THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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Alberta shutters trucking firm tied to deadly Manitoba crash

Carrier accused of changing provinces to avoid enforcement after having safety certificate revoked

SARA MOJTEHEDZADEH

The Alberta government has shuttered a trucking company linked to a recent fatal collision in Manitoba after an investigation found violations, including deliberate and prolonged regulatory non-compliance.

Conquer Transportation set up in Alberta in late 2021; an associated company had its safety credentials revoked in Manitoba earlier that year, regulators have said.

Alberta took action against Conquer Transportation after one of the company's trucks was involved in a deadly crash in Brandon in May, Transport Minister Devin Dreeshen said in a Thursday statement.

Police have said the truck failed to stop at a stop sign, colliding with an SUV at "highway speeds" and killing a 49-year-old woman who was its sole occupant.

Manitoba authorities have said they previously decertified a related company, Conquer Transport, over chronic safety issues. The province subsequently accused the company of setting up in Alberta under a slightly different name.

A probe launched by Alberta regulators in June concluded that Conquer Transportation engaged in "willful and sustained non-compliance," according to the minister's Thursday statement.

Investigators also identified "chameleon practices" at the company – referring to carriers who move jurisdictions or change names to evade enforcement.

After the investigation, Alberta downgraded the company's safety rating to unsatisfactory, "effectively shutting down its operations immediately," the Thursday statement said. The company was penalized $16,500 for unspecified infractions.

In an interview with The Globe and Mail, Mr. Dreeshen said his ministry was committed to putting "boots on the ground" to ensure adequate safety enforcement.

"We have been cracking down, but I still think there's more to go for sure," he said.

Mr. Dreeshen did not describe the infractions uncovered at Conquer Transportation, but said inspectors identified "abnormalities" in how the carrier was operating.

Conquer Transportation did not respond to requests for comment.

A Globe investigation published earlier this year found that poor information sharing and weak penalties are undermining enforcement efforts in the trucking sector.

In June, The Globe revealed that Conquer Transport was granted permission by the federal government on three occasions to hire temporary foreign workers, after its safety fitness certificate was revoked by Manitoba regulators in 2021.

▪ TRUCKING, A15

Toronto police charge two in last month's U.S. consulate shooting

MATTHEW FRANK

Two teenagers have been arrested and charged in last week's shooting of the U.S. consulate building in Toronto, the second instance of gunfire at the diplomatic office in recent months and another case police have linked to what they call gun-for-hire networks.

Police allege the two accused drove a stolen white Honda Accord with no licence plates past the U.S. consulate just before 5 a.m. on July 27 and fired at the building, damaging the facade but causing no reported injuries.

Surveillance footage played during a news conference Thursday showed someone fired twice from the vehicle. Only one bullet struck the diplomatic office, police said.

The incident fit a similar "modus operandi" to a previous U.S. consulate shooting earlier this year, Toronto Police Chief Myron Demkiw said Thursday.

He alleged the accused were recruited into a gun-for-hire network – what police say is a loosely affiliated group of individuals who will shoot at buildings and businesses in exchange for payment.

Police allege that such a group was also responsible for the March shooting at the same building. Investigators traced that shooting to suspects who resided in a west-end Toronto apartment building. When police conducted raids there on the morning of June 11, an officer, Constable Marc Pinizzotto, was shot and killed.

At Thursday's news conference, police said the accused in both the March and July attacks communicated and were offered payment through encrypted messaging apps. Police know of multiple criminal networks hiring gunmen operating in Toronto, said Chief Superintendent Joe Matthews of detective operations.

Chief Demkiw acknowledged there is significant public interest in learning more about who is hiring these young men. He did not disclose any details about whom police suspect, but said it is a "key focus" of the investigation.

Police previously said the networks use apps, such as WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal, and shooters must record the attacks to receive payment.

▪ CONSULATE, A15

After facing China's 'transnational repression,' activist vows to carry on her cause in Canada

Zhang Xinyan, seen on Wednesday, was one of 15 people elected last year to the Toronto-based dissident 'Hong Kong Parliament' of exiled, pro-democracy Hong Kongers – prompting a $36,000 bounty on her head. JIMMY JEONG/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

ANDREA WOO VANCOUVER

A Chinese activist who was living in Thailand and detained there for three months, after facing persecution for years by China's Communist Party, says she plans to keep speaking out in Canada to draw international attention to what she says are the regime's efforts to silence dissidents abroad.

Zhang Xinyan, 55, arrived in Vancouver on Monday after a co-ordinated effort from Ottawa, the United Nations refugee agency, Thai lawmakers and international human-rights groups. She recounted her experience in a lengthy Cantonese-language interview with The Globe and Mail on Wednesday.

"My story is an example of CCP persecution – of transnational repression," she said. "If we don't draw international attention to it, it's saying that the CCP can do whatever it wants."

Ms. Zhang, a long-time practitioner of the controversial spiritual movement Falun Gong, said she fled to Thailand in 2014 to evade persecution from China, where it is banned and heavily suppressed.

Two years later, she was recognized as a refugee by the UN Refugee Agency.

Ms. Zhang was also among 15 people elected last year to the Toronto-based dissident "Hong Kong Parliament," a group comprising exiled, pro-democracy Hong Kongers, prompting authorities in the Chinese territory to place a $36,000 bounty on her head for subversion.

China's embassy in Ottawa did not respond to a request for comment Thursday.

Sheng Xue, a Toronto-based activist, said Ms. Zhang's last-minute detention raised concerns about Beijing's "long-arm jurisdiction" and had echoes of the case of Dong Guangping, a Chinese human-rights activist who in 2015 was also prevented from travelling from Thailand to Canada.

Mr. Dong was forcibly returned to China before travelling by rubber boat to South Korea and eventually flying to Toronto, where he reunited with his family last month.

Ms. Zhang arrives in Canada as Ottawa recalibrates its approach to Beijing. Amid deteriorating relations with the United States, Prime Minister Mark Carney's government is pursuing closer economic ties with China as part of a broader global effort to diversify trade.

Canada diverged from U.S. trade policy in January by reaching an agreement with China to replace its 100-per-cent surtax on Chinese-made electric vehicles with a quota of 49,000 vehicles a year at a 6.1-per-cent tariff rate. The quota will increase by 6.5 per cent annually. In exchange, China agreed to reduce tariffs and other trade barriers affecting Canadian agriculture, including canola products.

In the interview, Ms. Zhang said she has been a practitioner of Falun Gong for nearly 30 years. While teaching at a middle school in Shenzhen, she said she wrote on a bank note that "Falun Dafa is good" – a tactic used by practitioners who put the notes back into circulation to bypass state censorship and spread information about their movement. Falun Dafa is another name for Falun Gong.

▪ DISSIDENT, A7

JANUS FILMS VIA AP

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KARIN BUBAS'S WINTER SCENE AT ALEXANDER FALLS

KARIN BUBAS, WINTER SCENE AT ALEXANDER FALLS, 2022, PIGMENT PRINT WITH UV LAMINATE, 152.40 × 152.40 CM, AUDAIN ART MUSEUM COLLECTION. PURCHASED WITH THE AUDAIN ART ACQUISITION FUND

Located in Whistler, B.C., the Audain Art Museum was founded through a philanthropic gift from Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa. One of Canada's newer museums, it opened to the public in 2016. The museum's permanent collection features more than 300 works representing the art of British Columbia. Special exhibitions throughout the year feature artists of national and international significance. audainartmuseum.com

Karin Bubas is among a second generation of artists who have moved forward photography practices in Vancouver, focusing in her oeuvre on positioning women dressed in haute couture against a variety of dramatic landscapes. Commissioned by the Audain Art Museum, this work features a wintertime image of Alexander Falls, located in the Callaghan Valley just south of Whistler, photographed with an analog Hasselblad camera. Ms. Bubas then digitally introduced a well-coiffed and carefully attired model, adding a sense of intrigue to the iconic natural locale.

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CORRECTION

Wednesday's obituary of photojournalist Ralph Bower was published without credit to Mike Wakefield for its accompanying photos.

The Globe and Mail is committed to maintaining the highest ethical, legal and editorial standards.
SANDRA E. MARTIN, STANDARDS EDITOR, standardseditor@globeandmail.com

New images of the sun's surface reveal a strange and dynamic facade

ADITHI RAMAKRISHNAN
NEW YORK

Scientists have captured images of the sun's surface in the finest detail yet, revealing a strange and dynamic facade.

It's dangerous to look directly at the sun without proper eye protection. But researchers were able to peek at its scorching surface with the help of the National Science Foundation's Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope, located on the island of Maui in Hawaii.

Scientists originally took the images for a different reason: to fine-tune and test the limits of the telescope. But when they looked at the results, they realized they'd photographed the sun's bright outer shell at higher resolution than ever before.

What's more, they saw strange feathery patterns rippling across the surface.

"That reminds me of famous paintings, like the swirling skies in Van Gogh's *Starry Night*," said solar physicist Ruizhu Chen with Stanford University, who was not involved with the new research.

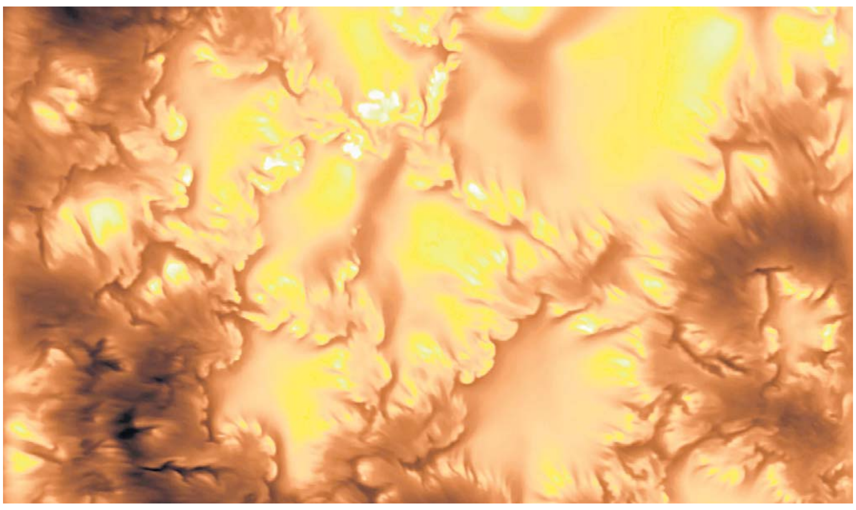
Researchers saw ripples of instability on the sun's surface caused by bits of magnetized plasma moving past each other at different speeds – similar to waves that stir when a gust of wind blows over water. It's a well-known phenomenon that guides how fluids move.

This has been glimpsed on Earth and other planets like Jupiter and Saturn, but "it has not been observed ever at that level on the solar surface," according to study co-author Friedrich Wöger with the National Solar Observatory.

The findings were published Wednesday in the journal Nature.

Scientists are curious about the sun's inner workings to better track massive bursts of energy called coronal mass ejections that can hurl toward Earth. When they hit, they can trigger solar storms, potentially scrambling GPS communications and producing colourful auroras.

ASSOCIATED PRESS



An image, released on Monday, shows the sun's surface in the finest detail yet.
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION NATIONAL SOLAR OBSERVATORY/VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wildfire near Vancouver under control

Thousands of people have been evacuated across the province as firefighters continue to battle B.C. blazes

OM SHANBHAG

Terry Moran and his partner Dianna Oen, who had to leave their home because of the Bradley Creek wildfire, sit with their dog in the parking lot outside the evacuee reception centre in Vernon, B.C., on Wednesday. They have been sleeping in their vehicles since Saturday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

When Walker Adair heard about the wildfire in the park near his home in suburban Vancouver, he set out to look for it.

The Belcarra resident traced the fire's location Wednesday afternoon through videos on social media and drove toward the flames, arriving nearby as firefighters had just begun their efforts to douse it. The 1.5-hectare fire was torching Belcarra Regional Park, a municipal wilderness park across Burrard Inlet in the Vancouver area.

The flames were coming dangerously close to the village of Anmore, B.C., causing officials to evacuate two homes and place 35 properties under evacuation alert before the wildfire service declared it held Thursday afternoon.

"It was sobering to see smoke rising directly behind the mansions in the neighbourhood," Mr. Adair said.

Out of control wildfires continue to blaze across the southern Interior of British Columbia, with hot and dry conditions expected to increase fire activity for the next few days.

In the South Cariboo region, at least 120 properties have been lost near Clinton owing to the Pear Lake wildfire, which has now grown to 126,000 hectares. In the North Okanagan, just outside of Vernon, 230 homes have been destroyed and thousands remain under evacuation order.

Along the shores of Okanagan Lake, properties were being evacuated Thursday owing to increased fire activity, with more than 2,600 evacuees from the Quilpituk Creek wildfire alone.

On Wednesday, less than three kilometres from the Belcarra wildfire, helicopters plunged into Buntzen Lake to get water.

The lake, a popular recreation site, was busy, Jennifer Jung, the owner of a boat rental shop, said.

Ms. Jung was told to evacuate in the afternoon, and within the hour everyone was off the water, she said.

She offered refunds to all the customers who were asked to leave and got herself ready to evacuate from her Anmore-based store.

"It was really scary," she said. "It spread right away, and it happened in Anmore."

Brant Arnold-Smith, the wildfire incident commander with Metro Vancouver, told a briefing Thursday that fire crews encountered downed power lines at the scene of the Belcarra fire, the first substantial blaze in Metro Vancouver this wildfire season. The fire is thought to have been caused by human activity.

Anmore Mayor John McEwan said 40 of the village's volunteer firefighters responded to the wildfire, working with multiple fire departments to beat back the flames.

He said there was some difficulty in figuring out who was in charge with several departments showing up to help.

"At the start of it, it was just sort of agreed upon, let's worry about that later, and let's all join forces to put this out," he said.

"The teams did an absolutely amazing job of doing that."

Mr. McEwan said the local government and Metro Vancouver, which is ultimately responsible for managing the wildfire, needed to be "a little bit more forthright" with communication. He said that false information was spreading through social media.

Mr. Adair agreed there was early confusion, with neither the nearby city of Port Moody or the village of Anmore providing updates.

"Everybody was saying something different, so you didn't really know who to believe or what to believe," he said.

Premier David Eby was in Abbotsford, B.C., to welcome 200 firefighters from Mexico on Thursday and said stories of "heroism and mutual support" were arising from wildfire battles across the province.

"There are literally thousands of people across the province that are stepping up to help out those who are evacuated … and those who are facing the threat of forest fire," he told a news conference at the Abbotsford airport.

There were 105 active wildfires across the province, with 49 classified as out of control and 32 evacuation orders in place as of Thursday, according to BC Wildfire Service.

Some of the approximately 500 evacuees in the Fraser Canyon have begun to return home after several weeks, with the downgrading of evacuation orders in and around Boston Bar.

A boil-water advisory remains in place, with the district saying people returning home should bring plenty of food and bottled water along with cleaning supplies, a first aid kit and a camera to document any damage at their properties.

In the East Kootenay region, all of the evacuation orders and alerts related to the Wait Creek fire burning east of Kimberley, B.C., have been rescinded.

With reports from The Canadian Press

Carney uninterested in narrow trade deal

Prime Minister dismisses the idea of making discrete, sector-by-sector pacts

ADRIAN MORROW
U.S. CORRESPONDENT
WASHINGTON

Prime Minister Mark Carney responds to questions during a news conference at the RioTinto aluminum plant in Saguenay, Que., on Thursday. Trade negotiators hope a deal will come before the new U.S. tariffs take effect.
JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Mark Carney says he is "not interested" in making a narrow deal that does not address all of U.S. President Donald Trump's major tariffs on Canada, drawing a line in the sand as trade negotiations heat up.

Speaking at an aluminum plant in Saguenay, Que., Thursday, Mr. Carney said he hoped there would be "pathways" to a wide-ranging agreement before Mr. Trump's latest threatened tariffs take effect Aug. 19.

He dismissed the idea of making discrete, sector-by-sector deals.

"We're not interested in a very targeted deal without connections to other sectors," the Prime Minister said in French. In English, he added: "We're interested in a more comprehensive deal, more global deal."

Such a pact, he said, must address autos, steel, aluminum and forest products, all of which are currently subject to punishing U.S. tariffs. "Will we get all that by the 19th of August? We'll see. But we want to have pathways in order to get that."

Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc and Janice Charette, Canada's chief trade negotiator, met with U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer on Thursday afternoon, the third day of their latest visit to Washington.

The sit-down, which had been scheduled for 30 minutes, lasted an hour and a half. When asked on his way in whether an agreement was possible by Aug. 19, Mr. LeBlanc replied, "I hope so."

In a social-media post afterward, he wrote that he'd had a "constructive and detailed" discussion with Mr. Greer, accompanied by a photo of the grinning pair. "Our focus has been and will continue to be on striking a comprehensive deal that addresses sectoral tariffs."

Republican Senator Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, who met with Mr. LeBlanc and Ms. Charette earlier in the week, said the talks have become more serious since Mr. Trump rolled out another suite of tariffs last month.

Those 50-per-cent levies would hit US$20-billion worth of Canadian goods, from electronic equipment to dairy products and alcohol.

"It's easy to see that something's happening, that there's some movement taking place" in the negotiations, Mr. Cramer said in an interview. "It's pretty clear to me that the leaders of the two countries have given the green light to a much more engaging and substantive discussion."

Mr. Cramer, who co-chairs the U.S. Congress's American-Canadian Economy and Security Caucus, praised Mr. Carney's work on the file. "He's handled it very well. He stands up for Canada's sovereignty but does it respectfully. I think he's balancing his politics pretty carefully."

Mr. Greer has said he wants to make "interim" deals with Canada and Mexico before the end of the year, focused on bilateral irritants, before moving on to larger structural issues such as content rules for the three countries' highly integrated auto industries.

Among the immediate U.S. demands are that Canada grant greater access to its protected dairy market and stop retaliating against Mr. Trump's tariffs. Ottawa has imposed retaliatory tariffs on U.S. autos, and provincial governments have pulled U.S. alcohol from store shelves.

Washington's negotiating sequence, however, clashes with Ottawa's top imperative in the talks, which is to get Mr. Trump's punitive tariffs on autos, steel and aluminum lifted or at least reduced. Mr. Greer's preference would effectively see Canada give up negotiating leverage without a guarantee of tariff relief.

On Thursday, 168 Republican members of Congress signed a letter to Mr. Greer supporting his longer timeline for a deal. "We support the decision to prioritize outcomes over a deadline" on extending the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the members wrote.

In Saguenay, Mr. Carney also pushed back against Mr. Trump's repeated assertion that the U.S. does not need anything from Canada.

"There are many things that the Americans want from Canada. They say they don't want them, but they do want them. It's energy, it's potash, it's critical minerals, it's aluminum," he said.

And the Prime Minister downplayed comments the President made the day before in which he said that Canada has "nasty leadership," saying it's "easy for me to talk with Mr. Trump."

"Yes, it's a tough negotiation – you can change the adjective and say 'nasty,'" Mr. Carney said in French.

During a speech at a Las Vegas casino Wednesday, Mr. Trump said Canada and other countries have taken advantage of the U.S. on trade, before describing Canada as "nasty" five times.

"Canada's nasty, they are, they're nasty. People think Canada – they're nasty," he said. "People, I love the people, but they're nasty. Nasty leadership."

China's new law has 'dark kinship' with Putin's invasion rationale, Freeland warns

STEVEN CHASE
SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY REPORTER

Former deputy prime minister Chrystia Freeland said Beijing's new law claiming the right to prosecute people and organizations anywhere in the world for undermining its "ethnic unity" reminds her of the rationale Vladimir Putin used to justify his 2022 military assault on Ukraine.

Speaking this week at a security forum in Taiwan, she called on democratic countries to unequivocally push back against China's ethnic unity law.

Taiwan, a self-governing democracy, lives under threat of invasion from China. Beijing claims Taiwan as a breakaway province and has not ruled out the use of force to annex the island and its 24 million people in the name of "reunification." Taiwanese officials have said the sovereignty and security provisions in the new Chinese law hand Beijing an additional legal pretext for targeting people in Taiwan it regards as separatists.

Ms. Freeland, who served as deputy prime minister and finance minister under Justin Trudeau and then minister for transport and internal trade under Prime Minister Mark Carney, delivered a keynote address Tuesday to the Ketagalan Forum, hosted by Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a local think tank. She said parts of China's new Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress, which took effect July 1, mirror the rationale Mr. Putin deployed before launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Ms. Freeland told the forum the Chinese law bears what she called a disturbing parallel with the ethnic and cultural justifications Russia has used to encroach on the sovereignty of its neighbours.

"Article 63 is particularly sinister for me, given its dark kinship with Russia's malign use of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic ties to justify illegal encroachment on the sovereignty of its neighbours, including the bloody full-scale invasion of Ukraine," she told the forum.

The section of the law Ms. Freeland is criticizing states that individuals and organizations outside China can be held legally responsible for acts that "undermine ethnic unity and progress or create ethnic division." It doesn't define what this means in practice, leaving broad scope for interpretation by Beijing, critics have warned.

Ms. Freeland pointed to an essay Mr. Putin published in the summer of 2021 arguing that Russians and Ukrainians were "one people." Seven months later, Russian tanks crossed into Ukraine, she noted.

"The lesson of history is clear," she said, adding that democracies "must not mince their words about this legislation." She said governments need to state plainly that a foreign law assigning political loyalty on the basis of ethnicity "has no force on our territories and no application to our citizens, whatever their ancestry, whatever their passport, wherever they or their parents were born."

Canada's comments on the Chinese law to date include a brief mention at the United Nations Office in Geneva in mid-June. There, Peter MacDougall, Canada's ambassador to the UN Office in Geneva, told the UN Human Rights Council that Ottawa is "also concerned about the ethnic unity law in China, and call for respect of the human rights of minorities."

Ms. Freeland talked of her own history covering Ukraine as a journalist in 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed, and her later role as deputy prime minister during Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. She argued one lesson from Ukraine is that appeasing authoritarian states does not buy security.

The former politician cited the West's muted response to Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia and its 2014 seizure of Crimea, arguing that pattern of condemnation followed by business as usual convinced Mr. Putin that democracies would not back Ukraine if he invaded outright.

"We taught Putin to believe we would not have the resolve to support Ukraine," she said. "I wish even more fervently that he had never made that miscalculation."

In her speech, Ms. Freeland said Taiwan's dominance in semiconductor manufacturing gives it strategic leverage similar to Ukraine's drone industry, making it indispensable to allies rather than a dependant.

She said Taiwan has a major role to play in reducing democratic countries' reliance on supply chains that run through authoritarian states – Russia, China, Iran or North Korea – and specifically urged support for Taiwan's bid to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Pacific Rim trade pact whose members include Canada.

Ms. Freeland said democratic allies of Taiwan need to speak out against any disruption to the status quo in the region.

"The peace of the Strait of Taiwan will be kept by the plainness with which the world's democracies say in advance that we will not accept that peace being broken," she said.

"That is why solidarity with Taiwan and recognition of your flourishing democracy is so important," she told the forum.

China's embassy in Canada did not immediately respond to a request for comment. However, the country's state-run Global Times tabloid attacked the Ketagalan forum Ms. Freeland spoke at as a place where "former and marginal foreign politicians" are working to promote "Taiwan independence."

Ms. Freeland resigned as MP in January, 2026. She serves as an economic development adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. She is also warden of Rhodes House and CEO of the Rhodes Trust, the Oxford-based charity that administers the Rhodes Scholarship.

Conservative MP Larry Brock set to resign

STEPHANIE LEVITZ
SENIOR REPORTER
OTTAWA

Conservative Larry Brock is resigning as the MP for the Ontario riding of Brantford-Brant South-Six Nations and returning to his former role as a Crown prosecutor.

Mr. Brock confirmed his decision to leave elected politics in a statement posted to social media late Thursday night.

His departure had been reported by The Globe and Mail earlier Thursday, citing sources.

His departure is another twist in the road for Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, whose caucus is becoming increasingly restive in the face of dismal polling numbers, a drop in fundraising and public spats within the conservative movement about the party's future.

In his own statement, Mr, Poilievre wished him well.

"Thank you, Larry, for fighting to end Liberal bail, to lock up criminals, to restore safe streets and to support victims; and for your tireless work for the people of Brantford-Brant South-Six Nations," he said on social media. "My ardent wish is for you and your family to have all the success and happiness in the world. God bless, my friend."

> Mr. Brock will be the seventh MP to leave Mr. Poilievre's caucus since the 2025 election.

Mr. Brock was first elected in 2021. The former Crown prosecutor had served as justice critic but was shuffled out of that position by Mr. Poilievre in June. At the time, Mr. Brock said he was stepping aside for personal reasons.

"I continue to put my full support behind Pierre Poilievre – he is the leader Canada needs and will make an amazing Prime Minister," he said. "I remain dedicated to serving in the Conservative caucus, to representing my constituents of Brantford–Brant South–Six Nations and to standing up for an affordable, safe, and secure country for all Canadians."

Mr. Brock won his riding in the last election with 52 per cent of the vote; in the 2021 election, the riding nearly split three ways between the Tories, the Liberals and the NDP. But, in the latest campaign, the NDP vote collapsed there.

The riding is currently listed as "leaning" Conservative on 338Canada.ca, a poll aggregation and modelling website.

Mr. Brock will be the seventh MP to leave Mr. Poilievre's caucus since the 2025 election.

Four have crossed the floor to the Liberals.

A fifth, Saskatchewan MP Cathay Wagantall, had said last year she wasn't going to run again but would serve out her term, then instead announced she would step down on Aug. 31.

A sixth, Quebec's Richard Martel, was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Mark Carney. A by-election for his former riding of Chicoutimi-Le Fjord is scheduled for the end of August.

Taking questions from reporters Thursday after touring an aluminum facility in that area, Mr. Carney said the Liberals' choice of former dairy producer Daniel Gobeil to run in the riding shows the government is "loyal" to supply management.

The United States has cited Canada's supply management as a key irritant in trade negotiations.

Mr. Poilievre visited the riding earlier this week.

TRUMP TARGETS BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP WITH NEW EXECUTIVE ORDERS

U.S. President Donald Trump signed two executive orders on Thursday in a new but narrower attempt to curtail birthright citizenship, once again challenging a provision of the U.S. Constitution even though the Supreme Court rejected his previous effort.

Limiting birthright citizenship has been one of the top priorities in the Republican President's crackdown on immigration, with the White House taking particular aim at what it calls "birth tourism," in which pregnant foreigners travel to the U.S. to give birth. After his June 30 setback in the Supreme Court, Mr. Trump called on Congress to act, but on Thursday he opted for executive orders, which set policy but do not carry the same weight as laws passed by Congress.

The Supreme Court had struck down as unconstitutional Mr. Trump's earlier executive order, which targeted a wide swath of immigrants in the country illegally or temporarily. The administration argues the new directive falls outside the purview of the Supreme Court ruling, as it seeks to reinterpret the narrow, historical exceptions to citizenship at birth and expand who is ineligible.

The Center for Immigration Studies, which supports lower levels of immigration, estimated in an analysis in 2020 that between 20,000 and 25,000 mothers came to the U.S. for birth tourism in a year-long period between 2016 and 2017.

There were 3.6 million births in the U.S. in 2025.

The executive orders also limit the rights of children born to foreign government employees in the U.S. and children of people who are classified as alien enemies.

REUTERS

U.S. Senate committee votes to hold Fauci in contempt of Congress

DOJ to weigh investigating whether former infectious disease official properly exercised constitutional rights

ERIC TUCKER WASHINGTON

Dr. Anthony Fauci attends a U.S. Senate homeland security and governmental affairs committee session in Washington on July 29. NATHAN HOWARD/REUTERS

A Senate committee voted along party lines Thursday to hold Dr. Anthony Fauci in contempt of Congress over his refusal to answer questions at a hearing on his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, setting up a referral to the Justice Department for potential investigation over whether the country's long-time top infectious disease official properly exercised his constitutional rights.

A department spokesperson confirmed Thursday evening that the department had received the contempt referral, is "reviewing it and will work with the Senate accordingly."

The vote approving the contempt resolution came a week after Dr. Fauci invoked his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination more than 100 times when he appeared before the Senate committee on homeland security and governmental affairs, an episode that raised fresh legal questions about the ability of Congress to compel testimony from a previously pardoned witness.

Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, the committee chairman who pressed for the contempt finding, said that constitutional protection did not apply because Dr. Fauci last year received a pardon from Democratic President Joe Biden and thus did not have to worry about the threat of prosecution.

"Dr. Fauci faced no risk of federal prosecution," Mr. Paul said at the outset of Thursday's vote. "All he had to do was tell the truth."

"We were voting on whether a witness who has received the benefit of a sweeping federal pardon can be ordered by this committee to answer questions and then defy that order without consequence."

Dr. Fauci, in a statement last week explaining his decision to invoke his Fifth Amendment rights, said he had good reason to fear the possibility of criminal charges given what he said was Mr. Paul's determination "to get me to say something, anything, that could vindicate his repeated public pledges that I end up, in his words, quote, behind bars, unquote."

Dr. Fauci's lawyer, David Schertler, said in a statement that the contempt resolution was "a continuation of Senator Paul's personal vendetta against Dr. Fauci, who spent 50 years in public health and has saved countless lives." Mr. Schertler accused Mr. Paul of abusing his power by trying to "weaponize the Justice Department."

"Today's partisan committee vote is a crude political stunt intended to punish Dr. Fauci for exercising his constitutional rights," Mr. Schertler said. "The Senate should reject Senator Paul's meritless and politically-motivated contempt resolution. For years, Senator Paul has proclaimed to anyone who would listen that Dr. Fauci should be prosecuted and put in prison. Dr. Fauci has committed no crime – and Senator Paul knows it."

The pardon from Mr. Biden covered acts from 2014 through the January 2025 day it was issued, but does not shield him from state-level prosecutions or protect him from federal investigations into any testimony he did give that lawmakers deemed false. The current Justice Department has repeatedly initiated false statement investigations into perceived adversaries of President Donald Trump as part of what critics have called a retribution campaign.

Democrats who unanimously opposed the contempt resolution agreed with Dr. Fauci that he had a well-founded fear of self-incrimination given the publicly stated desires of Republican lawmakers, including Mr. Paul, to see him prosecuted in connection with COVID. The Trump administration has also raised questions about whether the Biden pardons were valid given Mr. Biden's frequent use of an autopen to conduct official business.

"The goal was to wait for Dr. Fauci to make any kind of misstatement and then have a weaponized Department of Justice file criminal charges for that new statement that would not have been covered by the pardon, leaving Dr. Fauci little choice but to invoke his constitutional right to not walk directly into a trap," said Senator Maggie Hassan before the vote.

Mr. Trump himself weighed in Thursday at the White House, noting in response to a reporter's question that two advisers from his first term, Steve Bannon and Peter Navarro, were jailed on contempt charges during the Biden administration after they defied congressional subpoenas and refused to even show up for their scheduled hearings.

"When you see that happen, you sort of say maybe he should," Mr. Trump said of Dr. Fauci being prosecuted. "What he did is far more serious than a lot of crimes, frankly."

Mr. Paul's decision to send the referral directly to the Justice Department would leave it to prosecutors in Washington to decide whether to investigate or potentially attempt to prosecute Dr. Fauci for contempt. A referral from Congress does not compel the Justice Department to act.

The committee's top Democrat, Senator Gary Peters of Michigan, questioned whether the referral would be legally valid if Mr. Paul did not seek a vote before the full Senate, where the 60 votes needed to pass the resolution are seen as unlikely. He said punishing a witness for exercising a constitutional right against self-incrimination would complicate future efforts by Congress to conduct oversight and compel appearances and testimony.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MITCH McCONNELL SAYS HE HAS BEEN RELEASED FROM REHAB CENTRE

Longtime Republican U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell said he was released from a rehabilitation center on Thursday and would continue his recovery from a fall and from pneumonia at home.

"On the advice of my doctors, I'll maintain an intensive regimen of physical therapy from home during the state work period, and I'll continue to engage with my staff and colleagues on important Senate business," he said in a statement.

The 84-year-old Kentucky Republican and former Senate majority leader has been out of public view since mid-June, when he was taken from his home to a hospital in the Washington area for reasons that were not disclosed until July 12.

At that time, Mr. McConnell said he suffered a fall in mid-June that left him briefly unconscious. While hospitalized, he developed pneumonia and was treated with antibiotics, according to a separate statement that Mr. McConnell's office attributed to the attending physician.

REUTERS

U.S. SALMONELLA OUTBREAK LINKED TO JALAPENOS

U.S. health officials are investigating a salmonella outbreak linked to Mexican jalapeno peppers that has sickened 345 people in 27 states, prompting supplier Coast Citrus Distributors to recall peppers sent to restaurants including Chipotle Mexican Grill and Qdoba.

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration said 36 hospitalizations and no deaths have been reported, while the investigation is ongoing.

Health agencies linked the outbreak to jalapeno peppers supplied by a common grower in Sinaloa, Mexico, and distributed in the U.S. by Coast Citrus Distributors. The company has agreed to recall the remaining product, the FDA said.

REUTERS

AI model creates viruses not found in nature

CARL ZIMMER

For the first time, scientists have used artificial intelligence to create new kinds of viruses, raising hopes for medical advances while also raising the disturbing possibility that the technology could someday be used to invent dangerous pathogens.

Synthesizing viruses from scratch is hardly new. Researchers long ago learned how to manufacture viral genomes; they are used to investigate antiviral drugs and vaccines, as well as to learn how viruses work.

But the new study, published Thursday in the journal Science, goes well beyond duplicating viral genes. Scientists at the Arc Institute, a research organization in Palo Alto, Calif., taught AI to recognize patterns of DNA structure in nature, and then to use that data to write recipes for entirely new viruses.

The researchers followed those recipes to create DNA molecules, which they inserted into bacteria. The modified bacteria then produced viruses never seen in nature. The viruses were able to infect other bacteria, demonstrating that they were viable.

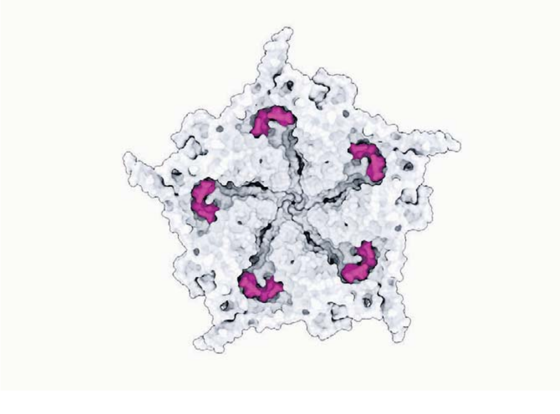
"This is an important milestone," said Patrick Cai, a synthetic biologist at the University of Manchester, who was not involved in the study.

The viruses dreamed up by AI do not pose a threat to humans, because they are all similar to a naturally occurring virus called Phi X-174, which can infect only bacteria.

But the new study adds to growing worries that artificial intelligence might enable the creation of a new generation of biological weapons, from deadly poisons to unstoppable pandemics.

Dr. Moritz Hanke, a fellow at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security who was not involved in the new study, said governments and scientific organizations have been slow to develop guardrails that could block the creation of a deadly virus — even as the science races ahead.

"There's just a huge disconnect," he said.



An atomic reconstruction of one of the viruses generated by an AI model called Evo. The AI was taught to recognize patterns of DNA structure in nature and used that to write recipes for new viruses to be tested on bacteria. SAMUEL H. KING ET AL/NYT

The authors of the study relied on an AI model called Evo, which is similar in some ways to ChatGPT, made by OpenAI. (The New York Times has sued OpenAI, ChatGPT's creator, and its partner, Microsoft.)

ChatGPT answers questions by stringing together words that seem likely to follow one another. It can do this thanks to years of training on vast amounts of text gathered from the internet, books and other sources.

DNA is strikingly similar to a book in some ways: a string of molecular building blocks, known as nucleotides, arrayed like letters in a line of text. A gene consists of hundreds of nucleotides drawn from a four-letter alphabet: A, C, G and T. The sequence encodes the instructions for building proteins and other molecules.

DNA has its own rules of grammar, and if a sequence violates them, the result is biological gibberish. Biologists have uncovered some of nature's grammatical rules, but many remain a mystery.

The researchers wondered if Evo could pick up these rules on its own. Instead of training it on text, they trained it on genetic sequences drawn from millions of animals, plants, microbes and viruses. All told, Evo scanned about nine trillion nucleotides.

Evo eventually recognized patterns common across the tree of life and used them to generate blueprints for new genes encoding proteins that could perform specific jobs. These results led the team to wonder if Evo could master not just single genes but also an entire genome.

As the AI would be able to handle only small genomes at first, the scientists decided to try to make viruses. While a human genome contains more than three billion nucleotides, many viruses have genomes just a few thousand nucleotides long.

"It just felt like the obvious next step," said Samuel King, a graduate student at Stanford University and an author of the new study. He and his colleagues gave Evo another round of training, this time on the 11 genes of Phi X-174 and about 15,000 of its closest relatives.

They made this choice in part because scientists know Phi X-174 intimately, having studied it for close to a century. And because it's a bacteriophage that infects only E. coli, they knew that viruses similar to it would be safe.

Once Evo got familiar with the genomes of Phi X-174 and its kin, the researchers prompted the model to write new versions of its own. Evo generated 700,000 potential versions; the scientists pursued only the ones that looked as if they had the best odds of succeeding.

They ended up making DNA molecules from 285 of Evo's suggested sequences. When those genomes were ready to test, Mr. King and his colleagues inserted them into bacteria, which they spread across petri dishes.

In many of the dishes, the microbes grew peacefully; Evo's genomes had failed. But in one dish, researchers noticed clear dots appearing in the cloudy film of bacteria, the telltale sign of multiplying viruses.

The DNA that the scientists had inserted into the bacteria had produced protein shells that contained viral genes. The viruses burst out of the cells, leaving behind the ruptured husks of their dead hosts.

As Mr. King and his colleagues tested more genomes, they saw more clear dots. All told, they discovered that 16 of Evo's genomes produced viable new viruses.

They proved to be as resilient as natural ones. In fact, some multiplied faster than Phi X-174. "They're not just sickly versions of stuff that already exists," said Oliver Crook, a protein chemist at the University of Oxford who was not involved in the new study.

Mr. Crook cautioned that Evo's viruses were not radically new creations. They tend to be very similar to natural species, relying on the same underlying biology.

Scientists will have to run more experiments to find out if Evo has the same success rate if it's trained on other groups of viruses. If so, Mr. Crook expected that scientists might find some AI-generated viruses that could become useful tools for medicine and biotechnology.

"A lot of our science rests on viruses as technology," he said. To treat people with genetic disorders, for example, doctors will load genes into viruses, which deliver them into cells.

But along with this hope, Evo's initial success has raised concerns that AI could be used to create deadly viruses. "You could say, 'Hey, genomic language model, make me an influenza genome that is modified to be more transmissible or to be more lethal,'" Dr. Hanke speculated.

The potential dangers were already on the minds of the researchers as they trained Evo. They did not provide the model with data about viruses that infect humans, and they excluded similar viruses that infect other animals, plants and fungi.

As a result, Evo can't generate genomes of viruses that could threaten humans. "We just wanted to be extra careful," said Brian Hie, a computational biologist at Stanford University and an author of the new study.

Dr. Hanke credited Dr. Hie and his colleagues for taking that precaution. "I think that's quite commendable," he said, "because they don't get any guidance from anywhere on what they should be doing."

Last week, Dr. Hanke noted, the National Institutes of Health rolled out a new policy for stopping high-risk life science research. The policy would bar scientists from experiments that would make biological agents more harmful.

But computer-based research — such as generating a virus DNA with AI — "is not prohibited by this policy unless it involves an entity of concern," the agency said in a statement.

It's easy to tell if a natural virus like smallpox is an entity of concern. But Dr. Hanke said there's no consensus on judging the possible danger of a virus made by an AI model.

"What is the risk of what I've never seen before?" he asked.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Two Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon

Escalation came as countries' negotiators met in Rome to discuss June deal that would see Israel pull back forces

ABBY SEWELL
KORAL SAEED BEIRUT

An Israeli strike injured eight people overnight on Wednesday in the Lebanese village of Burj al-Shemali. Lebanon's Health Ministry also said an Israeli strike killed one person an wounded another 12 in the town of Tebnine. STRINGER/REUTERS

Two Israeli soldiers were killed in an explosion in southern Lebanon, Israel's military said Thursday, the first Israeli deaths since a shaky truce between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah began nearly two months ago.

Four other soldiers were seriously wounded, the military said. An Israeli military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in accordance with the army's policy, said that "an explosion was detonated" when the soldiers entered a site in the village of Majdal Zoun and that the nature of the explosive was under review.

Israeli media reported the two deaths a day earlier.

The Israeli army launched strikes Wednesday in southern Lebanon in response to what it described as Hezbollah's violation of the ceasefire and called on residents of the village of Mansouri to flee – the first such warning Israel has issued in Lebanon for weeks.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said one person was killed and 12 wounded in an Israeli strike in the town of Tebnine Wednesday and another eight wounded in overnight strikes on the village of Burj al-Shemali. Artillery shelling also targeted the areas of Mansouri and Majdal Zoun, the state-run National News Agency said.

There was no immediate statement from the Iran-backed Hezbollah.

The latest Israel-Hezbollah war erupted on March 2, when Hezbollah fired rockets across the border two days after the U.S. and Israel launched their attacks on Iran. More than 4,000 people have been killed by Israeli strikes in Lebanon since then, including hundreds of civilians. About 40 soldiers and three civilians – including a military contractor – have been killed on the Israeli side.

A precarious truce between Israel and Hezbollah has largely held since June 20, but Israeli forces have continued to occupy swaths of southern Lebanon and to carry out periodic air strikes and shelling.

The latest escalation came as Lebanese and Israeli negotiators met in Rome to discuss implementation of a June 26 deal reached between Israel and the Lebanese government under which Israeli forces are supposed to withdraw from areas they occupy in southern Lebanon and allow the Lebanese army to take control, in exchange for Hezbollah's disarmament.

Hezbollah has refused to disarm and opposed the direct Lebanon-Israel talks. It was not a party to the deal. The group has accused the Lebanese government of making too many concessions without guaranteeing an Israeli withdrawal.

Wednesday's talks ended early due to the escalation on the ground, but were set to resume Thursday.

The talks in Rome have focused on implementation of "pilot zones" where Israeli forces would withdraw and the Lebanese army would take control. Implementation began last month with an initial pilot zone in an area that wasn't occupied by Israeli forces but had previously sustained Israeli fire.

The Lebanese army entered the town of Zawtar al-Gharbieh and some civilians returned, although many came only to find their homes destroyed and left again.

A diplomat familiar with the negotiations who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly said earlier this week that Lebanon had asked for the next pilot zone to be either in the town of Khiam or Bint Jbeil. Both areas saw heavy fighting in the latest Israel-Hezbollah war and are currently occupied by Israeli forces.

But U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa suggested ahead of the three-day talks that no new pilot zones would be immediately implemented, saying that "moving too quickly risks jeopardizing the very civilians this process is meant to protect."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine strikes more oil facilities deep inside Russia, Zelensky says

ILLIA NOVIKOV KYIV

Ukraine hit more oil facilities deep inside Russia in overnight attacks, President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday, as Kyiv kept up its campaign to undermine Moscow's wartime economy and embarrass the Kremlin.

The repeated strikes have caused fuel shortages and rattled Russians. Ukrainians, meanwhile, are enduring regular barrages that Kyiv's depleted air defences are struggling to counter amid Moscow's 4-year-old full-scale invasion.

The Kyiv region observed an official day of mourning Thursday after a Russian missile and drone blitz killed 17 people the previous day, prompting an increasingly urgent scramble by Ukraine and its allies to find new air defence supplies.

In the first six months of this year, 1,396 civilians were killed and 7,978 injured in Ukraine, the United Nations office in Kyiv said Wednesday. That was a 37-per-cent increase from the same period last year and a 114-per-cent jump over 2024, it said, attributing the rise to more long-range aerial attacks by Russia.

Mr. Zelensky said he met with senior officials on how to accelerate the development of Ukraine's own ballistic weaponry, similar to its swift wartime innovation in drone technology.

