



Jerjuan Newton

Brotherly battle
Newton to face sibling at Illinois

SPORTS C1



Master works
Crafting wooden 'jewels'

PEACH D1

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FINAL

OHIO'S SPACE TRAVEL INVOLVEMENT

Kaptur among 3 to tour facilities within the state

Tours include NASA Glenn campuses

By **TOM HENRY**
BLADE STAFF WRITER

SANDUSKY — U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D., Toledo), U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D., Ohio), and U.S. Rep. Max Miller (R., Cleveland) are spending two days learning more about Ohio's involvement in the new era of space travel.

Their visit includes Tuesday and Wednesday tours of the NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland. That center is one of 10 field centers the space agency has across the country, and is the only one in the Midwest.

NASA Glenn's satellite campus near Sandusky, the Neil Armstrong Testing Facility, is where Ms. Kaptur began her day on Tuesday morning.

Formerly known as NASA's

Plum Brook Station, it was renamed in honor of Mr. Armstrong two years ago this month.

NASA has for decades been "unlocking the mysteries of science to make the future better for all of us," Ms. Kaptur said.

"We know more what's happening to people and to the planet because of NASA's existence," she said.

The visit is a follow-up to one Mr. Brown made to the Cleveland facility in January, when NASA Administrator Bill Nelson and NASA Deputy Administrator Pam Melroy accompanied him.

Ms. Melroy has returned for the latest tours Ms. Kaptur and

See **NASA**, Page A5



THE BLADE/ISAAC RITCHEY

Rep. Marcy Kaptur visits the in-space propulsion facility at the Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility and NASA Glenn Research Center in Sandusky.

PRICE TALKS ON WIDELY USED PRESCRIPTIONS

10 drugs targeted for Medicare negotiations

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Biden touted the potential cost savings of Medicare's first-ever price negotiations for widely used prescription drugs on Tuesday as he struggles to convince Americans that he's improved their lives as he runs for re-election.

The drugs include the blood thinner Eliquis, diabetes treatment Jardiance, and eight other medications. The negotiation process was authorized under the Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden signed last

year, capping decades of debate over whether the federal government should be allowed to haggle with pharmaceutical companies.

Any lower prices won't take effect for three years, and the path forward could be further complicated by litigation from drug-makers and heavy criticism from Republicans.

But the effort is a centerpiece of Mr. Biden's re-election pitch as the Democrat tries to show Americans he's

See **MEDICARE**, Page A4

Hurricane Idalia chases Floridians from the Gulf



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Drivers pass a sign indicating that Tampa International Airport is closed on Tuesday as the state prepares for Hurricane Idalia. Florida residents in vulnerable coastal areas were ordered to pack up and leave as the hurricane gained steam.

State officials have 1 word for residents: 'Leave'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CEDAR KEY, Fla. — Florida residents living in vulnerable coastal areas were ordered to pack up and leave Tuesday as Hurricane Idalia gained steam in the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico and threatened to unleash life-threatening storm surges and rainfall.

Idalia also pummeled Cuba with heavy rains on Monday and Tuesday, leaving the tobacco-growing province of Pinar del Rio underwater and many of its residents without power.

Idalia had strengthened to a Category 2 system on Tuesday afternoon, with winds strengthening to 105 mph by Tuesday evening. The hurricane was projected to come ashore early Wednesday as a Category 4 system with sustained winds of up to 130 mph



ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION

Tybee Island resident Timmy Sheehan boards up his house on Tybee Island, Ga., ahead of Hurricane Idalia as it chugs toward land. It is expected to hit early Wednesday.

in the lightly populated Big Bend region, where the Florida Panhandle curves into the peninsula. The result could be

a big blow to a state still dealing with lingering damage from last year's Hurricane Ian. The National Weather Ser-

vice in Tallahassee called Idalia "an unprecedented event" since no major hurricanes on record have ever passed through the bay abutting the Big Bend.

On the island of Cedar Key, Commissioner Sue Colson joined other city officials in packing up documents and electronics at City Hall. She had a message for the almost 900 residents who were under mandatory orders to evacuate. More than a dozen state troopers went door to door warning residents that storm surge could rise as high as 15 feet.

"One word: Leave," Ms. Colson said. "It's not something to discuss."

Gov. Ron DeSantis repeated the warning at an afternoon

See **IDALIA**, Page A3

INSIDE

Weather

HI 71° LO 48°

Page D6

U-Haul in Rossford

U-Haul will build its 91st store in Rossford. The large facility will be on 5 acres near Sportsman's Drive and I-75.

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Trash deal

Lucas County OKs a contract extension for refuse services for Monclova Township.

Second News | Page B1

Buckeyes pick QB

Kyle McCord is named Ohio State's starting quarterback.

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'Rich Men'

Oliver Anthony says his hit song is not a Republican anthem.

