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The Washington Post

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Some sun 26/12 • Tomorrow: Variably cloudy 32/20 **B20**

Democracy Dies in Darkness

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2026 • \$6

‘This would be the best comeback’



LISI NIESNER/REUTERS

Lindsey Vonn of the United States trains Saturday in Belluno, Italy. Vonn is competing at age 41 with a titanium replacement in her knee, and now a ruptured ACL, after nearly six years of retirement. She races Sunday. In Milan, officers deployed water cannons as demonstrations turned violent. **Story, A12, and Olympics coverage, B1**

Trump on posting video of Obamas as apes: ‘I didn’t make a mistake’

BY NATALIE ALLISON

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE — President Donald Trump declined to apologize for sharing a social media video that depicted Barack and Michelle Obama as apes, saying he did not realize the image of the former president and first lady was tacked on to the end of the clip.

The president said Friday that

he had watched and passed along the video — which focused on claims of voter fraud until the final seconds of the clip — to unidentified “people” to post to his Truth Social account, but that he “didn’t see the whole thing,” including the brief portion that showed the heads of the Obamas edited onto the bodies of apes.

In response to a question from The Washington Post about

whether he would heed the calls of some Republicans to apologize for posting the video, which was widely condemned as racist and offensive, Trump said he would not.

“No, I didn’t make a mistake,” Trump said on his way to Palm Beach, Florida, for the weekend. “I look at a lot of — thousands of things. And I looked at the beginning of it. It was fine.”

Trump referred to the controversial video, which was online for about 12 hours before being deleted, as “a very strong post in terms of voter fraud.”

The video was posted late Thursday night. On Friday morning, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt defended the post, decrying the “fake outrage” and saying the ape image was

SEE TRUMP ON A15

An unsolved 1971 homicide leads to a surprise DNA link

A detective stumbles onto ‘case within a case’ involving siblings separated for 62 years

BY PAUL DUGGAN

On a July afternoon in 1971, two boys riding a minibike in the Maryland countryside came upon a half-naked woman lying injured in a field.

She was unconscious and had trouble breathing. Her hair and fingernails were dirty, perhaps from crawling, and her sunburn indicated she’d been there for hours. She wore only a blouse and bra. Her underwear and slip were in weeds nearby but the rest of her clothes were missing. Howard County police found no handbag, no wallet, nothing with her name, and in the miles of farmland surrounding the field, they could find no witnesses.

The woman was rushed to a hospital, where doctors noticed bruises darkening across her abdomen, apparently from a beating. She also had suffered a stroke. A blood clot lodged in her right carotid artery had starved her brain of oxygen.

She would linger in a coma for 54 days before dying, her identity an enduring mystery.

In 2024, a Howard County cold-case detective, Wade Zufall, took a fresh look at the old homicide, hoping DNA analysis and forensic genealogy would reveal the woman’s name and lead him to a suspect.

Zufall soon figured out who she was. And in the process, he

SEE CASE ON A9



ILLUSTRATION BY ANNA LEFKOWITZ/THE WASHINGTON POST; PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHARLES AND MILDRED SHARKEY; HOWARD COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT; CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER

Bad Bunny’s show may tell a story about a cultural divide

As millions await his Super Bowl performance, others pan his politics

BY DAVID NAKAMURA, ARELIS R. HERNÁNDEZ AND MARIANA ALFARO

Puerto Rican native Ray Sanchez generally supports President Donald Trump and his MAGA movement. But at a Super Bowl party Sunday, the 60-year-old auto industry consultant will be rooting for the latest target of their culture war: Bad Bunny, the superstar headlining the halftime show.

Sanchez called his fellow Puerto Rican’s chance to showcase Latin music on the NFL’s biggest

stage an extraordinary triumph for a U.S. territory whose people have struggled to win the same rights as other American citizens. Never mind that some conservatives are boycotting the performance over his outspoken politics and criticism of Trump’s hard-line immigration agenda.

“Being against Bad Bunny is absurd,” said Sanchez, who expects hundreds to attend the party in San Juan, Puerto Rico’s capital. “There is no one in music who has gone as far as he has in promoting our culture.”

The halftime show in Santa Clara, California, before a global television audience expected to top 100 million, is an opportunity for the 31-year-old artist, whose real name is Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, to go even further. Across the country, Latino fans say

SEE SUPER BOWL ON A5

BUSINESS

New York’s landlords say they won’t survive Mamdani’s rent plan. **B8**

ARTS & STYLE

At 91, sculptor Joan Danziger reflects on her strange menagerie.

TRAVEL

The only ski area in Rhode Island faces a dire threat: No snow.

BOOK WORLD

Bad Bunny conquered the world, but he wants to save Puerto Rico.

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