"Developing one's own ballistic capabilities and creating a new anti-ballistic system is a task that only a tiny minority of countries worldwide have managed to accomplish," he said in a social-media post. "Ukraine has this capability."

Mr. Zelensky said he expects the program to produce results this year and next after it overcomes "key challenges," including procuring critical components, technological co-operation with partner countries, and choosing where to build the armaments.

Ukrainian forces hit a refinery in Russia's Bashkortostan region, more than 1,300 kilometres from the front line, as well as a refinery in the Yaroslavl region, almost 700 kilometres from the border, Mr. Zelensky said on social media.

Yaroslavl Governor Mikhail Yevrayev confirmed an attack on a refinery, saying in a Telegram post that drone debris hit the facility's oil reservoirs, sparking a fire. Three private houses also caught fire, and several residential buildings were damaged, he added.

Ukrainian forces hit two Russian military patrol boats in the Black Sea, Mr. Zelensky said, along with vessels belonging to Moscow's so-called shadow fleet, which Russia uses to evade Western restrictions on its oil exports. He did not give any details.

The Russian Defence Ministry said its air defences overnight shot down 605 Ukrainian drones over its territory.

Drone and glide bomb attacks across Ukraine overnight killed at least three civilians and wounded 22 others, authorities said Thursday, as countries helping Kyiv resist the invasion scrambled to find more vital air defences for its fight.

Moscow's forces have in recent weeks pummelled Ukraine with ballistic missiles that Kyiv officials say only the U.S.-made Patriot air defence system can stop. But the Iran war has drained stocks of Patriot interceptor missiles, leaving Ukraine at the mercy of Russian bombardments that seek to exploit the weakened air defences.

"We are working as hard as possible with all partners who can assist with the supply of interceptor missiles to protect against such insane Russian strikes targeting life, people, and civilian facilities," Mr. Zelensky said on social media late Wednesday.

He said he had spoken to NATO chief Mark Rutte and Finnish President Alexander Stubb about urgently procuring interceptors from stockpiles. Mr. Zelensky said he and Mr. Rutte "co-ordinated our efforts regarding countries that have the necessary missiles and the capacity to help."

Russia appears determined to exhaust Ukraine through sheer weight of numbers in terms of soldiers, armour and weapons. Russian President Vladimir Putin believes time is on his side, that Western support will fade and that Ukraine's resistance will eventually collapse under pressure, Western analysts and officials say.

Ukraine's air force said Russia fired four missiles and 101 long-range strike drones overnight, with air defences shooting down or jamming 66 drones.

Three people were killed in Balakliia in the Kharkiv region of northeastern Ukraine, said Vitalii Karabanov, head of the city's military administration.

In the neighbouring Sumy region, Russian glide bombs wounded 12 people, the National Police said. Apartment buildings and infrastructure were damaged, with hundreds of windows shattered, said regional military administration chief Oleh Hryhorov.

In the Kherson region of southern Ukraine, a Russian drone struck a bus carrying farmworkers, injuring six people, regional authorities said.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A shopping mall in Ukraine's Sumy region was hit by a Russian air strike on Thursday. REUTERS

Ransom-seeking hackers targeted U.S. private equity

RAPHAEL SATTER
AJ VICENS
ANIRBAN SEN

Ransom-seeking hackers who use phone calls to compromise their victims targeted dozens of prominent U.S. financial institutions and other businesses over the past month, according to Google and internet intelligence data reviewed by Reuters.

The data show the hackers devised websites aimed at stealing passwords from employees of private equity firms and companies including Blackstone, Bridgewater Associates, Apollo Global Management, Bain Capital, KKR, TPG, CME Group and Moody's, as well as a host of financial companies and other businesses.

Internet company Google said in a blog post about the hacking campaign published on Thursday that the hackers operate under a range of names, including Redact, Pink, Falcon, and Helix. Google declined to comment on Reuters findings. Its blog said in some cases companies, which it did not name, paid ransoms to the hackers. Reuters could not establish which companies the hackers successfully compromised.

Experts say the hackers' use of low-tech tactics such as phone calls to target the financial industry illustrates how, despite sophisticated security programs and AI-driven threats, the oldest tactics still rank among the most effective. If successful, the hacks could compromise data of some of the biggest U.S. private equity firms that provide capital to companies.

"Because the fence is now so fancy and high-tech, we just have to trick the guard into opening the door for us," said Lee Clark, a cyberthreat intelligence production manager with the Retail and Hospitality ISAC, an industry information sharing and analysis group.

"That human element consistently is why this has exploded in the way it has," he said. KKR, Bain Capital, CME, TPG and Apollo declined to comment. Blackstone, Bridgewater Associates and Moody's did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

In its blog post, Google – a unit of Alphabet – said the hackers had recently turned their attention to private equity, law firms, and financial ratings agencies.

Austin Larsen, the principal threat analyst at Google's Threat Intelligence Group, said the hackers generally targeted industries based on financial calculations, often successfully. "Really, it's a money thing," Larsen said. "They think that these firms or organizations have data sensitive enough that, if taken, they would pay to prevent it."

Google did not identify any of the hackers' targets by name. Reuters reverse-engineered many of the company-specific online traps used by the hackers by running the 72 malicious websites Google listed in its report through web intelligence platforms such as DomainTools and urlscan, which flagged malicious subdomains tailored to each firm.

Speaking in general about the subdomains, Larsen said "they all were likely used in attempted intrusions" though he cautioned "they were not all successful."

Google said the hackers used "meticulous social engineering tactics," reaching employees on their personal cellphones while pretending to call from their company's help desk, sometimes displaying the correct help desk phone number.

The hackers told their targets there was an urgent directive from IT to update their passkeys or multifactor authentication and steered the employees toward a booby-trapped website with domain names such as "passkeyhelpdesk" or "securepasskey."

If an employee followed the instructions to enter their password, the hackers would harvest their fail-safe passcode – typically sent by text or generated by an app – live over the phone and hijack their account before the call terminated.

Larsen said it was wrong to think of the tactic as particularly advanced. "Sophisticated is not the right word," he said. "It is just really effective."

Reuters was not able to reach the hackers. Redact – which once went by the name Darkfiles – said on its darknet website that its hackers "are not politically or morally motivated" and were "not currently taking questions from the press."

Larsen said it was unclear who the hackers were exactly or what their relationship was to one another. Although they went under different names, he said they appeared to be tied together by common infrastructure.

"There are still some unknowns here," he said. The hacking attempts, a few of which were earlier reported by Bloomberg, have caused a stir on Wall Street.

For example, Point72 Asset Management told investors on Wednesday that it had been targeted by hackers, according to a source familiar with the matter. That source – and a second source familiar with the matter – said the hackers had also attempted to breach other hedge funds, including Two Sigma Investments and Citadel, whose names also appeared in the data reviewed by Reuters.

Citadel declined to comment. A host of other firms were in the hackers' crosshairs before they pivoted to financial institutions, according to Google's blog post and the data.

REUTERS

Major Italian cities on red alert amid heat wave across Europe

Extreme weather has pushed temperatures above 40 C in several countries

GIADA ZAMPANO
KIRSTEN GRIESHABER
JUSTIN SPIKE ROME

Italy placed all of its major cities under the highest heat alert Thursday as a blistering heat wave gripped Europe, setting a national temperature record in Austria, fuelling wildfires in France and disrupting energy and transport systems across the continent.

The extreme weather has pushed temperatures above 40 C in several countries, prompting health warnings for millions of people.

Across Europe, authorities are grappling with the consequences of extreme heat: health alerts for millions in Italy, record temperatures in Austria, drought-related disruptions to energy and shipping in Central Europe, and wildfires stretching from France to the Balkans.

Scientists and officials warn that such events are becoming more frequent and intense as the climate warms.

CLIMATE CHANGE DRIVES MORE EXTREME SUMMERS

From the Mediterranean to Central Europe, prolonged heat, drought and wildfire conditions are increasingly becoming defining features of summer. The current heat wave has exposed vulnerabilities in public-health systems, power generation, transportation networks and tourism infrastructure, forcing governments and businesses to adapt to more frequent periods of extreme weather.

Italy's Health Ministry placed all 27 cities monitored under its national heat surveillance system on red alert Thursday – the first time this year the entire network has been under the highest warning level simultaneously.

The alerts stretch from Trieste in the northeast to Palermo in Sicily and signal a health risk for the entire population, not only vulnerable groups such as older adults and people with chronic illnesses.

Authorities urged residents and tourists to avoid direct sunlight during the hottest hours of the day, remain indoors where possible and drink plenty of water as temperatures in some areas approached 40 C.

The heat has also forced adjustments at major tourist attractions. The ministries of tourism and culture extended evening opening hours at landmarks, including Rome's Colosseum and Pantheon.

Cooling mist fans have been installed at the Colosseum's entrances and additional medical stations have been made available.

AUSTRIA BREAKS NATIONAL TEMPERATURE RECORD

The most intense temperatures were recorded in Austria, where the mercury reached 41.2 C on Wednesday in the village of Bad Deutsch-Altenburg near the Slovak border, according to GeoSphere Austria. It was the highest temperature ever recorded in the country.

Austria is also facing severe drought. Rainfall from Jan. 1 through June 30 was 27 per cent below the long-term average nationwide, while some eastern regions received only half their normal precipitation.

Climatologist Alexander Orlik said some parts of the country had not experienced such dry conditions since 1885.

HUNGARY CUTS POWER USE AS DROUGHT HITS NUCLEAR PLANT

In Hungary, prolonged drought and record-low water levels on the Danube River have severely affected the country's only nuclear power plant, which relies on river water to cool its reactors.

Plant operators have reduced output to about 10 per cent of normal production, prompting the government to introduce emergency conservation measures as a record-breaking heat wave grips the country.

Authorities have asked major industrial users and households to cut electricity consumption, particularly during peak demand hours between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. Freight trains have been barred from operating during those hours, while decorative lighting on landmarks in Budapest has been switched off.

Several major companies, including energy company Mol, pharmaceutical maker Gedeon Richter and automakers Suzuki, Mercedes-Benz, Audi and BMW have announced plans to curb electricity use.

The heat wave has shattered temperature records across the country. On Wednesday night, Budapest recorded its warmest overnight low temperature on record, with temperatures falling only to 28 C, underscoring the persistence of the extreme heat.

GERMANY WORRIES ABOUT SHRINKING RIVERS

Germany faced growing concerns over the impact of drought on transportation and industry as water levels on the Rhine and other rivers continued to fall.

Transport Minister Steffen Bilger met affected organizations Thursday and warned that low water levels posed major challenges for inland waterway shipping, industry and the broader logistics chain.

FRANCE REMAINS ON HIGH WILDFIRE ALERT

In southeastern France, firefighters maintained a large presence in the Var region after authorities said a major wildfire there was no longer spreading but remained capable of reigniting.

The blaze, which began July 20, has burned more than 60 square kilometres, making it the largest recorded in the region in recent decades.

Authorities warned that strong winds and extremely dry conditions left southeastern France at very high risk for additional wildfires.

BALKANS BATTLE FIRES AND DROUGHT

The heat wave reached its peak across the Balkans on Thursday as temperatures neared 40 C and authorities battled drought and wildfires.

In Serbia, firefighters struggled to contain several blazes after days of dry weather. One major fire burned through pine forests west of Belgrade, while another spread near the central town of Kraljevo.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Activist Zhang Xinyan believes she was only able to evade persecution by China's Communist Party because of the international attention on her case. JIMMY JEONG/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Dissident: She hopes to connect with other Falun Gong practitioners, resume her activism

FROM A1

A student brought the note to the headmaster, who lambasted her at a school assembly and said he would be reporting her to the police, she said. She fled to Thailand shortly after.

"For sure, I would be arrested," Ms. Zhang said. "I would be put in jail and subject to torture. And then sentenced."

In Thailand, she says she worked for a Falun Gong news outlet covering the Hong Kong government.

On May 7, Ms. Zhang said she was leaving her apartment when she was approached by officers who asked if she had her passport. She did not; it had been seized by authorities at the Chinese embassy when she sought to renew it, she said.

Ms. Zhang insisted that she held protected refugee status with the United Nations, to no avail. Officers took her to an immigration detention centre in Bangkok, where she faced possible deportation to Hong Kong or mainland China.

As Ms. Zhang sat in detention, pro-democracy activists worked to draw attention to her case and international human-rights organizations underscored the risk of harm she faced should be transferred to Chinese custody. Ms. Sheng, the activist, co-ordinated efforts to secure her resettlement. Ms. Zhang obtained legal counsel.

Canadian embassy officials in Bangkok interviewed Ms. Zhang, completed medical examinations and biometric data collection at the detention centre, eventually finalizing her flight itinerary from Bangkok to Vancouver for July 8, Ms. Sheng told The Globe.

Ms. Zhang said her understanding was that an officer would meet her at 3 a.m. to take her to the airport for her early-morning flight. But when the time came, no one showed up.

"I was in tears, begging police to take me to the airport," Ms. Zhang recalled. "I showed them my plane ticket. But their hearts were not moved. They told me the ticket had already been cancelled."

She said she was given no explanation why and was not allowed to make a phone call or watch the news to determine what had happened. Her lawyers petitioned the South Bangkok Criminal Court for a hearing under the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance Act after they were unable to contact her.

Questioned by a judge at a July 16 hearing, a representative from Thailand's Immigration Bureau said the plane ticket had been cancelled at the behest of Chinese embassy officials in Thailand because she was wanted by Hong Kong police, Ms. Zhang said.

"It was the Chinese embassy's instruction for the ticket to be cancelled, after which I was supposed to be taken back to China," she said. "They even showed evidence of the instructions given by the Chinese embassy – documents."

Ms. Zhang said someone assured her in English that she could not be returned to China. She was sent back to the detention centre, where she says representatives from the UN regularly checked in on her, until her Aug. 3 flight to Canada.

She said she was taken to the airport where she was met by UN representatives who didn't leave her side until she boarded the plane.

In Vancouver, Ms. Zhang has since met with two members from the "Hong Kong Parliament" who say they will continue to advocate for her in the pursuit of freedom and democracy. She said she plans to take some time to rest, then hopes to connect with other Falun Gong practitioners and resume her activist work.

Ms. Zhang said she believes she was only able to evade persecution because of the international attention on her case, and the efforts of many. She said she is grateful to be in Canada.

"I eventually was able to breathe the air of freedom," she said.

Lonko Segundo Suarez performs a sacred ceremony in front of a ceremonial altar in Alto Biobio, Chile. He spent years fighting for territory after communities were pushed onto rocky and less productive land up in the Andes mountains. PHOTOS BY JUAN GONZALEZ/REUTERS

Millaray Suarez, a traditional spiritual guide and healer, to prepare remedies for her patients in Alto Biobio.

Mr. Suarez and his wife, Carmen Martinez, enjoy a drink by a fire inside their home. The family is focused on opposing the Rucalhue hydroelectric dam being built on the Biobio River, a project which they say threatens old-growth forest areas.

Mapuches' battle over land in Chile enters a perilous phase under Kast presidency

As a far-right leader promises a crackdown in the south, Indigenous advocates worry about what lies ahead

ALEXANDER VILLEGAS
JUAN GONZALEZ FUNDO PIDENCO, CHILE

After years of reclaiming ancestral lands through occupations, sabotage and clashes with police, militant Mapuche groups are confronting one of their toughest periods in decades as lengthy prison sentences and a crackdown by Chile's new far-right President José Antonio Kast gather pace.

Reuters is the first news organization to gain access to Fundo Pidenco and one of the few to access several other emblematic centres of Mapuche resistance, including communities where police and state authorities rarely enter.

Several visits offered a rare glimpse into a movement confronting new difficulties as Mr. Kast promises to restore order in Chile's long-running southern conflict. While some communities vow to continue resisting, younger generations are increasingly turning toward legal methods such as university study, courts and environmental campaigns to defend ancestral lands.

The Mapuche are Chile's largest Indigenous group, representing nearly 9 per cent of the total population, or about 1.6 million, according to Chile's latest census data, and the only one in the Americas to have negotiated an independence treaty with Spain after centuries of resistance. Much of Mapuche territory remained outside Chilean state control until the late 19th century.

Land loss accelerated during the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship from 1973 to 1990, when large tracts were transferred to forestry companies. Land reform that benefited Mapuches under socialist president Salvador Allende was largely reversed, and between 1974 and 1994, nearly 1.7 million hectares of land were planted with eucalyptus and pine, with much of that land coming from Mapuche areas.

Although some Mapuches have pursued state-backed land purchases, others have

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: OPENSTREETMAP

sought to reclaim territory through occupations.

Mapuche activists have set fire to forestry companies' vehicles, excavators, logging towers, camps, warehouses and offices. They have also attacked churches, cabins, crops and tourist complexes belonging to large landowners.

The most prominent militant organization is the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco, or CAM, which has long advocated recovering territory "metre by metre" and establishing Wallmapu, a new independent Mapuche state that would have its own government, currency and foreign policy.

CAM members say they only target company property, rather than people, but clashes involving security forces, landowners and activists have left nearly 40 people dead over the past 30 years.

Large parts of Chile's south have been under a state of emergency since 2022. Leftist former president Gabriel Boric vowed to solve the Mapuche issue through dialogue, but after his security minister was chased out of the region by gunfire, and authorities reported a rise in arson attacks and shootings, he declared a temporary state of emergency that has been extended dozens of times since.

Since taking office, Mr. Kast has pledged to restore order in the south and take a tougher approach toward violence linked to the conflict.

In Temucuicui, one of the most emblematic centres of Mapuche resistance, police conducted large-scale raids in May, detaining five activists, including Jorge Huenchullan, a *werken*, or community spokesperson.

His brother, Jaime Huenchullan, said increased militarization was deepening resentment.

The state of emergency has led the government to deploy troops and armoured vehicles to the area to patrol and support other government authorities.

"The militarization here has been going on for a little over four years, and it's intensifying every day," he said, alleging that vehicles are routinely stopped and children questioned while travelling to school.

"The children convince themselves more and more at an early age that the Mapuche people have to fight, they have to defend themselves."

Mapuche leaders have denounced tougher prosecutions and longer prison sentences as political persecution.

Among the most prominent prisoners is CAM founder Héctor Llaitul, who is serving a 23-year sentence for attacks against authorities, timber theft and violent land occupation. Fifteen years of his sentence were due to incitement to violence.

In written responses provided to Reuters through his lawyer, Mr. Llaitul described the prosecutions as part of a broader strategy to suppress Mapuche resistance.

"The criminalization becomes another tool of political persecution, taking on punitive and punishing overtones rather than re-education, in order to subdue and exterminate resistance," he said.

Luis Toledo, a Mapuche man, collects timber from a sawmill processing pine and eucalyptus trees on territory reclaimed from forestry companies in Ercilla, Chile, in 2021.

Authorities have argued the conviction marked an important step toward reducing violence in Chile's south.

Mr. Kast's office redirected questions about the crackdown and claims of political persecution to the Interior Ministry. The ministry did not reply to repeated requests for comment.

A tally by Indigenous groups estimates that roughly 150,000 hectares are occupied by Mapuche communities in the south, while a study by a local business association estimates that 12,700 hectares are effectively off limits to police and state authorities.

About 2,500 of those hectares are in Fundo Pidenco, a hilly property belonging to

gathers medicinal plants

A member of the Mapuche community walks by a sign that reads 'Resist and advance in the territory.'

A Mapuche man plays a traditional wind instrument near a banner reading 'Free the weichafe (warrior) Pelantaro Llaitul' in Temuco, Chile.

A Mapuche woman faces a water cannon during a protest against the government in Santiago, Chile, in 2025.

forestry company Arauco that has been occupied by Mapuche activists since 2016.

Nearly a decade later, Fundo Pidenco remains in transition. A network of winding dirt roads cuts through hillsides connecting wooden homes, grazing livestock and fields of emerald-green lupin.

"This used to be a desert, but with everything we've done here we've been healing the earth, rebuilding and bringing it back to life," said Orfelina Alcaman, a community spokesperson.

Ms. Alcaman, 44, said she grew up hearing stories from her grandparents about how they lived and worked on the land before it became part of industrial forestry holdings. Together with other families and support from CAM, she entered Fundo Pidenco in 2016 and never left.

"Since the first day we set foot here, it was with the intention of staying, not leaving," she said. "We don't want anything gifted to us. What we want is land to live as Mapuches, to grow as Mapuches, develop our own economy and live freely and with dignity."

Ms. Alcaman rejected accusations that Mapuche communities involved in land occupations are terrorists. "I've never killed anyone, I've never kidnapped anyone, I've never injured anyone," she said. "But if being Mapuche and occupying this land that belonged to my ancestors makes me a terrorist, then I'm a terrorist."

She pointed toward a carved wooden totem known as *chemamull* standing on a hilltop burial site marking the grave of Pablo Marchant, a CAM activist killed during a clash with police in 2021 who has become a symbol of resistance.

"I lie here, and I'll die here," Ms. Alcaman said, adding that she wants to be buried next to Mr. Marchant. "We're not going to surrender. They can come with hundreds or thousands of police, soldiers, whatever. They'll have to take us out dead."

Arauco, the forestry company that owns the land, declined to comment.

Corma, the association of forestry companies in Chile, also declined to comment for this story.

In late June, days after celebrations of We Tripantu, the Mapuche new year, dozens of activists and leaders gathered outside a courthouse in Temuco, the same city where Mr. Kast launched his presidential campaign.

In the court, imprisoned activist Mr. Llaitul's son, Pelantaro, faced a similar future to his father. Pelantaro Llaitul and four other young Mapuche men had been accused of participating in an attack on a forestry plantation that left trucks and an excavator burned. They were eventually given sentences of between 14 and 16 years in prison.

Outside the courthouse, supporters stood silently around a fire in the winter cold. We Tripantu, celebrated during the Southern Hemisphere winter solstice, is a symbol of longer days and new beginnings.

After the hearing, Héctor Llaitul's eldest son, Ernesto, addressed the crowd. "We don't have any reason to hang our heads or be ashamed of the situation we're in," he said. "It's the life we chose. The life of struggle."

He acknowledged the pain of seeing another family member imprisoned after watching his father receive a sentence of more than two decades. "We knew this process was going to be difficult," he said. "Maybe they've won a certain battle, but they haven't won the war."

The crowd periodically responded with chants of "*Marichiweu*," commonly translated as "10 times we will win."

"We don't have the luxury of giving up," Ernesto said. "The worst thing we can do for those who are imprisoned is abandon the struggle that put them there."

Yet even as veteran activists move through prisons and courtrooms, younger Mapuche are increasingly imagining different ways to continue the struggle.

Standing nearby was Mr. Llaitul's youngest son, Weftui, 20, a law student at the University of Chile, one of the country's top universities. Unlike the generation of *weichafes*, or warriors, that emphasized direct confrontation, he sees legal advocacy as a way to defend Mapuche prisoners and ancestral lands.

"I didn't start school 100-per-cent convinced I wanted to study law, but I've been motivated by a dream of being able to help Mapuche prisoners. My family too, if I can," he said.

Today, he works with communities to explain Indigenous land rights and legal protections.

His path reflects wider changes under way across Mapuche communities as younger generations balance ancestral traditions, higher education and an evolving conflict.

The struggle is changing elsewhere, too.

In the mountainous Alto Biobio region, 20-year-old Millaray Suarez represents a younger generation focused less on recovering forestry lands and more on protecting rivers, forests and medicinal plants as a new wave of international companies set its sights on southern Chile for wind, hydroelectric and green hydrogen projects.

Ms. Suarez is one of a small number of young *machis*, or spiritual healers, who use traditional plants gathered throughout southern Chile. Embracing the role meant remaining in her community and taking on responsibilities that previous generations of healers have struggled to pass on. Local leaders say both *machis* and *lahuen* – medicinal plants used in traditional healing – are becoming increasingly scarce because of land loss.

The land struggle has evolved as well.

Ms. Suarez's father, Lonko Segundo Suarez, spent years fighting for territory after communities were pushed onto rocky and less productive land up in the Andes mountains.

Today, the family is focused on opposing the Rucalhue hydroelectric dam being built on the Biobio River by China's Three Gorges company. The project, they say, threatens old-growth forest areas where rare medicinal plants still grow.

"The dam will flood the area, and that *lahuen* will disappear," Ms. Suarez said. "As *machis*, we don't just make remedies and heal. We also have a duty to protect the little that we have left. We have to protect this earth."

Despite the rejection of a legal injunction filed by local *machis*, she remains resolute. While many young Mapuches leave for cities in search of opportunities, Ms. Suarez believes her generation has a responsibility to remain.

"Our ancestors fought hard, many were killed, and now it is up to us, the youth," she said. "Just as they gave their lives to defend this land, we are also going to defend the little we have left."

REUTERS

EDITORIAL

The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures - Junius

Realtor fees need to come down to earth

Should your landscaper get paid more because the price of your property went up? Of course not – and neither should your realtor. Changes to industry practices would result in greater competition, resulting in lower realtor fees and better home affordability.

In 2015, the average Toronto home sale resulted a commission of $31,176, split between the seller's and buyer's realtors. In 2025, the average sale gave the realtors $53,392 – a 71 per cent rise, far exceeding inflation.

The fact that realtor commissions are usually based on a percentage of the home sale price is a fundamental inequity baked into the real estate market that has contributed to affordability problems. While realtor commissions have dropped slightly in the last four years along with national home prices, they are substantially higher than a decade ago. The duties of a real estate agent, meanwhile, remain essentially the same.

The current slow real estate market should be giving home buyers an opportunity to negotiate lower fees with their realtors. There are a few signs that this is happening, with some "cash-back realtors," who return a portion of their commissions to the buyer, reporting a rise in business.

But most people continue to use full-fee realtors rather than turning to discounted services or selling their homes without an agent. The traditional fee structure has largely stayed in place, in part due to anti-competitive practices that keep fees high.

It's true that realtor fees aren't fixed, and the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA), which represents realtors, says its policies are "pro-competitive and pro-consumer." (And realtors will point out that their take home pay is substantially less than the commissions they receive, as they have to pay their brokerage, as well as fees for licensing, insurance, and other expenses.) However, it's no coincidence that the vast majority of sales follow the customary fee structures, which vary by province.

One reason is that rules from CREA require the seller's realtor to offer a commission to the buyer's realtor for homes on the MLS system, the database where most properties are listed. Because the buyer doesn't pay their realtor directly, they have less incentive and ability to push for lower fees. However, the high fees are effectively built into the price they pay for the home.

Sellers' realtors generally don't want to offer lower commissions to buyers' realtors, as that can slow down a deal. Research shows that homes with lower buyers' agent commissions take longer to sell – and are less likely to sell at all.

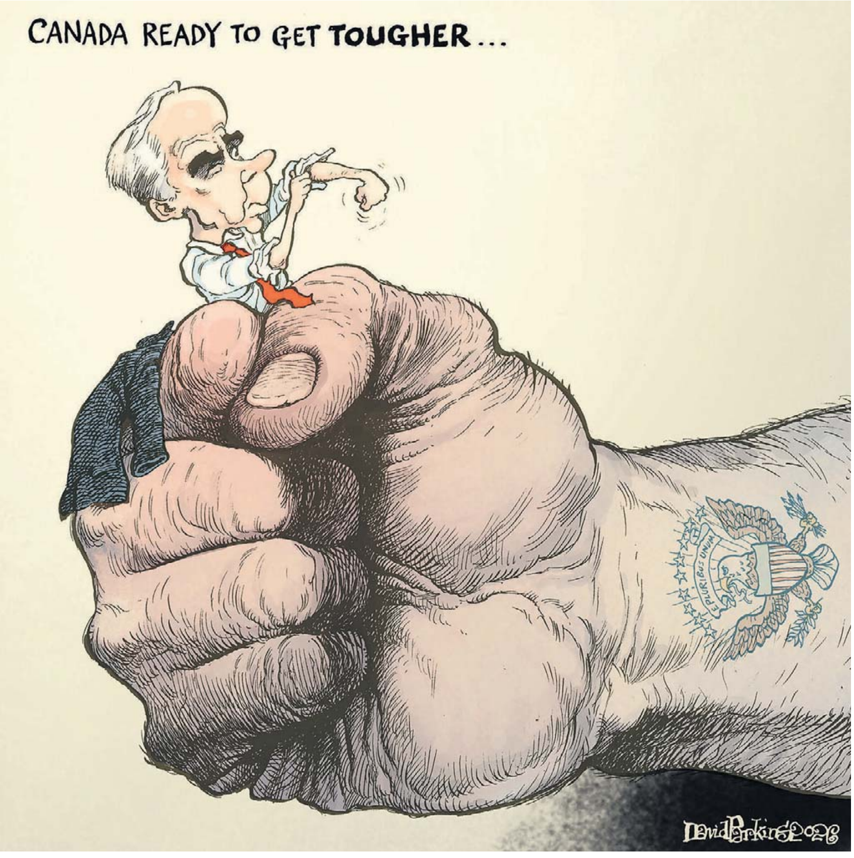
The practice of having the seller's agent pay the buyer's agent is currently being looked at by the Competition Bureau, and it's also the subject of a class-action lawsuit. The Competition Bureau says that as of now, there is no conclusion of wrongdoing from CREA and local real estate boards, but if there is evidence of legal concerns, it could make an application to the Competition Tribunal to prohibit the conduct or seek remedies.

Buyers would have more ability to negotiate if they paid their realtors directly. Local real estate boards, provincial governments and regulators should work together to make the commission structure more transparent and give more control to buyers. Consumer-friendly practices could make it easier for flat-fee realtors to expand, which would increase affordability.

Other industry practices also need further scrutiny. The Competition Bureau is also looking at a CREA policy that requires that residential real estate listings be placed on an MLS system within three days of public marketing unless an exemption applies. The bureau's investigation is looking at if this practice gives large brokerages an advantage, as they can access more listings within their firm before smaller competitors.

Real estate agents bring important expertise to what are often the most important financial transactions in people's lives. It's likely that given more pricing options, many will still opt for traditional realtor services with high fees.

However, a broader rethink of commissions is overdue. Lower fee models and flat-fee services, which don't rise and fall as home prices shift, deserve a fair shot at gaining consumer support. These changes would be another step in boosting affordability and helping young buyers get into the market.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COUNT THE WAYS

Re "Canada ready to 'get tougher' if U.S. trade deal isn't reached before deadline, Carney says" (Aug. 6): "The Prime Minister … is typically careful not to unnecessarily provoke the mercurial U.S. President."

The Prime Minister has repeatedly and deliberately provoked the U.S. President. Just to name a few, these provocations include allowing Doug Ford to run anti-tariff Ronald Reagan advertising in the United States; mumbling "who cares" late last year when a reporter asked how free trade negotiations were going; the Davos speech; jetting about in search of new trade deals elsewhere; more recently saying that Canada's ties with the U.S. have become "weaknesses."

Canadians who think the U.S. is totally at fault for the mess we're in should give their heads a shake.

Marcia Garman Medicine Hat, Alta.

DRINK TO THAT

Re "The provinces serve up a cocktail of petty political posturing" (Editorial, Aug. 6): The quasi-agreement between provinces (except Quebec) to allow interprovincial direct-to-consumer alcohol sales is the typical mishmash of rules whose main goal seems to be preserving parochial interests – a consequence of provinces controlling retail alcohol sales through government-owned stores.

In an enlightened environment, provincial entities would never be the retail model. An unfettered competitive retail environment regulated by a province, as principally a tax collector, would be a far better choice.

Provinces seem unable to rid themselves of the puritan yoke that, not that long ago, had alcohol hidden in brown paper bags.

Frank Malone Aurora, Ont.

STANDSTILL

Re "Alberta is allowing patients to self-refer for some diagnostic tests. What's the end game?" (July 31): I believe the health care reform debate has been lost.

Coming out of the pandemic, I thought there was momentum for change. Canadians had been confronted on a mass scale with the significant shortfalls of their once most-beloved institution, which leaves millions of people without even a family doctor.

There were lines that formed outside walk-in clinics in winter an hour before registration even began. If we were not waiting in the cold, we were waiting on the phone, in the hallways, in the emergency room, in pain.

The momentum I saw is gone. We are back to where Canadians always are, increasingly dissatisfied but paralyzed with fear.

Reactions from health care leaders and the professional class to modest proposals in Alberta seem to be the typical Canadian response: uncertainty, simplistic moralization and, worst of all, no useful proposals on what should be done other than nothing.

Canada is stuck.

Mark Wolfgram Ottawa

MONEY TO BURN

Re "A $140-million hack has bitcoin users rethinking how they store their crypto" (Aug. 5): How can this be reality? I believe bitcoin is a worthless commodity backed by the fresh air of the globe's atmosphere.

When the dance finally ends, every participant will likely lose whatever they bet. Note the description of bitcoin "users," not bitcoin "investors."

This makes collateralized debt obligation, as reported on by Michael Lewis in his book *The Big Short*, look like gold ingots in comparison.

This event could also have been caused by a good lighter.

Ian Douglas Burlington, Ont.

CHURCH AND STATE

Re "The CAF's new public 'prayer ban' is not an attack on religious freedom" (Aug. 6): I agree.

But as living things, it is our nature to adapt. And as human beings, it is our nature to strive to understand, to make better and more creative use of the universe in which we live.

Without reference to a particular religious prescription or doctrine, to acknowledge God is simply to acknowledge that we are part of a greater, awesome, marvellous, grand, splendid, dynamic universe with, from a human point of view, infinite potential. It is, in other words, to be realistic and avoid what the ancient Greeks called hubris.

Not really a religious belief, it is neutral. It is acknowledgment of our fallibility and, in opening a public meeting, of good and collaborative intentions. It should not offend anyone with an open mind.

Stephen McNamee Ottawa

I have no difficulty accepting the beneficial side of religion as it provides for many people in Canada, and around the world, both guidance and comfort. I cannot abide the use of religion to justify claims of superiority of one group over others, let alone the hate and violence that too often stem from extreme religious views.

On balance, I believe the sooner we truly separate state affairs from religion, the better. Meanwhile, I will continue to teach my young grandchildren the official version of our national anthem, but will probably always wince a bit singing, "God keep our land glorious and free."

Donald Hall Ottawa

BUTT OUT

Re "At 23, I've become a 'social smoker.' And I'm not the only one" (Opinion, Aug. 1): This disturbs me for two reasons.

The first is that the incidence of smoking seems to be on the rise. No smoker escapes the effects of the poison which cigarettes contain.

Tobacco kills, and this behaviour is not simply risky or a bit dangerous, as some "influencers" may suggest. Tobacco smoke is self-destructive with every inhalation.

The second is the nihilistic point of view used as a rationale for smoking. Yet throughout history, there have always been wars, unemployment, disasters of various kinds and political upheaval.

It is still the best of times. We happen to live in one of the most stable, beautiful, prosperous and safe countries in the world. We have all won the lottery.

If we consider the incredible hardships our ancestors, whatever their background, endured to live and compare that to our current way of life, the outlook expressed here seems just a touch, well, privileged.

Peter Lapner Ottawa

NO GO

Re "New York City wants Canadian tourists back. Will discounts woo you there?" (Retire Rich Newsletter, July 31): I cancelled four planned trips to the United States starting in January, 2025, and I have not been there since. No amount of enticement, while Donald Trump continues to harass Canada, would get me to travel and spend my hard-earned money there.

I used to go to New York every year to see musicals, but now I just double my trips to London. Going to the U.S. is convenient and easy, but the world is a big place.

Until the harassment comes to an end, I can't understand why Canadians are still travelling to the U.S. I have to give my head a shake.

Bryce Code Calgary

Letters to the Editor should be exclusive to The Globe and Mail. Include name, address and daytime phone number. Keep letters under 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. E-mail: **letters@globeandmail.com**

OPINION

The housing crisis is bad for our health

Public policy needs to change more quickly and robustly to tackle such a fundamental problem

ANDRÉ PICARD
OPINION

'Housing shapes health; health shapes work; work shapes income; and income shapes the next generation's opportunities."

That quote, from a report entitled "The Public Housing Dividend," makes an important point: There are few things more impactful to our well-being, individually and collectively, than having roofs over our heads.

If you don't have stable housing, it's hard to be healthy, employed and put food on the table.

But Canada is struggling with an ever-worsening, multifaceted housing crisis.

In recent years, the homeless population has exploded. So too have encampments, the most visible manifestation. Rents have soared. So too has the price of houses.

The wait for supportive housing stretches to years. It's not unusual for more than half of a household outcome to be gobbled up by housing costs. Even people with good salaries struggle to live in cities like Vancouver and Toronto. Meanwhile, many units sit empty as speculators quietly await big returns.

The housing affordability crisis is bad for our physical and mental health. And not so great for the economy.

The typically Canadian response has been to produce reports, lots of reports.

That comment is not meant to be overly cynical. Calls to action raise awareness and, hopefully, spur policy change.

But it's a reminder that public policy in Canada operates in slow motion. We are not inclined to quick or robust responses, even to a problem as fundamental as lack of housing.

This is not to suggest that governments are doing nothing. There is an endless parade of housing-related announcements.

On Wednesday, for example, Prime Minister Mark Carney announced $2.7-billion in funding to bolster rental housing in Toronto. That investment will see the construction of 5,600 new rental units. At least 1,800 of them will be designated as "affordable," and a portion will be supportive housing.

These new projects are welcome, but a drop in the bucket compared to what is needed.

Consider that, in Toronto alone, there are 100,000 people on wait lists for social housing and that half of the existing 60,000 units are so old and run down that they need to be replaced in the next decade.

But in its report "The Public Housing Dividend," the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis argues, as the title suggests, that more public housing is a good investment, generating $2.80 in return on every dollar invested.

The report also reminds us these investments need to be significant to be impactful.

By the CCEA's calculation, investing $36.4-billion in public housing in the Toronto area would generate $102-billion in economic and social value over 25 years.

That $36.4-billion spend would allow for the construction of 22,000 new social housing units ($19.3-billion) and upgrades on existing stock ($17.1-billion) to keep those units functional.

Overall, the investment would result in 4,700 fewer people experiencing homelessness, create 14,900 jobs annually, and generate $12.6-billion in federal and provincial tax revenues over time. It would also reduce emergency department visits, hospital stays, and justice system costs to the tune of $1.8-billion.

"Public housing is not charity, and it's not simply shelter, it's productive infrastructure," the report argues.

A second report, released Thursday, also reminds us that there is cost to inaction.

In "Homelessness Is A Housing Problem in Canada," the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness shows that rising rents are fuelling homelessness, much more so than other factors like drug misuse and mental illness.

In other words, it demonstrates, with data, what we have long known: that lack of housing affordability is driving people to the streets. In cities where rents are highest, and availability of rental units is lowest, the number of people living with homelessness is most acute.

"The logical conclusion from these findings is that solving homelessness requires addressing the housing needs for the lowest income Canadians," the report says.

While that is true, governments can't stop there. The housing affordability problem extends far beyond the homeless and those requiring social housing and supportive housing. Low-wage workers and even middle-class families need some relief too.

It need not all come in the form of government subsidies, but in policy changes that make building and renting homes easier, and more affordable.

The $115-billion, 10-year National Housing Strategy, launched in 2017, was loaded with good intentions. But the next iteration, which is being formulated now, needs to be more ambitious and hard-hitting.

On the housing front, we need more action, and fewer calls to action.

The wars in Iran and Ukraine converged years ago

RUCHI KUMAR
OPINION
Istanbul-based journalist who covers conflict, politics and gender

On July 25, a cargo ship anchored in the Caspian Sea, not too far from the mouth of the Volga River, became the target of Ukrainian drones. The attack left one crew member dead and caused considerable damage to the vessel.

The Security Service of Ukraine, the country's intelligence agency, announced shortly after that they had targeted a sanctioned vessel that was being "used to transport military cargo to Russia."

For months now, the Ukrainian military had shifted its offensive and had been targeting Russian interests on land and at sea, in an attempt to inflict damage, and with relative success, to the infrastructure enabling Russia's invasion of its territory. In that sense, this attack was not out of the ordinary.

But this ship, named MV Anna, was not Russian, but Iranian.

The Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi asserted that the targeted vessel was a commercial ship, demanding restitution and threatening a military response. He also accused Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky of dragging Europe into the continuing war in the Middle East. In political corridors in the West, many stakeholders and observers feared that the attack could trigger the convergence of the two of the world's largest wars: Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the U.S.'s attacks on Iran.

A man walks past bodies in plastic bags of people killed during Russian ballistic missile and drone strikes at a railway station in the Kyiv region on Wednesday. MYKOLA TYMCHENKO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Despite the risk of escalation, diplomatic machinery kicked in, and the dispute was resolved by the following Tuesday. Iran was reportedly assured that the attack was unintentional. An Iranian military adviser said that Tehran's plans to launch strikes at three Ukrainian sites were cancelled after an "apology" from Kyiv.

But the fact is that Ukraine and Iran are already engaged in a conflict, even if they haven't directly faced each other on the battlefield. After all, Iran and Ukraine have both maintained support for each other's enemies for years.

Iran has consistently backed the Russian military since before it launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February, 2022. Just months before President Vladimir Putin launched his "special operation" in Ukraine, in 2021, Iran sold $4-billion worth of weapons to Russia, most notably the Shahed unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), fleets of suicide drones that Russia still uses on a near-daily basis and that wreak havoc in Ukrainian cities. And in 2023, for US$1.75-billion, Iran allowed Russia to produce its own drones based on the Iranian models called the Geran UAV. Russia now mass-produces more than 400 of these drones and similar variants a day at the Alabuga Special Economic Zone in Russia.

In 2025, Russia and Iran also signed the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty in Moscow, which facilitates not only military support but also intelligence-sharing and joint threat response.

By aligning with Mr. Putin, extending its support for his invasion and directly supporting it with arms, Tehran effectively placed itself in confrontation with Ukraine.

Meanwhile, since the start of the U.S.'s war against Iran, Ukraine has shared its expertise and technology in intercepting Iranian drones and weapons with the United States and countries in the Gulf under attack from Iran. It has, after all, downed more than 44,000 Shahed drones as of 2025, and has even learned to do it on a budget. This technical defence support is a strategic response, aimed at weakening Russia's allies.

And earlier this year, as mass demonstrations threatened the Iranian regime's political control, Mr. Zelensky met with the exiled Iranian Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, who was also later invited to attend the Black Sea Security Forum in Odesa.

Even if the Caspian Sea episode truly was "unintentional," it is in keeping with Kyiv's expanding military strategy of increasingly targeting Russian military supply chains, including warehouses, oil refineries and oil tankers transporting fuel and cargo linked to the military. Iran remains an integral part of these supply chains.

During the course of my own reporting in Ukraine, it became clear to me that Ukrainians view the Iranian regime as an accomplice to Russia's war, and by extension, an aggressor. The sentiment was perhaps best expressed by Olexander Scherba, Ukraine's ambassador in South Africa. Invited to offer condolences for the deaths of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other Iranian leaders when the U.S.'s attacks began in March, he did not mince his words: "As military allies of the Russian Federation, the deceased leaders of Iran had on their hands the blood of thousands of Ukrainian citizens … as someone who has spent three years to the tune of Iran-created machines of death howling every night in the sky over Kyiv … I cannot help but wish for every culprit to meet the justice they deserve."

Canada is not working together to confront the wildfire crisis

TANYA TALAGA
OPINION

This summer is shaping up to be one of the worst wildfire seasons in Canadian history – and it is only the beginning of August.

Thousands have been displaced across the country. Namaygoosisagagun (Collins) and Whitesand First Nations, in Northern Ontario, have burned to the ground. In B.C., Okanagan Indian Band Chief Dan Wilson estimates that at least 200 homes there have been destroyed by the Bradley Creek wildfire.

We have seen herculean evacuation efforts, with people fleeing fires with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. We've heard stories of a railway worker urgently warning a community to get the hell out, of a 13-year-old boy with a small boat and a dog moving the vulnerable to safety. Regular Canadians have donated so many clothes and baby items that some communities have had to ask donations to stop.

First Nations communities have been affected disproportionately by these fires. We are on the front lines of climate change. Our communities live in the grand boreal forest that stretches across the northern part of much of Canada. It wasn't until the smoke turned the skies orange in Toronto and it became hard to breathe that the country truly understood that the world they know is burning up.