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A RITE OF PASSAGE



THE BLADE/KURT STEISS

Anna Hurning, a cookbook author and YouTube host, holds up a hot dog bun after signing it at Packo's at the Park in Toledo on Tuesday. Mrs. Hurning held a book signing and a meet-and-greet for her recently released Polish cookbook, 'Polish Your Kitchen, A Book of Memories, Easter Edition.' SEE STORY, PHOTOS ON B1.

WAGNER CHIEF DEATH

Prigozhin is buried in hometown

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — A private burial was held for Yevgeny Prigozhin, ending a tumultuous journey from St.

Petersburg street thug to Kremlin-financed mercenary leader, following a suspicious plane crash two months after his brief mutiny that challenged the authority of President Vladimir Putin.

His spokesman said Tuesday a service took place behind closed doors, and directed

See **PRIGOZHIN**, Page A4

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NASA

Continued from Page A1

Mr. Brown are getting. A retired Air Force colonel and NASA astronaut, Ms. Melroy is one of only two women to command a space shuttle mission. "Ohio is a gem for us," she said. "It has a powerful technology and economic impact on the area." NASA Glenn was named after John Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth. He went on to a lengthy career as a U.S. senator.

Mr. Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon. Both were from Ohio. So was inventor Thomas Edison, who was born in Milan, Ohio, only about a 10-minute drive from where people were standing on Tuesday.

NASA's most famous non-astronaut, Apollo-era mission control director Eugene Kranz, grew up in Toledo. The Wright Brothers grew up in Dayton.

Yet, for all of Ohio's connections to aviation and electricity, it still fights an uphill battle in Congress, Ms. Kaptur said.

"If you look at the Congress and the way that it's composed, we here in Ohio have 15 congressional seats," she said.

California has 52 and "it's very hard to compete in the Congress for attention when you don't come from the biggest place," Ms. Kaptur said.

The two facilities under the NASA Glenn banner are "crown jewels" for the space agency because of their roles in electricity and propulsion research, among other things, Ms. Melroy said.

Ms. Kaptur and Mr. Brown are learning more about them, including plans for a new NASA Electric Aircraft Testbed building, called NEAT for short, that the space agency is building on the Sandusky campus. It is expected to be completed and operational in October, 2025, a NASA spokesman, Jimi Russell, said.

It is being built to demonstrate next-generation electric aircraft.



Deputy administrator Pam Melroy, left, Director James A. Kenyon, and Rep. Marcy Kaptur speak with press while visiting the in space propulsion facility Tuesday in Sandusky.

THE BLADE/ISAAC RITCHEY



THE BLADE/ISAAC RITCHEY

A sign greets guests at the Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility and NASA Glenn Research Center on Tuesday in Sandusky. The tour with Ms. Kaptur had a stop in a building at the facility.

fied aircraft.

The Sandusky site already is home to one of the world's most powerful decibel chambers, which is used to study noise stress placed upon metal during liftoff. Decibels produced there are powerful enough to liquefy human organs.

The two Ohio facilities are "home to some of the most powerful space simulation test environments in the world,"

NASA Glenn Director James Kenyon said.

The morning tour with Ms. Kaptur included a stop inside a building at the Neil Armstrong Test Facility that measures spacecraft's thrust capabilities.

"Once you get outside of Earth's atmosphere, they have to work," Mr. Kenyon said of spacecraft thrusters. "This is the only place you can test them at full scale. When you think about our ambitious

agenda — our big vision to go to the moon and then onward to Mars — this capability's going to be vital to that."

NASA had a successful, month-long Artemis 1 mission in the fall of 2022.

It was unmanned. The next Artemis mission will include four astronauts, marking the first time humans are sent back to the moon since 1972.

The goal of Artemis is not only a return trip to the moon, but also establishing a sustained presence there.

The space agency wants to explore the mysterious dark side of the moon, as well as areas in its southern hemisphere, where water has been discovered. The hope is that the moon's water can be harnessed to make hydrogen as a fuel for eventual Mars missions, tentatively planned for the late 2030s, and that the moon can be used as an outpost.

"It's an exciting, exciting future that's ahead," Mr. Kenyon said.

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New coronavirus form could beat body's immunity

Scientists: Variant bears scrutiny

WASHINGTON POST

ATLANTA — A highly mutated form of the coronavirus that threatens to be the most adept yet at slipping past the body's immune defenses is capturing the attention of virologists and health officials.

While only about a dozen cases of the new BA.2.86 variant have been reported worldwide — including three in the United States — experts say this variant requires intense monitoring and vigilance that many of its predecessors did not.

It has even greater potential to escape the antibodies that protect people from getting sick, even if you've recently been infected or vaccinated.

The latest variant does not appear to make people sicker than earlier iterations of the virus; antiviral treatments should still work against it and tests should still detect it, according to a risk assessment by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

It's too soon to know whether the updated booster formula expected to come out next month that targets a different subvariant would be effective against this highly mutated one.

If this feels like déjà vu, it should.

After igniting a global explosion of cases in the winter of 2021-2022, the highly contagious omicron variant spawned a slew of immune-evading descendants.

