiana, a couple and their five children went into hiding. That meant less food, few outings and no lights on the tree. A4

**Citizenship dispute** A 22-year-old woman is facing deportation despite her lawyer's insistence that she was born in Maryland. B13

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**The pit viper** Gary from "Zootopia 2" is charming China in the Year of the Snake. A15

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### Two people

charged in the theft of nearly \$40,000 in wine from a high-end cellar in Virginia are suspected in similar heists across the U.S. and Europe. B13

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