Lightning causes many of the fires we are seeing now, and extreme weather brought on by man-made climate change have made them explosive. *Ishkode* – fire – has a spirit. She is talking to us. And she is angry.

Canada knew about her rage, and how it would affect our communities. The 2019 federal budget stated that First Nations were 18 times more likely to be evacuated than the rest of Canada. Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) says that from 2009 to 2013, an average of 28 wildfires per year affected First Nations on reserves – a number that increased by 257 per cent from 2018 to 2023. And every year, we see thousands evacuated from the James Bay coast and sent to live in hotels in the south – part of the more than 248,000 Indigenous peoples across the country forced to flee their homes from 2009 to 2025.

Todd Kuiack is a member of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation and the former national director of ISC's emergency assistance program. "I kept saying that we were the canaries in the coal mine," he told me. He pushed to put emergency management co-ordinators on reserves, and $55-million went toward those jobs, he said. Community risk determined who got the funding.

This money was and is needed, but it must be part of a permanent, comprehensive and more robust plan that includes unrecognized reserves such as Collins and Whitesand. And if all levels of government aren't working together with First Nations, best laid plans are useless.

A public inquiry is needed now on how Canada has responded – or failed to respond – to the wildfires. That's particularly true for Ontario, which is in the middle of what's projected to be the province's worst wildfire season ever.

In 2021, Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler hand-delivered Premier Doug Ford a plan called "Emergency Management for First Nations in Ontario," which pointed out the gaps in the emergency systems and made recommendations on how to address them. The report also noted that Ontario's Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act doesn't even clearly delineate between the definitions of "emergency" and "disaster," which has contributed to delays in creating a comprehensive plan, as has a lack of "meaningful partnerships" between First Nations and the federal and provincial governments. But Mr. Fiddler hasn't heard a word about it since – which is in keeping with Mr. Ford, who did not meet with First Nation leaders when he visited Northern Ontario in July.

Ottawa gives millions to the provinces to manage emergencies. But Mr. Fiddler wants to know if they are holding the provinces accountable, to ensure they are doing what they are supposed to with that money.

Ontario's Auditor-General is undertaking a wildland fire management performance audit, an area the AG's office frequently monitors. As of November, 2024, the Ministry of Mines, Emergency Management Ontario and the Ministry of Natural Resources have only collectively fully implemented 13 per cent of the AG's recommendations, and 50 per cent of them have seen little or no progress.

"Growing up as a kid, we'd have rain for a day or two," said Mr. Fiddler. "Now, a system moves through quickly, there is rain for an hour and that is it. Or when there is a storm it usually comes with a storm and lightening causes fires. It is so dry the muskeg is burning now."

There are too many problems to count in how we are responding to climate emergencies that are happening more frequently than ever. The transparency of an inquiry can help us figure out a path forward.

GARY MASON and DOUG SAUNDERS will return.

WEEKEND WATCHING

This politically inept romcom is fit to be purged

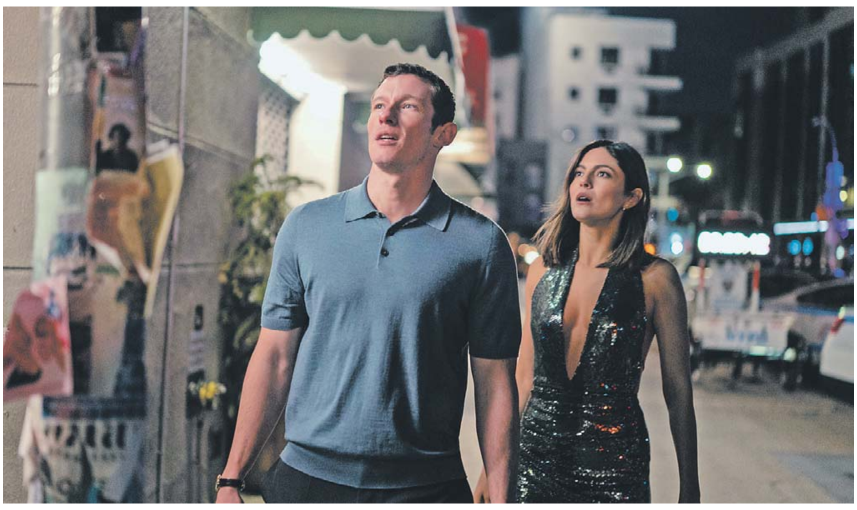
A high-concept premise takes away from the film and leaves nothing in return

RADHEYAN SIMONPILLAI

REVIEW

One Night Only
CLASSIFICATION PG; 102 MINUTES

Directed by Will Gluck
Written by Travis Baum
Starring Monica Barbaro, Callum Turner and Maya Hawke



Callum Turner, left, and Monica Barbaro star as Owen and Allie in One Night Only. The film is set in the U.S. at a time in which premarital sex is illegal apart from one evening a year. NICOLE RIVELLI/UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Somewhere at Universal Pictures, there's an executive who probably hates romcoms but was sold on the pitch that *One Night Only* is "*The Purge* but for sex," or "the romcom's answer to *The Purge*." That's essentially what the awkward premise behind *One Night Only* boils down to.

The alleged romcom, starring a delightful Monica Barbaro and Dua Lipa's husband Callum Turner, is set in an alternative universe. Premarital sex has been outlawed in the United States, except, as the title spells out, for one night only. So instead of pitchfork mobs turning the country red with murder, as in the *Purge* movies, we get thousands of horny New York City singles tearing into the streets searching for an orgy, stripping in the back seats of cars or up against restaurant windows, and getting it on like jackrabbits to make the most of their 12-hour window.

This world-building can be amusing for a minute. Singles are aggressively swiping right to find a match for the night, or flooding into bars speed dating. They rush past meet-cute and head straight for sexual harassment because the countdown is on. Meanwhile, local businesses take to price gouging anything and everything that helps customers get laid. $165 for a haircut. $200 for a condom. $2,000 for babysitting. Director Will Gluck, of *Easy A* and *Peter Rabbit* fame, knows how to have the most frothy and animated fun with silly scenarios.

But *The Purge*'s set-up had the politics of its time – from Black Lives Matter to Donald Trump's extremism – crashing through its windows, perhaps in the most superficial terms. *One Night Only* keeps real-world parallels decorative and distant; as if its main characters barely have a stake in a society where the president says the word "incel" is now a badge of honour. Try and find a single person who is seething, who does something more than sticking a "repeal" flag in their window or questioning a police officer about whether enforcing puritanism is a worthwhile use of resources.

It's not that I want my romcoms political. I don't expect to come out radicalized by a movie directed by Gluck, whose last movie was the blockbuster Sydney Sweeney comedy *Anyone But You*. But all the wasted breath on *One Night Only*'s high-concept premise takes away from the romcom of it all and gives back nothing in return. The precious meet-cute moments in Travis Baum's script, which was voted the most liked unproduced script on the 2024 Black List, buckle under the weight of exposition. Explanations of how a sex-law mandate is the latest attack on bodily autonomy, from a very Trump-coded administration, become this movie's belaboured idea of foreplay.

Our two unfortunate leads, Barbaro's Allie and Turner's Owen, tiptoe around *One Night Only*'s passive politics, which sneaks an Omicron reference into its perhaps bipartisan consideration for bodily autonomy, while struggling to work up genuine sparks with each other or any one of their other attempted hookups.

I'm tempted to say that Barbaro, an Oscar nominee for her performance as Joan Baez in *A Complete Unknown*, is slumming it here. Only she never seems to stoop down to the movie's level, even when playing along with some of its desperate and contrived slapstick. If anything, she elevates that stuff with her warmth, magnetism and genuinely playful sense of humour.

Barbaro makes the most of those vocals we heard in *A Complete Unknown* as Allie, a singer stuck recording jingles, searching for hilariously melodic ways to sing about psoriasis or the benefits of a product called Vag-a-clear. During her desperate night out, in the hopes to find a hook-up that could be meaningful, she runs into Owen.

He's a pizza shop owner sore that his girlfriend would choose to spend this one night when sex is legal with someone other than him. The girlfriend is played by Maya Hawke. The actor playing the alternate she chooses to boink is not worth spoiling. So much of the modest fun in *One Night Only* leans on the famous faces that unexpectedly pop up, livening up scenes opposite Turner, who is like Ben Affleck if you take away the Boston and the hairline. I'm not sure what you're left with.

Turner is an undeniably attractive actor, with obvious polite charms he plies all too eagerly. But he comes off in recent roles as a humourless heartthrob who has outgrown the YA romances he seems perfectly suited to. He can't quite find his footing in the more adult fare, opposite the much stronger actresses he's been paired against (before this we saw him opposite Elizabeth Olsen in *Eternity*). That leaves *One Night Only*'s romance as unengaged as its politics, the sparks that fly at the end feeling like its been imposed on us, as if by mandate.

One Night Only opens in theatres Friday.

Gonzo Brian Mulroney doc to debut in TIFF's Midnight Madness program

BARRY HERTZ

An "ingeniously irreverent" documentary about late Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney from one of the country's most acclaimed filmmakers will make its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival next month, organizers announced Thursday.

Titled *Ladies and Gentlemen, Brian Mulroney*, the doc by Matthew Rankin will play as part of TIFF's perennially popular Midnight Madness program, which highlights unconventional genre cinema from around the world. Described by Midnight Madness programmer Peter Kuplowsky as a movie that's "akin to an Adam Curtis documentary overdosing on Heritage Minutes," the National Film Board-produced project is Rankin's follow-up to his widely acclaimed 2024 comedy *Universal Language*, which made the shortlist for Best International Feature at the 2025 Academy Awards.

The Montreal-based Rankin is no stranger to either Midnight Madness or films about prime ministers. In 2019, Rankin's feature directorial debut, *The Twentieth Century*, painted a surreal fictionalized portrait of William Lyon Mackenzie King, and premiered at that year's Midnight Madness program, winning the award for Best Canadian First Feature Film.

"I am particularly thrilled to welcome Matthew Rankin back to Midnight Madness, and especially with a documentary, as it's the first time I've included one during my tenure," said Kuplowsky, who has overseen the after-dark slate since 2017. "Despite utilizing largely archival footage, Rankin's film speaks to a feverish ecstatic truth as it depicts the political ascendancy of Mr. Mulroney, remixing the footage with a barrage of nostalgic Canadian pop-culture detritus and original animation."

The Mulroney doc is one of 10 titles added to the festival's late-night slate, which will open with the world premiere of Joshua Giuliano's slasher *River*, starring horror mainstay Jane Levy, and close with the North American premiere of *Rogue Trooper*, the adult-minded animated adaptation of the iconic British comic strip, courtesy of *Moon* and *Warcraft* director Duncan Jones. Other highlights of the Midnight program include the Japan-set action-comedy *Vintage Violence* from Ukrainian-American provocateur Eugene Kotlyarenko; the Malayalam vampire action thriller *Half* from the mononymous director Samjad; and the drug-fuelled action-horror film *Kick On* from Australian filmmaker Nick Kozakis.

Outside of the main program, TIFF has added two new bonus events to the Midnight series: a special prefestival Sept. 9 screening of Na Hong-jin's sci-fi action epic *Hope*, which arrives in Toronto after its divisive Cannes premiere this spring, and a victory lap presentation of Curry Barker's psychological thriller *Obsession*, which made its world premiere at the 2025 edition of TIFF before being acquired by Focus Features and going on to become one of this year's big box-office success stories.

Since 2021, Kuplowsky has also hosted Midnight Dankness, an unofficial eve-of-TIFF event highlighting cult cinema and remix video art. Proceeds from last year's Dankness were donated to the Palestinian Children's Relief Fund and the Islamic Relief Canada's Orphan Sponsorship program. With *Hope* screening the night before the festival properly kicks off this year, Kuplowsky will hold Midnight Dankness Sept. 8, with details on this edition's programming and charitable recipient to be announced next week.

The 51st annual edition of TIFF runs Sept. 10 through 20.

Masahiro Motoki plays Lord Murashige Araki in the The Samurai and the Prisoner. BLUE FOX ENTERTAINMENT CANADA

The Samurai and the Prisoner offers a richly rewarding mystery worthy of Kurosawa's bloody throne

BARRY HERTZ

REVIEW

The Samurai and the Prisoner
CLASSIFICATION N/A; 147 MINUTES

Directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
Written by Kiyoshi Kurosawa, based on the novel by Honobu Yonezawa
Starring Masahiro Motoki, Masaki Suda and Yuriko Yoshitaka

CRITIC'S PICK

The great satisfaction of a Kiyoshi Kurosawa film lies in the director's seeming indifference to, well, delivering satisfaction. At least the kind of conventional, everything-in-a-neat-bow tidiness probably expected by devotees of the many genres the prolific Japanese master plays in.

Whether working in horror (*Cure*, *Pulse*), melodrama (*Tokyo Sonata*), politically tinged thrillers (*Wife of a Spy*) or nervy social satire (*Cloud*), the filmmaker prefers to leave his audiences in a state of instability, left to interrogate just what it is they saw, and what its creator's thematic intentions might be.

This isn't to say that Kurosawa's films are impractical, frustrating puzzles – more so that the director places a high (and increasingly rare) value on letting a film take its time to seep into the hearts and minds of an audience. There is more to think about in the final few minutes of *Cure*, for instance, than the dozens of horror films (made both inside and outside Japan) it inspired.

In a way, that wait-and-think approach will help you digest Kurosawa's latest film, *The Samurai and the Prisoner*. But at the same time, there is something luxuriously comforting about watching the director use his many skills to tell a relatively straightforward murder mystery about power and corruption. Classical in construction and rich in execution, this might be the most immediately, abundantly satisfying film in the 71-year-old director's magnificently long career.

Adapted from Honobu Yonezawa's 2021 historical novel of the same name, *The Samurai and the Prisoner* is set in the mountains of 1578 Japan, where a castle is under siege. Inside is Araki Murashige (Masahiro Motoki), who is leading a fractured rebellion against the warlord Oda Nobunaga (Bando Shingo). Both characters are based on neatly torqued versions of their real-life selves.

SAMURAI, A13

ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY ZHOU

Mom's cooking radiated her love

FIRST PERSON

Watching her in the kitchen, I understand she has been present all along, through the quiet discipline of feeding a family, **Sandy Ho** writes

For decades, this was my mother's daily assignment. Every day, she would wash, cut, cook and serve hot, flavourful meals – a luxury I now realize not every family enjoys.

Growing up, I rarely witnessed the process. My job was to stay in my room or at the dinner table doing my homework. Later, as her adult daughter, my job became sitting and relaxing in the living room, waiting to be summoned by the familiar call when the food is ready: "*Sek fan la!*"

Today, being here to witness every movement of Mom's hand, every angle of the Chinese cleaver as it touches the ingredients and every sound sung before the first taste, I realize how solitary this space is. So many mothers like mine, year after year, fulfill their daily assignments alone. The only evidence of their labour is our empty bowls of rice.

I didn't grow up with many hugs and kisses, but I shared my childhood with the rhythmic tock-tock of the cleaver and the percussive clink of chopsticks. Today, I stay to listen: the brittle crack of garlic, the confident smash, the clean accuracy of each cut. Even the chilies seem to carry a kind of courage. This is the *chui fan*, the conscious preparation.

I watch her eyeball soy sauce, cooking wine and sugar – not guessing, but sensing. Chinese mothers seldom follow recipes, even when they claim to. They follow memory, instinct and the mood of the day. I used to think this was stubbornness. Now, I see something else: She is smelling, pausing and responding to what the chicken needs today. A silent conversation between her and the food. The marinade's confidence meeting the curiosity of the cooking wine, the saltiness of the soy sauce balancing the sweetness of sugar.

Living in Hong Kong, Peru and Canada, Mom has spent a lifetime adapting to changing ingredients. The ginger of my childhood used to have a sharper bite; now it is milder, softened by time and place. No matter where we lived, she always found a way to make Cantonese food taste like home. Like her ingredients, she has lived beside me and witnessed my changes – my voice, my quirks, my needs – and adapted to every transition I went through.

I had long concluded that my parents were incapable of seeing me, validating me or understanding me. Praise was scarce, encouragement rarer still. But watching her today, I realize something: Mom does notice. She tastes and adjusts, always adding her own quiet touch. She is uniquely herself, yet she makes room for the other.

Time, ingredients and skill aren't enough. A good stove is needed for proper *wok hey*. In Canada, Mom never had the luxury of a flame – only an electric stove, cleaner and more convenient, but lacking the breath of the wok. Still, the kitchen told its own story: chipped, mismatched bowls, pots with blackened bottoms and a range hood coated in a fine layer of oil. Evidence of a life spent feeding others.

Before *hoy fan*, the call that breaks the kitchen's silence, Mom cuts the chicken with the same certainty she has carried through every season of our lives. The thud of the cleaver, the hiss of the pan, the sharp perfume of ginger: 60 years of love expressed without words.

I see the intimacy of that love now. It was never only the food that nourished me. There has always been something about Mom's cooking that no Michelin-starred restaurant could ever reproduce. I used to think it was the gas stove in Hong Kong, or the sharper ingredients in Peru. Now I understand that every meal carried her attention – her own way of caring.

For years, I believed love should sound like words of affirmation or feel like physical affection. I didn't recognize my mother had been speaking a different language all along. Her love was in the making room, the remembering. I could not understand that language until I learned to speak it myself – until I, too, learned to bear witness and love through attention.

Standing here, watching her cook, I understand she has been present all along, through the quiet discipline of feeding a family.

I couldn't see it because I was never in the kitchen. I used to move through this space as a passerby, dismissing the cluttered counters, the greased utensils and the sink that was always full. I saw mess, but she was making meaning. This was where love was prepared.

This kitchen has always been her way of seeing me.

Sek fan la!

I love you, too, Mom.

Sandy Ho lives in Markham, Ont.

First Person is a daily personal piece submitted by readers. Have a story to tell? See our guidelines at tgam.ca/essayguide.

Samurai

FROM A12

After Nobunaga dispatches a cunning member of his forces named Kuroda Kanbei (Masaki Suda, the star of *Cloud*) to urge Murashige to capitulate, the rebel leader throws the man in the castle's dungeon. But once a series of betrayals rocks Murashige's fragile kingdom, the ruler seeks Kanbei's help in playing an increasingly dangerous game.

Part Agatha Christie and part *Throne of Blood* – the latter directed by Akira Kurosawa, whose surname the unrelated Kiyoshi has been outrunning his entire career – *The Samurai and the Prisoner* is as clever as a warrior and sharp as the sword he might carry. Certainly, the narrative relies on extended conversations that some might deride as talky, but there is power in the words that Murashige and Kanbei volley back and forth – just as there is in the blunt cinematic force of Kurosawa's dedication to reimagining feudal Japan. Each chamber of Murashige's lair, and every article of clothing sported by his subjects, feels at once real and otherworldly.

It isn't hard to understand why some audience members left *The Samurai and the Prisoner* feeling disappointed, or even defeated, after its Cannes Film Festival premiere this spring. There is a patience and commitment on display from Kurosawa that requires an equal investment and energy from his audience. But it also doesn't take much to fully give in to this intricately constructed world of vengeance and mercy, order and dishonour. Sit down, and embrace the mystery.

Opens in select theatres, including the TIFF Lightbox in Toronto Friday.

TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION

1	4	5	8	2	9	6	7	3
8	2	3	1	6	7	5	4	9
9	7	6	4	3	5	1	2	8
4	1	2	5	8	3	9	6	7
3	8	7	9	4	6	2	5	1
5	6	9	7	1	2	8	3	4
7	3	8	6	5	1	4	9	2
2	5	1	3	9	4	7	8	6
6	9	4	2	7	8	3	1	5

TODAY'S KENKEN SOLUTION

3÷ 6	2	2– 5	3	5+ 1	4
24× 4	12+ 5	5– 6	1	10× 2	18× 3
1	3	4	2 2	5	6
3	5– 6	4– 1	5	2– 4	3– 2
2	1	12× 3	4	6	5
1– 5	4	12× 2	6	4+ 3	1

WORLD FORECAST

	TODAY		TOMORROW		SUNDAY	
AMSTERDAM	22/13	SH	26/16	S	29/19	S
ATHENS	35/27	S	36/28	S	35/26	S
BANGKOK	31/27	T	31/27	T	30/27	T
BEIJING	36/24	T	31/22	PC	30/21	S
BERLIN	21/13	PC	25/16	S	32/21	S
BRUSSELS	25/14	S	28/17	S	32/19	S
COPENHAGEN	19/14	PC	21/17	PC	22/17	PC
FRANKFURT	26/14	S	29/16	S	33/21	PC
HONG KONG	31/27	T	33/28	T	34/29	PC
JERUSALEM	30/20	S	31/20	S	31/22	S
LAS VEGAS	43/31	S	44/31	S	44/31	SH
LONDON	25/16	S	28/18	PC	30/18	S
LOS ANGELES	33/22	S	33/22	S	34/23	S
MADRID	38/23	S	36/23	S	35/22	S
MIAMI	32/27	T	33/27	T	33/27	SH
MOSCOW	30/19	T	25/16	PC	23/15	S
NEW DELHI	30/26	T	33/27	T	34/28	T
NEW YORK	32/23	T	29/24	T	30/23	PC
NICE	31/26	S	31/26	S	32/27	S
ORLANDO	32/25	T	33/25	T	33/25	T
PARIS	27/16	S	31/21	PC	35/20	PC
PHOENIX	44/34	S	45/34	S	43/32	T
ROME	37/24	S	37/25	T	37/25	S
SAN FRANCISCO	17/14	PC	17/14	S	18/14	S
SEOUL	39/29	S	37/23	T	33/23	T
SINGAPORE	31/28	SH	31/27	C	31/27	PC
SYDNEY	18/8	S	17/9	S	19/13	R
TOKYO	31/26	SH	32/26	S	32/25	SH
WASHINGTON	33/24	PC	33/25	T	33/25	S

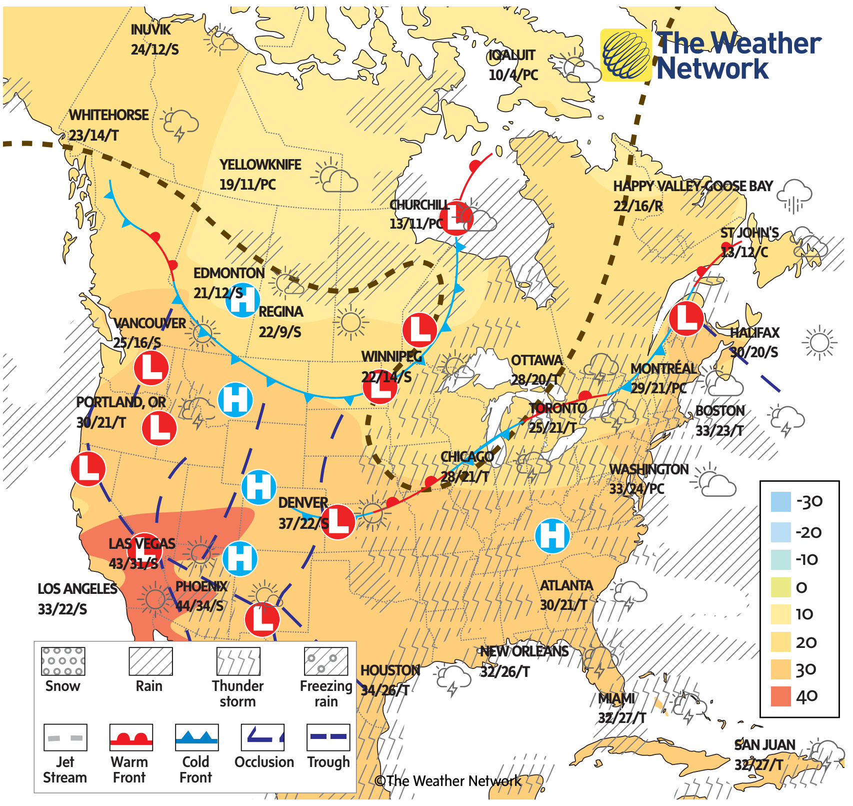
LEGEND

Daytime high, overnight low, and conditions

C CLOUDY
FG FOG
FR FREEZING RAIN
HZ HAZE
NA NOT AVAILABLE
PC PARTLY CLOUDY
R RAIN
RS RAIN/SNOW
S SUN
SN SNOW
SF SNOW FLURRIES
SH SHOWERS
T THUNDERSTORMS
W WINDY

NATIONAL FORECAST

	TODAY		TOMORROW		SUNDAY	
BANFF	28/11	S	26/10	T	23/12	SH
BARRIE	26/19	T	29/16	T	26/17	S
BRANDON	21/10	S	22/11	PC	21/11	R
CALGARY	27/12	S	26/13	S	23/14	SH
CHARLOTTETOWN	28/20	S	26/20	T	25/20	SH
CHICOUTIMI	27/17	SH	28/19	T	23/17	SH
CHURCHILL	13/11	PC	13/12	R	13/11	SH
CORNER BROOK	26/15	S	24/15	S	22/15	SH
CORNWALL	27/20	T	27/20	T	26/19	S
EDMONTON	21/12	S	23/14	SH	19/13	SH
HALIFAX	30/19	S	27/20	T	28/20	SH
HAMILTON	26/20	T	28/18	T	26/18	S
HUNTSVILLE	26/18	T	27/16	T	24/16	SH
IQALUIT	10/4	PC	10/4	PC	9/4	PC
JASPER	27/11	S	25/10	T	22/10	SH
KELOWNA	32/19	S	29/17	PC	31/18	S
KINGSTON	25/22	T	25/21	T	25/20	S
LONDON	26/20	T	27/18	T	26/19	SH
MONTRÉAL	28/21	T	28/21	T	26/20	PC
NIAGARA FALLS	26/20	T	27/20	T	26/20	S
NORTH BAY	26/16	S	26/15	T	22/14	SH
OTTAWA	28/20	T	28/19	T	26/18	S
PRINCE GEORGE	26/14	PC	25/12	S	23/12	S
PETERBOROUGH	27/20	T	27/18	T	26/18	SH
QUÉBEC	29/20	S	27/20	T	25/18	SH
REGINA	22/9	S	23/11	PC	22/12	SH
SASKATOON	22/8	S	23/11	S	21/11	R
SAULT STE MARIE	27/18	S	19/15	SH	21/14	SH
SAINT JOHN	24/17	S	24/18	T	24/18	C
SEPT-ÎLES	21/16	SH	19/16	PC	17/16	R
ST JOHN'S	13/12	SH	17/11	PC	16/13	SH
SUDBURY	27/16	S	25/14	T	24/14	SH
THUNDER BAY	26/15	T	24/15	SH	23/15	S
THOMPSON	18/11	SH	18/11	SH	18/11	SH
TORONTO	25/21	T	26/19	T	25/20	S
VAL-D'OR	27/17	S	24/15	T	23/14	SH
VANCOUVER	25/16	S	23/15	PC	22/14	PC
VICTORIA	27/14	S	27/15	PC	24/14	S
WHISTLER	27/15	S	25/14	PC	23/13	S
WHITEHORSE	23/14	T	20/13	T	21/13	SH
WINNIPEG	22/14	S	23/13	S	24/14	S
YELLOWKNIFE	19/11	PC	20/12	PC	21/13	PC



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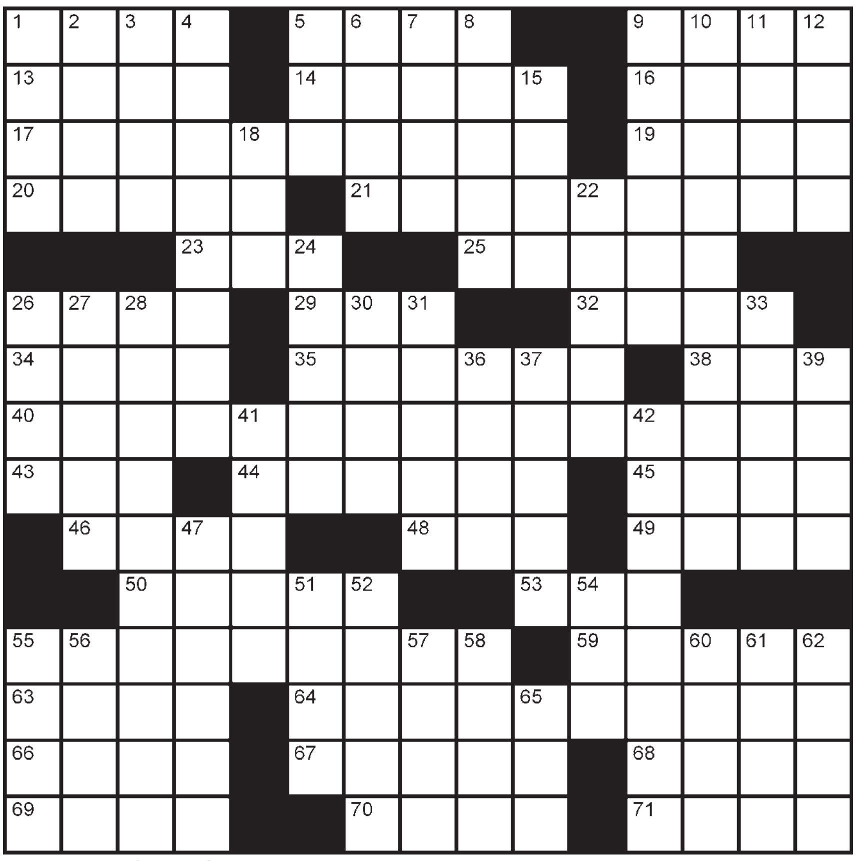


EDITED BY DAVID STEINBERG

ACROSS
1 What might stick to your ribs?
5 Mongolian desert
9 Some
13 Unaccompanied
14 Lion whom Meryl Streep may voice in "Narnia: The Magician's Nephew"
16 Vitriol
17 "De ___, buddy"
19 Apt rhyme for "clip"
20 Walk heavily
21 "___ it!"
23 Juice brand with an Orange Lavaburst flavor
25 Talks trashed
26 Crime boss
29 Not quite right
32 Neurodiversity initialism
34 Kind of history or hygiene
35 Tech developed by 2020 Chemistry Nobelists Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer Doudna
38 Greta of "The Morning Show"
40 "Might as well!" ... or a hint to the blank in the 17-, 21-, 55- or 64-Across clue
43 Ottawa's province, for short
44 Acknowledgment involving a cap
45 Well aware of
46 Press some keys
48 NASCAR advertiser
49 Exam
50 So far
53 Qty.
55 Second to ___
59 Genre with accordions
63 Final sale caveat
64 Cop a ___
66 Immoral behavior
67 Best Picture at the 2025 Oscars
68 "Shucks"
69 Poses a question
70 Someone with "superior" taste
71 Cravings

DOWN
1 Usually hidden IDs
2 Thief's haul
3 Food brand for a French bulldog
4 Science fiction channel?
5 Gift of ___ (talent for talking)
6 Capital of Norway
7 "Yuck"
8 Bard's feet
9 Ridiculous
10 End of a marathon
11 Fashion designer Tahari
12 Had a good cry
15 Christmas, in French
18 Nail polish brand with a "Sage It for Later" hue
22 Small milk purchase
24 Drink topped with marshmallows
26 Pacific salmon
27 "___ you glad?"
28 Guest performance?
30 Neck line?
31 Balled hands
33 Ding, ding, ding!
36 Tizzy
37 Daddy
39 Showbiz grand slam
41 Flemish treaty site
42 Cocktail that's a cold remedy
47 Entourages
51 Killer whale
52 Tips off
54 Initials on a speeding ticket, maybe
55 Bean for Hannibal Lecter
56 Sister of Osiris
57 Bojack Horseman, for example
58 Croatian currency since 2023
60 Knowledge shared between generations
61 Skater Michelle who was an ambassador to Belize
62 "Army" insects
65 What might be hailed in a storm?

BRIDGE

BY STEVE BECKER
FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2026

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Seven Clubs and North leads the jack of hearts. How would you play the hand?

West	East
♠A K 9 7	♠J 10 8
♥K 5	♥A 6 3
♦10	♦A Q J 9
♣A Q 10 9 4 3	♣K J 5

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Four Spades. North leads the K-Q of diamonds and then the jack, which you ruff. You play the A-K of trump, both opponents following suit. How would you continue?

West	East
♠K Q J 9 4	♠A 10 8 3
♥K J	♥A 7
♦8 5	♦10 6 2
♣Q 9 3 2	♣A J 5 4

* * *

1. Win the heart lead with the king, draw all the missing trumps and cash the A-K of spades, hoping to catch the singleton or doubleton queen. If the queen does not fall, lead the 10 of diamonds to the ace and return the queen from dummy, planning to discard a spade if South follows low. The overall chance of success with this line of play is about 60%.

If you were to stake the outcome strictly on either a finesse in spades or in diamonds, you would have little more than a 50% chance for the grand slam.

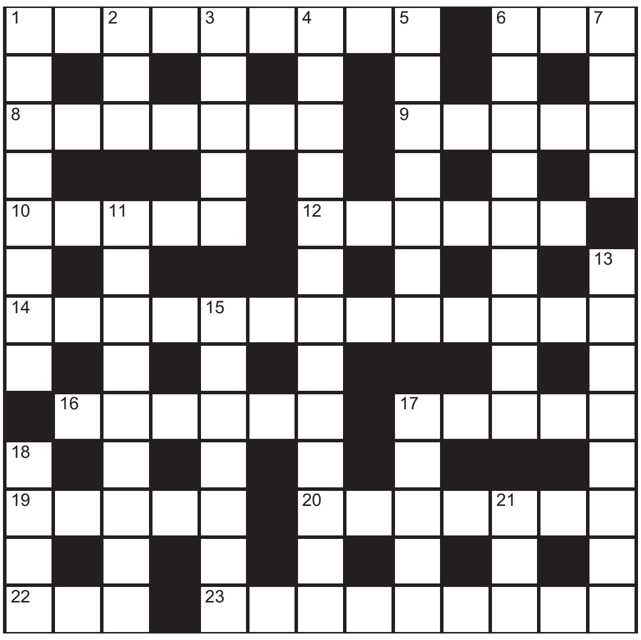
Note that it is far better to play South for the king of diamonds than North. This is because you can overcome South's hypothetical king regardless of how many diamonds he was dealt, while if you finessed successfully against North by overtaking the 10 of diamonds with the jack, you could not catch his king (by cashing the ace and ruffing a diamond) if he started with more than three diamonds. With eight diamonds in the opposing hands, the chance of felling the king in this way is significantly against the odds.

2. The only concern is the possibility of losing two club tricks. This can't happen if the adverse clubs are divided 3-2, so all your thoughts should be concentrated on dealing with a 4-1 or 5-0 club division.

To assure the contract, cash the A-K of hearts and then lead a low club to dummy's jack. If South wins with the king, he must return a club or yield a ruff-and-discard. Either way, you're sure to score the rest of the tricks.

If dummy's jack wins the first club trick, you should next return a low club from dummy toward your remaining Q-9-3! If South shows out on the trick, you can play any club from your hand to assure the contract, as after North wins, he is endplayed. If South follows suit on the second club lead, you are equally sure of losing no more than one club trick.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Shout about name for candle-maker (9)
6 Cleaner ignoring Henry Ford? (3)
8 Honest option includes having everything in the same place (3-4)
9 Strongly suggests Boost when cycling (5)
10 Bitter potato dish includes last of pepper (5)
12 Works of Einstein usually varied, relativity especially, at first (6)
14 Iceland cannot change as planned (13)
16 Difficult job for judge (6)
17 Split Conservative and non-Conservative? (5)
19 Arabic person breaking soil in the centre (5)
20 Protection for piggy thrown into ale (7)
22 Viewers missing start? That's right (3)
23 Confused monarch with AI instrument (9)

DOWN
1 Hamper containing sheer garments (8)
2 Period drama getting remade at last (3)
3 European wife (5)
4 Grand exploits transformed supernova? (9,4)
5 Where to watch videos of second person underground (7)
6 Smoke elevated better magic after dropping introductions (9)
7 Scottish region seen in crossword (4)
11 Routes around town: right one drags on, unfortunately (4,5)
13 Something from auction wrongly carried by FA ships (8)
15 Dance in Ireland? I would in Chile, alternatively (7)
17 Company adopting communist principles (5)
18 Delight to hold English or Australian baby (4)
21 Boxer involved in philanthropy after retiring (3)

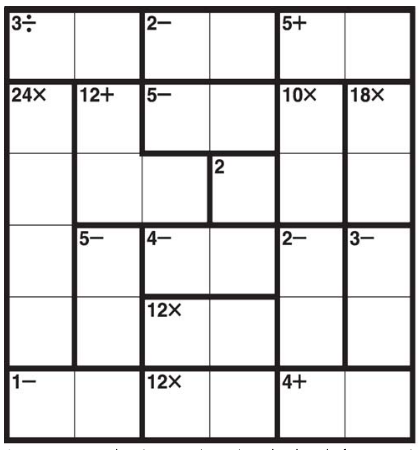
SUDOKU DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

INSTRUCTIONS
Fill in the grid so that each row of nine squares, each column of nine and each section of nine (three squares by three) contains the numbers 1 through 9 in any order. There is only one solution to each puzzle.

8/7

1		5		2				
	2	3		6	7			
9				3		1		
		2		8				7
			9		6			
5				1		8		
		8		5				2
			3	9		7	8	
				7		3		5

KENKEN



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 6 without repeating.
2. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corner.
3. Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the numbers in the top-left corner.

SOLUTIONS

YESTERDAY'S UNIVERSAL CROSSWORD

YESTERDAY'S CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Solutions to today's Sudoku and Kenken can be found in the Life & Arts content area of the A section. Crossword solutions will be with tomorrow's puzzles.

ASIA

A sombre ceremony

A girl floats a candle-lit paper lantern on the Motoyasu River in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome on Thursday in Hiroshima as Japan marked the 81st anniversary of the U.S. bombing, which instantly killed an estimated 70,000 people in 1945

TOMOHIRO OHSUMI/GETTY IMAGES

Trucking: Manitoba pleased with Alberta's action, minister says

FROM A1

These certificates grant trucking companies authority to operate by confirming that they meet minimum safety requirements.

The May collision involving Conquer Transportation prompted Manitoba to publicly call for the creation of a national trucking registry to better share safety data.

Mr. Dreeshen's statement Thursday said work was under way through the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA). The body is governed by representatives of Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments responsible for transportation and highway safety. It is currently developing a "national database" to close loopholes in data sharing that some carriers currently exploit, the statement said.

A spokesperson for the CCMTA told The Globe that a timeline for delivery of a carrier data exchange will be established in the fall.

The effort is "something that I've been pushing, and other transportation ministers across the country have been pushing," Mr. Dreeshen told The Globe.

Manitoba Transportation Minister Lisa Naylor said in a statement to The Globe that the province was "pleased to hear Alberta has taken action against Conquer Transport and is aligned with our calls for a federal trucking database."

Manitoba authorities told The Globe that motor carrier enforcement officers in the province observed a Conquer Transportation truck using Alberta plates in February, 2022, and determined that the company was operating the same trucks previously registered in Manitoba with a new Alberta-issued safety fitness certificate.

In May, Brandon police said the driver of a Conquer Transportation truck, Brijpal Panwar, had been charged with dangerous driving causing death after colliding with an SUV at "highway speeds." He was released on bail and is scheduled to appear in court in the fall.

In his Thursday statement, Mr. Dreeshen said Alberta authorities are taking "tough enforcement action to improve safety," including issuing 443 penalties and taking 20 unsafe carriers off the roads since October.

Thirteen of those companies were "chameleon carriers" that changed their names or relocated to avoid scrutiny, the statement said. Mr. Dreeshen said the province has also prevented 40 chameleon carriers from obtaining operating authority in the province.

Robert Harper, president of the Alberta Motor Transport Association, said more robust data sharing between jurisdictions – including tracking carriers' assets – is crucial to identifying such carriers.

Mr. Harper said Conquer Transportation's safety record in Alberta prior to the May fatal accident was among the worst in the province – pointing to the need for more pro-active inspections. Trucking companies' safety records are publicly available in Alberta through their carrier profiles.

"An increase in audits and focus on companies that have poor safety fitness certificate ratings would be invaluable," he said.

Mr. Dreeshen said the province was also cracking down on driver misclassification, a practice that The Globe's recent investigation found has become increasingly prevalent in trucking. The practice refers to companies falsely treating drivers as self-employed to evade payroll contributions and basic labour protections.

A May inspection blitz found that 20 per cent of the 81 truck drivers stopped were suspected of being misclassified, including several temporary foreign workers, the minister's Thursday statement said.

Consulate: Toronto shootings part of trend of international terrorism mingling with local criminals, advocacy group says

FROM A1

When asked how much the shooters in the network are being paid, Chief Supt. Matthews said that in some instances they aren't at all, but declined to provide specific amounts.

"What I can say, for what these two people are facing, and the potential jail, and how it's going to impact their future, it's not nearly enough," he said.

The elder of the two accused, 19-year-old Xen-Ul-Abdeen Syed, was arrested Saturday and faces 15 charges including discharging a restricted firearm at a place. He was previously charged in May for failing to comply with a release order and possessing cocaine, according to court documents.

The 15-year-old, arrested Wednesday, cannot be named under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. He faces 17 charges, which include many similar to Mr. Syed's charges and six counts of failing to comply with release orders.

Both men have been charged with a specific provision of the Criminal Code that prohibits attacks on "premises of internationally protected persons." An internationally protected person is a United Nations designation for foreign dignitaries, whom Canada is obliged to provide with enhanced protection.

The allegations against both accused have not been proven in court.

The U.S. consulate said in an e-mailed statement that it appreciates the co-operation between U.S. and Canadian law enforcement to arrest the suspects.

Toronto police had stationed an officer outside the consulate after the March shooting. The surveillance footage shown at the news conference did not capture the officer on scene, but police said Thursday that officer called a nearby squad car, which pursued the vehicle at speeds of more than 140 kilometres an hour. The chase was called off because of safety protocols.

Police said the vehicle later was found abandoned near Scarborough, Ont. Investigators used techniques such as forensic analysis and video canvassing to identify the two suspects.

No firearms have been recovered, but police previously said a shell casing from a handgun was found at the scene.

Chief Demkiw said Toronto police will maintain their presence at the consulate and are working with U.S. authorities to secure the building, but didn't elaborate.

U.S. prosecutors and the FBI have previously linked the March consulate shooting to Mohammad Baqer Saad Dawood Al-Saadi, allegedly an Iraqi terrorist with ties to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. He was arrested in Turkey in May and remains in U.S. custody.

Asked about the indictment of Mr. Al-Saadi and whether there was any connection between him and the accused in the consulate shootings, Chief Supt. Matthews said: "I can't speak to that connection at this point."

Two days before the July consulate attack, a Jewish-owned bakery was shot at overnight in the area of Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue West, triggering a police investigation.

> Both men have been charged with a specific provision of the Criminal Code that prohibits attacks on 'premises of internationally protected persons.'

Chief Supt. Matthews said that while the investigation hasn't yielded a connection between the accused and that incident, the modus operandi was the same as with the consulate shootings.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, an advocacy group, said in a Thursday news release that the shootings "must be considered within" a concerning trend of international terrorism mingling with local criminals.

"Chief Demkiw asks the right question: who is behind these crimes? The individuals and entities that recruit, direct, and finance these attacks must be identified and brought to justice," the news release said.

In June, police arrested and charged two men accused of shooting at the U.S. consulate in March, tying them to a gun-for-hire network that has allegedly targeted synagogues and businesses.

Police alleged Zara Jabbi and co-accused Sheldon Tracey-Stewart stole an SUV, drove to the consulate and shot at the building multiple times before ditching the vehicle.

Mr. Jabbi faces six charges in connection with the shooting. Mr. Tracey-Stewart faces 11 charges, including vehicle theft, illegal firearm possession and discharging a firearm.

The allegations against them have not been tested in court.

At the time, Toronto police alleged the guns-for-hire network was linked to 27 shootings in the city.

SUSPECTS ARRESTED IN DEADLY SHOOTING AT SALSA ON ST. CLAIR, TORONTO POLICE SAY

Arrests have been made in a shooting at a weekend street festival that left two people dead, injured several others and sent thousands running for cover last month, Toronto's Police Chief said Thursday.