Most fade into irrelevance. Others, such as the XBB lineage accounting for most U.S. cases this year, outcompete the rest with their transmissibility and ability to infect — and re-infect.

Nearly every announcement of a new variant came with reassurance from public health officials that it did not cause more severe illness.

But BA.2.86 stands out in the omicron family tree because of how much it has morphed. It has more than 30 mutations on its spike protein, the part of the virus that pierces through the cell and that vaccines train the body to fend off.

Experts believe the antibodies forged through battles with earlier variants will have a difficult time recognizing this new foe. "This is a radical change of the virus like what happened with omicron, which caught a lot of people defenseless," said Eric Topol, director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute. "Even if they had a vaccine or prior infection, it could still get into them and infect them again or for the first time. We are facing that again."

The biggest unknown is whether the BA.2.86 will be transmissible enough to cause a surge. A variant adept

at evading immunity would not take off in a population if it does not spread efficiently and multiply.

Officials say they should have a clearer understanding of the variant's transmissibility within weeks as surveillance ramps up in response to the threat.

On Aug. 12, virologists in Israel were the first to announce that BA.2.86 had been detected in a patient.

Scientists in Denmark, Britain, South Africa, Switzerland, and Thailand soon followed. Some of the samples were collected in late July. The sporadic reports add up to evidence of international transmission, but the magnitude is unclear.

In one Swiss town, roughly 2 percent of coronavirus particles sequenced in a wastewater sample taken in early August were BA.2.86 variants. That was the first sign of a variant spreading within a community.

"Finding BA.2.86 in yet an additional country — now in wastewater rather than a patient — is another piece of evidence that BA.2.86 is globally widespread by now," said Tanja Stadler, a professor at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology who announced the findings. "It is still too early to tell if this variant will cause a major wave."

The United States is experiencing an uptick of cases believed to be driven primarily by XBB and the new EG.5 variant, but several BA.2.86 cases have been announced in the past week.

One of the BA.2.86 cases was discovered in Michigan in an older adult with less severe symptoms, while another was detected in a traveler arriving at Dulles International Airport in Virginia.

A third case was detected in an Ohio wastewater sample.

Areas where the BA.2.86 variant have been detected have not reported disproportionate increases in hospitalizations, the CDC said, suggesting it's not more likely to cause more severe illness than other omicron subvariants.

When omicron struck, a huge swath of the country lacked immunity because they never had coronavirus or had not been vaccinated — but that's no longer the case.

"Nearly all the U.S. population has antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 from vaccination, previous infection, or both, and it is probable that these antibodies will continue to provide some protection against severe disease from this variant," the CDC said in its recent risk assessment of BA.2.86. "This is an area of ongoing scientific investigation."

Maine's puffins recovering in the face of climate change

ASSOCIATED PRESS

EASTERN EGG ROCK, Maine — On remote islands off the Maine coast, a unique bird held its own this year in the face of climate change.

Atlantic puffins — clownish seabirds with colorful bills and waddling gaits — had their second consecutive rebound year for fledging chicks after suffering a catastrophic 2021, said scientists who monitor the birds. The news flies in the face of environmental trends, as scientists have said warming waters off New England jeopardize the birds because that reduces the kind of fish they need to feed their chicks.

One fish, though — the sand lance — has remained in abundance this year, allowing puffins to thrive, said Don Lyons, director of conservation science at National Audubon Society's Seabird Institute in Bremen, Maine. He said it's a sign the impact of climate change on ecosystems is not always as tidy as we think.

The encouraging news comes as the Audubon Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary



ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Atlantic puffin brings a beak full of baitfish to feed its chick in a burrow under rocks on Eastern Egg Rock, a small island off mid-coast Maine Sunday.

sary of tending to Maine's puffin colonies, which it restored from just a few dozen pairs. There are now as many as 3,000 birds, and the population is stable, Mr. Lyons said.

The puffins — also known as "clowns of the sea" or "sea parrots" — nest in burrows and feed their chicks small fish such as herring. Two years ago, the colonies suffered one of

their worst years for reproduction in decades due to a lack of those fish. Only about a quarter of the birds were able to raise chicks that summer.

Audubon and other conservation groups have tied the fish shortage to warming ocean temperatures. The Gulf of Maine, which has puffin colonies on its islands, is warming faster than most of the world's

oceans.

About two-thirds of the puffins fledged chicks last year, Mr. Lyons said. The birds did not equal that number this year, he said, but they again had a better year than 2021, despite a less than ideal summer of hot, rainy conditions.

The puffins' ability to reproduce despite environmental changes speaks to the resiliency of seabirds, said Bill Sydeman, president and chief scientist of the Farallon Institute. However, the long-term dangers posed by climate change remain existential threats to puffins and many other seabirds, he said.

The challenges faced by seabirds make successful breeding seasons especially important, said P. Dee Boersma, a University of Washington professor of biology.

"What that means is we should be more cautious and concerned about reproductive failures and things like that to make sure that in good years everyone that wants to has a chance to breed, and do well," said Ms. Boersma.

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