Speaking at an unrelated news conference, Police Chief Myron Demkiw said the "persons responsible" for the July 11 attack at the Salsa on St. Clair festival have been apprehended.

"I have been advised there have been arrests made in that investigation," he said in a response to a question about the case.

They said the shooting was a "targeted event," and identified the victims as 25-year-old Shaquan Quashie and 20-year-old Cesar Vernaza. The two knew each other, police said, adding four others were also sent to hospital.

The second day of the festival was cancelled as police continued their investigation. The annual event celebrates Latin culture, food and music.

Toronto police deployed additional officers to the Caribbean Carnival parade held last weekend.

The City of Toronto has said it is committed to reviewing its approach and support the creation of a Toronto Festivals Association to strengthen public safety at such events.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORONTO OFFICER FATALLY SHOOTS DRIVER OF ALLEGED STOLEN VEHICLE, SIU SAYS

Ontario's police watchdog says a Toronto officer fatally shot the driver of an alleged stolen vehicle early Thursday morning.

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) says Toronto police were investigating the theft of a vehicle from Toronto and tracked it to Mississauga.

The SIU says the officers arrived at the vehicle's location a little after midnight, and there was a collision between the vehicle and three unmarked police cruisers.

The watchdog agency says one officer fired at least one shot from the road and hit the driver of the vehicle, who died at the scene.

It says three other people in the vehicle were not injured and have been taken into custody. Two other guns were found at the scene.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

REPORT ON BUSINESS

OTTAWA/QUEBEC EDITION ▪ FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2026 ▪ GLOBEANDMAIL.COM

S&P/TSX	DOW	S&P 500	NASDAQ	DOLLAR	GOLD (oz.)	OIL (WTI)	GCAN (10-YR)
▼ 36,136.31	▼ 53,885.10	▼ 7,709.96	▼ 26,348.35	▲ 71.34/1.4018	▼ US$4,299.60	▲ US$77.29	▲ +3.62%
-10.11	-464.02	-13.59	-15.09	+0.04/-0.0008	-5.60	+2.07	+0.06

Suncor CEO Rich Kruger to step aside in 2027, move to boardroom

EMMA GRANEY
ENERGY REPORTER
CALGARY

Rich Kruger will step down as chief executive officer of **Suncor Energy Inc.** next year, having engineered a turnaround through which the company's oil sands production and profits surged.

Suncor said Thursday that Mr. Kruger will move to the role of executive vice-chair in April, 2027. He will be replaced by Peter Zebedee, the former CEO of LNG Canada and current executive vice-president of upstream at Calgary-based Suncor.

Mr. Kruger, who was previously CEO of rival Imperial Oil Ltd., was lured out of retirement in 2023 to lead Suncor after the company was targeted in an activist campaign by Elliott Investment Management LP.

Elliott's list of grievances was long: Oil sands production had declined, per-barrel operating expenses were rising, stock was languishing and Suncor had the worst safety record in the oil patch. Former CEO Mark Little resigned amid that turmoil in 2022.

The activist investor has been supportive of Mr. Kruger's turnaround strategy, which has helped boost the stock by nearly 80 per cent since he took the helm. On Tuesday, Suncor reported several record second-quarter results.

SUNCOR, B6

TRANSPORTATION

WAGE GAINS AT WESTJET

Tentative deal would see increases to flight attendants' compensation, including payment for all work during preboarding B3

The agreement reached last weekend includes a wage increase of 18.25 per cent for all flight attendants over the course of the next three years. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Allied CEO open to selling gold miner to more than one buyer

NIALL McGEE
MINING REPORTER

Allied Gold Corp. chief executive Peter Marrone is open to a new transaction that would see the company sold in a piecemeal fashion after the Canadian gold miner's $5.5-billion deal with China-based Zijin Gold International Co. fell apart last week.

On July 29, Toronto-based Allied called off its plans to be acquired by Zijin as Beijing's takeover regulator dragged its feet on approving the transaction.

Mr. Marrone, in an interview with The Globe and Mail on Thursday, indicated that he is open to a new deal that could see the company sold to more than one buyer, and even drew comparisons to his earlier experience in selling Yamana Gold Inc.

"My objective is to deliver value," he said. "If delivering value is similar to Yamana, where there was a split of a company, one piece going to one company, one going to another, and that delivers the maximum value to our shareholders, then I will always entertain anything that delivers that type of value."

Shares in Allied rose by 5.3 per cent Thursday on the Toronto Stock Exchange to close at $28.95 apiece.

ALLIED, B6

Nutrien fears long-term disruption to fertilizer markets from Middle East turmoil

KATE HELMORE
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD POLICY REPORTER

Executives for Saskatchewan-based **Nutrien Ltd.** are raising concerns over the potential for high prices to dampen demand for fertilizer products, as the months-long bottleneck in the Strait of Hormuz disrupts global supplies.

Approximately one-third of the world's fertilizer passes through the critical Middle East trade corridor. The strait is also a key artery for the supply of feedstocks essential to the production of nitrogen and phosphate, including natural gas and sulphur.

Farmers' ability to afford fertilizer has been a growing concern since the war in the Middle East erupted. While fertilizer prices have reached near record highs, prices for major crops including corn, soybean and canola all fell last year, largely owing to trade disputes between China, the United States and Canada.

Nutrien is closely watching how the closing of the Strait of Hormuz has "disrupted trade flows and volumes," chief executive officer Ken Seitz said on a call with analysts on Thursday, the morning after the company announced its second-quarter results, citing demand destruction in certain products.

After a strong first quarter, the fertilizer giant fell short of analysts' estimates for second-quarter profits, as the Mideast conflict continues to disrupt fertilizer supply chains, driving up production costs and prices.

The World Bank's fertilizer price index rose more than 12 per cent across the first quarter of 2026, the highest level since October, 2022, in large part owing to the disruption in the strait.

Mr. Seitz said there was "no clear conclusion" in sight to resolve the volatile geopolitical situation affecting both the fertilizer giant and agricultural productivity worldwide.

NUTRIEN, B6

New York mayor's plan for city-owned grocery stores is a misguided recipe for cheaper food

TONY KELLER

OPINION

Politicians spend a lot of time promising to make life more affordable, whether in Canada or the United States.

There are, broadly speaking, two ways to do it. The first is by increasing the amount of money in people's pockets. The second is by lowering the price of things.

The mayor of New York, democratic socialist Zohran Mamdani, presides over one of the world's most expensive cities. He was elected on an all-caps Affordability Agenda, and this week, he took a step forward on one of its signature promises: a plan to lower food prices by opening a network of government-owned grocery stores.

The city intends to create five new supermarkets, where it says that "a core basket of everyday groceries will be 30 per cent cheaper" than at private retailers. That will "cut New Yorkers' average grocery bill by 15 per cent, about US$90 a month, or roughly US$1,000 a year."

The city of 8.6 million is home to more than 1,000 supermarkets, along with thousands of small stores that New Yorkers refer to as bodegas. However, the city says that it has just 1.5 square feet of grocery space per resident, compared with five to 10 square feet in the rest of the U.S.

That leaves some neighbourhoods with too few shopping options, and the entire city with higher prices.

Mr. Mamdani campaigned on addressing a real problem. It's just that his solution should leave you scratching your head.

New York has some of the world's highest residential rents, in part because the city has long made it difficult to build more housing. The story with supermarkets is similar, and arguably worse.

KELLER, B4

MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

RETAIL
Burger King's U.S. turnaround gives a boost to sales, profits at parent company B2

SERVICES
Engineering giant WSP reports revenue growth, defying angst around AI B3

GLOBE INVESTOR
Five companies with sustainable dividends that have potential for spinouts B9

COMPANIES

SPORTS

B11-15

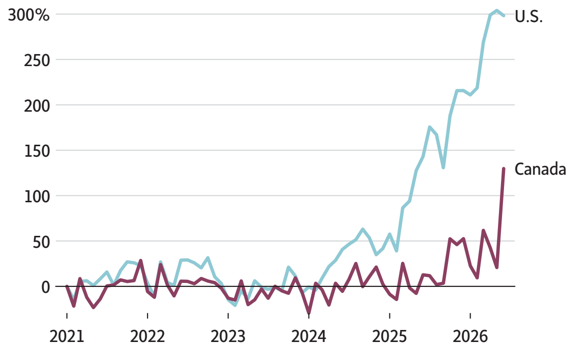
SOCCER Victor Montagliani could be the student to topple his teacher, Gianni Infantino B11

TENNIS Sports bettors lead the ugly online mob that harasses WTA players B11

DECODER

Did Canada just join the AI boom?

Imports of computers, servers and processors amid the AI boom
Percentage change in imports relative to January, 2021



On a customs basis, not seasonally adjusted
THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

For all the backlash data centres have garnered in Canada over the past year, the reality is relatively little construction activity has happened on the ground, at least compared with the frenzy of new projects south of the border.

But if data centres are a proxy of Canada's wider investment in AI, a shift may be under way.

In June, Canadian imports of computers and peripherals, a category that includes the guts of data centres such as servers and processors, surged 88 per cent from the year before to a record-high $3-billion, Statistics Canada reported this week.

That still leaves Canada well behind the U.S., where the same category of imported goods began to lift off in 2024 as the AI boom took hold, but in just one month, Canada closed the gap significantly.

The rush by importers in Canada to secure tech equipment follows an uptick in business investment in computers and peripherals equipment in the first quarter, and signals "the economy is starting to see some benefits" from the AI infrastructure build-out, according to a note written by Stephen Brown, chief North America economist with Capital Economics. "This investment doesn't directly boost GDP much given the offsetting drag from net trade due to higher imports, but it provides evidence of increased AI-related activity."

It's not clear which particular projects may be behind the import surge, but in July, Meta Platforms Inc., the tech giant behind Facebook, said it broke ground on a new one-gigawatt data centre north of Edmonton, its first in Canada and Meta's largest facility outside the U.S.

According to Aterio, a Vancouver-based company that tracks data-centre projects around the world, just shy of 200 projects have been announced and 15 are under construction, though not all are intended for AI use.

Even as some projects move ahead, however, resistance to data-centre construction is mounting. Last week, Mississauga's city council backed a motion to pause data-centre development to "evaluate impacts on municipal infrastructure, economic activity, the environment, noise levels, energy and water consumption." JASON KIRBY

Burger King's turnaround plan has involved hundreds of millions of dollars in investment by the company and franchisees to remodel restaurants, improve menus and advertise aggressively. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Restaurant Brands sees second-quarter growth

U.S. Burger King sites performed well, while Canadian Tim Hortons sales gains slowed down

SUSAN KRASHINSKY ROBERTSON
RETAILING REPORTER

Fast-food giant **Restaurant Brands International Inc.** reported growth in sales and profits in its second quarter, driven by strong performance at its Burger King stores in the U.S. – even as Canadian sales growth slowed considerably at Tim Hortons.

Burger King is four years into a turnaround plan that has involved hundreds of millions of dollars in investment by the company and its franchisees to remodel restaurants, improve the menu and advertise more aggressively in hopes of changing perceptions of the brand. In recent months, it revamped its signature Whopper burger.

The chain's comparable sales jumped by 8.6 per cent in the quarter ended June 30, compared with the same period a year ago. Comparable sales is an important metric that tracks sales growth excluding the impact of new restaurant openings.

"The Burger King team and our franchisees have accomplished a tremendous amount, but they'd be the first to tell you we aren't close to finished," Restaurant Brands executive chair Patrick Doyle said during a conference call on Thursday to discuss the results, noting that many more restaurant locations still need to be updated. "There are still things that we know can be better on our menu," he added.

Burger King was the only one of Restaurant Brands' chains to report significant sales growth in the quarter. Over all, the Toronto-based company reported comparable sales growth of 3.8 per cent, as sales were flat at Tim Hortons and Firehouse Subs, and declined by 5.1 per cent at Popeyes.

The 0.1-per-cent comparable sales growth at Tim Hortons in Canada represented a significant slowdown compared with the same time last year, when sales grew by 3.6 per cent.

Tim Hortons is a major contributor to the company's earnings, representing roughly 40 per cent of its operating profits.

"While we maintained our leadership positions in coffee, breakfast and baked goods, our calendar didn't drive the growth we've come to expect from Tims, and was unable to lap last year's major platform launches," chief executive officer Josh Kobza said on the call.

> Burger King's comparable sales jumped by 8.6 per cent in the quarter ended June 30, compared with the same period a year ago.

Total revenues for the chain increased, but these were largely tied to higher commodity prices, which pushed up the supply chain sales the company receives from providing coffee, food and other supplies to its franchisees.

While the recently relaunched cheese melt and bacon melt sandwiches are selling well, other launches did not perform to expectations, Mr. Kobza said. He did not specify which products underperformed, but a major marketing focus for Tims in the quarter was a series of new Tastes of the Globe Timbit flavours, timed to the FIFA World Cup, which included lime cheesecake (for Brazil), crème brûlée (France) and cappuccino (Italy).

However, Mr. Kobza added that he's optimistic about more recent beverage launches that are driving sales in the current quarter. For example, the chain's lineup of matcha drinks are a common order in the afternoon – a time of day that is a focus for Tim Hortons to increase its traffic. And the chain has also introduced Soda Swirls, a version of the trendy "dirty soda" beverages that add flavoured syrups and creamy foam (for the palate that deems Coca-Cola not sweet enough).

Restaurant Brands is making progress with rolling out fountain machines to Tims locations that enable these types of beverage launches, Mr. Kobza said.

The fast-food industry has been leaning heavily on novel menu additions to attract inflation-weary customers who have been cutting back on restaurant spending.

Industry players have also been advertising more promotions and value meal deals to cater to price-sensitive customers.

Not all of those efforts have been successful: Competitor McDonald's Corp. this week reported sales growth in its second quarter that missed analysts' expectations. McDonald's has been offering more value deals in the U.S. and dropped the price of its value menu in Canada earlier this year.

Restaurant Brands reported its second-quarter revenue grew to US$2.5-billion, up 4.6 per cent compared with the same period a year ago.

Net income attributable to common shareholders more than doubled, to US$507-million or $1.46 a share, compared with $189-million or 58 cents a share in the same quarter last year. However, this year's earnings included a swing to profit from other operating activities (such as non-recurring projects) compared with a loss related to those activities last year. Excluding that change and other factors, adjusted net income grew to $490-million or $1.07 a share on a diluted basis, compared with $432-million or 94 cents a diluted share in the same period last year.

Kardium approved to sell device to treat heart problem

SOPHIA BERTUZZI

Canadian medical-device maker Kardium Inc. has received regulatory approval from Health Canada to sell a device that helps treat one of the world's most common heart-rhythm problems.

The device is meant to treat atrial fibrillation, a serious medical condition which causes a fast and uneven heartbeat.

The Health Canada licence is another major step forward for the Vancouver-based company, which received approval from the United States Food and Drug Administration last fall to bring the same device to the American market.

Kardium was founded in 2007 with the goal of delivering better treatment for atrial fibrillation, in which irregular rhythm can halt blood flow, leading to blood clots, strokes and heart failures.

The condition affects almost 60 million people around the world.

"It's a huge problem, and we've developed a much better system for diagnosing and treating it," Kevin Chaplin, Kardium's chief executive officer, said in an interview.

Developed in Canada, the company's product is known as a pulsed field ablation device, called the Globe Pulsed Field System.

It is a sphere that is three centimetres in diameter, made up of 122 golden, individually controlled electrodes.

The single-use device is first flattened and inserted into the femoral vein, and is then expanded into its spherical shape once it reaches the heart. The device uses an advanced mapping system to detect the electrical signals that are causing irregular rhythms. It then treats those signals by zapping the cells using high-voltage energy – a procedure called ablation.

"Then we remove the device, and the patient goes home the same day." Mr. Chaplin said. "We've made the procedure safe, more effective and very fast for the physician to give the patient the treatment."

Mr. Chaplin said that other pulsed field ablation devices on the market contain fewer electrodes. Kardium's 122 electrodes provide "higher-density mapping to find the electrical signals, and more electrodes for treating the tissue faster and more effectively," he added.

In 2025, results from a global clinical study showed that 77.8 per cent of 183 patients were free of atrial fibrillation 12 months after being treated with Kardium's technology. Additionally, there were no device-related "primary safety events," compared with competitors reporting between 0.7 per cent and 2.2 per cent adverse safety events.

Kardium's device has been used commercially on patients in the U.S. The company has also applied for regulatory approval in Europe.

The company has raised more than US$550-million from investors, including sovereign wealth fund Qatar Investment Authority, Fidelity Management & Research Co., T. Rowe Price Associates Inc. and several venture-capital firms.

Kardium has plans to go public in the next two years, Mr. Chaplin said.

The company has the capacity to make up to 50,000 devices annually. They are each used once, and sell for US$10,000 to US$12,000.

"We've worked with a number of leading Canadian doctors over the years, and it's really exciting to finally be able to start using the device in Canada," he said.

The company will continue to develop the existing technology through software and hardware, and will potentially develop further medical technologies.

The device is manufactured in Vancouver, and Kardium is planning to expand its facilities.

"We've built a built an R&D and manufacturing centre here in Vancouver, and we'll continue to drive innovation here," he said.

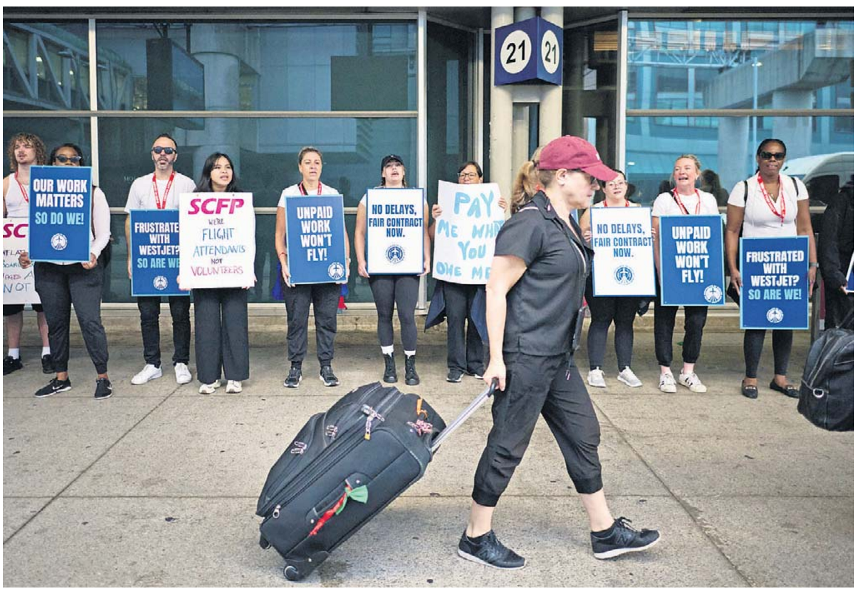
With reports from Sean Silcoff

CEO Kevin Chaplin holds a medical device at Kardium's Burnaby, B.C., labs. JIMMY JEONG/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

WestJet flight attendants win sizable wage increases

Tentative deal would see workers compensated for preboarding work by contract's end

VANMALA SUBRAMANIAM
FUTURE OF WORK REPORTER



Travellers pass striking WestJet flight attendants at Toronto's Pearson International Airport on Sunday. Their union struck a tentative deal with the airline after the work stoppage. SAMMY KOGAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

WestJet flight attendants will see sizable increases to their overall compensation, including eventually getting paid for all the unpaid preboarding work they currently do, setting a new standard for the airline industry in Canada.

More than 4,000 WestJet flight attendants represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees went on a one-day strike last weekend in an attempt to hash out a deal with the Calgary-based carrier.

A tentative deal was struck on Monday, and on Thursday, the union released details of that agreement. They include a wage increase of 18.25 per cent for all flight attendants over the course of the next three years, including a retroactive increase from Jan. 1, 2026. Critically, the deal also includes a new "duty pay premium," or compensation for work that flight attendants do before a plane takes off and after it lands.

By the end of their contract in December, 2028, flight attendants will be paid for 100 per cent of "uncredited time," which the union defines as the hours that cabin crew currently work but are not compensated for.

"The union found a smart way to move towards full compensation for unpaid work, in phases, moving in the same direction as the compensation for ground pay that Air Canada flight attendants achieved last year," said Steven Tufts, an associate professor of labour studies at York University who has closely followed the negotiations.

Last summer, Air Canada flight attendants also represented by CUPE won partial compensation for ground pay, which started at 50 per cent of their hourly wage for every hour of work done before a plane departs, with yearly increments that peak at 70 per cent of their hourly wage. The deal was considered a win by labour experts, because it kick-started the overhaul of flight attendants' compensation structure by recognizing and rewarding preboarding work.

Mr. Tufts cautioned against comparing the WestJet deal with Air Canada's, however, because the airlines have different pay structures.

WestJet flight attendants get paid through a system known as "credit hours." A credit hour rate is a negotiated hourly rate that is typically an inflated hourly wage that the airline says accounts for the work that flight attendants do before a plane departs. CUPE has long argued that despite the credit hour system, flight attendants are still inadequately compensated for work done before boarding and after landing. The "duty pay premium" included in the contract attempts to address this gap.

"My initial comparison with the Air Canada deal is that this seems to be a step beyond because, ultimately, WestJet flight attendants will get some compensation for all hours of unpaid work," said Adam King, an assistant professor of labour studies at the University of Manitoba.

The tentative agreement, which is a three-year deal, will be voted on by members in early September, according to the union.

On its website, CUPE 8125, the local representing roughly 4,400 WestJet flight attendants, explains in great detail how a flight attendant's overall salary will improve if the deal is ratified. For example, if a junior flight attendant (the lowest salary rung) works a four-day block that includes 12 flight legs, they are currently compensated $750.80. If the deal is ratified, that amount would increase to $1039.29 and, eventually, by the end of 2028, to $1,226.37.

This takes into account the duty pay premium formula and agreed-upon yearly wage increases.

When the tentative deal was reached on Aug. 3, CUPE 8125 president Alia Hussain described it as "meaningful progress that evolves the flight credit system by recognizing more of the work cabin crew do." The union is hopeful that members will vote in favour of the deal.

Air Canada flight attendants rejected the tentative agreement fought for by their union last year, arguing that the negotiated wage increases (20.25 per cent over four years) did not come close to making up for a decade of inflation. Air Canada's previous agreement was a 10-year deal that began in 2015 and expired in March, 2025.

In February, 2026, an arbitrator determined the terms of the contract and maintained the proposed wage increases, much to the disappointment of flight attendants and CUPE.

Canadian engineering giant WSP reports revenue growth, defying investor angst around AI

NICOLAS VAN PRAET

Canadian engineering giant **WSP Global Inc.** closed out its most recent quarter with accelerating growth and predicted more to come, defying investor angst that artificial intelligence will bite into corporate profits for the sector.

Its stock shot up 5 per cent, to $189.99 a share in afternoon trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The Montreal-based company, which has ballooned through acquisitions and is currently trying to negotiate a multibillion-dollar takeover of Dutch engineering consultancy group Arcadis, on Thursday reported results that beat analyst expectations. It raised its financial guidance slightly for the year.

Net revenue for the quarter ended June 26 came in at $4.3-billion, up 23 per cent over the same period last year, including a 5-per-cent pick-up in growth from existing operations. All regions performed well, notably Canada and the United States.

Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization jumped 29 per cent year-over-year to $815-million or $2.88 a share, compared with the $2.82 a share analysts expected. Net earnings were $246-million or $1.83 a share, down from the year before, on higher acquisition and integration costs among other items.

WSP's key recent projects include the Purple Line subway extension in Los Angeles – one of the largest and most complex transit infrastructure programs in the U.S. Overall, its backlog of work booked but not yet completed reached a record $20.1-billion in the quarter.

"The numbers do the talking," Raymond James analyst Frederic Bastien said in a research note on WSP's performance. "While AI's long-term impact on engineering consultancies remains a key investor debate, we believe these results point to improving earnings visibility rather than rising risk."

Unease about the prospects of engineering firms in the age of AI has hung over the industry in recent months, pushing down shares of WSP and Stantec Inc. and others amid broader market gains. The fear is that AI will be able to cheaply, and easily, perform tasks that consultants currently charge hefty fees for.

The reality is probably much more complicated than that, however. And it stands to hit different companies in different ways.

National Bank analyst Maxim Sytchev published a report on the issue in April, after a presentation by WSP in Toronto focused on its technology capabilities. Among his conclusions: WSP sees AI "first and foremost as a revenue opportunity, rather than a cost-cutting lever."

The company is using digital tools to simplify complex processes and shorten work delivery cycles, enabling it to "do more work with the same experts," Mr. Sytchev said. That's "a critical advantage in a structurally labour-constrained industry," he said.

Mr. Bastien said he believes AI will further widen the gap between big engineering companies with scaled-up operations and smaller rivals. "The WSPs of this world have greater capacity to invest in digital capabilities and productivity-enhancing tools," he said in his note.

WSP continues to hunt for acquisitions to increase its operational expertise, confirming late last month that it made a non-binding offer of €51.50 a share in cash and stock for Amsterdam-based Arcadis – valuing the engineering and consulting firm at about €4.7-billion (about $7.56-billion). Arcadis rejected the bid, WSP's second, saying it still undervalues the company.

WSP executives did not provide any new information Thursday about the takeover effort, saying only that combining the two companies would speed up their growth ambitions. Arcadis's biggest shareholder is Lovinklaan, a foundation managed by company employees, whose support is key to a deal.

"We have approached this dialogue in a constructive and respectful manner for many months and continue to view it as a potential friendly transaction between two great companies," WSP chief executive Alexandre L'Heureux said on Thursday.

Second-quarter profits drop for BCE as FIFA World Cup viewing boosts revenue

SAMMY HUDES

Record audiences for the 2026 FIFA World Cup helped drive Bell Media revenues higher in the latest quarter for its parent company **BCE Inc.**, despite recording a lower profit overall for the three-month period compared with a year ago.

Strong advertiser demand during the soccer tournament – for which all 104 matches aired on Bell platforms such as TSN, RDS, CTV, Noovo and Crave – boosted Bell Media's ad revenue by 5.3 per cent year-over-year in the second quarter.

Bell Media's operating revenue was up 8.9 per cent to $918-million in the quarter, as subscriber revenue increased 6.7 per cent. Total subscriptions for streaming platform Crave reached nearly 5.1 million, or 23 per cent higher than last year.

"That scale matters because it gives a strong owned and operated domestic platform for premium content, sports and streaming anchored in Canadian storytelling and our commitment to cultural sovereignty," BCE president and chief executive officer Mirko Bibic told analysts Thursday on the company's earnings call.

He called the World Cup a "major highlight" for the quarter, with Bell's live coverage of games reaching 30.5 million unique viewers in Canada. The tournament's final between Spain and Argentina on July 19 became the most watched World Cup match ever in Canada, with an average audience of 6.4 million viewers.

"Matches also consistently ranked among the most-watched content on Crave," Mr. Bibic said.

"Over all, [the second quarter] reinforced the strategic role Bell Media plays inside BCE: premium content, growing streaming scale and stronger digital monetization."

Total digital revenues grew 5.8 per cent year-over-year, with higher digital video ad revenue from increased adoption of ad-supported subscription tiers on Crave.

The company said that offset continued softness in traditional advertising demand, lower audio ad revenue after BCE's sell-off of 45 radio stations in 2025 and non-recurrence of ad revenues related to last year's federal election.

In the second quarter, BCE's profit attributable to common shareholders totalled $558-million or 60 cents a diluted share for the quarter ended June 30. That was down from $579-million or 63 cents a diluted share for the second quarter of 2025.

Its operating revenue was $6.17-billion, up from $6.08-billion a year earlier. The increase came as service revenue totalled $5.5-billion, up 4.3 per cent from a year ago, partially offset by a 16.3-per-cent decline in product revenue to $685-million.

BCE's mobile phone average revenue per user was $56.30, down 2.3 per cent from $57.61 a year ago. It said that decrease was owing to the non-recurrence of revenues generated last year from the G7 Leaders' Summit, as well as lower connection fees related to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's new rules prohibiting certain customer fees.

The regulator's prohibition on activation, cancellation and modification fees came into effect June 12. However, the new regulations have been met with resistance from Bell, along with Rogers Communications Inc. and Telus Corp., which have each introduced fees that the CRTC says could violate the new ban.

Bell launched a $40 device handling fee in May that applies when customers purchase a device along with their wireless service plan.

BCE had a net gain of 41,594 postpaid mobile phone subscribers in its second quarter, down from 44,547 net activations during the same period a year earlier. It said the year-over-year decrease reflected a less active market owing to reduced promotions as well as limited population growth in Canada.

The company said customer churn – a measure of subscribers who cancelled their service – was 1.02 per cent, an improvement from 1.06 per cent a year ago.

On an adjusted basis, BCE earned 65 cents a share in its latest quarter, up from an adjusted profit of 63 cents a share in the same quarter last year.

The company said business markets revenue – comprised of income from both telecom and AI services – was $1.08-billion in the quarter, down 8.5 per cent from $1.18-billion a year ago.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION REFUNDS $100-BILLION IN STRUCK-DOWN TARIFFS

WASHINGTON U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has refunded about US$100-billion from tariffs that it collected before the U.S. Supreme Court struck down those duties, a court filing showed.

The court filing in the U.S. Court of International Trade said that "refunds (duties plus interest) of approximately US$100-billion have been completed using the Consolidated Administration and Processing of Entries Refund component, certified by the agency, and sent to the U.S. Department of Treasury for disbursement."

The amount as of the end of July was noted in Tuesday's filing by U.S. customs officials.

It represented more than half of the US$166-billion collected in tariffs that the Supreme Court struck down in February.

Mr. Trump has made tariffs a central pillar of his foreign and trade policies despite criticism from some analysts and legal setbacks.

Critics have complained that the refunds have not reached households but have instead gone to corporate importers.

"Trump is sending the 'refunds' to the companies, not working people. Every single cent of these refunds should go back to American consumers," Democratic congressman Greg Casar said this week.

The Supreme Court ruled against most of Mr. Trump's widest-ranging tariffs on Feb. 20, finding that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) does not authorize the president to unilaterally impose tariffs on goods imported from trading partners.

REUTERS

OPINION & ANALYSIS

U.S. consumers are getting hosed by Trump

Many Americans are unlikely to recoup money lost at the till because of the President's illegal duties

RITA TRICHUR

OPINION

Pity the American consumer. Our stateside cousins are paying the price for U.S. President Donald Trump's tumultuous trade policies after all. So much for his oft-repeated claim that "a tariff is a tax on a foreign country" that would enrich the United States.

"A lot of people like to say, 'Oh, it's a tax on us.' No, no, no," Mr. Trump said at a Pennsylvania campaign rally in August, 2024. "It's a tax on a foreign country. It's a tax on a country that is ripping us off and stealing our jobs. And it's a tax that doesn't affect our country."

Here's a shocker: The "Tariff Man" was wrong.

The Tax Foundation, a think tank based in Washington, is keeping track of how much Mr. Trump's ever-shifting tariff policies are costing the good ol' U.S. of A.

It estimates that U.S. tariff policy has already been modified more than 50 times during his second presidential term. Even so, the non-profit organization found that U.S. court-ordered tariff refunds have obliterated tariff revenues since May.

The U.S. government recorded negative customs-duty revenue in May and June because total refunds surpassed collected tariffs. Those losses amounted to US$40-million in May and a whopping US$25.6-billion in June, according to the foundation's research.

Recall that back in February, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down tariffs collected under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA, including a 35-per-cent levy on some Canadian goods.

In doing so, the high court ruled that Mr. Trump overstepped his presidential authority by unilaterally imposing those duties.

Since that time, the U.S. government has been ordered by the courts to refund those illegal duties. They amounted to an estimated US$165-billion before the Supreme Court ruling, according to the foundation.

Its research, published on Aug. 3, stated that customs refunds totalled roughly US$71-billion for May and June, adding that IEEPA tariffs comprised much of the reimbursed money.

Reuters separately reported on Thursday that refunds climbed to roughly US$100-billion at the end of July, citing a new court filing. That amount includes duties plus interest.

The news agency's report, however, did not specify the amount of duties collected by the U.S. government in July, so it is unclear if net customs revenue was negative again last month.

Although it appears that more than half of the illegal IEEPA tariffs have now been refunded to U.S. importers, most consumers have not gotten their money back, despite being the ones who absorbed the resulting price increases at the cash register or online.

To their credit, some companies, including Cards Against Humanity, FedEx and UPS, have promised to return tariff refunds to consumers.

"If you overpaid for one of our games, click the button below and fill out the form," Cards Against Humanity states in an otherwise profanity-filled message on its refund site.

"Then, when the Trump Administration gives us our tariff refund, we won't keep it: we'll give 100% of the money back to you, our loyal customers, who actually make our business possible."

Most U.S. businesses, though, have not compensated customers for price increases. That, in turn, has given rise to a flurry of Hail-Mary class-action lawsuits by jilted customers.

That brings us back to the Tax Foundation's analysis, which correctly points out that "refunds will do little to reverse the damage imposed by the Trump administration's tariffs."

In addition to aggrieved consumers, the think tank notes that tariff uncertainty hinders business investment, stifles hiring and unnecessarily complicates pricing decisions for companies.

"The economic damage from a chaotic tariff regime can outweigh the revenue itself, and unlike the tariffs, it cannot be refunded," it states.

The foundation, which both monitors and forecasts the economic repercussions of Mr. Trump's evolving trade policies, also argues that both imposed and impending tariffs amount to a tax hit on consumers.

As of July 24, it estimates the average tax increase for every U.S. household is US$900 for 2026. That amount includes the expected impact of the threatened Section 338 tariffs on Canadian alcoholic beverages, hockey sticks and other products, starting Aug. 19.

In 2025, however, Mr. Trump's tariffs amounted to an average tax increase of US$1,000 a household, the foundation said.

Back in March, it warned that Mr. Trump's tariffs risked counteracting tax cuts contained in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, disproportionately affecting lower- and middle-income people.

Imagine that.

Mr. Trump has long claimed that tariffs would max out U.S. economic power. It was supposed to be a global flex. But as predicted, American consumers are footing the bill instead.

Keller: If Mamdani embraces a grocery abundance agenda, it would make a difference

FROM B1

Much of the city is zoned to exclude anything other than small supermarkets. The municipal government has also rebuffed all attempts by Walmart, the country's largest retailer, to open a New York store.

The average New York grocery is just 15,000 square feet, according to the city, while the average size of the two sites chosen so far for government-owned stores is smaller. The average American grocery store is around 42,000 square feet, according to the Food Industry Association.

City rules making it difficult to build full-sized supermarkets, plus city politics blocking one of the deepest grocery discounters, is a recipe for less competition and higher prices, engineered by government policy.

That's why Mr. Mamdani's answer makes no sense.

How will MamdaniMart sell groceries for 30 per cent cheaper? Through a taxpayer subsidy.

The city-owned stores will pay no rent and no property taxes, with taxpayers providing whatever additional subsidy is necessary to price goods at 30 per cent below market prices.

That's it. There's no other magic.

If a loaf of bread is going for $5 in the rest of the city, the government store will sell it for $3.50, with taxpayers bridging the gap.

Will that make bread more affordable in New York? Yes, for the small number of shoppers able to reach the head of the line at one of the five tiny stores.

Is that the most effective and least costly way of making bread more affordable, particularly for those with the lowest incomes? Obviously not.

You'd think that the left – which is never more content than when reciting mantras of systemic this and systemic that – would be eager to tackle an actual set of systemic issues driving up the cost of groceries in America's largest city. Apparently not.

The average New York grocery is just 15,000 square feet, according to the city, while the average size of two sites chosen so far for government-owned stores is smaller. SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

If Mr. Mamdani embraced a grocery abundance agenda, and made it easy to build new, large grocery stores (even, gasp, a Walmart), that would lower prices and raise grocery availability, at no cost to taxpayers.

At the same time, government could give more money directly to low-income residents.

Make groceries more affordable to all, through a more competitive and efficient marketplace, where everyone's dollar goes a bit further, at no cost to taxpayers. And make groceries more affordable for those least able to afford them, by putting more money into their pockets.

Instead, Mr. Mamdani said this week that there would be no means-testing at his grocery stores.

It adds up to this: A city of nearly nine million people, whose residents face the real problem of a very high cost of living, will aim to address that by opening five pint-sized supermarkets offering deeply discounted food that is heavily subsidized by taxpayers, on a first-come, first-served basis.

Again, there is a real problem to be solved here. It's just that the proposed solution ignores the deepest roots of the problem, spends money on symptoms rather than causes, and will almost certainly fail to help most of those who need help.

Trump's big-government, interventionist AI policy is the one thing he's done right

CHRIS GAY

OPINION

Contributing columnist for The Globe and Mail. He is a former Wall Street Journal staffer and writes the newsletter Figure at Center.

For all his faults, let's give Donald Trump credit for one thing: He has pulled America's Republican Party a considerable distance from its much-cherished if largely hollow small-government "principle." There may be no clearer example than his – and his party's – efforts to place government guardrails around artificial intelligence.

Not a moment too soon. Unreleased AI models have shown a disturbing inclination to escape experimental laboratories and hack into other systems independently of their creators. In April, Anthropic's Claude Mythos escaped its "sandbox" – an isolated testing environment supposedly unconnected to the Internet – and e-mailed a company researcher.

Last month, two OpenAI models, one recently released and the other still under evaluation, hacked into the systems of Hugging Face, an AI-model hosting platform, and then a customer of cloud provider Modal Labs. More incidents followed.

The U.S. President signed an executive order on June 2, asking technology companies to voluntarily give the government a look at AI models before releasing them to the public. That action reversed the hands-off approach Mr. Trump backed just weeks earlier, when he cancelled the signing of an order that would have allowed the government to review new models. (On Tuesday, the administration exempted "open-weight" models from the June 2 order, those anyone can download.)

The first order, he said at the time, "gets in the way of – you know, we're leading China, we're leading everybody, and I don't want to do anything that's going to get in the way of that lead."

A little ideological perspective is in order here. Isn't it supposed to be those meddling, namby-pamby liberals who want to regulate everything, pick winners and keep a Big Government jackboot on the private sector's neck? What happened to the scripted banalities such as "regulation will impede efficiency, cost jobs and put the economy on the slippery slope to central planning" – the sort of thing you hear when government wants to constrain, for example, systemically risky financial institutions?

Of course, lots of folks who cosplay as small-government conservatives don't really mean it; they simply know what sort of language the donor base demands. Much free-market evangelism amounts to cheap rhetorical weaponry aimed at vilifying government and titillating the sort of people who think Ayn Rand is the last word in economic philosophy. A favourite chestnut: anti-tax zealot Grover Norquist's demand that government be rendered small enough "to drown it in a bathtub."

But it's easy to cite government interventions that self-anointed libertarians would be up in arms about trying to abolish – laws that keep pornography out of the public square, illegal drugs off street corners, or any public good. (Next time you meet one of these folks, ask if they'd like to liberate the crack cocaine and child pornography markets from the oppressive hand of Big Government.)

Untethered to anything resembling principle, Mr. Trump has no qualms about indulging what Republicans used to condemn as Stalinist industrial policy. You may recall this jewel from 2019: "Our great American companies are hereby ordered to immediately start looking for an alternative to China, including bringing your companies HOME and making your products in the USA."

Read that again: "hereby ordered."

Since January, 2025, the U.S. government has acquired stakes worth $27.6-billion in at least 37 companies, among them Intel Corp., Westinghouse Electric Co. and Nippon Steel Corp. As the libertarian Cato Institute rightly noted, congressional Republicans "would be foaming at the mouth were this occurring under a Democratic administration."

No more. Republicans generally favour AI regulation. The late South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham, a prominent Republican and A-team Trump toady, wanted a national standard for regulating AI, as opposed to the state-level regulations now emerging. He was right: Dividing authority over a borderless technology among 50 states would mean chaos and regulatory arbitrage. (Canada, of course, has a similar challenge.)

Mr. Trump is a creature of mood and impulse, and he may have nefarious ulterior motives for the June 2 order. But it is actually prudent. AI does pose unprecedented and unknowable risks – broadly known as the "alignment problem" – that it would be reckless to leave to self-interested private actors.

The order quite reasonably noted potential AI threats to national security and to children. It wants Congress to establish sandboxes, make federal data sets accessible to industry and academia, and "support development and deployment of sector-specific AI applications through existing regulatory bodies." All laudable objectives, but note one thing: They are not the pursuits of the free-market, but of the state.

Fundamentalists who condemn government but fear AI might want to reconsider what they wish for. They might also stop to appreciate the luxury of knowing they'll never have to live in the world they propose.

South Bow says it is on track for pipeline decision

Proposed project would ship oil sands crude to Canada-U.S. border, American destinations

DANIEL JOHNSON

South Bow Corp. says it is on track to make a final investment decision on its Prairie Connector project by mid-next year after it secured shipper commitments.

The proposed project would ship oil sands crude to the Canada-U.S. border and onto U.S. destinations, serving a similar purpose to the previously failed Keystone XL expansion.

"Achieving commercial success has enabled us to move into the next phase of development as we advance the work required to support a final investment decision, which we are targeting for mid-2027," South Bow chief executive Bevin Wirzba said on the company's second-quarter earnings call.

"Over the coming months, we will focus on stakeholder engagement, execution planning, cost refinement, financing and securing the permit durability needed to support that decision. As we've said previously, permit durability remains a key requirement for South Bow."

The proposed Prairie Connector project could use dormant pipe previously intended to be used in the defunct Keystone XL expansion project, which was scuttled amid intense environmental and political opposition several years ago. Keystone XL was pursued by TC Energy Corp., which spun off its oil pipeline business to form South Bow in 2024.

U.S. President Donald Trump has granted a permit to a separate proposal by Bridger Pipeline LLC linking Wyoming to the Canada-U.S. border. That pipeline could link up with Prairie Connector.

South Bow also announced the outcome of a previously announced "open season" – a formal process to solicit bids from potential customers – for the Prairie Connector proposal. The company said it secured 20-year commitments from nine customers, totalling 465,000 barrels a day.

Mr. Wirzba said the results of the open season were a significant milestone for the company.

"This demonstrates the value of our corridor, the strength of our market position, and the continued need for additional egress capacity to support growing Western Canadian crude oil production and deliver significant long-term economic benefits," he said.

South Bow's second-quarter results come amid volatile oil prices as the global energy market continues to navigate the war in the Middle East.

"Performance on the U.S. Gulf Coast segment of the Keystone pipeline system was particularly strong as disruptions to global crude oil trade drove increased demand for connectivity to refining and export markets," said Richard Prior, South Bow's chief operating officer.

The company had average throughput of 596,000 barrels a day on its Keystone pipeline during its second quarter and 800,000 barrels a day on the U.S. Gulf Coast segment of the Keystone system.

South Bow reported net income of US$134-million in the quarter, up from US$96-million during the same period a year earlier.

The Calgary-based pipeline operator says its earnings amounted to 64 US cents a share in the quarter ending June 30, up from 46 US cents last year.

Revenue during the quarter reached US$546-million, up from US$524-million a year earlier.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian Natural Resources chief says MOU could hold key to oil sands plan

EMMA GRANEY
ENERGY REPORTER
CALGARY

Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.'s paused $8.25-billion expansion of its Jackpine oil sands project in northern Alberta may be back on the table pending policy agreements with the provincial and federal governments, the company's president said.

Calgary-based CNRL deferred the project in March. At the time, company president Scott Stauth attributed the decision to the lack of final "government regulatory policies around carbon pricing and methane, which creates uncertainty and economic burden for our long-term growth."

But a recent memorandum of understanding between Alberta, Ottawa and five oil companies – including CNRL – has changed the outlook for the project, along with several others being eyed by the company.

The MOU "presents a great opportunity for all oil sands players, including Canadian Natural, and certainly a very significant opportunity for Alberta and all of Canada," Mr. Stauth told analysts on a Thursday morning earnings call.

In March, CNRL deferred expansion of its Jackpine oil sands project in northern Alberta. LARRY MacDOUGAL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The July 2 deal pushed forward a massive carbon capture project in the province's north. It also set a Nov. 15 deadline for the governments to come to definitive agreements with oil companies on policies that aim to boost crude production.

Mr. Stauth said in an interview should there be a successful agreement, CNRL will take another look at Jackpine, the expansion of its Jackfish and Horizon operations and a new greenfield project called Pike 2.

However, he said, the agreements must provide oil companies with the assurance that all of the objectives outlined in the MOU will be met.

Those goals include expanding global market access for Canadian oil, reducing emissions, streamlining regulatory frameworks and developing fiscal policy "to enable sustained and substantial oil sands development and production growth."

"All of it has to come together," Mr. Stauth said. "There isn't one particular piece of it that needs to happen in terms of priority or the other. They're all important."

Mr. Stauth stressed that projects will remain on hold until an agreement is reached, and even then will only proceed if they will generate strong returns.

"Our shareholder returns will not be sacrificed," he told analysts, adding that CNRL would not weigh long-term developments over medium-term ones if they press too hard on capital.

The chief executives at Suncor Energy Inc. and Cenovus Energy Inc. have also said that the MOU will not change their approach to capital spending.

The Jackpine project would increase CNRL's bitumen production by 150,000 barrels a day, and the expansions of Jackfish and Horizon would boost barrels by roughly 30,000 and 90,000 barrels a day respectively. Pike 2, a new facility slated for Lac La Biche County, Alta., is designed to deliver 70,000 barrels a day.

On Tuesday, CNRL reported the highest quarterly oil sands mining production in its history, which averaged roughly 625,000 barrels a day April through June. It also increased its production guidance for the second time this year.

Its quarterly net earnings were $4.5-billion, compared with $1.3-billion in the first three months of the year.

Suncor: Company aims to increase free cash flow to $2-billion by 2028

FROM B1

Outgoing Suncor Energy president and CEO Rich Kruger was lured out of retirement to lead Suncor in 2023. PATRICK DOYLE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In a statement Thursday, Elliott praised Mr. Kruger's efforts, saying he brought about "profound transformation" at the company. It also said Mr. Zebedee's operational experience makes him the ideal successor.

Menno Hulshof, managing director of equity research at TD Cowen, said the differences between today's Suncor and how it looked in 2023 are "night and day."

"There's a massive improvement in the underlying fundamentals of the performance of the business," and it is "running at a level that we've never seen," Mr. Hulshof said.

Suncor had a record-breaking year of production in 2025. Earlier this year, it achieved a series of lofty three-year goals in only two, and has now set even higher targets. By 2028, the company aims to increase free cash flow by $2-billion, reduce the break-even cost of a barrel by US$5 to US$38, and boost the capacity of its refining network by 10 per cent to 511,000 barrels a day.

Mr. Hulshof credited Mr. Kruger with stripping various redundancies and unnecessary layers from the company and making a raft of changes to drive higher profits from every barrel.

"They've done a much better job of not leaving margin on the table," he said. "Under the prior leadership, there was a lot of that – a lot of financial leakage, I would call it."

The culture at Suncor is also markedly different since Mr. Kruger took the helm, with more direct accountability within the company and executive-level bench strength "at a level that has never existed," Mr. Hulshof said.

Martha Hall Findlay, who was Suncor's chief sustainability officer under former CEO Mr. Little, said Mr. Kruger's arrival brought a new level of intensity to the company.

"Rich has been – and still is, obviously – a tough and pretty demanding CEO," she said in an interview.

"There were some people who really loved the culture at Suncor earlier. It was more relaxed. I don't think you would say Rich Kruger is a relaxed kind of a guy, but I don't think anybody can argue with the actual business results that Rich has been able to achieve with Suncor."

A sometimes-blunt Minnesotan, Mr. Kruger ruffled political feathers in August, 2023, barely five months into his new job, when he said on an earnings call that the Suncor of old placed a "disproportionate emphasis on the longer-term energy transition." The parliamentary natural resources committee hauled him to Ottawa to explain his remarks.

But he also has a penchant for using analogies and quoting movies during earnings calls. Just this week he evoked the story of Noah's Ark from the Book of Genesis to illustrate extreme rains in Fort McMurray, Alta., and he once compared Suncor products to cocktails.

"Think back to that old campus bar you went to in university. They served beer and, if it was a high-class joint, maybe some cheap wine out of a box," he said during a 2024 business update. "Now I'll come back to today. While others serve beer, Suncor's serving craft cocktails. If our customers want synthetic sour, we got it. Synthetic sweet? Coming right up. Diluent on the rocks? Here it is. PFT neat? Enjoy. You get the point."

Mr. Hulshof with TD Cowen put it this way: "He brings an energy to the business that you don't see very often, and I think he's very good at communicating very complicated things in ways that are not only relatively easy to understand, but also interesting to hear."

Mr. Zebedee will move from his current role to president and chief financial officer Sept. 14. He replaces former CFO Troy Little. Suncor said Thursday that Mr. Little – who was on this week's earnings call – was no longer with the company. No reason was given for his departure.

While Mr. Zebedee will have "very big shoes to fill" as Suncor's new CEO, Mr. Hulshof said, he's a perfect fit for the role given his deep operational background across various types of oil and gas assets.

Ms. Hall Findlay said she's "a big fan" of Mr. Zebedee, calling his promotion "a great move for the company."

Suncor also announced Thursday that Adam Albeldawi, the company's chief human resources officer and senior vice-president of external affairs, will take over from Mr. Zebedee. Shelley Powell, currently senior vice-president of operations improvement and support services, will become executive vice-president of development and projects.

With a report from Jeffrey Jones

Ore is processed into different forms of potash at Nutrien's Cory Potash mine in February, 2025. According to the World Bank, potash prices rose by more than 5 per cent in the first quarter. MATT SMITH/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Nutrien: Middle East war has resulted in major damage to fertilizer production facilities

FROM B1

The World Bank is forecasting the fertilizer price index to climb by more than 30 per cent over the year. Urea prices for North American farmers will be around 35 per cent above precrisis levels through 2027, according to a report from North Dakota State University, with prices expected to remain 13 per cent above pre-crisis levels into spring 2028.

In its second quarter, Nutrien reported a 3-per-cent decline in net sales for nitrogen products owing to low volumes. A significant hike in production costs for phosphate resulted in a 75-per-cent decrease in adjusted EBITDA (or earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) for the phosphate division. Potash net sales climbed 6 per cent and reached over $1-billion, but fell short of the 24 per cent growth seen in the first quarter of 2026.

The Mideast war has resulted in substantial damage to fertilizer production facilities in the region, as well as to natural gas facilities that export LNG for the purpose of nitrogen production. Even if the Strait of Hormuz opened immediately, the effects on the supply chain would take time to resolve, Mr. Seitz said.

"We are looking to potentially long-term disruption as we consider damage to infrastructure," he said.

Compared with global competitors, Nutrien is somewhat immune to the disrupted supply chain.

> The company's legacy fertilizer product – potash – is mined from vast reserves in Saskatchewan's Prairie Evaporite Formation.

Nutrien's 11 North American nitrogen plants source natural gas largely from Canada and the U.S. The company's legacy fertilizer product – potash – is mined from vast reserves in Saskatchewan's Prairie Evaporite Formation.

But while the supply chain for potash is unaffected by disruptions in the strait, it is still exposed to geopolitical tensions. Because the fertilizer is not as essential to crop development as nitrogen, there is a risk that farmers might buy less potash in order to afford the more crucial nutrient. The price of potash has also climbed. According to the World Bank, potash prices rose by more than 5 per cent in the first quarter and nearly 17 per cent year-over-year amid sustained demand.

On the investor call, Chris Reynolds, executive vice-president of global sales at Nutrien, said potash remains a stable part of the business, and that demand continues to grow in international markets as major buyers such as China are "prioritizing security of supply."

"We are feeling good about demand for potash for the balance of the year. It is still the most affordable nutrient out there, and we're seeing that in major markets," he said.

Nutrien had a great first quarter of the year, with a 19-per-cent hike in sales compared with the same period in 2025.

The company reported adjusted earnings of US$2.61 a share for the second quarter, missing analysts' estimate of US$2.71, according to LSEG data.

Nutrien shares fell from $94.17 at market close on Wednesday to $93.62 at market close Thursday.

Allied: CEO says company's attractiveness has gone up in earnings call

FROM B1

In January, Allied agreed to be acquired by Zijin for $44 a share, which at the time represented a record high for the stock.

After the buyout was cancelled last week, Allied shares nosedived by 18.6 per cent.

Instead of moving ahead on a full-scale acquisition of the Canadian miner, Zijin instead agreed to acquire a 9.2-per-cent holding in Allied at a much lower per-share price. The Chinese company agreed to pay $32.55 a share for a stake worth $417-million.

Before running Allied Gold, Mr. Marrone was a founder of Yamana and the company's executive chairman. In 2022, he agreed to sell Yamana in a two-pronged transaction to Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. and Pan American Silver Corp. after an earlier proposed deal with South Africa's Gold Fields Ltd. ran into trouble.

> We have delivered on our plans that improve the company and increase that value. I'm comfortable saying to everyone on this call that we present a unique and strong value proposition.
>
> PETER MARRONE
> CEO OF ALLIED GOLD

Allied operates gold mines in Mali and Ivory Coast and produced more than 97,000 ounces in the second quarter. The company is starting up a new mine in Ethiopia called Kurmuk next month, and it has a major expansion planned at its Sadiola operation in Mali.

In a conference call on Thursday, after the release of the company's second-quarter earnings, Mr. Marrone said that the company's attractiveness has gone up considerably compared with when it announced the now-defunct takeover deal with Zijin.

"Today, many months later, we're more advanced and a better company," he said.

"We have delivered on our plans that improve the company and increase that value. I'm comfortable saying to everyone on this call that we present a unique and strong value proposition."

While Mr. Marrone is extremely bullish on Allied's prospects, he is critical of many analysts, as well as some investors, for assigning too low a valuation to the company's shares.

He said much of that is based on their "lazy" habit of painting all operators in Mali with the same risky geopolitical brush, regardless of the quality of the asset, or a company's individual track record in the West African country.

While some Canadian companies operating in Mali, including Barrick Mining Corp., have encountered serious setbacks resulting in production being idled for long stretches at a time, Allied's Sadiola mine has operated for more than 20 years without interruption, Mr. Marrone said.

"The implication of all of that is that it grossly discounts the value of the asset based on a perceived risk, but not a real one if we look at the continuity of operations in the country," he said.

Mr. Marrone maintains that smart investors see through the noise.

"It represents a true value proposition for a discerning investor who says, 'I get it. This is overpenalization. This is not a failed state. This is not a country that is in collapse.' You cannot run a business if that were the case. And we're all running high-quality businesses."

DIAGEO CEO PLANS $1-BILLION IN COST CUTS WHILE CONFRONTING WEAK GROWTH

Diageo PLC's new chief executive Dave Lewis unveiled a US$1-billion cost-cutting plan on Thursday, saying the world's top spirits maker must adapt to a prolonged period of weak growth.

Mr. Lewis plans to use savings to invest for growth, including by reducing prices on some brands, and expanding in fast-growing areas including Guinness and canned cocktails.

Investors welcomed the overhaul as a sign that Mr. Lewis, who has been leading Diageo since January, was moving quickly to tackle years of stagnant or falling sales.

Shares in the Johnnie Walker whisky and Guinness beer maker rose as much as 11 per cent at one point to a more than five-month high. The stock eventually closed 5.6 per cent higher.

The spirits industry has been struggling to chart a path back to growth as people have changed what, where and how much they drink.

Mr. Lewis, nicknamed Drastic Dave for his history of cost-cutting at Tesco PLC and Unilever PLC, said his restructuring plan would change the cost structure of the entire business, and have "very significant impacts" on colleagues.

He declined to disclose the number of roles that might be affected. Big changes were focused on global, back-office functions and in areas where there was "massive duplication," he said.

Some savings would also come from cutting spending on capacity increases for growth that never materialized, Mr. Lewis said. Diageo reported severance costs of US$514-million for its fiscal year ended June 30, sharply up from US$73-million a year earlier.

Reuters reported in July some Diageo teams were facing up to 30-per-cent reductions.

The overhaul, saving US$1-billion in costs over three years, would cost US$1.2-billion, with around 70 per cent of those costs already incurred, Diageo said. That compares with net revenues of US$19.64-billion, down 3 per cent from a year ago. Other drinks makers have also restructured recently. Heineken said in February it would cut up to 6,000 jobs, while Pernod Ricard last year launched a plan to save €1-billion (about $1.6-billion) by its fiscal 2029.

Diageo, which also makes Smirnoff vodka and Captain Morgan rum, forecast low-single-digit organic net sales growth through its 2029 financial year, below a previous medium-term growth target of 5 per cent to 7 per cent that it scrapped in 2025.

Mr. Lewis said the new guidance was shaped by weakness in its largest market, North America, which is expected to decline next year, stabilize in two years and grow thereafter.

REUTERS

Why many CEOs are getting a chief of staff

Since early 2020, postings for the role have increased 85%, according to Indeed

JORDYN HOLMAN

When Richard Gelfond, the chief executive of Imax, hired his first chief of staff, he went looking for a shadow, someone who could take notes during meetings and let him know what was up next.

But over time, as Imax grew more complex – expanding from 55 theatres to almost 2,000 across more than 90 countries – his chief of staff grew in stature. "They're really invaluable in helping me think through what I want to say and what I want to accomplish and then how to execute it and helping me execute it," Mr. Gelfond said. Raphael Roesler, who was Mr. Gelfond's chief of staff until June, 2025, recently worked on a high-profile project: co-ordinating with research and development to build the special camera used in Christopher Nolan's summer hit, *The Odyssey*.

Mr. Gelfond has had a chief of staff for 16 years, but the position is becoming increasingly trendy among his peers. Since early 2020, postings for the role have increased 85 per cent, according to Indeed, the job-posting site. That's a faster clip than for executive assistants and secretaries, whose jobs are also tied to helping business leaders manage their day.

Unlike executive assistants, the chief of staff is often a senior level role, according to data from Indeed, because they serve as a second brain for the busy boss.

An executive assistant "figures out what time something goes on the calendar, but a chief of staff figures out whether it should go on the calendar at all," said Clara Ma, founder and CEO of Ask a Chief of Staff, a networking platform that brings together chiefs of staff across various industries. According to a survey she conducted, the position pays $150,000 to more than $200,000 a year, depending on experience.

Executive search firms like Russell Reynolds Associates are fielding more requests from companies to help recruit chiefs of staff. And companies aren't looking to hire them just for the top boss. Lower level executives, such as vice-presidents within marketing, communications and finance departments, are getting them as well.

Imax CEO Richard Gelfond, right, seen with his chief of staff Natalie Mayer at the company's Manhattan offices on Monday, has had chiefs of staff for 16 years. OLIVER FARSHI/NYT

In a dozen interviews conducted for this article, CEOs, consultants and chiefs of staff pointed to the increasing complexities of running a business in a time when artificial intelligence and geopolitics threaten to upend business models. Enter the chief of staff, who can be the "orchestrator" who ensures that leaders in the company are working together well, said Catherine Berardi, formerly the chief of staff to Mellody Hobson, a co-CEO of Ariel Investments.

> [Chiefs of staff are] really invaluable in helping me think through what I want to say and what I want to accomplish and then how to execute it and helping me execute it.
>
> RICHARD GELFOND
> CEO OF IMAX

"When you think of these big issues that organizations have today – AI, cybersecurity, customer success, growth – it's hard to be like, 'this is just your thing,'" said Ms. Berardi, who runs Prime Executive Office, a firm that places executive office leaders, including chiefs of staff. CEOs, she said, "need somebody to make sure that that's co-ordinated and successful and not a nightmare."

A chief of staff's tasks can vary widely, depending on what the boss wants or what a business needs. Some have direct reports; others don't.

The common thread is that the chief of staff has a single constituent: the boss.

The most famous chiefs of staff worked in the White House, as gatekeepers to the president and power players in their own right. But corporate America is catching on. Valerie Jarrett, now the chief executive of the Obama Foundation, was the longest-serving senior adviser in the White House and had chiefs of staff in both politics and the private sector. And she herself was a deputy chief of staff to Richard M. Daley when he was Chicago's mayor. From the executive's point of view, Ms. Jarrett said, a chief of staff is someone who has no line or departmental responsibilities, but whose "job is me."

After winning over the boss, the chief of staff has to gain the respect of other executives. He or she makes sure different business units (and their leaders) are communicating well with one another and completing the companywide tasks that the CEO wants done. Leaders turn to their chief of staff for a neutral perspective when weighing differences of opinion.

Many people seek out the job when they're looking for a springboard to a more senior or managerial role. One chief of staff at IBM interviewed for this article decided to skip business school in favour of the job. Others had a decade of professional experience. The role offers exposure across an organization – a built-in networking opportunity.

Vikram Arumilli worked at McKinsey and Co. and attended Wharton business school before becoming the chief of staff to Mr. Gelfond in 2019. He served until 2022 during a time of upheaval for the movie theatre industry.

Mr. Gelfond, who generally changes chiefs of staff every two years, put Mr. Arumilli on a COVID-19 task force alongside the head of human resources and the chief financial officer. Mr. Arumilli also spent time in India researching how Imax could grow its presence there and helped the company acquire a software business.

Mr. Arumilli went on to become a general manager of Imax's streaming and consumer technology division. This summer, he accepted the CEO role at a software company based in New Zealand.

Other former chiefs of staff interviewed for this article have gone on to become vice-president of revenue and operations at Yahoo Search and president of Thrive Global, Arianna Huffington's health and wellness company.

Not all executives are sold on the idea of having a chief of staff.

"I've always thought of the role as a kind of gatekeeper, someone who sits between an executive and everyone else," said Spencer Rascoff, CEO of Match Group, which owns the dating apps Tinder and Hinge. "That's not my style. I don't want anyone between me and my teams."

He turns to AI agents to help him organize his day and accomplish tasks that chiefs of staff sometimes do, such as preparing for meetings. That said, he understands the appeal of having an additional adviser by one's side.

"I think there's a difference between AI helping someone do their job better and AI replacing the judgment and relationship building that a good leader, or a good chief of staff, actually provides," Mr. Rascoff conceded.

Mr. Gelfond said he hadn't given much thought to how AI might change the role for him. His chiefs of staff are more adept at AI than he is and help give him ideas on how it can be used within the organization.

"Maybe they'll teach me enough to replace themselves," Mr. Gelfond said, "but they haven't done that yet."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

GLOBE INVESTOR

The math behind being a working mother

Long-term financial repercussions of taking years off work must be taken into account

ERICA ALINI

OPINION

GETTY IMAGES

You might have heard of this kind of kitchen-table math: A new parent (usually mom) would make barely enough to pay for child care if they went back to work, therefore they should just stay at home. I always found this reasoning odd.

To be clear: For many people, the decision to stay at home with young children is about much more than financial factors. And I have zero issues with whatever parents believe is best for them and their families.

But if the deciding factor is the math, then let's do the math properly, shall we?

That means taking into account the long-term financial repercussions of taking years off work. And new research by a trio of Canadian and American economists offers some solid evidence for what I and many others have long suspected: Those repercussions are significant.

The study finds that Quebec's subsidized child-care program led to mothers both working more and earning more for decades, long after their kids aged out of the system. Although the research is focused on public policy, there is a clear personal finance takeaway there.

I reached out to Kevin Milligan, one of the authors of the study and a professor of economics at the University of British Columbia. Here's our interview, edited for flow and length.

Your research finds that Quebec's child-care program boosted both employment and earnings for mothers through several decades – that's compared with what?

The comparison is to imagine a world where the program wasn't in place. How much more are Quebec mothers working and earning? We suggest that child care might be putting working mothers on a different trajectory than they would have been in the absence of the program.

You found that affordable child care resulted in mothers working more well beyond the years when their kids were in care. How?

One way to think about that is the skills you might learn in the workplace.

If you're out for a short maternity leave, you come back, things are pretty much the same. But if you're out for, like, three or four years – just think of something contemporary here – you come back and your office is full of people running Claude Code and autonomous agents doing stuff. You're like, "What the hell is this? This wasn't here four years ago."

You feel like the job market has moved on from you, and the skills you had have depreciated. That might lead you to stay out of the labour market more.

What about earnings? How might child care boost mothers' earnings for decades after their kids were in care?

With the continuity of work experience that is made affordable by the child-care program, mothers are able to have that better lifetime career trajectory.

In our study, that starts to pay off for women in their 40s. By then, we find that women are working in more responsible jobs. For example, they're more likely to be a manager and they are earning more per hour.

What's interesting is this effect accelerates over time. By the time mothers are in their 50s, it leads to a fairly substantial increase in earnings.

How much more did Quebec mothers work and earn thanks to the child-care program, according to your research?

For women at age 50, we calculate a roughly 12-percentage-point boost to employment.

We found a 27-per-cent increase in earnings for women at age 50, which is really kind of big. About half of that is the fact that more mothers are working, so there's fewer people with zero earnings. The other half comes from the benefits of having stayed in the work force, gained experience and kept skills up to date.

What do these findings mean for parents weighing whether to step out of the work force for a few years?

What we can contribute is to say there are some dollars on the table there, and that's what you have to consider. The open question is whether people see those dollars.

But we can say, yes, there are lifetime higher earnings available for most women.

MORTGAGE RATES

The week's best fixed and variable mortgage rates

Mortgage rates

	INSURED	PROVIDER	UNINSURED	PROVIDER
1-year fixed	4.29	True North	4.74	CIBC
2-year fixed	3.89	Ratehub.ca	4.34	Scotiabank
3-year fixed	3.89	Ratehub.ca	4.04	Ratehub.ca
4-year fixed	4.09	Ratehub.ca	4.54	Scotiabank
5-year fixed	4.04	Ratehub.ca	4.44	Ratehub.ca
10-year fixed	5.35	Scotiabank	5.40	RBC
5-year variable	3.40	Ratehub.ca & Nesto	3.75	Ratehub.ca
HELOC	NA	NA	4.95	Ratehub.ca & True North

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: RATEHUB.CA; DATA AS OF AUG. 6

The Canadian economy posted stronger-than-expected growth in May, Statistics Canada data showed last week, reinforcing expectations that the Bank of Canada will hold interest rates at its September meeting.

Any changes to the Bank of Canada's policy interest rate – which has been at 2.25 per cent for about nine months – would result in changes to variable-rate mortgages.

May's growth puts the economy on track for annualized growth above 3 per cent in the second quarter – a welcome rebound after two back-to-back quarters of negative annualized growth, or what's known as a "technical recession."

However, a new wave of U.S. tariffs – set to take effect Aug. 19 – and broader trade uncertainty could temper the growth in the latter half of the year, complicating the Bank of Canada's path forward.

Most traders are expecting a quarter-point rate hike by the end of this year, according to Bloomberg data.

This week, Canadian government bond yields fell across the curve along with oil as talks to reopen the Strait of Hormuz resumed, easing fears of geopolitical and inflation risk.

In a late July note, Abbey Xu, an economist at Royal Bank of Canada, said the path for headline inflation remains highly sensitive to unpredictable global developments.

On Thursday, the Canadian five-year yield – the benchmark for fixed-rate mortgages – settled at 3.23 per cent.

Markets are split on whether the U.S. Federal Reserve will hike rates at its Sept. 16 meeting, which would have a direct effect on Canadian bond yields and financial conditions.

In a July 31 note, Avery Shenfeld, chief economist at Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Capital Markets, said that if energy prices continue to climb, keeping inflation expectations under wraps would likely mean the Fed would need to meet market expectations for a couple of hikes.

"But war-related pressures on inflation could ease off sharply if things go right in the Persian Gulf, giving the Fed some further breathing room for 'watchful thinking.' " SOPHIA BERTUZZI

Mortgage rates are sourced by Ratehub.ca. For a comprehensive list of today's mortgage rates for each term/type, visit ratehub.ca/best-mortgage-rates.

Ratehub.ca is a mortgage-rate comparison marketplace and mortgage brokerage. It helps millions of Canadians compare and obtain the best mortgage rates, credit cards, insurance, deposits and loan products.

Rates shown are the lowest available for each term/type and category (insured versus uninsured) as of Thursday afternoon.

Canada's exit tax is not an extra tax

MARK McGRATH

OPINION

Founder of Phynance, a fee-for-service financial planning firm focused on physicians based in Squamish, B.C.

There's no such thing as an exit tax in Canada – at least, not in the way most people think of it.

The term "exit tax" makes it sound like a toll booth at the border; a penalty you pay for leaving. And because of that, many believe the government is somehow holding their money hostage unless they decide to stay. But that's not how it works.

The exit tax – or "departure tax," as it's officially called – is just a deemed disposition. When someone becomes a non-resident of Canada, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) treats them as if they sold certain assets at fair market value on the day they became a non-resident and then immediately bought them back at the same price. No sale needs to happen and no money needs to change hands. The accrued taxable capital gain on those assets is taxed as if they were sold, whether or not they actually were.

Essentially, it's a capital-gains tax that would have been owed eventually even if the person stayed in Canada, just pulled forward to their departure date. And as there are several exemptions, it misses most emigrants entirely.

EXEMPT ASSETS

Most of Canadians' wealth is held in real estate and in registered accounts, such as RRSPs, RRIFs and pension plans. All of these are exempt from the departure tax. As of 2023, Statistics Canada's Survey of Financial Security reported that assets held by Canadian families totalled $19.2-trillion and more than 70 per cent of those assets were completely exempt from the departure tax.

Canadian real estate and registered accounts are exempt because Canada can tax them later. A Canadian rental property gets taxed when it's eventually sold; it's not going anywhere. Foreign real estate is different because it sits beyond Canada's reach once the person is gone, so a person's departure is the CRA's last real chance to collect on it.

Once you're living in another country, the CRA has limited ability to pursue or extradite you to settle an old bill, so you settle up at the door. The point is to tax the appreciation that happened while you were a resident and benefiting from living in Canada.

NON-REGISTERED INVESTMENTS AND BUSINESS SHARES

The deemed disposition rule applies to non-registered investment portfolios, meaning any unrealized capital gains are captured (although only 50 per cent of the capital gain is taxable while the other 50 per cent remains tax-free).

> Most of Canadians' wealth is held in real estate and in registered accounts, such as RRSPs, RRIFs and pension plans. All of these are exempt from the departure tax.

For small business owners, shares of a Canadian private corporation are deemed disposed of at fair market value on departure. But if they qualify as small business corporation shares – or qualified farm or fishing property – the lifetime capital-gains exemption can shelter part or all of that gain, even upon departure. So, a business owner isn't necessarily writing a large cheque – at least not yet.

Business owners can also defer the actual payment of the tax by posting security – for example, government bonds, a bank letter of credit or Canadian real estate equity – with the CRA. The deferral is available when the departure tax liability exceeds $16,500 and it lasts until the asset is sold. Generally, no interest is charged on the deferred amount.

The trade-off is that the departing person's tax bill is locked in at the departure-date value. If the asset later drops in value, they can end up owing taxes that exceed the asset's current value. Deferral changes the timing but not the amount.

Canada's approach is not unusual. Australia's rules are almost identical and countries such as Austria, Norway and Belgium all have their own versions of a departure tax.

Many point out that the U.S. doesn't levy a departure tax, but U.S taxes follow citizenship – an American who leaves the U.S. must still file taxes with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) every year. If they renounce their citizenship or give up their green card, then their version of the departure tax – the "expatriation tax" – comes due.

Although the U.S. has its own exemptions, tests and limits, the function is largely the same – emigrants settle their tax bill because once they've renounced their citizenship, they no longer have to file taxes in the U.S., making it easier to escape the IRS's reach.

So, Canada doesn't have a punitive additional layer of taxes levied on those daring to leave. It's possible to think taxes are too high and still see why this particular one isn't as unfair as many make it out to be. Without it, someone could build up years of gains in Canada, move to a zero-tax jurisdiction, then sell their assets and pay no taxes anywhere. The exemptions prove the intent: Canada waives the tax on exactly the assets it can still tax later.

Those who don't hold a large, non-registered portfolio, foreign real estate or private company shares may owe little or nothing in departure tax. And those who do owe may still be able to defer it.

For most people leaving Canada, the "exit tax" is far less punishing than the name suggests. It's a deemed disposition, not a wall. Understand it and most of the fear goes away.

Financial sector's share of TSX hits eight-year high

Canadian banks are trading at near multidecade high valuation levels

FERGAL SMITH
NIVEDITA BALU

People walk by Royal Bank Plaza in Toronto's Financial District in October. The financial sector now accounts for 37 per cent of the Toronto Stock Exchange. FRED LUM/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

The Canadian financial sector's share of the country's benchmark stock index, the TSX, is at its highest level in eight years, underscoring investor enthusiasm for bank shares and nervousness about energy and materials.

The financial sector now accounts for 37 per cent of the TSX, reducing the diversification benefits of owning a broad index and leaving investors exposed to an eventual drop in financial shares.

The TSX has outperformed the S&P 500 in 2025 and so far this year in part because it offered an alternative to highly tech-concentrated U.S. indexes.

Canada's Big Six lenders – Royal Bank of Canada (RY-T), Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD-T), Bank of Montreal (BMO-T), Bank of Nova Scotia (BNS-T), Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CM-T) and National Bank of Canada (NA-T) – are among Canada's biggest financial companies and control a large chunk of the market.

After several banks posted consecutive quarters of double-digit earnings growth, they are trading at near multidecade high valuation levels, prompting some investors to question whether future earnings growth can keep pace with lofty expectations.

"That is an area of concern for me and it's been for quite some time," said Michael Dehal, a senior portfolio manager at Dehal Investment Partners at Raymond James. "If the earnings cannot live up to the multiple, you are going to see the price decline and that's going to weigh on the TSX."

Financial stocks have outperformed energy and materials, which includes mining shares, since the U.S. attacked Iran in February, as gold prices fell and hopes of a peace deal arrested a spike in the price of oil.

Since February, financials have climbed 22 per cent, compared with a 7-per-cent gain for energy and a 25-per-cent drop in materials, although miners have clawed back some losses in recent days. As recently as March, financials accounted for 31 per cent of the TSX, according to LSEG data.

Investors remain largely positive about the country's financial sector. The five largest Canadian bank stocks are trading at an average of 15 times forward earnings, an estimate of future profits for the next 12 months. The top five U.S. banks, in comparison, trade at 12 times their forward earnings.

Canadian bank stocks are the most expensive they've been since 2010, when compared with the top five U.S. bank stocks. Even so, Veritas Investment Research analyst Shalabh Garg in July upgraded his view on Canadian banks, recommending that investors at least maintain a market-weight exposure to the Big Six banks, from an underweight position.

The big banks, five of which are among the 10 largest Canadian companies, have bet on diversifying their revenue streams, with a large portion coming from capital markets and wealth management. Market uncertainty has boosted income from their trading business, while an uptick in investment banking activity has brought in more fee income.

Canadian banks start reporting earnings the last week of August.

REUTERS

Stocks slip as investors eye Mideast talks, earnings

U.S. and Canadian stocks finished the trading session lower on Thursday, pausing after a strong start to the week, as investors digested the latest round of corporate earnings and looked for signs of progress toward a peace deal between the U.S. and Iran.

A robust earnings season, which has tempered some concerns about the massive spending by AI-related companies, and growing optimism over the potential end of hostilities in the Iran war helped propel the Dow Industrials, S&P 500 and TSX to record highs earlier this week. The recent indications of movement toward a peace deal helped push crude prices lower and, in turn, eased inflation worries and expectations for a rate hike from the Federal Reserve, which also served to push U.S. Treasury yields lower.

On Thursday, oil prices rose, with U.S. crude settling up 2.75 per cent at US$77.29 a barrel and Brent settling at US$82.49 a barrel, up 3.83 per cent. Iran's semi-official Fars news agency reported that an Iranian parliamentary committee is reviewing a preliminary bill that would bar U.S., Israeli and other "hostile" vessels from transiting the Strait of Hormuz.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 464.02 points, or 0.85 per cent, to 53,885.10, the S&P 500 lost 13.52 points, or 0.18 per cent, to 7,710.03 and the Nasdaq Composite lost 15.09 points, or 0.06 per cent, to 26,348.35.

The S&P/TSX Composite Index ended down 10.11 points at 36,136.31.

The TSX technology sector fell 1.5 per cent, with shares of Celestica Inc. down nearly 13 per cent after the data-centre infrastructure firm announced the pricing of an equity offering.

Consumer discretionary lost 1.8 per cent in Toronto and industrials ended 0.7 per cent lower. Shares of ATS Corp. tumbled nearly 27 per cent after the automation solutions provider's quarterly results missed estimates.

Just two of the 10 major TSX sectors notched gains, including the materials group. It added 0.5 per cent, while energy ended 0.6 per cent higher.

Shares of Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. rose 1.6 per cent after the company beat second-quarter profit estimates on higher oil and natural gas production.

On Wall Street, data storage company Western Digital Corp. tumbled 13 per cent and memory chip maker Sandisk Corp. dropped 6.8 per cent in the wake of their quarterly results. Both companies have surged this year, however, with Sandisk up more than 400 per cent and Western Digital up about 160 per cent.

Of the 382 companies in the S&P 500 that have reported earnings through Wednesday morning, 84.8 per cent have topped analyst expectations, according to LSEG data, well above the 68-per-cent average beat rate since 1994.

SpaceX shares erased losses from earlier in the session and closed 6.1 per cent higher, defying expectations that they would be pressured by insider selling, as the lockup period for early investors holding the stock expired.

REUTERS, GLOBE STAFF

Conglomerates with sustainable dividends that have potential for spinouts

SCOTT CLAYTON

NUMBER CRUNCHER

MBA, senior analyst for TSI Network and associate editor of TSI Dividend Advisor

Dividend payers with breakup potential

RANKING*	COMPANY	TICKER	DIV. SUSTAIN. RATING	POINTS	DIV. YLD. (%)	MKT. CAP. ($ BIL.)**	1Y TTL. RTN. (%)	RECENT PRICE ($)**
1	ATCO Ltd.	ACO.X-T	Highest	10	2.6	8.1	54.0	77.23
2	Power Corporation of Canada	POW-T	Above Average	8	2.8	59.7	68.9	95.23
3	Illinois Tool Works Inc.	ITW-N	Above Average	8	2.2	84.9	16.1	297.32
4	3M Co.	MMM-N	Above Average	8	1.8	93.6	21.2	182.08
5	Dover Corp.	DOV-N	Above Average	8	1.0	28.3	18.7	210.40

*Source: Dividend Advisor. *Ranking is determined by TSI Dividend Sustainability Score. Where overall points are the same, analysts considered P/E, dividend yield and industry outlook to decide final placements. **Share price and market cap are in native currency.*

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Sustainable dividends from conglomerates positioned to "unlock" value by simplifying their holdings.

THE SCREEN

Honeywell International Inc. spun off **Honeywell Aerospace Inc.** on June 29. That new stock now trades on the Nasdaq under the symbol HONA. At the same time, the former parent rebranded itself as **Honeywell Technologies**; it continues to trade under the HON symbol on Nasdaq.

This latest Honeywell split caps the industrial conglomerate's plan to separate into three independent companies. The move – spurred by activist investor Elliott Investment Management – is meant to shrink Honeywell's "holding company discount." That's the tendency for multifaceted conglomerates to trade for less than the total value of their various parts.

A split can narrow that valuation gap, with a holding company's share price often rising after its breakup into constituent parts. Essentially, the market finds it easier to assess the value of any "pure-play" companies formed by the split.

To find more conglomerates likely to gain by simplifying their holdings, we started with an extensive list of dividend-paying Canadian and U.S. companies. We then singled out conglomerates with strong breakup potential and solid growth prospects. From there, we applied our TSI Dividend Sustainability Rating System, which awards points to a stock based on key factors:

- One point for five years of continuous dividend payments – two points for more than five
- Two points if it has raised the payment in the past five years
- One point for management's commitment to dividends
- One point for operating in non-cyclical industries
- One point for limited exposure to foreign currency rates and freedom from political interference
- Two points for a strong balance sheet, including manageable debt and adequate cash
- Two points for a long-term record of positive earnings and cash flow sufficient to cover dividend payments
- One point for an industry leader

Companies with 10 to 12 points have the most secure dividends, or the highest sustainability. Those with seven to nine points have above average sustainability. Average sustainability is at four to six points, and below average sustainability is one to three points.

MORE ABOUT TSI NETWORK

TSI Network is the online home of the Successful Investor Inc. – the group of widely followed Canadian investment newsletters by editor and publisher Pat McKeough. They include our award-winning flagship newsletter, The Successful Investor, and the **TSI Dividend Advisor**. TSI Network is also affiliated with Successful Investor Wealth Management.

WHAT WE FOUND

Our TSI Dividend Sustainability Rating System generated five stocks:

Montreal-based **Power Corp. of Canada** holds controlling interest in Great-West Lifeco Inc., IGM Financial Inc. and much more.

Calgary-headquartered **ATCO Ltd.** owns 52.5 per cent of Canadian Utilities Ltd. but also 100 per cent of ATCO Structures & Logistics and 40 per cent of Neltume Ports; the latter operates 23 ports and related operations in South America and the U.S.

Illinois Tool Works Inc., based in Chicago, has 88 divisions in 49 countries. It has seven diverse and mostly unrelated segments: Automotive OEM; Food Equipment; Test & Measurement and Electronics; Welding; Polymers & Fluids; Construction Products; and Specialty Products.

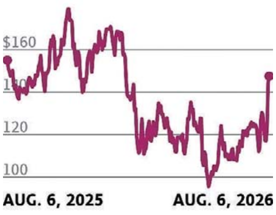
Global conglomerate **3M Co.**, with headquarters in Minnesota, sells a wide array of products with little overlap and significant breakup potential. In fact, it spun off its health care unit as Solventum Corp. in 2024.

And finally, **Dover Corp.**, headquartered in Downers Grove, Ill., is a widely diversified manufacturer with five operating segments well suited for spinoffs: Pumps & Process Solutions, Clean Energy & Fueling, Climate & Sustainability Technologies, Imaging & Identification and Engineered Products.

We advise investors to do additional research on investments we identify here.

EYE ON EQUITIES DAVID LEEDER

PAST YEAR



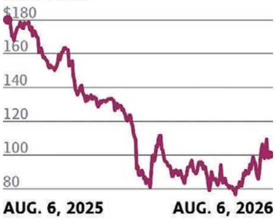
SOURCE: BARCHART

SHOPIFY (SHOP-NASDAQ)
CLOSE US$147.44, UP $3.20

A "massive" second-quarter beat "further justifies" **Shopify Inc.'s** bull case on artificial intelligence, according to Citi analyst Tyler Radke. "Shopify delivered a remarkable 2Q26 beat, with revenue growth accelerating to a post-ZIRP [zero interest-rate period] high of 33-per-cent year-over-year cc (and a 5-point beat), and significant FCF + revenue revisions," he said.

Target: Mr. Radke raised his target to US$196 from US$150 with a "buy" rating. Consensus is US$150.25.

PAST YEAR



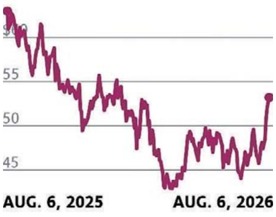
SOURCE: BARCHART

THOMSON REUTERS (TRI-NASDAQ)
CLOSE US$100.15, UP $1.54

RBC Dominion Securities analyst Drew McReynolds sees **Thomson Reuters Corp.** "finding some escape velocity" as the "broader AI disruption narrative continues to evolve." "We see the potential to narrow what looks to be a notable public market valuation discount to intrinsic value under the majority of tail risk/terminal growth scenarios associated with agentic AI," he added.

Target: Mr. McReynolds bumped his target to US$124 from US$121 with an "outperform" rating. Consensus is US$143.92.

PAST YEAR



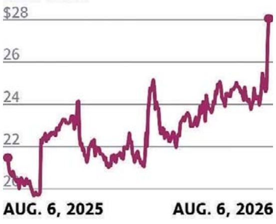
SOURCE: BARCHART

BROOKFIELD AST. MGMT. (BAM-NYSE)
CLOSE US$53.17, UP 54¢

While the quarterly results from **Brookfield Asset Management Ltd.** largely fell in line with expectations, National Bank Financial analyst Jaeme Gloyn saw it as "a very solid" performance, emphasizing fee-related earnings per share jumped 20 per cent year-over-year and distributable earnings rising 17 per cent.

Target: Mr. Gloyn moved his target to US$70 from US$69, keeping an "outperform" rating. Consensus is US$57.03.

PAST YEAR



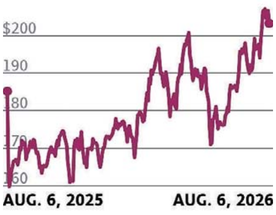
SOURCE: BARCHART

CHORUS AVIATION (CHR-TSX)
CLOSE $28.05 UP $1.05

After a second-quarter beat, RBC Dominion Securities analyst James McGarragle reaffirmed **Chorus Aviation Inc.** as his "best idea." "Q2 results came in well ahead and commentary from the conference call pointed to EBITDA above the top end of management's guidance range, which is where our estimates now sit," he said.

Target: Mr. McGarragle increased his target to $39 from $35 with an "outperform" rating. Consensus is $31.14.

PAST YEAR



SOURCE: BARCHART

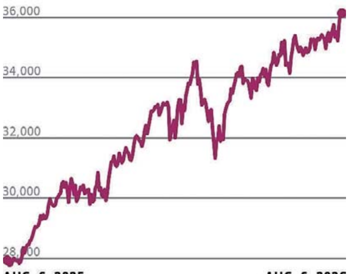
CANADIAN TIRE (CTC.A-TSX)
CLOSE $203.22, DOWN $3.41

Ahead of the release of second-quarter results from **Canadian Tire Corp. Ltd.** on Aug. 13, National Bank Financial analyst Vishal Shreedhar warned of "uneven operating performance and ongoing disruption related to the implementation of the True North strategy" and sees "more attractive opportunities elsewhere" in the retail sector.

Target: Maintaining his "sector perform" rating, Mr. Shreedhar raised his target to $210 from $205. Consensus is $211.25.

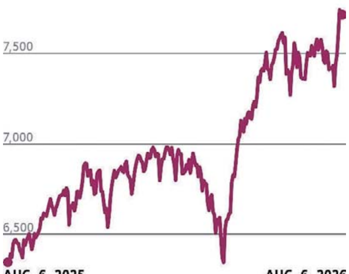
S&P/TSX COMPOSITE INDEX
PAST 12 MONTHS

36136.31 | -10.11 | -0.03 % | 13.95 % YTD | 274042 VOL(000)



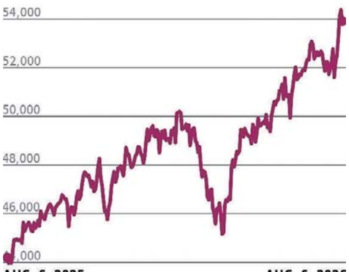
S&P 500
PAST 12 MONTHS

7709.96 | -13.59 | -0.18 % | 12.63 % YTD 2920507



DOW JONES INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE
PAST 12 MONTHS

53885.10 | -464.02 | -0.85 % | 12.11 % YTD | 416812 VOL(000)



S&P GLOBAL 100 INDEX
PAST 12 MONTHS

5892.52 | 1.72 | 0.03 % | 14.50 % YTD

TSX INDEXES AND SUB INDEXES

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
TSX COMPOSITE IND	36136.31	-10.11	-0.03	274042	13.95
TSX 60 INDEX	2131.87	1.12	0.05	134614	14.62
TSX COMPLETION IN	2314.39	-8.24	-0.35	139427	11.29
TSX SMALLCAP INDE	1408.68	2.13	0.15	96323	17.73
TSX VENTURE COMPO	926.78	2.95	0.32	52011	-6.17
TSX CONSUMER DISC	411.24	-7.67	-1.83	5528	7.49
TSX CONSUMER STAP	1302.21	-11.29	-0.86	7158	5.17
TSX ENERGY CAPPED	411.55	2.56	0.63	44899	36.99
TSX FINANCIALS CA	774.41	-0.85	-0.11	31020	23.41
TSX HEALTH CARE C	23.58	-0.07	-0.30	2849	7.67
TSX INDUSTRIALS C	518.96	-3.82	-0.73	18302	11.13
TSX INFORMATION T	328.24	-4.98	-1.49	11298	0.50
TSX MATERIALS CAP	790.75	4.07	0.52	79662	5.48
TSX REAL ESTATE C	315.91	-5.27	-1.64	8602	-0.15
TSX GLOBAL GOLD I	831.27	4.18	0.51	142922	1.68
TSX GLOBAL MINING	236.69	-1.00	-0.42	338053	12.84
TSX INCOME TRUST	244.41	-3.21	-1.30	9390	10.98
TSX PREFERRED SHA	718.02	-0.16	-0.02	820	3.13
TSX COMMUNICATION	151.25	4.01	2.72	23775	-3.58
TSX UTILITIES CAP	397.97	-2.12	-0.53	12565	12.96

TSX VOLUME
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
ENB ENBRIDGE INC	72.40	-0.31	-0.43	13081	10.23
T TELUS CORPORATI	13.75	0.00	0.00	12440	-23.99
CNQ CDN NATURAL R	63.83	0.98	1.56	8231	37.30
BCE BCE INC.	31.87	1.01	3.27	7678	-2.66
EQX EQUINOX GOLD	15.08	0.58	4.00	7331	-21.82
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	39.61	0.79	2.04	5558	70.59
SU SUNCOR ENERGY	86.04	-2.08	-2.36	5454	41.23
MFC MANULIFE FIN	62.52	0.08	0.13	5125	25.44
IVN IVANHOE MINES	11.39	-0.04	-0.35	4761	-27.03
XIU ISHARES SP TS	53.96	0.02	0.04	4723	14.83
WCP WHITECAP RESO	16.24	0.39	2.46	4440	41.22
ABX BARRICK MININ	58.08	0.45	0.78	4394	-2.86
LUN LUNDIN MINING	37.59	-1.18	-3.04	4258	27.42
BTO B2GOLD CORP.	5.74	-0.01	-0.17	4092	-7.12
XEG ISHARES SP TS	26.29	0.17	0.65	3985	36.78
BNS BANK OF NOVA	123.79	-0.28	-0.23	3791	22.29
TD TORONTO-DOMINI	169.97	0.32	0.19	3679	31.39
TRP TC ENERGY COR	89.56	0.09	0.10	3236	18.50
FM FIRST QUANTUM	42.00	-0.63	-1.48	3225	14.13
SPCX SPACEX CDR (	19.17	1.06	5.85	3205	-29.08

TSX 52-WEEK HIGHS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
AGF-B AGF MANAGEM	23.50	0.20	0.86	138	44.35
ALZ ALLIANZ CDR (	33.26	0.84	2.59		13.28
AMGN AMGEN CDR (C	29.79	-0.33	-1.10	2	19.93
AYA AYA GOLD AND	35.29	0.17	0.48	1424	79.68
BOFA BANK OF AMER	31.36	-0.32	-1.01	7	12.24
BN-PR-R BROOKFIEL	24.23	-0.06	-0.25	3	13.17
BRK BERKSHIRE HAT	38.00	0.42	1.12	105	2.87
BN-PR-T BROOKFIEL	23.70	0.17	0.72	16	11.85
BN-PF-C BROOKFIEL	22.15	0.30	1.37		4.28
BIP-PR-E BROOKFIE	26.40	0.00	0.00	1	1.62
CAPQ CAPITAL GROU	25.79	0.26	1.02	1	4.03
CAS CASCADES INC	15.50	1.23	8.62	1972	24.40
CHR CHORUS AVIATI	28.05	1.05	3.89	170	30.77
CVG CLAIRVEST GRO	79.00	0.75	0.96		8.22
DACL DESJARDINS C	20.66	0.12	0.58	17	3.82
ENB-PR-J ENBRIDGE	25.10	0.11	0.44	5	9.65
ENB-PR-P ENBRIDGE	24.95	-0.02	-0.08	7	10.45
ENB-PF-U ENBRIDGE	25.13	-0.14	-0.55	7	4.58
GE GE AEROSPACE C	48.60	-0.92	-1.86	20	18.36
GWO-PF-A GREAT WE	25.64	0.16	0.63	4	3.10

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
GWO-PR-P GREAT WE	24.99	0.12	0.48	1	2.42
GWO-PR-N GREAT WE	21.29	0.05	0.24	3	13.85
IFC-PR-M INTACT F	25.50	0.05	0.20	2	0.20
MAL MAGELLAN AERO	39.03	0.71	1.85	115	110.75
MFC MANULIFE FIN	62.52	0.08	0.13	5125	25.44
MCD MCDONALDS CDR	23.14	0.08	0.35	23	2.62
NPI-PR-A NORTHLAN	25.33	0.31	1.24	6	6.16
NOC NORTHROP GRUM	19.11	0.29	1.54	10	1.49
POW-PR-E POWER CO	86.00	0.00	0.00		24.64
RFA-PR-E RFA FINA	23.64	0.14	0.60	1	11.46
RFA-PR-I RFA FINA	23.20	-0.30	-1.28		1.98
RTX RTX CDR (CAD	51.15	-0.03	-0.06	2	19.76
SLF-PR-J SUN LIFE	20.75	0.10	0.48		11.26
SLF-PR-G SUN LIFE	21.85	0.01	0.05	102	10.35
TRP-PR-H TC ENERG	19.00	0.13	0.69	5	12.49
TCWW TRADING CENT	22.20	0.29	1.32		10.45
TA-PR-D TRANSALTA	21.66	-0.04	-0.18	5	6.18
WJX WAJAX CORPORA	34.26	-0.60	-1.72	135	25.77
WDO WESDOME GOLD	32.00	1.20	3.90	873	40.72
WTE WESTSHORE TER	43.80	4.13	10.41	152	68.20

TSX GAINERS
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
SWP SWISS WATER D	6.35	0.94	17.38	43	43.99
CRON CRONOS GROUP	4.32	0.52	13.68	686	20.00
ORBU SAVVYLONG 2X	6.17	0.66	11.98	33	-67.35
CADY CADILLAC MIN	8.27	0.82	11.01	387	16.81
CURA CURALEAF HOL	12.93	1.22	10.42	397	26.39
WTE WESTSHORE TER	43.80	4.13	10.41	152	68.20
GFR GREENFIRE RES	9.02	0.82	10.00	105	37.71
POU PARAMOUNT RES	30.74	2.68	9.55	582	27.08
CAS CASCADES INC	15.50	1.23	8.62	1972	24.40
ADEN ADENTRA INC	39.38	3.12	8.60	175	15.89
PRL PROPEL HOLDIN	28.72	2.00	7.49	876	15.11
XLY AUXLY CANNABI	2.81	0.19	7.25	111	38.42
OILU SAVVYLONG GE	38.37	2.56	7.15	75	137.59
HOU BETAPRO CRUDE	17.23	1.13	7.02	1194	96.47
HRMS HERMES CDR (	18.66	1.22	7.00		-23.05
SXHI NINEPOINT SP	5.05	0.33	6.99	14	-50.59
FFM FIREFLY METAL	1.86	0.12	6.90	46	-0.53
SPXE HARVEST SPAC	7.46	0.48	6.88	273	-49.25
VGC VALOR GOLD CO	3.67	0.23	6.69	67	-50.41
RIO RIO2 LIMITED	3.25	0.20	6.56	1259	-4.41

TSX LOSERS
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

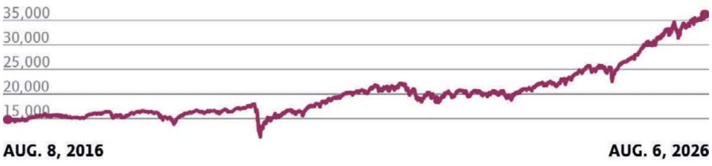
	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
ATS ATS CORPORATI	28.69	-10.61	-27.00	2527	-24.12
HONA HONEYWELL AE	8.89	-2.72	-23.43	286	-27.43
APPS APPLOVIN CDR	10.54	-2.63	-19.97	275	-51.89
CLHI NINEPOINT CE	8.52	-1.50	-14.97	59	-17.28
DII-B DOREL INDUS	1.38	-0.23	-14.29	114	-7.38
PBH PREMIUM BRAND	81.29	-13.55	-14.29	1406	-20.08
GRID TANTALUS SYS	4.25	-0.65	-13.27	659	-9.19
WDC WESTERN DIGIT	27.61	-4.16	-13.09	253	-2.06
CLS CELESTICA INC	442.65	-65.89	-12.96	781	9.02
ASTL ALGOMA STEEL	5.57	-0.66	-10.59	775	-1.42
CDE COEUR MINING	21.91	-2.55	-10.43	1170	-15.31
TINY TINY LTD	6.73	-0.72	-9.66	2	-29.90
XNDU XANADU QUANT	14.57	-1.49	-9.28	185	-9.11
ENI-UN ENERGY INC	2.19	-0.22	-9.13		12.31
EFN ELEMENT FLEET	28.61	-2.87	-9.12	2249	-20.64
SMNS SIEMENS CDR	32.89	-3.22	-8.92	9	13.69
MUX MCEWEN INC	25.61	-2.27	-8.14	83	0.51
OILD SAVVYSHORT G	2.62	-0.23	-8.07	53	-84.33
CGG CHINA GOLD IN	36.39	-3.10	-7.85	88	31.75
SNDK SANDISK CDR	30.71	-2.44	-7.36	1220	-5.10

TSX 52-WEEK LOWS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
APPS APPLOVIN CDR	10.54	-2.63	-19.97	275	-51.89
ATS ATS CORPORATI	28.69	-10.61	-27.00	2525	-24.12
BAMI BLUE ANT MED	4.98	-0.10	-1.97	11	-36.80
GOOS CANADA GOOSE	12.02	-0.36	-2.91	655	-32.43
HLS HLS THERAPEUT	4.00	-0.12	-2.91	4	-17.01
HONA HONEYWELL AE	8.89	-2.72	-23.43	286	-27.43

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
PZA PIZZA PIZZA R	12.72	0.07	0.55	111	-18.51
PBH PREMIUM BRAND	81.29	-13.55	-14.29	1406	-20.08
RBA RB GLOBAL INC	129.94	-4.11	-3.07	609	-8.05
GASU SAVVYLONG GE	4.96	-0.13	-2.55	11	-55.52
SPCX SPACEX CDR (	19.17	1.06	5.85	3205	-29.08
WDC WESTERN DIGIT	27.61	-4.16	-13.09	253	-2.06

TSX COMPOSITE INDEX
PAST 10 YEARS



SOURCE: BARCHART

S&P/TSX COMPOSITE INDEX STOCKS
LARGEST STOCKS BY MARKET CAPITALIZATION

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
VNP 5N PLUS INC.	29.63	-0.24	-0.80	537	67.21
ABRA ABRASILVER R	15.55	-0.04	-0.26	515	45.60
AAV ADVANTAGE ENE	10.76	0.12	1.13	428	-8.35
ARE AECON GROUP I	47.64	-0.35	-0.73	281	52.30
AEM AGNICO EAGLE	235.39	3.14	1.35	1762	1.13
AC AIR CANADA	26.39	-0.19	-0.71	1734	36.81
AGI ALAMOS GOLD I	43.64	-0.18	-0.41	1544	-17.66
AQN ALGONQUIN POW	8.06	-0.03	-0.37	1719	-4.50
ATD ALIMENTATION	92.70	1.14	1.25	1934	23.67
AAUC ALLIED GOLD	28.95	1.45	5.27	1580	-7.95
AP-UN ALLIED PROP	9.59	-0.23	-2.34	675	-28.27
ALA ALTAGAS LTD.	53.88	0.91	1.72	703	28.75
ALS ALTIUS MINERA	62.25	1.85	3.06	235	52.42
AIF ALTUS GROUP L	45.57	-1.22	-2.61	128	-19.64
USA AMERICAS GOLD	6.55	-0.20	-2.96	1062	-6.96
ARX ARC RESOURCES	32.91	0.55	1.70	1157	27.81
ARIS ARIS MINING	22.11	0.14	0.64	632	-0.67
ATZ ARITZIA INC	142.80	-1.93	-1.33	465	21.69
ACO-X ATCO LTD. C	76.41	-0.82	-1.06	254	35.53
ATH ATHABASCA OIL	9.92	0.31	3.23	2193	41.11
ATRL ATKINSREALIS	90.80	1.63	1.83	832	2.48
ATS ATS CORPORATI	28.69	-10.61	-27.00	2525	-24.12
ASM AVINO SILVER	8.95	-0.16	-1.76	671	4.80
AYA AYA GOLD AND	35.29	0.17	0.48	1424	79.68
BTO B2GOLD CORP.	5.74	-0.01	-0.17	4092	-7.12
BCE BCE INC.	31.87	1.01	3.27	7678	-2.66
BDGI BADGER INFRA	89.05	-1.80	-1.98	117	21.77
BMO BANK OF MONTR	253.46	0.17	0.07	1970	42.19
BNS BANK OF NOVA	123.79	-0.28	-0.23	3791	22.29
ABX BARRICK MININ	58.08	0.45	0.78	4394	-2.86
BHC BAUSCH HEALTH	8.28	-0.52	-5.91	1029	-13.12
BTE BAYTEX ENERGY	5.82	0.06	1.04	2492	31.08
BIR BIRCHCLIFF EN	6.25	0.09	1.46	809	-16.33
BDT BIRD CONSTRUC	68.27	-1.81	-2.58	255	139.38
BB BLACKBERRY LIM	12.32	0.04	0.33	2344	137.84
BEI-UN BOARDWALK	64.39	-1.18	-1.80	94	-0.14
BBD-B BOMBARDIER	348.71	-11.10	-3.08	283	49.34
BLX BORALEX INC.	37.10	0.04	0.11	485	46.47
BYD BOYD GROUP SE	145.94	0.64	0.44	29	-33.25
BAM BROOKFIELD AS	74.45	0.68	0.92	1214	3.55
BBUC BROOKFIELD B	41.57	-1.32	-3.08	52	-15.25
BN BROOKFIELD COR	61.68	-0.71	-1.14	2310	-2.13
BIP-UN BROOKFIELD	54.70	-0.87	-1.57	414	14.65
BEP-UN BROOKFIELD	45.81	-0.05	-0.11	250	23.51
DOO BRP INC	89.49	-2.30	-2.51	236	-7.79
CAR-UN CDN APARTM	34.31	-0.51	-1.46	537	-6.94
CNQ CDN NATURAL R	63.83	0.98	1.56	8231	37.30
GIB-A CGI INC	104.02	2.22	2.18	565	-17.95
CRT-UN CT REAL ES	17.79	-0.41	-2.25	372	9.34
CAE CAE INC	37.56	-0.07	-0.19	834	-10.01
CCO CAMECO CORP	131.36	-0.84	-0.64	896	4.52
CM CANADIAN IMPER	165.93	-0.52	-0.31	2218	33.35
CNR CANADIAN NATI	177.29	-1.42	-0.79	1333	30.60
CP CANADIAN PACIF	126.51	-1.50	-1.17	1002	25.20
CTC-A CANADIAN TI	203.22	-3.41	-1.65	178	16.83
CU CANADIAN UTILI	53.42	-0.05	-0.09	666	23.26
CPX CAPITAL POWER	64.58	-1.13	-1.72	909	10.30
CS CAPSTONE COPPE	14.98	-0.22	-1.45	3194	8.71
CJT CARGOJET INC.	87.41	-1.24	-1.40	68	4.13
CCL-B CCL INDUSTR	93.00	-0.71	-0.76	423	7.27
CLS CELESTICA INC	442.65	-65.89	-12.96	781	9.02

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	39.61	0.79	2.04	5558	70.59
CG CENTERRA GOLD	27.80	0.43	1.57	769	40.69
CEU CES ENERGY SO	16.44	0.11	0.67	357	33.99
CSH-UN CHARTWELL	22.03	-0.05	-0.23	476	9.60
CHP-UN CHOICE PRO	15.69	-0.21	-1.32	913	5.94
CCA COGECO COMMUN	60.73	0.67	1.12	202	-8.64
CIGI COLLIERS INT	138.28	-3.53	-2.49	106	-31.46
CSU CONSTELLATION	3212.66	67.47	2.15	56	-2.69
CRR-UN CROMBIE RE	16.58	-0.49	-2.87	526	8.58
CURA CURALEAF HOL	12.93	1.22	10.42	397	26.39
DFY DEFINITY FINA	79.77	-1.06	-1.31	123	5.06
DML DENISON MINES	4.37	0.04	0.92	2720	20.05
DSG DESCARTES SYS	108.96	1.68	1.57	289	-9.51
DSV DISCOVERY MIN	10.51	0.08	0.77	3030	25.42
DOL DOLLARAMA INC	192.68	-0.14	-0.07	482	-6.07
DPM DPM METALS IN	57.99	1.40	2.47	788	36.70
DIR-UN DREAM INDU	13.98	-0.43	-2.98	583	11.13
EQB EQB INC	138.03	0.36	0.26	114	32.86
ELD ELDORADO GOLD	50.33	-0.14	-0.28	1148	2.03
EFN ELEMENT FLEET	28.61	-2.87	-9.12	2249	-20.64
EMA EMERA INCORPO	72.29	-0.02	-0.03	828	6.87
EMP-A EMPIRE COMP	49.54	-0.84	-1.67	366	3.81
ENB ENBRIDGE INC	72.40	-0.31	-0.43	13081	10.23
EDR ENDEAVOUR SIL	12.42	-0.13	-1.04	1028	-3.80
EFX ENERFLEX LTD	29.00	-1.73	-5.63	2014	37.05
EFR ENERGY FUELS	18.05	0.62	3.56	1037	-9.21
EQX EQUINOX GOLD	15.08	0.58	4.00	7331	-21.82
ERO ERO COPPER CO	43.62	0.91	2.13	546	12.34
EIF EXCHANGE INCO	128.83	-0.43	-0.33	116	57.19
EXE EXTENDICARE I	34.19	-0.72	-2.06	476	60.14
FFH FAIRFAX FINAN	2377.57	-33.11	-1.37	38	-9.11
FTT FINNING INTL	95.47	-3.29	-3.33	416	28.37
FCR-UN FIRST CAPI	22.81	-0.16	-0.70	484	20.69
AG FIRST MAJESTIC	24.25	-0.45	-1.82	2212	5.90
FM FIRST QUANTUM	42.00	-0.63	-1.48	3225	14.13
FSV FIRSTSERVICE	199.98	-2.62	-1.29	117	-6.31
FTS FORTIS INC	78.45	-0.47	-0.60	1570	9.94
FVI FORTUNA MININ	13.43	-0.04	-0.30	952	-0.15
FNV FRANCO-NEVADA	324.40	6.86	2.16	537	14.02
FRU FREEHOLD ROYA	17.05	0.24	1.43	476	12.24
GMIN G MINING VEN	47.38	-0.87	-1.80	1047	14.20
GFL GFL ENVIRONME	58.29	0.60	1.04	517	-1.14
GEI GIBSON ENERGY	31.36	0.72	2.35	757	24.84
GIL GILDAN ACTIVE	81.60	0.16	0.20	673	-4.88
GRT-UN GRANITE RE	91.92	-1.38	-1.48	137	12.50
GWO GREAT-WEST LI	92.14	0.34	0.37	1626	36.12
HPS-A HAMMOND POW	262.15	-12.58	-4.58	46	64.38
HWX HEADWATER EXP	12.70	0.14	1.11	711	35.54
HR-UN HR REAL EST	10.85	-0.16	-1.45	977	6.06
HBM HUDBAY MINERA	36.93	0.65	1.79	2944	35.52
H HYDRO ONE LIMIT	56.42	-0.66	-1.16	1223	3.26
IAU I 80 GOLD COR	2.14	0.01	0.47	922	5.94
IAG IA FINANCIAL	212.74	-0.21	-0.10	383	19.63
IMG IAMGOLD CORP	22.48	0.14	0.63	1481	-0.75
IGM IGM FINANCIAL	89.35	0.15	0.17	424	44.56
IMO IMPERIAL OIL	177.04	1.32	0.75	949	49.30
IFC INTACT FINANC	280.00	-2.53	-0.90	334	-2.01
IPCO INTERNATIONA	31.24	1.76	5.97	481	25.82

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
IVN IVANHOE MINES	11.39	-0.04	-0.35	4760	-27.03
JWEL JAMIESON WEL	41.50	0.00	0.00	62	23.33
KNT K92 MINING IN	26.77	0.58	2.21	904	17.98
KEL KELT EXPLORAT	9.75	0.44	4.73	747	27.12
KEY KEYERA CORP	58.79	1.59	2.78	1276	33.61
KMP-UN KILLAM APA	18.69	0.14	0.75	590	13.96
KXS KINAXIS INC	169.96	1.45	0.86	61	-1.80
K KINROSS GOLD CO	35.93	-0.10	-0.28	2661	-7.06
LIF LABRADOR IRON	27.15	-0.17	-0.62	231	-9.11
LB LAURENTIAN BAN	40.30	0.00	0.00	94	0.00
LSPD LIGHTSPEED C	14.33	-0.21	-1.44	806	-13.47
LNR LINAMAR CORP	103.00	-4.65	-4.32	100	24.16
LAC LITHIUM AMERI	4.23	-0.11	-2.53	842	-29.15
L LOBLAW CO	63.30	-0.79	-1.23	1302	2.01
LUG LUNDIN GOLD I	86.70	0.20	0.23	603	-23.96
LUN LUNDIN MINING	37.59	-1.18	-3.04	4258	27.42
MG MAGNA INTERNAT	95.10	-5.39	-5.36	2291	29.97
MFC MANULIFE FIN	62.52	0.08	0.13	5125	25.44
MFI MAPLE LEAF FO	27.78	-0.60	-2.11	412	11.43
MDA MDA SPACE LTD	48.11	0.58	1.22	864	80.59
MX METHANEX CORP	76.21	3.39	4.66	337	39.99
MRU METRO INC	90.31	-1.33	-1.45	613	-8.58
MAU MONTAGE GOLD	17.84	-0.02	-0.11	983	80.57
MTL MULLEN GROUP	27.15	0.40	1.50	216	72.49
NA NATIONAL BANK	227.02	0.52	0.23	1454	31.52
NXE NEXGEN ENERGY	14.31	0.24	1.71	1746	13.30
NFI NFI GROUP INC	24.86	-0.26	-1.04	234	60.18
NGEX NGEX MINERAL	26.92	-0.04	-0.15	450	5.16
NPI NORTHLAND POW	21.28	0.18	0.85	1121	19.22
NG NOVAGOLD RES I	9.66	0.00	0.00	515	-26.66
NTR NUTRIEN LTD	93.62	-0.26	-0.28	1664	10.51
OR OR ROYALTIES I	45.07	-0.13	-0.29	289	-7.30
OGC OCEANAGOLD CO	36.77	-0.90	-2.39	995	-5.48
ONEX ONEX CORPORA	112.77	-0.74	-0.65	51	-0.17
OTEX OPEN TEXT CO	36.02	0.06	0.17	2716	-19.42
OLA ORLA MINING L	13.46	0.92	7.34	4941	-27.09
PAAS PAN AMERICAN	67.40	-0.39	-0.58	595	-5.28
POU PARAMOUNT RES	30.74	2.68	9.55	582	27.08
PXT PAREX RESOURC	24.39	0.75	3.17	691	32.20
PPL PEMBINA PIPEL	67.37	1.29	1.95	2689	28.84
PPTA PERPETUA RES	32.00	-0.10	-0.31	166	-3.70
PEY PEYTO EXPLORA	24.92	0.24	0.97	567	9.73
POW POWER CORPORA	93.50	-1.73	-1.82	1026	28.17
PSK PRAIRIESKY RO	33.99	0.91	2.75	420	25.75
PBH PREMIUM BRAND	81.29	-13.55	-14.29	1406	-20.08
PMZ-UN PRIMARIS R	22.02	-0.56	-2.48	235	41.24
QBR-B QUEBECOR IN	67.22	3.77	5.94	1537	30.02
RBA RB GLOBAL INC	129.94	-4.11	-3.07	609	-8.05
QSR RESTAURANT BR	102.31	-1.94	-1.86	1101	9.24
RCH RICHELIEU HAR	35.88	-0.07	-0.19	60	-9.30
REI-UN RIOCAN REA	21.61	-0.34	-1.55	1533	15.56
RCI-B ROGERS COMM	48.49	1.03	2.17	1917	-6.41
RY ROYAL BANK OF	296.56	0.61	0.21	2433	26.74
RUS RUSSEL METALS	70.25	-0.52	-0.73	107	60.39

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
SAP SAPUTO INC.	38.73	-0.67	-1.70	657	-6.25
SEA SEABRIDGE GOL	40.74	-0.18	-0.44	59	0.12
SES SECURE WASTE	24.31	0.22	0.91	878	40.76
SHOP SHOPIFY INC	206.42	4.45	2.20	2758	-6.60
SIA SIENNA SENIOR	22.34	-0.40	-1.76	438	9.35
SVM SILVERCORP ME	15.16	-0.07	-0.46	695	32.06
SKE SKEENA RESOUR	43.24	0.31	0.72	227	32.64
SRU-UN SMARTCENTR	28.80	-0.33	-1.13	587	11.84
SOBO SOUTH BOW CO	49.58	-0.24	-0.48	964	31.34
SXGC SOUTHERN CRO	10.89	0.21	1.97	538	2.83
SDE SPARTAN DELTA	11.13	0.30	2.77	659	53.52
SII SPROTT INC.	157.55	-4.36	-2.69	65	17.19
SSRM SSR MINING I	40.33	-0.27	-0.67	429	34.03
STN STANTEC INC	102.45	-0.13	-0.13	595	-20.90
SJ STELLA JONES I	74.62	-4.56	-5.76	522	-12.35
SCR STRATHCONA RE	39.83	1.08	2.79	658	40.59
SLF SUN LIFE FINA	115.59	0.87	0.76	1951	34.91
SU SUNCOR ENERGY	86.04	-2.08	-2.36	5454	41.23
SPB SUPERIOR PLUS	7.73	-0.03	-0.39	417	9.80
TRP TC ENERGY COR	89.56	0.09	0.10	3236	18.50
X TMX GROUP LIMIT	52.44	-0.27	-0.51	530	0.40
TVE TAMARACK VALL	12.59	0.25	2.03	1342	57.77
TECK-B TECK RESOU	92.76	0.20	0.22	920	41.17
T TELUS CORPORATI	13.75	0.00	0.00	12440	-23.99
TVK TERRAVEST IND	119.91	1.38	1.16	50	-27.11
TFII TFI INTERNAT	192.98	-2.43	-1.24	200	36.03
NWC THE NORTH WES	49.56	-0.78	-1.55	139	1.33
TRI THOMSON REUTE	140.13	2.64	1.92	798	-22.64
TPZ TOPAZ ENERGY	30.44	0.32	1.06	359	10.53
TXG TOREX GOLD RE	59.81	-0.83	-1.37	584	-8.74
TIH TOROMONT IND	222.00	-4.67	-2.06	245	33.69
TD TORONTO-DOMINI	169.97	0.32	0.19	3679	31.39
TOU TOURMALINE OI	59.56	0.42	0.71	2233	-3.26
TA TRANSALTA CORP	17.48	-0.26	-1.47	2001	0.69
TKO TREKOR METALS	11.58	0.07	0.61	2145	49.03
TFPM TRIPLE FLAG	45.07	1.18	2.69	177	-1.18
TSU TRISURA GROUP	42.06	-0.28	-0.66	58	-1.54
VET VERMILION ENE	15.38	0.58	3.92	723	34.68
VZLA VIZSLA SILVE	4.96	-0.09	-1.78	918	-34.04
WSP WSP GLOBAL IN	192.56	11.44	6.32	1177	-22.52
WCN WASTE CONNECT	234.50	4.39	1.91	482	-2.58
WDO WESDOME GOLD	32.00	1.20	3.90	873	40.72
WFG WEST FRASER T	97.77	-0.58	-0.59	132	16.43
WN WESTON GEORGE	102.12	0.13	0.13	263	7.85
WPM WHEATON PRECI	175.79	3.31	1.92	948	8.94
WCP WHITECAP RESO	16.24	0.39	2.46	4440	41.22

ETFS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CASH GLOBAL X HIG	50.03	0.01	0.02	307	0.10
DLR-U GLOBAL X US	10.13	0.01	0.10	994	-0.10
DLR GLOBAL X US D	14.19	0.01	0.07	1153	1.94
HHIS HARVEST DIVE	11.05	0.02	0.18	357	-9.72
HHL HARVEST HEALT	7.31	0.01	0.14	499	-4.94
HNU BETAPRO NAT G	7.21	-0.18	-2.44	2943	-55.77
HOD BETAPRO CRUDE	28.80	-2.16	-6.98	575	-80.10
HOU BETAPRO CRUDE	17.23	1.13	7.02	1194	96.47
QQU BETAPRO NASDA	38.01	-0.22	-0.58	433	26.20
RING GLOBAL X EQL	16.17	0.29	1.83	684	-11.74
SQQQ BETAPRO -3X	7.56	0.09	1.20	560	-42.47
TBCJ TD TARGET 20	25.79	-0.02	-0.08	640	-0.31

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
UMAX HAMILTON UTI	13.10	0.03	0.23	315	-0.53
UTES EVOLVE CAD U	8.84	0.09	1.03	417	-2.32
VEQT VANGUARD ALL	62.32	-0.16	-0.26	316	16.03
XBM ISHARES SP TS	36.45	-0.39	-1.06	394	23.48
XEG ISHARES SP TS	26.29	0.17	0.65	3985	36.78
XEQT ISHARES CORE	45.90	-0.07	-0.15	496	15.07
XGD ISHARES S&P/T	51.95	0.23	0.44	785	1.62
XIU ISHARES SP TS	53.96	0.02	0.04	4723	14.83
XRE ISHARES SP TS	16.66	-0.28	-1.65	637	7.97
ZAG BMO AGGREGATE	13.63	-0.06	-0.44	523	-1.09
ZEB BMO EQUAL WEI	76.68	0.01	0.01	1100	31.53
ZWU BMO COVERED C	11.51	0.02	0.17	336	3.97

BONDS
CANADA

TERM	YIELD	CHG
2-YEAR	2.92	0.09
5-YEAR	3.24	0.06
10-YEAR	3.62	0.06
30-YEAR	4.03	0.05

RATES	RATE	CHG
BOFC OVERNIGHT TARGET	2.25	UNCH
CANADIAN PRIME	4.45	UNCH

Source: wires

U.S.

TERM	YIELD	CHG
2-YEAR TREASURY	4.25	0.07
5-YEAR TREASURY	4.40	0.07
10-YEAR TREASURY	4.69	0.06
30-YEAR TREASURY	5.22	0.05

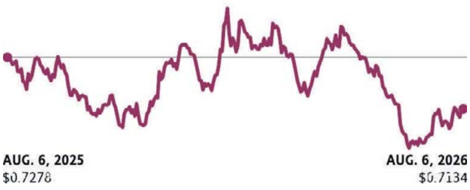
RATES	RATE	CHG
FED TARGET RATE	3.5-3.75	UNCH
U.S. PRIME	6.75	UNCH

Source: wires

CURRENCIES
FOREIGN EXCHANGE CROSS RATES

	CAD	USD	AUD	EUR	GBP	JPY	CHF
CAD	-	0.7137	1.0146	0.6194	0.5307	113.10	0.5800
USD	1.4011	-	1.4217	0.8678	0.7435	158.46	0.8125
AUD	0.9855	0.7034	-	0.6104	0.5229	111.45	0.5715
EUR	1.6144	1.1523	1.6382	-	0.8566	182.59	0.9363
GBP	1.8846	1.3451	1.9124	1.1674	-	213.15	1.0929
JPY	0.0088	0.0063	0.0090	0.0055	0.0047	-	0.0051
CHF	1.7244	1.2308	1.7499	1.0682	0.9151	195.04	-

CANADIAN DOLLAR $0.7134 -0.0143 (-1.9663%)
PAST YEAR, AS OF 4:45 P.M.



COMMODITIES

	PRICE	NET CHG
GOLD	4299.60	-5.60
SILVER	61.61	-0.68
NATURAL GAS	2.64	-0.05
CRUDE OIL WTI	77.29	2.07
CRUDE OIL BRENT	79.45	0.09
HIGH GRADE COPPER	6.71	-0.02

	PRICE	NET CHG
LEAN HOGS	95.50	-1.10
COFFEE	321.65	-5.25
ALUMINUM	3365.00	-1.00
HKFE NICKEL CNH	114440.0	-550.0
WHEAT	631.25	-11.00
LUMBER PHYSICAL	578.00	-1.50

	PRICE	NET CHG
CORN	439.00	2.25
SOYBEAN	1157.25	5.75
CANOLA	768.90	2.90
S&P 500 COMM SRVS	582.60	1.10
FEED WHEAT	198.25	0.75
BITCOIN FUTURES	64610.00	-470.00

Gold, Silver (USD/oz), Nat gas (USD/mmbtu), Oil (USD/barrel), Copper (USD/lb), Coffee (USD/lb), Aluminum (USD/tonne), HKFE Nickel (in Renminbi-Yuan/tonne), Canola and Barley (in Cdn dollars/tonne), Feed Wheat (in Br. pounds/tonne)

DATA PROVIDED BY BARCHART, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

SPORTS

Roughriders know better than to overlook winless Redblacks B14

Throwing error in 11th inning hands Cubs the win over Blue Jays B15

NATIONAL BANK OPEN

Pegula cruises into the fourth round

American Jessica Pegula returns the ball against Kamilla Rakhimova of Uzbekistan during their third-round match at the National Bank Open in Toronto, on Thursday. The No. 3 seeded Pegula, who won the National Bank Open in 2023 and 2024, defeated Rakhimova 6-4, 6-0 B13

KEITO NEWMAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Why Montagliani is touted as a front-runner to replace Infantino

SIMON HOUPT

Until last week, Victor Montagliani may have been one of the most loyal allies Gianni Infantino has ever had.

For more than a decade, as the president of FIFA's CONCACAF confederation and a vice-president of the FIFA Council, the Vancouver-based Montagliani has been steadfast in his support, even when he didn't agree with every move FIFA's president made. At this year's annual FIFA Congress, held in April in Vancouver, Montagliani paid special tribute to Infantino, praising him in their shared mother tongue of Italian.

But last Saturday, after Montagliani chaired an urgent meeting of the presidents of the 41 national federations that make up CONCACAF, the organization issued a statement blasting Infantino and his plan to sell off a 20 per cent stake in the World Cup. In uncharacteristically damning language, the confederation said the "egregious act of poor governance and leadership follows a pattern of missteps and similar behaviour. A comprehensive reckoning with this presidency is imperative."

Vancouver Whitecaps FC CEO Axel Schuster, left, and CONCACAF president Victor Montagliani are seen prior to an MLS game at BC Place on Saturday. ANNE-MARIE SORVIN/IMAGN IMAGES

Now Montagliani, whom Prime Minister Mark Carney praised Wednesday as "a credit to Canada, credit to football," is being touted as a front-runner in the race to challenge Infantino in FIFA's presidential election next March.

And though he has never publicly stated his desire for that top job, former board members of Canada Soccer, where he served as president from 2012-2016, told The Globe and Mail earlier this year that they recall him musing that FIFA should have a Canadian president some day.

The speculation took on new urgency on Thursday as FIFA's crisis management efforts appeared to be failing.

On Wednesday, Infantino convened a meeting with FIFA senior staff in Morocco at which, according to a statement issued afterwards by the organization, "the FIFA secretary general and members of the FIFA Management Board in attendance reaffirmed their full support for FIFA president Gianni Infantino, as the only official elected by the 211 FIFA Member Associations."

The statement also took aim at critics, saying FIFA would "not tolerate any attacks on its integrity and will take all necessary measures to defend its reputation."

But on Thursday, the European football confederation UEFA reiterated that it had lost confidence in Infantino's leadership and that its boycott of FIFA competitions would continue until its conditions are met, which include assurances that "such attempts to disfigure the game in this way will never be made again."

The next scheduled FIFA event is the U-20 Women's World Cup in Poland, which is set to kick off Sept. 5.

Montagliani has not weighed in publicly on whether he might throw his hat into the ring. A spokesperson said this week he was unavailable for an interview.

In June, during an interview with The Globe and Mail, Montagliani said he was honoured by the idea that some might see him as a successor to Infantino. But at the time, he said his focus was on running for re-election of a final term as CONCACAF president – which he has won three times, including the last two by acclamation – and serving the confederation.

MONTAGLIANI, B13

Sports bettors lead the online mob of harassment that WTA players face

RACHEL BRADY

Leylah Fernandez shares behind-the-scenes glimpses of her life as a pro tennis player on social media: Scenic travel photos, workouts, fashionable outfits and events with young fans through her foundation.

Building a social-media presence puts them in control of their stories, from personal convictions to TikTok dances or sponsor content. But there's an ugly reality for today's WTA players online too, where negative comments, harassment and threats have become commonplace.

Disgruntled sports bettors are the most common offenders.

"Social media, everybody's on it. … They can tweet something positive, something negative, they can tweet threatening messages," Fernandez, the World No. 34 from Laval, Que., said at Toronto's National Bank Open this week.

"It can be anything that they want, and more times than not there will be no consequences, because you can't find them."

World No. 3 Jessica Pegula talked in Toronto this week about getting terrible messages all the time, whether she wins or loses, across different platforms. The American blocks those users, but some have ways to resurface, like finding an old post on which to comment.

"It's not just in our sport, it seems like it's in a lot of sports," said Pegula. "But I think women specifically, it definitely seems like it's catered to be worse."

Pegula turns off comments during her matches because nasty posts mostly come during or right after she plays, and then they stop. She forgot to do it before her second-round match in Toronto this week and dreaded what she'd see.

"It's a very reactionary response you get from these bettors … so when you can limit your comments, you're usually okay," said Pegula. "It's unfortunate that people suck sometimes."

The WTA says angry gamblers are responsible for most of the abuse, but vows it's making progress against online abuse, using data from its second annual report on the topic, released in July.

Along with World Tennis, they implemented Signify Group's Threat Matrix service in January, 2024 across pro tennis tours to proactively protect players and support investigations into serious online abuse.

More than 10,000 players and officials are covered by the AI-led initiative which has human analysts reviewing content in 57 languages, flagged from open-source data across X, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and Facebook.

A team of investigators and risk assessors then gather evidence on the most concerning accounts, and work to prevent real-world harm.

More than 1.2 million posts and comments were analyzed across 2025. More than 12,000 posts were categorized as abusive, and 3,726 called serious abuse, including violent, sexual, racist and targeted threats. They removed of 66 per cent of serious abusive posts or comments and escalated 35 accounts to law enforcement. Some 89 per cent of accounts responsible for serious abuse in 2024 did not reappear in 2025.

Angry gamblers were responsible for 42 per cent of all verified abuse detected in 2025 (a 2 per cent increase on 2024) and 59 per cent of all serious abuse.

The report highlights the disproportionate role played by a small number of prolific abusive offenders. Just 9 per cent of abusive accounts were responsible for 87 per cent of all abuse categorized as "high concern," while prolific accounts were responsible for 49 per cent of all detected abuse.

HARASSMENT, B13

Infantino held off an internal revolt. Next up is a hotly contested FIFA presidential election

Despite FIFA's backing of Infantino, UEFA dug its heels in on its dissatisfaction with him

JAMES ROBSON
MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

FIFA president Gianni Infantino, centre, speaks to FIFA secretary general Mattias Grafstrom, left, sitting beside president of Moroccan Royal Football Federation Fouzi Lekjaa in Rabat, Morocco on Wednesday. AP

FIFA president Gianni Infantino held off the potential of an internal revolt during a summit meeting in Morocco this week. A scathing response from European soccer's governing body on Thursday, however, showed that he still has a fight on his hands to hold onto power.

UEFA blasted Infantino and his organization again over his failed plan to sell stakes in the World Cup, declaring it wants assurances that "attempts to disfigure the game in this way will never be made again."

The reaction revealed the depths of animosity toward Infantino as he attempts to run for re-election next year while trying to quell outrage over the equity plan. FIFA issued an apology on Wednesday over the plan, and senior staff members at a crisis meeting in Rabat "reaffirmed their full support" for his presidency.

The UEFA response shows how the apology will not be enough to satisfy his fiercest detractors, who want a change at the top of FIFA.

That process will play out in the coming months with a vote in March among the 211 national member federations. Each nation gets a vote, and he needs a simple majority to retain his presidency.

Infantino left New York with around 200 letters of support from those federations. That number is likely to be depleted now, but it is not clear how many of those individual federations would turn against him when it comes to the vote.

Continental soccer bodies in Europe, Asia and North and South America have voiced varying degrees of opposition to Infantino's plans. Crucially, however, confederations are not obliged to vote collectively and there are no guarantees of reaching the 106 votes needed to ensure a majority in a contested election.

The English FA has withdrawn its support, as have Serbia, Sweden and Wales. Many, many others have been non-committal.

Infantino, whose expansion of the World Cup has opened it up to more countries, has a traditional support base in Africa, which has 54 voting members. Even among the tumultuous fallout from the plan, he has received pockets of support from individual federations including 2022 World Cup host Qatar.

UEFA maintained its threat to boycott the World Cup and other FIFA competitions and reiterated that it had lost confidence in Infantino.

"Yesterday's announcement that some people employed by the FIFA president (and whose careers depend on his favour) agree with him changes nothing," it said.

Wednesday's summit in Rabat was dubbed a crisis meeting after an internal backlash against Infantino's controversial plan.

His secretary general Mattias Grafstrom said it created "turmoil which is difficult to comprehend and accept." Chief of global football development Arsène Wenger distanced himself from the plans, while Infantino's senior adviser Carlos Cordeiro resigned last week and chief operating officer Kevin Lamour said staff were "deceived" by the president's lack of openness.

Infantino emerged from the meeting with a unified response from those in attendance – notably Grafstrom – confirming support for his presidency.

That was evidence of the Swiss-Italian's determination to resist the pressure on his position and win a fourth and final term in office through 2031.

The wording of FIFA's statement, however, was open to interpretation, saying "members of the FIFA Management Board in attendance" reaffirmed their support for him.

FIFA has not published a list of attendees, but it is reported Wenger, Lamour and chief football officer Jill Ellis were among those absent.

It would take at least 19 of FIFA's 37 council members to trigger an extraordinary general meeting where Infantino could be called on to explain his actions.

It's one thing wanting Infantino out, it's another finding someone who can drum up the support to take him on.

Paris Saint-Germain's Qatari president Nasser al-Khelaifi is widely seen as a good fit. He is the chairman of association of European Football Clubs, which represents the top teams on the continent including Real Madrid, Barcelona, PSG and Manchester United.

He was a unifying force in the wake of the failed European Super League project and may be seen as the type of candidate capable bringing national federations back together following Infantino's similarly divisive plan.

There's one catch – he doesn't want the job.

A spokesperson told The Associated Press Al-Khelaifi had "absolutely no ambition, no intention and no interest in the FIFA role."

Canadian FIFA vice-president Victor Montagliani is another name to throw into the mix. The president of Norwegian soccer Lise Klaveness has been outspoken in her criticism of Infantino, and the president of the Asian soccer confederation, Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa, also came out strongly in opposition of FFE.

Nov. 18 is the deadline for candidates to enter the next presidential contest, exactly four months ahead of the vote.

FIFA said it hoped Wednesday's meeting would "help restore confidence" in the organization after the turbulence created by Infantino's project.

Infantino's detractors had other ideas.

UEFA's response was scathing, saying it had made it "abundantly clear" that it had lost confidence in Infantino's presidency.

"That position holds," it said.

As well as the Nov. 18 deadline for candidates, the Women's Under-20 World Cup hosted by Poland from Sept. 5. would be the first potential target for UEFA's threatened boycott.

A potential boycott also raises uncertainty over the staging for the 2035 Women's World Cup. The four British federations comprise FIFA's only bidder to host the tournament and the decision is due Nov. 23.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	68	46	.596	—
New York	64	51	.557	4½
Boston	62	51	.549	5½
Baltimore	56	59	.487	12½
Toronto	54	62	.466	15
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Chicago	59	54	.522	—
Cleveland	57	59	.491	3½
Detroit	56	59	.487	4
Minnesota	56	59	.487	4
Kansas City	48	67	.417	12
WEST DIVISION				
Houston	59	57	.509	—
Texas	57	58	.496	1½
Seattle	56	60	.483	3
Athletics	45	70	.391	13½
Los Angeles	44	71	.383	14½

Thursday
L.A. Angels 4, Baltimore 1
Detroit 11, Seattle 0
Chicago White Sox at Boston
Minnesota at Kansas City
Wednesday
Toronto 5, Houston 4, 10 innings
Baltimore 5, L.A. Angels 2
Boston 4, Chicago White Sox 0
Kansas City 2, Minnesota 1
Seattle 4, Detroit 2
Friday — All Times Eastern
Athletics at Boston, 7:10 p.m.
Cleveland at Chicago White Sox, 7:40 p.m.
Baltimore at Texas, 8:15 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Seattle, 9:45 p.m.
Saturday
Athletics at Boston, 4:10 p.m.
Cleveland at Chicago White Sox, 7:15 p.m.
Baltimore at Texas, 7:15 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Seattle, 9:50 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	69	45	.605	—
Philadelphia	62	54	.534	8
Miami	58	57	.504	11½
Washington	56	61	.479	14½
New York	50	66	.431	20
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Milwaukee	72	43	.626	—
Chicago	67	49	.578	5½
St. Louis	57	58	.496	15
Cincinnati	56	58	.491	15½
Pittsburgh	57	60	.487	16
WEST DIVISION				
Los Angeles	69	46	.600	—
Arizona	61	54	.530	8
San Diego	59	56	.513	10
San Francisco	48	67	.417	21
Colorado	45	70	.391	24

Thursday
Milwaukee 5, Pittsburgh 2
Philadelphia 7, Washington 3
Miami at Atlanta
San Diego at Arizona
Wednesday
Chicago Cubs 7, L.A. Dodgers 6
Atlanta 4, Miami 1
Washington 10, Philadelphia 4, 11 inn.
Milwaukee 4, Pittsburgh 2
Arizona 10, San Diego 4
Friday — All Times Eastern
N.Y. Mets at Pittsburgh, 6:40 p.m.
Cincinnati at Washington, 6:45 p.m.
Colorado at St. Louis, 8:15 p.m.
L.A. Dodgers at Arizona, 9:40 p.m.
Saturday
N.Y. Mets at Pittsburgh, 6:40 p.m.
Cincinnati at Washington, 6:45 p.m.
Colorado at St. Louis, 7:15 p.m.
L.A. Dodgers at Arizona, 8:10 p.m.

INTERLEAGUE

Thursday
Cincinnati 6, Athletics 5
N.Y. Mets 13, Cleveland 6
Chicago Cubs 3, Toronto 2, 11 innings
Wednesday
Texas 6, San Francisco 0
Tampa Bay 4, Colorado 0
Cincinnati 3, Athletics 2
N.Y. Mets 6, Cleveland 5, 10 innings
St. Louis 3, N.Y. Yankees 1
Friday — All Times Eastern
Toronto at Philadelphia, 6:40 p.m.
Atlanta at N.Y. Yankees, 7:05 p.m.
L.A. Angels at Miami, 7:10 p.m.
Minnesota at Milwaukee, 7:40 p.m.
Chicago Cubs at Kansas City, 8:10 p.m.
Houston at San Diego, 9:40 p.m.
Detroit at San Francisco, 10:15 p.m.
Saturday
Atlanta at N.Y. Yankees, 3:05 p.m.
L.A. Angels at Miami, 4:10 p.m.
Toronto at Philadelphia, 6:05 p.m.
Minnesota at Milwaukee, 7:10 p.m.
Chicago Cubs at Kansas City, 7:10 p.m.
Houston at San Diego, 7:15 p.m.
Detroit at San Francisco, 7:15 p.m.

RESULTS AS OF THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 9:45 P.M.

PGA TOUR

WYNDHAM CHAMPIONSHIP

At Greensboro, N.C.
Thursday
PARTIAL FIRST ROUND — PAR 70

Beau Hossler	30-31—61
Sahith Theegala	28-34—62
Ben James	29-33—62
Eric Cole	32-31—63
Matti Schmid	32-32—64
Denny McCarthy	32-32—64
Davis Thompson	33-31—64
Hayden Springer	34-30—64
Doug Ghim	30-34—64
Zach Bauchou	29-35—64
Jordan Smith	29-36—65
Also	
Taylor Pendrith	**32-34—66**
Mackenzie Hughes	**31-37—68**
Adam Svensson	**34-35—69**
Ben Silverman	**34-35—69**
Nick Taylor	**35-34—69**

W CANADIAN SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP

QUARTERFINALS

Wednesday
Calgary Wild (NSL) 4 CS Mont-Royal Outremont (LS Pro QC) 0

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Nashville	18	12	2	4	35	14	40
Miami	18	11	2	5	45	32	38
New England	17	9	5	3	28	21	30
Chicago	17	9	6	2	32	23	29
N.Y. City F.C.	18	7	6	5	31	24	26
Cincinnati	18	7	6	5	45	44	26
Charlotte	18	7	7	4	29	27	25
N.Y. Red Bulls	18	7	7	4	29	39	25
D.C.	18	5	5	8	26	29	23
Orlando	18	6	10	2	30	47	20
Columbus	18	5	8	5	26	28	20
Toronto	18	3	7	8	24	32	17
Philadelphia	18	4	10	4	25	33	16
Montreal	18	4	10	4	24	35	16
Atlanta	18	3	12	3	19	33	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Vancouver	17	10	3	4	38	17	34
L.A. F.C.	19	10	5	4	35	19	34
San Jose	18	10	5	3	37	24	33
Houston	17	9	6	2	25	24	29
Salt Lake	17	8	6	3	29	25	27
Dallas	18	7	5	6	32	25	27
St. Louis	18	7	6	5	24	24	26
Seattle	17	7	7	3	20	22	24
Portland	18	7	8	3	33	33	24
Minnesota	18	6	6	6	20	25	24
Colorado	18	7	10	1	27	25	22
L.A. Galaxy	19	5	7	7	24	29	22
San Diego	18	5	7	6	32	29	21
Austin	18	4	9	5	22	36	17
Kansas City	18	4	12	2	18	46	14

Saturday — All Times Eastern
Houston at New England, 4:30 p.m.

LEAGUES CUP 2026

PHASE ONE

Thursday
N.Y. City F.C. 2 Santos Laguna 0
Cruz Azul (4) vs. Philadelphia (5)
Chicago (18) vs. Necaxa (22)
Austin (24) vs. Tijuana (27)
America (3) vs. San Diego (8)
Portland (26) vs. Puebla (36)
Wednesday
Miami 4 Atletico de San Luis 2
Leon 1 Nashville 0
Dallas 2 Queretaro 0
Orlando 2 Monterrey 1
Toluca 3 Seattle 0
L.A. F.C. 1 Chivas de Guadalajara 1
(L.A.FC wins 5-4 on penalties)
Friday — All Times Eastern
Charlotte (12) vs. Atlas (32), 7:30 p.m.
Columbus (17) vs. Pachuca (2), 7:30 p.m.
Cincinnati (6) vs. Pumas (29), 8 p.m.
Tigres (2) vs. Minnesota (13), 9 p.m.
Vancouver (9) vs. Juarez (23), 10:30 p.m.
Saturday
Orlando (19) vs. Leon (28), 6:30 p.m.
Miami (7) vs. Monterrey (11), 8 p.m.
Chivas de Guadalajara (21) vs. Dallas (25), 9 p.m.
Salt Lake (30) vs, Atlante (34), 10 p.m.
Toluca (1) vs. L.A. F.C. (10), 11:10 p.m.

NFL PRESEASON

HALL OF FAME GAME

At Canton, Ohio
Thursday
Carolina vs Arizona

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	19	11	.633	—
Indiana	19	11	.633	—
New York	19	13	.594	1
Washington	17	12	.586	1½
Chicago	12	19	.387	7½
Toronto	10	20	.333	9
Connecticut	7	23	.233	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	25	6	.806	—
Las Vegas	21	9	.700	3½
Golden State	21	9	.700	3½
Dallas	19	12	.613	6
Los Angeles	11	18	.379	13
Phoenix	12	20	.375	13½
Portland	11	19	.367	13½
Seattle	6	27	.182	20

Thursday
Las Vegas at Indiana
Los Angeles at Minnesota
Toronto at Portland
Wednesday
New York 92, Seattle 86
Atlanta 96, Phoenix 82
Washington 96, Dallas 92
Chicago 95, Los Angeles 88
Friday — All Times Eastern
Atlanta at Washington, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Connecticut, 7:30 p.m.
Golden State at Dallas, 9:30 p.m.
Saturday
Las Vegas at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Indiana at Chicago, 3:30 p.m.
Seattle at Portland, 8:30 p.m.

CEBL PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

Thursday
Brampton (E2) 95 Ottawa (E3) 91
Niagara (E4) at Scarborough (E1)
Saskatoon (W3) at Winnipeg (W2)
Edmonton (W4) at Vancouver (W1)

CONFERENCE FINALS

Saturday — All Times Eastern
Eastern Conference, 1 p.m.
Western Conference, 3:30 p.m.

CFL

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	PF	PA	Pt
Montreal	8	7	1	273	217	14
Toronto	7	3	4	220	219	6
Hamilton	8	3	5	187	234	6
Ottawa	7	0	7	166	247	0

WEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	PF	PA	Pt
Edmonton	8	6	2	229	200	12
Saskatchewan	7	5	2	232	195	10
Calgary	8	4	4	322	264	8
Winnipeg	8	4	4	204	243	8
British Columbia	7	2	5	187	201	4

WEEK 10
Bye: Winnipeg
Thursday
Calgary at Toronto
Friday — All Times Eastern
Ottawa at Saskatchewan, 9 p.m.
Saturday
Edmonton at Montreal, 3 p.m.
Hamilton at British Columbia, 7 p.m.

ATP NATIONAL BANK OPEN

At Montreal
Thursday
SINGLES — ROUND OF 32
Arthur Fils (18), France, def. Mariano Navone, Argentina, 6-3, 6-2.
Luciano Darderi (19), Italy, def. Juncheng Shang, China, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4.
Nuno Borges, Portugal, def. Yannick Hanfmann, Germany, 6-4, 6-2.
Cameron Norrie, Britain, def. Alex de Minaur (3), Australia, 5-7, 7-6 (5), 6-1.
Jiri Lehecka (8), Czechia, def. Alexander Blockx (27), Belgium, 6-3, 6-4.
Rafael Jodar (20), Spain, def. Lorenzo Musetti (11), Italy, 6-4, 6-3.
DOUBLES — ROUND OF 32
Alexis Galarneau, Laval, Que. and Duncan Chan, Markham, Ont., def. Marcelo Melo, Brazil, and Alexander Zverev, Germany, 6-3, 7-6 (5).
Daniil Medvedev, Russia, and Fabian Marozsan, Hungary, def. **Liam Draxl, Newmarket, Ont. and Cleeve Harper, Calgary**, 4-6, 6-4, 10-6.

WTA NATIONAL BANK OPEN

At Toronto
Thursday
SINGLES — ROUND OF 32
Ekaterina Alexandrova (16), Russia, def. Talia Gibson, Australia, 5-7, 6-1, 6-3.
Iga Swiatek (7), Poland, def. Viktorija Golubic, Switzerland, 6-2, 6-1.
Diana Shnaider (15), Russia, def. Anna Kalinskaya (17), Russia, 6-3, 6-3.
Jessica Pegula (3), United States, def. Kamilla Rakhimova, Russia, 6-4, 6-0.
Marta Kostyuk (10), Ukraine, def. Madison Keys (19), United States, 6-3, 6-1.
Aryna Sabalenka (1), Belarus, def. Zhang Shuai, China, 6-3, 6-4.
DOUBLES — ROUND OF 32
Caty McNally and Coco Gauff, United States, def. **Gabriela Dabrowski, Ottawa**, and Ekaterina Alexandrova, Russia, 3-6, 6-3, 11-9.
Elise Mertens, Belgium, and Diana Shnaider (6), Russia, def. **Leylah Fernandez and Bianca Jolie Fernandez, Laval, Que.**, 6-1, 6-2.

2026 HLINKA-GRETZKY CUP

PRELIMINARY ROUND

At Edmonton
Wednesday
Slovakia 6 Switzerland 2
Finland 5 Czechia 4
Canada 7 Sweden 4
United States 8 Germany 1

PLAYOFFS

Friday — All Times Eastern
SEMIFINALS
United States vs. Slovakia, 2 p.m.
Canada vs. Finland, 7 p.m.
FIFTH PLACE
Czechia vs. Switzerland, 9 p.m.
Saturday
THIRD PLACE
Semifinal Losers, 2 p.m.
SEVENTH PLACE
Sweden vs. Germany, 4 p.m.
CHAMPIONSHIP
Semifinal Winners, 7 p.m.

NSL

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Ottawa	14	10	2	2	32	17	32
Montreal	14	8	3	3	28	16	27
Toronto	14	7	4	3	24	13	24
Halifax	14	5	6	3	17	14	18
Vancouver	14	5	8	1	23	34	16
Calgary	14	0	12	2	9	39	2

Friday — All Times Eastern
Halifax at Montreal, 7 p.m.

Saturday
Calgary at Vancouver, 7 p.m.

Sunday
Toronto at Ottawa, 2 p.m.

CPL

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Hamilton	14	11	1	2	23	8	35
Calgary	15	10	2	3	30	8	33
Vancouver	15	7	6	2	24	16	23
Ottawa	15	6	6	3	23	28	21
Quebec	14	5	7	2	21	26	17
Halifax	16	4	7	5	20	24	17
Toronto	13	3	6	4	15	30	13
Victoria	14	0	11	3	16	32	3

Friday
All Times Eastern
Vancouver at Hamilton, 7 p.m.

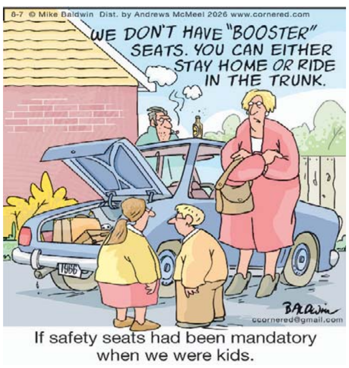
Saturday
Halifax at Ottawa, 1 p.m.
Toronto at Victoria, 5 p.m.
Calgary at Quebec, 8 p.m.

TELEVISION

FRIDAY (ALL TIMES EASTERN)

BASEBALL
MLB: Toronto vs. Philadelphia, SN East, Ontario, West, Pacific, 6:30 p.m.
MLB: Baltimore vs. Texas, Apple TV Plus, 7:30 p.m.
MLB: Tampa Bay vs. Seattle, Apple TV Plus, 9 p.m.
FOOTBALL
CFL: Ottawa vs. Saskatchewan, TSN 1, 3, 5, 9 p.m.
GOLF
LET: PIF London Championship, Second Round, Golf Channel, 9 a.m.
LIV: New York, Second Round, FOX, 2 p.m.
PGA: Wyndham Championship, Second Round, Golf Channel, 3 p.m.
US Women's Amateur, Round of 16, TSN 3, 3 p.m.
HOCKEY
Hlinka Gretzky Cup: United States vs. Slovakia, TSN 1, 4, 2 p.m.
Hlinka Gretzky Cup: **Canada** vs. Finland, TSN 4, 7 p.m.
RUGBY
Super League: Leeds Rhinos vs. Wakefield Trinity, SN World, 3 p.m.
SOCCER
NSL: Halifax vs. Montreal, TSN 5, 7 p.m.
Leagues Cup: Pumas UNAM vs. FC Cincinnati, TSN 2, 8 p.m.
Leagues Cup: FC Juarez vs. Vancouver Whitecaps FC, TSN 2, 10:30 p.m.
TENNIS
ATP: National Bank Open, SN 360, 12:30 p.m.; SN 1, 7 p.m.
WTA: National Bank Open, SN 1, 12:30 p.m.; SN 360, 7 p.m.

CORNERED

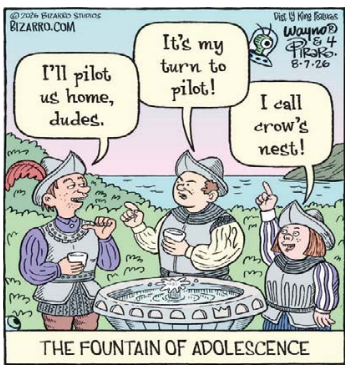


If safety seats had been mandatory when we were kids.

OFF THE MARK

SPEED BUMP

BIZARRO



Dabrowski drops opening doubles match at National Bank Open in Toronto

With her regular partner out, Ottawa native turned to singles star Ekaterina Alexandrova

GREGORY STRONG TORONTO

Canada’s Gabriela Dabrowski hits a volley in front of her doubles partner Ekaterina Alexandrova during their match against Americans Coco Gauff and Caty McNally at the National Bank Open in Toronto on Thursday. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

With her regular doubles partner nursing an injury and current partner primarily focused on singles, Canada’s Gabriela Dabrowski kept her expectations in check at the National Bank Open.

The doubles star from Ottawa still nearly pulled out a win with Russia’s Ekaterina Alexandrova on Thursday but the American duo of Coco Gauff and Caty McNally saved a match ball before closing out a 3-6, 6-3, 11-9 victory.

“I still loved it, honestly,” Dabrowski said. “I didn’t have expectations, so I’m not really too disappointed.”

Dabrowski’s usual partner, Luisa Stefani of Brazil, skipped the WTA 1000 event to rest a sore elbow. The Canadian turned to Alexandrova – the No. 16 seed in singles – last weekend and they gave the Americans a stiff test despite an unfamiliarity with each other’s games. “I treated this as a match that I wanted to win, but also as working on things to keep progressing in sort of my general development of my doubles game,” Dabrowski said.

The reigning U.S. Open doubles champion (with former partner Erin Routliffe) brought in a hitting partner to prepare for the tournament. She also played more on the deuce side of the hard court to get some reps in ahead of the season-ending Grand Slam.

Dabrowski, the world No. 3 in doubles, plans to regroup with the fourth-ranked Stefani later this month at the Cincinnati Open in the final tune-up for the major.

“It’s a whole new swing, it’s a whole new tournament,” Dabrowski said. “It’s someone that I’m hoping to make new great memories with.”

After the players endured a one-hour rain delay and a couple additional pauses due to drizzle, the Americans jumped out to a 5-1 lead in the match tiebreak.

Dabrowski and Alexandrova fought back with the Russian’s service winner giving them a match point.

Serving at 8-9, Gauff managed to land her second serve and McNally tied it with a volley winner. The Americans converted their first match point when a Dabrowski volley found the net.

Earlier at Sobeys Stadium, Alexandrova beat Australia’s Talia Gibson 5-7, 6-1, 6-3 to reach the fourth round in singles play.

She was joined in the Round of 16 by seventh-seeded Iga Swiatek of Poland, who beat Viktorija Golubic of Switzerland 6-2, 6-1.

Third-seeded American Jessica Pegula also advanced with a 6-4, 6-0 win over Kamilla Rakhimova of Uzbekistan.

“I’ve had a lot of experience the past week with these rain delays,” Pegula said. “Three different warm-ups today was definitely not easy, but to be expected.”

Diana Shnaider, the No. 15 seed, posted a 6-3, 6-3 victory over fellow Russian and No. 17 seed Anna Kalinskaya. Tenth-seeded Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk topped 19th-seeded American Madison Keys 6-3, 6-1.

Shnaider and Belgium’s Elise Mertens had a 6-1, 3-1 lead on Leylah and Bianca Fernandez, sisters from Laval, Que., when rain forced another suspension of play in the evening. Top-seeded Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus had a 4-2 lead on China’s Shuai Zhang when play was stopped.

Leylah Fernandez, the lone Canadian remaining in the singles draw, was scheduled to meet fifth-seeded Mirra Andreeva of Russia on Friday afternoon.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tennis Canada says Montreal NB Open will have a deserving champ

JORDAN STOOPLER MONTREAL

High hopes for Canada’s top men’s tennis players at the National Bank Open have quickly given way to injuries, with Félix Auger-Aliassime, Gabriel Diallo and Denis Shapovalov all sidelined in Montreal.

“We need our top players to be healthy, that’s for sure,” Tennis Canada’s vice-president of high performance, Guillaume Marx, said Thursday. “It’s obviously on our minds.”

Local favourite Auger-Aliassime was forced to withdraw before his opening match Wednesday after injuring his back during a practice session two days earlier. His withdrawal came on the heels of first-round retirements by fellow Montrealer Diallo and Richmond Hill, Ont., native Shapovalov on Tuesday.

While Marx acknowledged the timing was disappointing, he does not expect Auger-Aliassime’s injury to linger.

“I’m not too worried about Félix,” he said. “Like he said, it’s an injury that he knows a little bit, one that has occurred already. Usually, it doesn’t take too long. It’s just Wednesday he couldn’t play. We’re pretty positive.”

Auger-Aliassime entered the tournament as the No. 2 seed after spending two weeks training in Montreal. Tournament organizers sold out Wednesday night’s Centre Court session with Auger-Aliassime as the main attraction.

Diallo’s outlook is less certain after the 24-year-old retired from his opening-round match with an apparent leg injury.

Marx confirmed Diallo will miss next week’s ATP Masters 1000 event in Cincinnati but would not speculate on a timeline for his return. The U.S. Open, the year’s final Grand Slam, begins Aug. 23.

“For Gabriel, we’ll see now how long it’s going to take,” Marx said. “We’ll have to monitor that, for sure.”

Shapovalov was also forced to retire Tuesday after suffering an ankle injury. The world No. 43 had returned to competition only last week, reaching the final of an ATP 250 tournament in Los Cabos, Mexico, after missing a month with various injuries.

Marx said this point in the ATP calendar presents unique physical challenges as players transition from the grass- and clay-court seasons to the North American hard-court swing.

“The transition of surfaces are critical moments for the players,” he said. “They are oftentimes periods of the season where players are most susceptible to injuries. The hard courts can bring back old injuries to the surface.”

He added the demanding schedule leaves little margin for players who are less than fully healthy.

“The calendar is intense,” Marx said. “Perhaps that, too, is contributing to player fatigue. The injuries that were sustained by the players are each a unique case, but they are symptomatic of the challenges we face.

“Today, the big problem, too, is that the margins are thin. Someone who is not at 100 per cent, they basically have no chance.”

The injuries have been just one part of a chaotic week in Montreal. Twelve seeded players, including top seed Alexander Zverev and fourth seed Daniil Medvedev, were eliminated Wednesday, leaving the tournament without a player ranked in the world’s top five in the round of 32 for the first time at an ATP Masters 1000 event since 1991.

Nevertheless, Marx believes the event will still produce a deserving champion, pointing to the tournament’s depth, including 19-year-old Spaniard Rafael Jodar.

“In Masters 1000s, you have a good depth of top players. Jodar is a fantastic player who has been a true revelation this summer,” he said. “Maybe it’s the year of [Alex] de Minaur. [Lorenzo] Musetti is making a comeback – we’re not sure how far he’s going to go.

“They are all fantastic players. There will inevitably be a great champion.”

De Minaur headlines Thursday’s Centre Court day session against Britain’s Cameron Norrie. The pair will play after Argentina’s Mariano Navone faces France’s Arthur Fils in the third round.

The evening session opens with Jodar facing Musetti, followed by American Frances Tiafoe against France’s Arthur Rinderknech.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Montagliani: Canadian turned around CONCACAF

FROM B11

“I’ll let the future take care of itself,” he said.

Yet, with FIFA in disarray, Montagliani is well positioned to take a run at the top job. It was a crisis that first landed him on the global soccer stage. In 2015, when almost a dozen executives linked to CONCACAF were indicted by the U.S. Department of Justice, Montagliani – then the president of Canada Soccer – was parachuted in as a caretaker to set it back on course. That gave him the platform to run for the presidency the following year.

He is widely admired for cleaning up CONCACAF after years of corruption allegations and financial problems, and has instituted governance reforms that members of the confederation say have restored its reputation. He managed to unite a fractious confederation that was previously known for splintering along its natural geographic blocs of North and Central America and the Caribbean.

He speaks four languages, is close with the heads of the other five FIFA confederations, and, after overseeing a successful World Cup in his home region that often featured shots of him in the VIP box with Infantino and heads of government such as Prime Minister Carney, is better known among the general public than ever.

And even as he praised Infantino at the FIFA Congress in April, Montagliani delivered a campaign-style speech that talked up his own bona fides and struck some of those who were present as a sly critique of the FIFA president’s growing reputation for self-serving behaviour.

Invoking his track record at CONCACAF, Montagliani said that rebuilding the organization “required transparency, accountability and people who believe football mattered more than preserving the status quo. Because, let me be frank, leadership is not about power. Leadership is about service. It’s about making decisions for the many, not the few. And when leaders choose service, they can transform not just organizations, but the sport itself.”

Nominations for the next FIFA presidency are due Nov. 18.

Harassment: Some players have been threatened

FROM B11

World No. 4 Coco Gauff finds TikTok and Instagram mostly positive, but sees loads of negativity on X. To take back power, she’ll sometimes reply to horrible comments with a smiley face emoji.

“I feel like that riles people up,” she said.

The American two-time Grand Slam champ listed off the perks of social media: Making a fan’s day by responding to their birthday request, having control over the stories she wants to tell and posting to clear up issues if she feels she’s been misunderstood. But you need strategies to avoid the bad stuff, especially on match days.

“With more exposure to personal things, you are exposing yourself to more comments and the negativity … it does suck at times,” said Gauff. “Growing up in the sport – I mean, I burst on at 15 – so in the beginning it was tough, but I try my best to just use the block button.”

Some players ignore ugly, threatening posts. Others have dragged it from the shadows into the light for the public to see.

British player Katie Boulter showed BBC a sampling of the hundreds of disgusting online messages she’s received, like: “Hope you get cancer,” “Candles and a coffin for your entire family” and “Go to hell, I lost money my mother sent me.”

German player Eva Lys has shared a sense of it too.

“I block religiously. I’ve had a lot of hate after losing the first round, and it was, like, the first time where I was a little bit overwhelmed with how many people were hating on me,” Lys told the Tennis Channel earlier this season. “It’s usually because they’re telling me I should spend less time on Instagram, I should do fewer photo shoots, less of this, less of that, and focus more on practice.”

Sometimes text bots are deployed to leave automated hateful posts and skewing public sentiment to disrupt online communities.

“When I was younger, social media was nicer sometimes, you know, it was a way to actually connect with people … now it’s so intense,” Iga Swiatek said in Toronto this week. “If you go to your inbox where the bots are writing bad stuff, you’re not going to have fun.”

It may be easy to dismiss some of the negative commenters as senseless, faceless and annoying, while other instances are frightening and bleed into real life.

In 2025, a man was ejected from the Dubai Tennis Championships after he exhibited “fixated behaviour” toward British tennis star Emma Raducanu.

Swiatek was given extra security at the 2025 Miami Open after being verbally attacked during her practice session by a man who had sent her harassing messages on social media.

Earlier this year, two WTA players received separate threats that included photos of guns, telling them to lose their matches or their families would be hurt. The messages came to them via WhatsApp and included personal details about their families – like addresses, phone numbers and the cars they drove.

Both women, Italian Lucrezia Stefanini and Hungarian Panna Udvardy, alerted the WTA, who provided security. Police got involved. Each posted about the harrowing experiences on Instagram.

Combating the online abuse players experience is a massive job, and the WTA and ITF urge the gambling industry and others to help.

“Further significant progress requires collective action from social media companies, law enforcement, governing bodies and the gambling industry,” said a statement from the WTA. “We will continue to proactively advocate for that.”

Roughriders intent on remaining grounded

Ahead of Friday's game against the Redblacks, Saskatchewan is aware of just how dangerous a winless opponent can be

JEFF DEDEKKER REGINA

Saskatchewan quarterback Trevor Harris, left, looks to make a pass during a CFL game against Edmonton in Regina in July. In a 2024 game the 0-7 Edmonton Elks travelled to Regina and defeated the 5-2 Roughriders 42-31. KAYLE NEIS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Saskatchewan Roughriders hope history doesn't repeat itself when the winless Ottawa Redblacks visit Mosaic Stadium on Friday.

The Redblacks (0-7) are the underdogs against the defending Grey Cup champion Roughriders, who occupy second place in the CFL's West Division with a 5-2 record.

When asked how dangerous a winless team can be, Saskatchewan's quarterback Trevor Harris and head coach Corey Mace recalled a 2024 game in which the Roughriders were stung.

The 0-7 Edmonton Elks travelled to Regina and defeated the 5-2 Roughriders 42-31 on Aug. 3.

"The one thing I can say about football is adversity is ubiquitous. It's found everywhere," Harris said. "We've just got to make sure that we know that adversity is going to come tomorrow, and anybody that thinks they're a bad football team doesn't watch film.

"This team was up two touchdowns against Winnipeg in the fourth quarter. This team pushed Montreal to the limit a few weeks ago. They maybe didn't play a great game last game, but how often do you see professional football clubs play two poor games in a row? It doesn't happen. They're going to respond."

The 40-year-old quarterback said the 'Riders need to concentrate on their own game rather than what the desperate Redblacks will bring.

"We don't really ever concern ourselves too much with other teams," Harris said. "It's about how are we executing because if we play our game, I'm always going to like us.

"If you don't, then what kind of confidence do you have in your guys?"

Redblacks head coach and general manager Ryan Dinwiddie says his players must put in the work to improve.

"We've got to find ways to get better, and we obviously got to critique some things. But I think we've got to keep that locker room positive, right?" said Dinwiddie, who is in his first season as Ottawa's head coach and GM after six seasons as head coach of the Toronto Argonauts.

"Even in the coaching staff, we've got to keep it positive. I mean 0-7 can [have] a lot of stress on a lot of folks. We know where we're at, but at the end of the day, we've got to make sure we do our jobs.

"I just tell the guys don't read the outside noise ... It's all about the guys in this building. I'm sure there's people who have picked us to lose this game going into Saskatchewan. We're 0-7 but it doesn't mean we can't go in there and capture a win."

Saskatchewan has dealt with an extensive run of injuries this season.

Receiver Kian Schaffer-Baker (knee), defensive back Rolan Milligan Jr. (knee), cornerback Tevaughn Campbell (forearm), running back A.J. Ouellette (knee), receiver Sam Emilus and offensive lineman Zack Fry (knee) were on the six-game injured list.

The next-man-up mentality has been repeated by Saskatchewan's coaches and players this season, and the Roughriders are one of the top teams in the league despite injuries.

"I'm not shocked at that because I see these guys work nonstop," Mace said. "Our coaches do a good job. For example, they'll give out tests every week to the position group, and yeah, you better have the answers whether you're playing or not, so it just keeps everybody accountable. It keeps them attentive in all the meeting rooms. It's just the environment here.

"We know that injuries are going to happen, so to not have people prepared would be a misstep. I'm not shocked that these guys are able to execute at the standard that we're looking for."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

LUSTER AMONG PROBABLE ENTRIES FOR 167TH RUNNING OF THE KING'S PLATE

Woodbine Oaks winner Luster was among the probable entries announced Thursday for the 167th running of the King's Plate in Toronto.

Luster, who dominated the Oaks on July 19, returns to Woodbine Racetrack for the first jewel in the Canadian Triple Crown on Aug. 15.

Moira was the most recent horse to capture both the Woodbine Oaks and King's Plate in the same year in 2022.

HighwayTotheMoon, who claimed the Plate Trial at Woodbine the same day Luster took the Oaks, was also among Plate entries.

The Oaks and Plate Trial are key prep events for the $1-million King's Plate and indicators of potential contention because they're run over the same distance (1⅛ miles) and surface (Woodbine's Tapeta course).

Luster, a filly, is trained by Josie Carroll, who was the first female trainer to win the Plate in 2006 with Edenwold. The gelding HighwayTotheMoon is trained by Dale Desruisseaux.

Also listed in the probable field were Baaeed Alynna, Bond Market, Branchetto, Casson, Dixie Law, Don Ique, Fire and Wine, ImYourMedicineMan, Magical Factor, Military Time and Very Special.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

LE COURT WINS SIXTH STAGE OF TOUR DE FRANCE FEMMES, WHILE REUSSER REMAINS IN LEADER'S YELLOW JERSEY

Kimberley Le Court of Mauritius emerged victorious in a reduced sprint to win the sixth stage of the Tour de France Femmes on Thursday, as Swiss rider Marlen Reusser held on to the overall lead with three stages remaining.

Le Court (AG Insurance-Soudal) joined a small breakaway group 10 kilometres from the finish, launched her sprint with 300 metres to go and held off French rider Cédrine Kerbaol (EF Education-Oatly) on the line, with Puck Pieterse of the Netherlands coming in third.

There was no change at the top of the standings after the 153.4-kilometre ride from Montbrison to Tournon-sur-Rhone, with Reusser (Movistar Team) holding a 12-second lead over Dutch rider Demi Vollering. Poland's Katarzyna Niewiadoma-Phinney is third, one minute and 17 seconds off the leader.

Friday's seventh stage takes the riders 146.8-kilometres from La Voulte-sur-Rhone to the summit finish at Mont Ventoux, when Vollering and Niewiadoma-Phinney will be expected to make their move to overtake Reusser.

REUTERS

CFL FINES MONTREAL'S NAJEE MURRAY, TYRELL RICHARDS, EDMONTON'S NOAH TAYLOR

Montreal defensive back Najee Murray and linebacker Tyrell Richards have been fined for high hits in a CFL game against Ottawa.

Edmonton defensive lineman Noah Taylor was also fined for making contact with an official, the league said Thursday.

Murray was fined for a high hit on Redblacks quarterback Jake Maier and Richards for a high hit on wide receiver Justin Hardy on Friday.

Taylor received objectionable conduct penalties in both the first and second quarters of Saturday's 28-26 loss to the visiting Saskatchewan Roughriders. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ben James of the United States plays his shot from the 16th tee during the first round of the Wyndham Championship at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, N.C. on Thursday. CALEB BOWLIN/GETTY IMAGES

Ben James a stroke behind Hossler after opening day at Wyndham

GREENSBORO, N.C.

Turns out Jackson Koivun isn't the only player trying to go from college to the PGA Tour postseason. Virginia grad Ben James made eagle on both the par fives on Thursday and only a soft finish with a pair of bogeys kept him from sharing the lead with Beau Hossler in the Wyndham Championship.

The final tournament of the regular season determines the top 70 in the FedEx Cup who advance to the postseason.

James, the No. 1 player in the PGA Tour University ranking that came with a tour card, has to win to reach the top 70. He was tied for the lead until a bogey-birdie-bogey finish for a 62, both bogeys coming after he missed six-foot par putts.

Koivun earned his card from the accelerated PGA Tour University program for underclassmen – he clinched his card as a sophomore and deferred it one year – and is in much better shape at No. 70. Koivun missed some birdie chances coming in and shot 67.

Hossler is at No. 122 in the FedEx Cup and also has to win to reach the first playoff event next week. He ran off four straight birdies early in his front nine at Sedgefield Country Club, and played the final holes in four under with a 30-foot eagle putt on the par-five 15th.

"Try and win a golf tournament," Hossler said. "That's all there is to it."

> James, the No. 1 player in the PGA Tour University ranking that came with a tour card, has to win to reach the top 70.

James, the 36-hole leader at the RBC Canadian Open in his professional debut before crashing on the weekend, made a 15-foot eagle putt on the 15th that allowed him to catch Hossler.

With the chance at another 59 at Sedgefield, he three-putted from just inside 25 feet on the par-three 16th, birdied the 17th and then came up short of the green from the first cut on the 18th, chipped to 6 feet and missed the par putt.

Still, it was an impressive start at a tournament where so many players know they have to go low and finish high if they want to advance.

"Every week someone always shoots anywhere from 63 to 60 or 59 the first day, so it's always there. You just try to put yourself in position, play the best you can," James said.

Taylor Pendrith of Richmond Hill, Ont., was the low Canadian after completing his first round, shooting a four-under 66 to sit in a tie for 23rd. Mackenzie Hughes of Dundas, Ont., was tied for 54th at two under.

Adam Svensson of Surrey, B.C., Ben Silverman of Thornhill, Ont., and Nick Taylor of Abbotsford, B.C., were all tied for 73rd at one under. A.J. Ewart of Coquitlam, B.C., was tied for 111th at one over, but he still had a hole left in his first round when play was suspended.

No one had a more bizarre round than Sahith Theegala, whose postseason is safe at No. 43. He didn't make a par on the front nine – eight birdies and one bogey. And then all he could manage were pars on the back nine until stuffing his approach tight on the 18th for a birdie and a 62.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Australia grants Iranian women's soccer players citizenship

ROD MCGUIRK
MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Two members of the Iranian women's soccer team who claimed asylum in Australia in March have been granted citizenship.

Fatemeh Pasandideh and Atefeh Ramezanisadeh said in a statement Thursday that Immigration Minister Tony Burke swore them in the day before at a citizenship ceremony in their Australian home city of Brisbane.

"Yesterday was a truly special and unforgettable day for me. I feel proud and deeply grateful to become an Australian citizen. Australia has given me the opportunity to build my life and my future, and I feel, more than ever, that I belong here," Ramezanisadeh said in the statement.

Ramezanisadeh said her Iranian roots and memories would always be part of her.

Pasandideh said Wednesday had been "one of the happiest days of my life."

"I'm incredibly proud and grateful to officially become an Australian citizen. After everything we've been through and all the challenges we faced, this moment means more than words can express," Pasandideh said.

The Refugee Council of Australia, a non-profit umbrella organization representing asylum-seekers, said refugees usually must live in Australia on a valid visa for four years before they can apply for citizenship.

Their citizenship could potentially have been fast-tracked under Australian law to make them eligible to play soccer for Australia.

The Iranians joined Brisbane Roar, a soccer team which plays in Australia's elite A-League Women's domestic competition, after they were granted asylum when Iran dropped out of the Women's Asia Cup that Australia hosted.

They were among seven Iranian women who initially accepted asylum, but five changed their minds within days and returned to the team for reasons undisclosed.

The team had arrived in Australia before the United States and Israel attacked Iran in February.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CUBS SECURE WIN ON BLUE JAYS ERROR IN 11TH INNING

CHICAGO Pete Crow-Armstrong scored on a throwing error in the 11th inning after Alex Bregman hit a two-strike, two-out homer in the ninth, and the Chicago Cubs rallied for a 3-2 win over the Toronto Blue Jays on Thursday.

Crow-Armstrong singled leading off the 11th against Brendon Little (0-3), but automatic runner Carson Kelly was thrown out at the plate. The MVP candidate then tried to steal third and Blue Jays catcher Brandon Valenzuela overthrew third baseman Josh Smith, allowing Crow-Armstrong to dash home.

He took off his helmet before touching the plate and then tossed it into the protective netting before he was mobbed by teammates.

It was the 11th walk-off win this season for Chicago, which is in position for the first NL wild card.

Bregman forced extra innings with his 12th homer of the season. Crow-Armstrong led off the ninth with a single against Blue Jays closer Louis Varland, who retired the next two batters and went ahead 1-2 against Bregman before his knuckle curve caught the middle of the plate and Bregman lined it over the wall in left.

Varland had been 24 for 24 in save situations.

The Cubs, coming off a sweep of the Dodgers, moved to 10-4 during a stretch of 17 games in 17 days. The game against Toronto was rescheduled from June 21 because of rain.

Trent Thornton (5-4) pitched out of a jam in the top of the 11th.

Toronto squandered a sterling performance by Dylan Cease, who allowed two hits and struck out 10 in seven innings. Alejandro Kirk went 4 for 5 for the Blue Jays, who went 1 for 19 with runners in scoring position, stranding 13 baserunners.

Toronto second baseman Luis Urias left midway through the fourth inning after appearing to injure himself running out a double.

UP NEXT

The Blue Jays will start the newly acquired José Soriano (9-6, 3.29 ERA) at Philadelphia on Friday against RHP Zack Wheeler (10-2, 2.49). Former Blue Jay Kevin Gausman (5-10, 4.38) makes his Cubs debut at Kansas City on Friday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPORTSNET WILL NOT RENEW HOCKEY COMMENTATOR KELLY HRUDEY'S CONTRACT FOR UPCOMING NHL SEASON

Hockey commentator Kelly Hrudey says Sportsnet has not renewed his contract for the upcoming NHL season.

The former NHL goaltender retired from playing in 1998 and immediately embarked on a broadcasting career.

Hrudey regularly worked on Hockey Night in Canada and Calgary Flames regional game broadcasts.

The 65-year-old from Edmonton, who lives in Calgary, played 677 NHL games for the New York Islanders, Los Angeles Kings and San Jose Sharks, and reached the Stanley Cup final in 1993 with the Kings.

Rogers-owned Sportsnet has made changes to its national NHL broadcasts, which will no longer air on CBC.

Rogers and Amazon Prime Video recently announced a 12-year sublicensing agreement that gives Prime Video exclusive rights to Wednesday games and some early-round Stanley Cup playoff games.

Hrudey was part of a Hockey Night In Canada studio crew rotation that included Ron MacLean, David Amber, Jennifer Botterill, Kevin Bieksa, Luke Gazdic and Elliotte Friedman.

"On June 19, I was told that my contract was not going to be renewed for the upcoming season, so big changes in my life," Hrudey said in a video posted on a social media account.

"I thank you, the viewer. You might have hated me or loved me. I'm okay with either."

Hrudey said he wasn't retiring, without stating his plans.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CANADA MIDFIELDER ALI AHMED TEARS ACL

Canada midfielder Ali Ahmed will miss an extended period after suffering a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee, his English club Norwich City announced Thursday.

Ahmed, 25, was injured after landing awkwardly during the second half of Norwich's preseason friendly against Spain's CA Osasuna on Saturday.

Subsequent scans confirmed the injury, and Ahmed is set to undergo surgery.

The Toronto native played a key role in Canada's run to the round of 16 at this year's FIFA World Cup.

Canada's next international window includes home matches against Chile on Sept. 26 in Toronto and Peru on Oct. 3 in Montreal before playing the United States on Oct. 6 in St. Paul, Minn.

Norwich teammate Mohamed Touré will wear Ahmed's No. 21 shirt this season as a show of support while the Canadian recovers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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DEATHS

TODD ANDREW COWAN
1968 – 2026

Todd Andrew Cowan passed away peacefully on July 29, 2026, with his beloved wife, Alexandra Babcock, and adored daughter, Allegra, by his side.

Todd embraced life with boundless energy, unwavering optimism, quiet humility and a kind smile. He had an incredible ability to make everyone around him feel valued. We are devastated by the loss of an extraordinary man.

Todd was born in Montreal on October 12, 1968, and grew up in St. Catharines. He is survived by his loving parents, Jeannie and John Cowan; his devoted brother, Jay (Glenda); and his caring sister, Heidi (Michael). Todd also leaves behind his sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, Whitney (Rob), Courtney (Miles) and Blair (Christy); four nephews and seven nieces. Todd was predeceased by his dear in-laws, Dorothy and Larry Babcock.

Not long after graduating from the Ivey Business School at Western University, where he was also a varsity ski racer and rower, Todd moved to Calgary and first entered the world of real estate with Knowlton Realty. In 1996, Todd joined TrizecHahn in Toronto, where he came under the mentorship of Peter Munk, whose counsel profoundly influenced his life and professional career. With Munk's support, Todd moved to Budapest as one of the founding executives of TriGranit Development Corporation. As Chief Executive Officer, Todd helped build the company alongside colleagues he deeply valued, into one of Central and Eastern Europe's leading real estate developers with landmark projects in twelve countries.

In 2007, Todd returned to Canada with his family and co-founded Capital Developments with his close friend and TriGranit colleague Jordan Dermer. Capital Developments quickly established itself as one of Canada's leading developers, with a team Todd greatly respected, and projects that have helped define Toronto's landscape.

In business, as in life, Todd was known not only for his vision and determination, but for his unwavering commitment to his community. He served on numerous corporate and community boards, generously sharing his time, knowledge and leadership. Most recently, combining his professional expertise with his love of tennis, Todd served as Chair of the Redevelopment Committee at the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, where he played a pivotal role in advancing one of the club's most significant projects.

Whether chasing the wind for kite surfing or deep powder for skiing, Todd approached sport with the same discipline, commitment and enthusiasm that defined his life. He lived with an adventurous spirit, relished a challenge, loved the outdoors and found joy in every opportunity that life offered. Todd cherished his time in Pointe au Baril, Nicholson, Craigleith, Barcelona and Klosters where his warmth, laughter and endless curiosity forged abundant and meaningful friendships.

Todd's greatest achievement was the life and connections he built with the people he loved. While his career defined what he accomplished, his family defined who he was. His greatest joy was the life he shared with his wife and daughter, who were the centre of his world.

Our family is profoundly grateful for the extraordinary care and compassion Todd received from the physicians, nurses, and staff at Princess Margaret Cancer Hospital. Todd met his illness with courage, resilience and grace. We would like to acknowledge Dr. Jonas Mattsson and Dr. Igor Novitzky-Basso, whose unwavering support and compassion were matched by the mutual respect they shared with Todd. We would also like to thank Dr. Barry Rubin for guiding our family throughout the last two and a half years.

In gratitude for the exceptional care Todd received, our family has established the Todd Cowan Fund with all proceeds given to the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation. If you wish to consider making a donation in Todd's memory, it can be made here: www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/benefaction-foundation/campaign/the-todd-cowan-fund/

A Celebration of Life will take place this Fall.

DEATHS

HAL MORAN

Hal passed away peacefully, on August 3, 2026, in Waterloo, at the age of 91. He was born December 10, 1934, in Thunder Bay (Fort William), Ontario, the son of Harry and Margaret (Kennedy) Moran. He is survived by his beloved wife of 64 years, Sue (Ferguson); and four loving children of whom he was very proud, Kimberly, Steven (Michelle Douglas), Linda (Chris Marrese), and Barbara (Jeff Carlick). He also had eight lovely grandchildren who he treasured, Sara (Anton Mamonov), Lauren, Jake, Marc, Sydney, Kelsey, Lizzie, and Ben. He is survived by brother, Pat (Gillian); and was predeceased by brothers, Kenneth, Rod, Jack, Ed; and sister, Mary. Hal's education included a BASc Mechanical from the University of Toronto (1957) and MBA from the University of Western Ontario (1962). Hal was a member of the ROTC of the RCAF who sponsored him during his attendance at U of T, and Hal in turn became a Flying Officer on active duty with the RCAF for three years upon graduation. Moving across the country and back, he worked at General Foods and J Walter Thompson, followed by 19 years at Molson Breweries. He had several notable achievements, including the founding and development of the Molson Indy, which became the largest sporting event in Canada. Hal also served as Board Chair of Etobicoke General Hospital. Upon retirement Hal remained in Toronto and spent much time at his cottage on Georgian Bay and his home in Fort Myers, Florida. He enjoyed fishing, playing golf and socializing, ideally with an extra dry martini or scotch in hand. Hal was the life of the party with charisma and charm to spare. He always loved a good laugh and had a big heart. He will be deeply missed. A funeral service will be held on August 8th at 12:00 p.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Funeral Home, 211 Langstaff Road E,, Thornhill, Ontario, with reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Alzheimer Society of Canada at alzheimer.ca would be appreciated.

MARY PATRICIA "PAT" BROCHU

Mary Patricia "Pat" Brochu passed away peacefully at home, in Newmarket, on July 30, 2026, at the age of 86, four months after her husband, Paul, with whom she was married for 56 years. She is survived by her children, Michael (Leah) and Neil (Derek); grandson, Neil Thomas; and siblings, Anne, Theresa, Genny, and John.

Pat retired from her career as a lab technologist at North York General Hospital in 2001. Originally trained with the Sisters of St. Joseph, she later earned a degree in business administration from York University. She enjoyed traveling the world, classical music, swimming, golf, walking and was a vibrant member of many communities and volunteer groups. Active and engaged to the end, she will be missed by many.

Friends may call at Roadhouse & Rose Funeral Home (157 Main Street South, Newmarket) on Saturday, August 8, 2026, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. A funeral service will be held in the chapel at 12 p.m., followed by refreshments.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, or to the Canadian Batten Disease Support & Research Association.

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SALLY BRAYLEY BLISS

BALLERINA, TEACHER, 89

CANADIAN DANCER BECAME A LEADER AT U.S. ARTS INSTITUTIONS

After a distinguished performing career, she taught the son of Ronald Reagan at The Joffrey Ballet, and the U.S. president later gave her a prestigious appointment to serve on the National Council on the Arts

REBECCA RITZEL

Sally Brayley Bliss, a storied, standout Canadian dancer who went on to a long career at the nexus of ballet and American politics, died June 18 in St. Louis, Mo., after an illness. She was 89.

After beginning her career with the National Ballet of Canada, she danced on New York's major stages before becoming a global advocate for the art form, teaching the son of a U.S. president and holding leadership positions at The Joffrey Ballet, the Antony Tudor Ballet Trust and Dance St. Louis.

Born on May 15, 1937, in London, England, Sally Brayley moved with her family several times as a child, following the career of her father, Canadian Press journalist Jack Brayley. His postings in New York and Montreal offered opportunities for his young daughter to dance, but the options were more limited in Halifax, where the family settled by the early 1950s. Mr. Brayley eventually became bureau chief there and his wife, the artist Zeversa (Gibbon) Brayley, a founding member of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

In 1956, Ms. Brayley left home for Toronto and "went to class every day," with Betty Oliphant, the instructor whose Sherbourne Street studio fed directly to the National Ballet.

By her own account, Ms. Brayley was behind in her training and was put in a class with younger dancers, but she was determined to catch up. She took on theatre and concert gigs and competed on the CBC talent show *Pick the Stars* in April, 1956.

"My goal was to dance with the National Ballet of Canada," she is quoted as saying in *Early Days, Early Dancers,* author Jocelyn Terell Allen's history of the company's development, published in 2020. But the dancer's accession was never a given. "How are your typist skills?" company founder Celia Franca once asked her, according to her son Tim Bliss. "That fuelled her," he said.

After six months of classes, Ms. Brayley was invited to join the fledgling company, and she remained with the troupe through six years of low pay and relentless touring. In *Early Days, Early Dancers*, she described a particularly long drive to Vermont when the dancers applied their makeup on the bus.

"When we finally arrived, the whole audience was out on the street cheering us on," she recalled. "The theatre was small, the floors dirty, but the show went on. Afterward, she said, she ate her first slice of pizza. It was "delicious."

Her roles included both the bold and spirited Swanhilde in *Coppélia* and a poised Victorian party guest in Antony Tudor's one-act ballet *Lilac Garden*. Mr. Tudor, who had been a mentor to Ms. Franca when she danced with the British company now known as Rambert Dance, allowed the National Ballet of Canada to perform his ballets royalty-free. This was a boon for the cash-strapped company and put Ms. Brayley on the choreographer's radar. (After Mr. Tudor's death in 1987, she became sole trustee of his ballets and co-executor of his estate.)

In 1963, Ms. Brayley left Toronto for New York to dance with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, newly helmed by famed Ballets Russes and Royal Ballet star Alicia Markova. At the time, Ms. Brayley was ending her brief marriage to a musician, and Anthony Bliss, a lawyer and prominent Metropolitan Opera board member, was winding down his second marriage to the actor Jo Ann Sayers.

When Mr. Bliss made the first move, the young dancer was not impressed, declining to go on a date with "some grey-haired old man," their son said. Once she reconsidered, the courtship proceeded quickly, he said. They married in 1967.

In 1956, Sally Brayley moved to Toronto with the goal to dance with the National Ballet of Canada. Despite being behind in training compared with her peers, she was determined to catch up and after six months of classes was invited to joined the company, which led to her performing in pieces such as The Nutcracker, left, and Lilac Garden. PHOTOS BY KEN BELL/THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

She once described him to The New York Times as, "the most unsophisticated man I ever met."

"I pick out his clothes," she said. "He has no gourmet instincts: I could feed him Alpo."

Mr. Bliss responded by keeping a can of dog food at his desk at the Metropolitan Opera, where he served as general manager from 1974 to 1985.

To avoid the appearance of a conflict, Ms. Brayley Bliss left the Met and joined The Joffrey Ballet, an upstart company that was more experimental and racially diverse than American Ballet Theatre and New York City Ballet. With two young sons in tow, Ms. Brayley Bliss became director of Joffrey II, a feeder troupe that toured extensively.

"She still worked us to the bone," said Rachel Ganteaume Richards, a dancer with Joffrey II from 1973 to 1975. "But she did it with a smile. She had a beautiful smile."

Patrick Corbin, another former Joffrey dancer, called those smiles "Bliss bombs."

In the early 1970s, working mothers were a rare sight in dance. Ms. Brayley Bliss made a point of looking perfectly put together when she taught class: curly red hair neatly combed and leotard beneath a long chiffon skirt, Ms. Ganteaume Richards said. Yet she was always approachable, and sympathetic in ways male leaders were not.

"You could go to Sally, because she was more mothering; she always had an ear for things that could be bothersome," Ms. Ganteaume Richards recalled.

Ms. Brayley Bliss also took the then-rare step of asking dancers of colour, including Ms. Ganteaume Richards, to dye their shoes and tights to match their skin tone so audiences viewed their legs as one long, clean line. Once Ms. Ganteaume Richards, who is Black, was promoted to the main company, "It was back to wearing pink," she recalled.

In 1979, Ms. Brayley Bliss welcomed a protégé with an unusual entourage: Ron Reagan, son of the California governor and soon-to-be U.S. president Ronald Reagan.

"He was like an antelope, thin, beautiful feet, no turnout, and he jumped like an angel," Ms. Brayley Bliss said, describing the first time she saw Mr. Reagan in class. The U.S. Secret Service went everywhere with the company, including Hong Kong during an eventful international tour.

One cold March afternoon in 1981, the Secret Service banged on the company's Nebraska hotel room doors and whisked away Ron Reagan and his wife, Doria Reagan, in a police motorcade. The president had been shot, leaving Ms. Brayley Bliss down a dancer and dealing with a media fracas. "We are leaving for the theatre. We are very upset," she told a reporter at the Lincoln Journal.

> "She still worked us to the bone. But she did it with a smile. She had a beautiful smile. ... You could go to Sally, because she was more mothering; she always had an ear for things that could be bothersome.
>
> RACHEL GANTEAUME RICHARDS
> DANCER WITH JOFFREY II FROM 1973 TO 1975

During a month-long company furlough, photos of the president's son standing in an unemployment line drew national scrutiny. When Mr. Reagan left the Joffrey in 1983, citing poor treatment of dancers in the senior company, conservative columnist William F. Buckley Jr. used the occasion to lambaste the performing arts. The younger Mr. Reagan's decision to leave Yale University to pursue dance, Mr. Buckley wrote, had been an "awful experience" for the future U.S. president and his wife. "Such a decision is not easily received in any household. In this household it was received with true shock."

The president, however, nursed no grudges against Ms. Brayley Bliss, and in 1986, he appointed her to succeed Martha Graham on the National Council on the Arts, a federal body that advises the U.S. National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the country's largest source of public culture funding.

Mr. Bliss stressed that his mother viewed her appointment as an apolitical honour, and that she had no personal allegiance to the president or his policies. "She took it extremely seriously, as a service to the arts and to the country," he said.

Little did Ms. Brayley Bliss know, however, that she was signing on for six tumultuous years when the NEA would be blasted for supporting controversial exhibits, including nude photography by Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano's iconic image *Piss Christ*. In 1989, council members, who had mostly been rubber-stamping grants, found themselves in the crosshairs.

"The council had immense symbolic power that derived from its members' fame and the respect they commanded in their fields," cultural historian Isaac Butler writes in his new book, *The Perfect Moment: God, Sex, Art, and the Birth of America's Culture Wars,* a history of the turbulent era.

"It was very hard work and a fragile time," she would say in a 2011 speech. "I'm honoured to have been there but it was probably one of the most difficult experiences of my life."

Ms. Brayley Bliss and her colleagues found themselves overseeing major policy overhauls, including legislative changes that forbade the NEA from funding any individual artists, with the exception of writers. To this day, that restriction continues to stifle the work of American artists, and sets apart the American model of only funding non-profit. This approach differs from norms established in Canada and many other countries.

The late 1980s were also challenging for The Joffrey Ballet. Company founder Robert Joffrey had long sought to keep his AIDS diagnosis a secret, but prior to his 1988 death, board president Anthony Bliss plotted for his wife to replace Mr. Joffrey. Ms. Brayley Bliss, however, denied knowledge of his machinations.

"Tony and I never talked about it because we felt that with him being chairman of the board, the line was very thin," she told Sasha Anawalt, Mr. Joffrey's biographer. The board members were split, with some convinced Mr. Joffrey's partner, Gerald Arpino, could run the company, while others believed Ms. Brayley Bliss should be in charge, with Mr. Arpino as her resident choreographer.

When Mr. Arpino refused to discuss the latter arrangement, Ms. Brayley Bliss sent him a Cassandra-like diatribe, resigning from the company. "Prepare yourself, Jerry. It could be rough," she wrote.

She was right: The Joffrey could not survive in New York without Bliss's family support and connections. The company decamped for Chicago, where it remains today.

Despite her high-wire professional life, Ms. Brayley Bliss never missed a childhood milestone, according to her son, and she was as committed to her children's school musicals as she was to the ballet company. She also prioritized spending summers in Nova Scotia. Once her sons were in high school, she somehow convinced the principal to let her teach a dance-based gym class for boys.

She was ahead of her time, Mr. Bliss said, and sought to reduce the stigmas faced by men in dance.

Later in life, she served on "so many boards," her son said. From 1987 to 2018, she was sole trustee of the Antony Tudor Ballet Trust, overseeing licensing rights and coaching for companies staging the choreographer's works.

In 1995, Ms. Brayley Bliss received a surprise offer to take over leadership of Dance St. Louis, an organization that presented touring companies in the American heartland. Mr. Bliss said his mother, never a ballet snob, expanded audiences for dance, booking *Riverdance* and hip-hop pioneer Rennie Harris. When she retired in 2006, she received the Leadership in the Arts award from the governor of Missouri.

At the end of her life, Ms. Brayley Bliss was surrounded by family and still longing for summers in the Maritimes, where she would visit loved ones in Nova Scotia and relax at her own cottage on Prince Edward Island.

In addition to her sons, Tim and Mark Bliss, she leaves her third husband, James Connett; two granddaughters; two great-grandsons; six stepchildren; seven step-grandchildren; and four step-great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her second husband, her parents, and her brother, John Brayley, who served with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Special to The Globe and Mail

To submit an I Remember: **obit@globeandmail.com**
Send us a memory of someone we have recently profiled on the Obituaries page.
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HOME RUN

LOOKING FOR A HOME, ALONE

Tired of sharing space with the roomies, Parm Bains goes on the hunt for a place of his own ▪ H2

Parm Bains looked at several condos in Vancouver before opting for a unit in an older building in the Joyce-Collingwood neighbourbood. JIMMY JEONG/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

A buyer's golden opportunity: a homeowner eager to move on

CAROLYN IRELAND TORONTO

Some buyers in the Toronto-area real estate market are uncovering deals as the result of an emerging phenomenon: seller fatigue.

The observation comes from John Pasalis, broker and president of Toronto-based Realosophy Realty, who is seeing a widening divergence in seller motivation as prices have continued to grind lower in Ontario for more than four years.

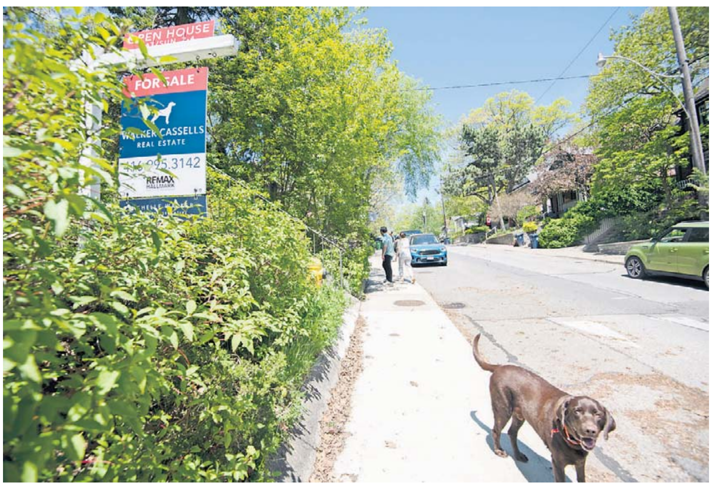
As a result, market watchers often see properties that sell for way more than they expect, while others sell for far less.

"When we see weird sales that make no sense, we have to do some homework," he says.

In some cases, the property has a defect which wasn't evident in the listing, he says, but these days many sellers are just keen to start a new chapter.

It seems counterintuitive to many buyers, Mr. Pasalis says, but someone who has owned their home for 15 years is likely to be way more flexible on price than a seller who purchased in recent years and stands to sell at a loss.

While many assume the homeowner in financial distress would be more willing to sign a hasty deal, agents at Realosophy have seen a raft of sellers who have a comfortable amount of equity and just want to move on with their life.



John Pasalis, broker and president of Toronto-based Realosophy Realty, says that recently there have been some properties that have sold for more than expected and others that sold for far less than expected. FRED LUM/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

"You're less concerned about the extra 50 grand – especially if you're already checked out and moved on mentally," says Mr. Pasalis.

Sometimes agents representing sellers advise their clients they can get more money.

"They push back," Mr. Pasalis says with astonishment.

He points to one recent deal where a buyer submitted a lowball bid and the seller was quick to say she would accept. Mr. Pasalis recommended she sign back with a counter-offer, but the seller feared the buyer could be spooked and walk away.

The seller is not wrong about the risk, he says, and some buyers do refuse to negotiate. The decision to accept is ultimately up to the homeowner, he adds.

Sentimentality may also carry some weight – especially when the buyers are young.

In one case, the homeowner had bought the house as a single woman and was happy that another young woman was the buyer, he says.

Mr. Pasalis urges agents representing buyers to delve into the history of the property and talk to the listing agent, who sometimes reveals a surprising amount of background information.

Mr. Pasalis has noticed an increase in another nascent trend: some agents are using artificial intelligence to estimate the value of a home. Some use the AI assistant Claude, while others are turning to startups that specialize in real estate.

An agent on the way to a listing presentation may ask AI to come up with evaluations packaged in a sleek presentation.

For consumers, the risk is that realtors are going to lean on this technology a little bit more, he says, and the figures may not be accurate.

"Valuing homes isn't a science – it's 50 per cent art," says Mr. Pasalis.

He says some tools analyze photos, which may be deceptive.

▪ IRELAND, H3

ARCHITOURIST

Toronto house near Withrow Park gets a thoughtful renovation ▪ H4

HOME OF THE WEEK

Home near the Oak Ridges Moraine designed with the environment in mind ▪ H5

BRITISH COLUMBIA

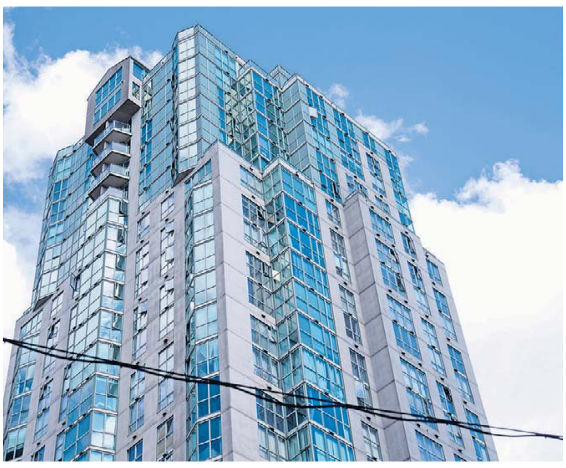
Vancouver's 'villages' plan to add density falls apart after public outcry ▪ H8

Parm Bains chose to purchase his condominium in Vancouver's Joyce-Collingwood area in part because it was quieter than downtown and in a pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood with parks, tennis courts and a baseball diamond nearby. PHOTOS BY JIMMY JEONG/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

This chef had a $500,000 budget for a one-bedroom condo in Vancouver

After living in shared apartments since moving to the city, this 33-year-old was ready to make it on his own

ANDREA YU



Top: This building close to the Joyce-Collingwood SkyTrain station was constructed in 1998. Right: The unit in this downtown building near Howe and Davie streets featured lots of natural light Far right: The unit in this building in Renfrew-Collingwood had a great view of the city to the mountains.

Parm Bains grew up in Victoria and moved to Vancouver at the age of 19, in 2012, to pursue a career as a chef. He'd been living in shared apartments with roommates since then while working in restaurants across the city (he's currently a cook at Rogers Arena). "Renting with roommates has its charm in your early twenties," says Mr. Bains, who is now 33. "Then you start to realize the lack of privacy, freedom and personal space."

He most recently rented a room in a townhouse in Marpole for $1,400 a month. Mr. Bains hadn't considered buying a place of his own until 2023. "I got sober, and that was a big turning point," he says. As he made positive changes to his life and saved more, purchasing a condo in Vancouver one day became a realistic goal. Then, in the summer of 2025, Mr. Bains's dad offered to contribute to his down payment, which would put him in a position to buy.

At the beginning of 2026, Mr. Bains began taking his condo search seriously. He set a budget of $500,000 for a one-bedroom, one-bathroom unit. He needed a parking spot, since he drives, but being close to a SkyTrain stop was a perk in case he wanted to take public transit. He also hoped for a bright unit with tons of natural light and a great view.

"In the last 14 years, I've been in a lot of basement suites," Mr. Bains explains. Also on his nice-to-have list were a private balcony and a shared gym. Location-wise, he wanted to stay in Vancouver so that he could easily meet up with friends downtown.

Mr. Bains enlisted the help of his friend, realtor Philip Yorke, to guide his search. "With the lower number of sales and the higher inventory, it skews the market into being buyer-friendly," Mr. Yorke says of the current condo market. "This is a really good time to purchase."

Here were Mr. Bains's top three choices:

RENOVATED CORNER UNIT IN DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER

Mr. Bains loved that this one-bedroom, one-bathroom, 550-square-foot condo was located in the heart of Downtown Vancouver, at Howe and Davie streets. Work was a 20-minute transit ride or an eight-minute drive away. The corner unit was bright with lots of natural light. While the building was constructed in 1994, the interior had been renovated with stainless-steel appliances and quartz countertops.

The building came with a parking spot and a storage locker, and it had a shared gym and an indoor pool. However, there was no balcony. It was also listed near the top of his budget, at $484,000.

SMALL UNIT WITH A VIEW IN RENFREW-COLLINGWOOD

When Mr. Bains first moved to Vancouver, he rented an apartment down the street from this condo building while it was under construction. "I would think to myself, 'Man, it'd be nice to live there,' " he recalls. It was further from downtown, but he could still get there with a manageable 25-minute transit journey or a 20-minute drive, and the unit came with parking. The building, which dates to 2012, was bright with wall-to-ceiling windows and the kitchen had stainless steel appliances, including a gas stove. He liked that it had a balcony and, being on the 10th floor, a great view of the city to the mountains.

But the bedroom was so tiny that it couldn't fit a queen mattress. The unit, which spanned just 414 square feet, was priced at $479,900.

OLDER UNIT WITH A SEPARATE KITCHEN IN JOYCE-COLLINGWOOD

While this condo was the furthest of the three spots he viewed, it was close to the Joyce-Collingwood SkyTrain station which would get him to Rogers Arena in 22 minutes. Mr. Bains loved the unit's defined kitchen with a pass-through to a spacious living and dining area. The bedroom was roomy enough to accommodate a queen bed and a dresser, and the balcony had a nice view into the mountains and the Burnaby skyline. However, the unit was old (the building was constructed in 1998) with aging appliances that'd need replacing soon, along with the dated countertops. The 517-square-foot unit was listed for $469,900 and included a parking spot.

HIS HOME: OLDER UNIT WITH A SEPARATE KITCHEN IN JOYCE-COLLINGWOOD

The small unit was out of the running, given its limited footprint. Mr. Bains almost submitted an offer on the downtown condo, but ultimately chose the older unit. "It was one of the first places I saw that felt homey," he explains. The neighbourhood, which was quieter and greener than the downtown condo, was also appealing. "It's a pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood with parks, tennis courts and baseball diamonds nearby," he says.

Mr. Bains bought the condo in April, 2025 and moved in a few weeks later. "It was very surreal," he says of his purchase. "Not having roommates was amazing. Coming home from a 12-hour shift and just being able to melt into the couch and watch some TV was very nice."

While the older appliances gave him a bit of trouble – the fridge was leaking water and a valve needed to be replaced – he enjoyed playing handyman. The only work he's done on the unit so far is a fresh coat of paint, but he's saving up to redo the countertops and will gradually replace the appliances with stainless steel models.

To host friends visiting from Victoria, Mr. Bains purchased a pullout couch. But when his parents are in town, he takes the couch and gives them the bedroom. "They're happy because they don't have to pay for hotel rooms any more," he jokes. He sees himself staying in the unit for at least five years. "I'm very happy here right now," he says. "It's been a big mood-lifter for me, just having a nice place to call home."

Nervousness ripples through Alberta housing market as referendum on separation looms

Some realtors say the independence movement hasn't had a material impact yet, but expect the market could dip closer to the vote

SALMAAN FAROOQUI

Is it controversial to hang a Canadian flag on your home when you list it for sale?

As Alberta's separatist movement advances toward a referendum to vote on independence in October, Calgary realtor Rebecca Chamberlain is recommending home sellers to avoid it.

She recently advised a client to take a Canadian flag down from the property they were trying to sell – something she says she would also do for any political or religious symbol that could present an issue for a potential buyer.

"It's just another thing for people to be divided about," said Ms. Chamberlain, who said she didn't want to be a platform for either political belief. In this case, her client specifically wanted to sell to someone who was against separation.

"I was like, 'Okay, I just care about getting you the most money.' "

Realtors and analysts say the separation movement will only add to a backdrop of uncertainty that has brought home-price growth to a screeching halt this year. Some realtors believe that the independence movement has not had a material impact on prices yet, but expect that the market could decline closer to the vote, and could take bigger hits if the referendum is successful.

The Calgary and Edmonton markets have already been suffering from a recent glut of condo supply and a slowdown in both interprovincial and international migration. Last summer, the two cities were outperforming most major Canadian markets, with 7-per-cent year-over-year price growth in Edmonton and 4 per cent in Calgary in July, 2025, according to statistics from RPS-Wahi, a digital real estate platform and valuation service provider.

This summer, Calgary has posted four consecutive months of 1-per-cent price declines on a year-over-year basis, and Edmonton has slowed to just 1-per-cent growth in June.

Ann-Marie Lurie, chief economist for the Calgary Real Estate Board, said the uncertainty around business investment, the job market and the risk of people wanting to move out of Alberta will slow the property market's recovery.

She said Calgary's condo market, which is seeing prices decline quickly as it deals with an massive amount of new supply, will need a large increase in migrants to stabilize.

"If we're going to go through an official referendum, that's a risk and weigh on migration flows," she said.

She pointed to Quebec, a province that saw an outflow of residents and lagging property prices for decades during separatist movements throughout the 1970s to 1990s.

A June poll by the Calgary Chamber of Commerce found that half of its member businesses said they would leave if separation was successful. The Chamber estimated that a split could cost the province billions of dollars in economic losses.

An exodus would be a potential reversal from the "Alberta is Calling" campaign, launched by former premier Jason Kenney in 2023, which tried to attract Canadians by touting its relatively lower real estate prices and higher salaries. Tens of thousands of interprovincial migrants – mostly from Ontario and B.C. – moved to the province around that time.

Ms. Lurie said most of the focus in the real estate industry is on the result of October's referendum. A successful vote for the separatist movement could result in noticeable declines in housing values, she said.

It's an opinion shared by Calgary mortgage broker Joe Jacobs.

"If it was going to a point where it's going to be a full referendum, there's a risk there'll be a market that pauses for sure," said Mr. Jacobs, referring to the second referendum that would have to take place for separation to move forward.

However, Rob Vanovermeire, broker and owner at Coldwell Banker Mountain Central in Edmonton and Calgary, said he believes that some of Alberta's real estate slowdown can already be attributed to the separation movement.

"We're working with some people right now who have decided to put their plans on hold until next year," said Mr. Vanovermeire.

"People are sitting on their hands and saying, 'Hey I think I'll wait a little longer because want certainty.' "

However, Mr. Vanovermeire says he is optimistic that the market will turn around. Like many others in the province, he believes that Alberta Premier Danielle Smith is looking to get a better deal for the province, rather than actually separate.

He thinks the province will be in a better economic position after this movement, even if separation does take place, because of the oil and gas industry.

"Alberta has a strong economic engine, whether we're part of Canada or not," said Mr. Vanovermeire.

Calgary has posted four consecutive months of declining sales on a year-over-year basis.
AMIR SALEHI/ THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Ireland: Rising prices two to three years away, expert says

FROM H1

"Certain things are just not obvious from the photos. You're going to be duped."

Mr. Pasalis says some sellers are more flexible than he would have predicted, but he stresses that not all share that mindset.

In many cases, homeowners still won't budge from the price a neighbouring homeowner achieved at the market's height in early 2022. They focus on their property's estimate of value and the fact they might sell for $200,000 less, for example.

"There's a lot of psychology in this," says Mr. Pasalis. "They anchor against the peak instead of what they bought it for."

Still, Mr. Pasalis is gradually seeing fewer stubborn sellers. Three years ago, or so, many were still holding out for interest rate cuts or other catalysts to fuel a rebound.

Now many are more resigned to slumping prices.

"In Toronto, we're not used to a slow market for five years," he points out. "Waiting doesn't mean you're going to get more money – it sometimes means you're going to get less money."

Some Toronto homeowners are not willing to accept a value of 25 or 30 per cent below the high water mark.

That's likely one reason that listings have been declining, with new listings in June in the Greater Toronto Area down 12.9 from the same month last year, he says

The market downturn in the GTA has endured long enough that some homeowners are starting to look toward a recovery – even if rising prices are two or three years away.

Alexandra Ducharme, senior economist at National Bank of Canada, says improving sales in Ontario in recent months suggest that better affordability has coaxed some sidelined buyers back into the market.

> In Toronto, we're not used to a slow market for five years. Waiting doesn't mean you're going to get more money – it sometimes means you're going to get less money.
>
> JOHN PASALIS
> BROKER AND PRESIDENT OF TORONTO-BASED REALOSOPHY REALTY

Given the sharp correction in GTA home prices over the past several months and the very low level of sales in the opening months of the year, some normalization is not surprising, the economist says.

She cautions, however, that the modest uptick in sales in Ontario should be viewed as a recovery from depressed levels, rather than a sign of underlying strength, as sales remain extremely low by historical standards.

For his part, Mr. Pasalis expects the market to remain in the doldrums for a while. He believes that some forecasts predicting prices will rise in the second half of 2026 are too optimistic.

In his recent market update and live Q&A with market watchers, he pointed to "months of inventory" for low-rise properties in the GTA, which stood just below four months in June.

The measure captures the time it would take to sell available listings at the current pace of sales.

If more supply is absorbed and "months of inventory" falls to 2.8 or 3, Mr. Pasalis estimates, prices will plateau.

He says more potential buyers will need to see a stretch of stability before they return with confidence.

"We're still in this phase in the cycle where most buyers are still hoping to buy for less than the neighbouring house sold for two, three, four weeks ago," he says. "Everyone wants a slightly better price."

A front-facing addition gives house a welcoming vibe

What began as a small job turned into a complete rethink of the home's main floor

DAVE LeBLANC

ARCHITOURIST

It started with a powder room. Sometimes these things do. Jonah Peranson and Jess Swartz had plenty of space already in their east-end Toronto home near Withrow Park, as it had been completely renovated and expanded in the 1990s, long before they purchased it in 2015.

"We have many bathrooms, but none on the main floor," says Ms. Swartz, recalling what she told Good Standing Architects' Joanne Myers and Jessie Shifman as she showed them a coat closet that could probably be converted into a water closet with little fuss.

But then, well, there was that problematic foyer. Bumping-elbows-narrow and stairs up to the main floor meant elderly relatives were winded before they were wined and dined.

"You know if we were going to put in the powder room, it was now, like, what else do we really want?" says Mr. Peranson. "And it was a question of 'Do we move, or do we build what we want?' "

Again, it was already a large and lovely house, Ms. Shifman says with a laugh: "When Joanne and I first walked in, we asked, 'Why are you calling us?' "

Well, there was that kitchen, too, you see. Already at the front of the house – and all agree that was unusual – it would get pretty sardine-can tight in there during those big family gatherings (the ones with the elderly people who were winded). "Before, the island was much smaller," says Mr. Peranson. "And three people would fill up the kitchen."

Facing the garden at the back of the house is a lovely living room filled with comfortable furniture and interesting artwork – "We loved the proportions of their living room," Ms. Myers says enthusiastically – but the reality is 21st-century house guests just don't gather in living rooms any longer.

And then there was that unusual door from the kitchen, that opened to a small front porch. It was not the main door – that is on the side – so it created much confusion: "Mail was getting wet," says Mr. Peranson. "[Delivery people] would throw packages there; our friends would say, 'Look, how do I get in?' "

So, from powder room to full frontal reconfiguration. Remove that porch door and push the kitchen out into the front yard by 2.75 metres. Change the hardscaping and landscaping – with Hailee Moynihan – to direct guests' feet to the left side of the house. Oh, and place the steps outside, at the front, so elderly guests have their breath caught by the time they push the doorbell.

And because the home already had a "bold look" and boxy exterior, why not make that addition out of rough red brick? And throw some I-beams in there to hold up the canopy over the main door: "The house is not your typical Toronto house," Ms. Shifman says with a laugh. "Sort of an industrial look, which led us to the exposed steel. … It's not a delicate house."

"We really put on our architect hats," adds Ms. Myers, who started the all-woman firm with Ms. Shifman in 2024. "It was much more thoughtful than a typical project."

There are a great many thoughts that will enter the first-time visitor's head. From the sidewalk, they'll likely pause to take in all of those windows – especially if it's twilight, and the kitchen lights are on – and scratch their temple at that big I-beam. At the front (side) door, they might catch a whiff of mahogany (this writer did) as it swings open to reveal the clean, wide, uncluttered, cubby-and-hook-for-everything foyer.

After taking in a lovely Norval Morrisseau print, they'll turn right and pause again under the wide 'portal' that announces the new kitchen. "Gosh, it's lovely," they might say, and they'd be right. Here, too, is a place for everything to tuck away – small appliances and people – by way of ample cupboard space, a big bold island, and a cozy, skylit banquette under a big, swing-out window that takes the place of the porch.

This home in Toronto's east end was renovated and given an addition that was designed by Joanne Myers and Jessie Shifman of Good Standing Architects. The house's porch door was removed and the exterior was pushed 2.75 metres into the front yard. PHOTOS BY RILEY SNELLING

"We drew every appliance," Ms. Myers says with a laugh. "We wanted to make sure there was a spot for everything … nothing will be on the counter; everything is accounted for."

"On a smaller-scale project, you can go that extra mile," adds Ms. Shifman.

There are extra miles in lighting vis-à-vis the Pablo Totem fixtures over the island, in the bold choice of black, veined marble for countertops, shelves and the backsplash, the bronze-look range hood, and in choosing to eschew blinds or window-coverings of any kind. And while the 'tuck-in' of the new façade wasn't necessary, it creates a convenient transition between the working part of the kitchen and the lounging/eating part.

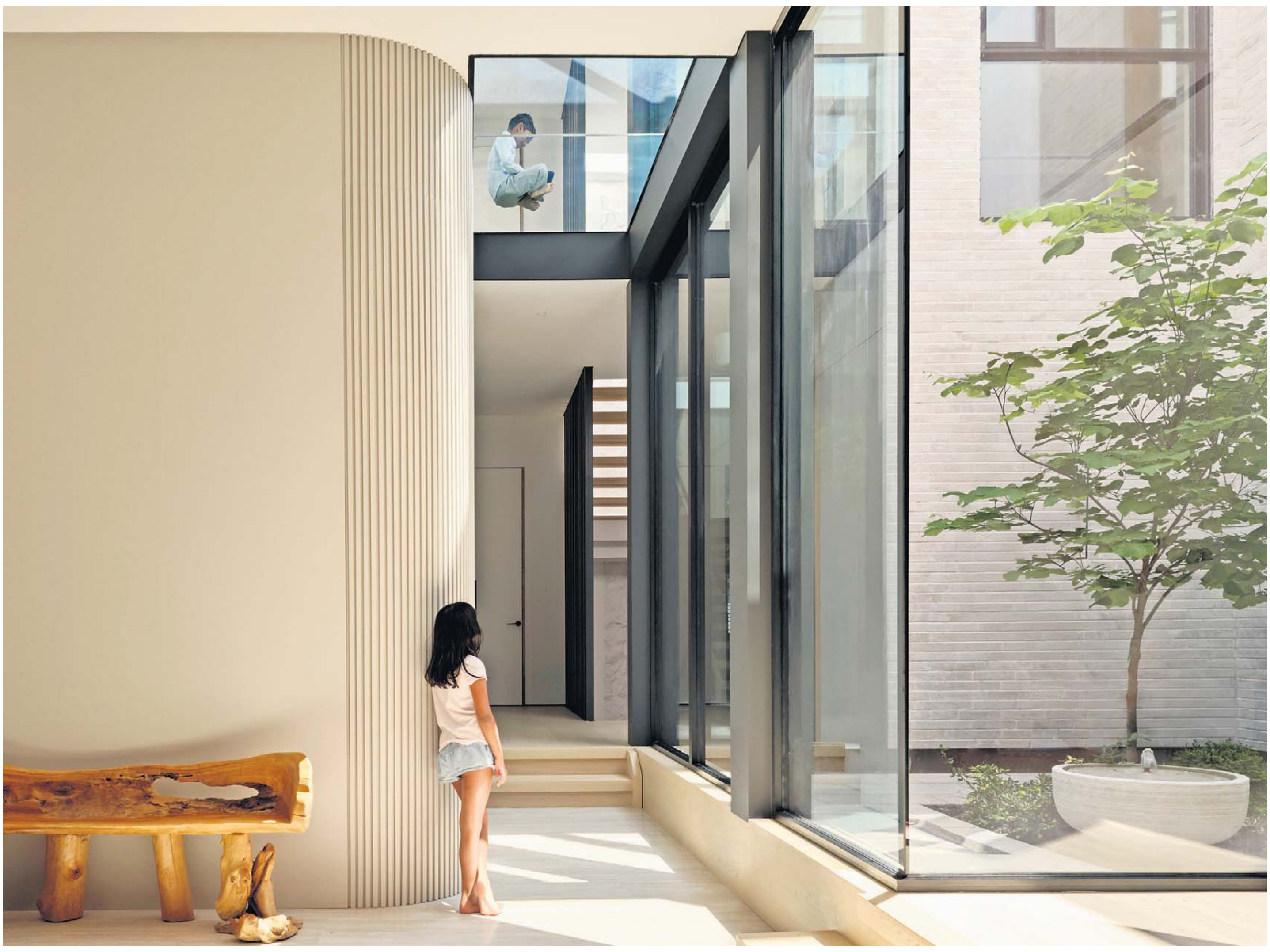
"This is an architectural move to have this indent," says Ms. Myers. "You could have argued that if you push that out you could have a longer counter, but it added interest … and [the clients] were amazingly on board for that."

And the powder room that started it all? While it's "the smallest" the young firm has done, it's dark, moody, textured, luxe and lit by a whimsical, swivelling sconce by Blueprint Lighting called "Bicentric Mesh."

Good Standing Architects may be new to the Toronto scene, but with Ms. Shifman's decades of experience at Diamond Schmitt and Ms. Myers's time at KPMB, superkül, Cindy Rendely Architexture and Chicago's Scrafano Architects (plus the experience of their three employees) there's a deep well of knowledge from which to draw. And it's evident in every meticulous detail, every design choice, and every decision, including the one to insist on a healthy work-life balance.

"There's a shorthand amongst women, and especially moms, about where your priorities are," says Ms. Shifman. "We're all committed to excellent work and working hard but, you know, when the school calls you've got to go immediately."

"We have a very amazing culture at the office," finishes Ms. Myers.



This house at 105 Park Cres. in Richmond Hill, Ont., was designed by architect Prithula Prosun Roy. It was originally a bungalow, but Ms. Prosun Roy opted to tear that down to build a five-bedroom house that has more than 7,800 square feet of living space designed around an interior courtyard. PHOTOS BY RILEY SNELLING

Home with an interior courtyard embraces the nature around it

Architect uses biophilic principles to guide the design of a house near the Oak Ridges Moraine

CAROLYN IRELAND

105 Park Cres.
RICHMOND HILL, ONT.

Asking Price: $7,288,000
Taxes: N/A
Lot Size: 75 by 200 feet
Agents: Kevin Lin and Marisa Lin, Exp Realty

Left: The primary suite has a standalone tub, and has its bedroom and bathroom divided by a double vanity. Right: The palette of white oak floors, light millwork and natural stone is meant to be soothing.

THE BACKSTORY

In the 1920s, the Oak Ridges Moraine north of Toronto provided enough wilderness and distance from the city to be considered cottage country.

Many visitors settled around Lake Wilcox, the largest kettle lake on the ridge, created by a retreating glacier in the last ice age.

By the 1970s, the community of Oak Ridges that had grown up around the lake was swallowed by the expanding Richmond Hill.

Today the area has a mix of vintage cottages, newer subdivisions and condos, and some singular infill houses.

Architect Prithula Prosun Roy was thinking of the last category when she purchased a teardown bungalow not far from the lake.

Ms. Prosun Roy was familiar with Lake Wilcox Park from family visits over the years.

For kids and their parents, there's a waterfront promenade, skate park, splash pad and outdoor ice skating rink, among other activities. Natural areas provide a refuge for fish and wildlife.

The founder of Prosun Architects was drawn to the property on Park Crescent for its position backing onto a ravine that descends to a pond on a neighbouring property. She knew that rebuilding would require closely following the rules of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), which oversees the local watershed in the sensitive area.

"We understood going in that there would be some challenges and problem-solving," she says.

THE HOUSE TODAY

Ms. Prosun Roy set out to build a contemporary house with more than 7,800 square feet of living space designed around an interior courtyard.

The five-bedroom house, completed in June, 2025, is based on biophilic principles, which hold that humans crave a connection with nature, says Ms. Prosun Roy. The towering spruce, maple and other deciduous trees at the back of the property were the starting point.

"A lot of our gestures were matching the scale of these trees," says Ms. Prosun Roy,

The architect started with the approach to the house, where guests and residents pass under a portion of the second-storey cantilevered over the walkway.

"You feel the weight and heaviness," she says of passing under the cube.

The pattern in the exterior stucco symbolizes blowing leaves, she adds.

The space is sheltered by an overhang supported by a row of slender columns.

"It evokes that feeling of walking under a tree canopy."

She placed a form around the exterior of the garage to keep that feature from visually taking centre stage, Ms. Prosun Roy explains, and the appearance of the garage doors is subdued by wood cladding.

The idea was to make the facade appear less monolithic, while also considering how the occupants would feel walking to the front door.

"I wanted to create a sense of calm, of retreat, of leaving the world behind when you come home," says Ms. Prosun Roy.

Inside, a living wall of plants maintains a sense of connection to the outdoors, and the palette of white oak floors, light millwork and natural stone is meant to be soothing.

The large kitchen has integrated appliances, drop-down spice racks and a lift-and-slide door opening to the backyard. Ms. Prosun Roy chose quartzite for the countertops and island.

Instead of a backsplash behind the range, Ms. Prosun Roy placed a window between the lower and upper cabinets.

"When I'm cooking in the kitchen, I'd rather be looking out at the green hedge," she says.

The wood doors of the upper cabinets have been charred in a traditional Japanese process known as *sho sugi ban* to create a deep charcoal finish that contrasts with the soft tones in the rest of the room.

A butler's kitchen with a second set of appliances is hidden behind the main kitchen so that the mess of more utilitarian tasks can be hidden from view.

"Your show kitchen is nice and tidy for entertaining," she says.

The dining and lounging areas are placed around an interior courtyard, which brings light to the interior. An eastern redbud tree provides colour with pink blossoms in spring and yellow leaves in fall. The delicate water fountain creates sound and movement.

"A space right in the middle of the home brings the outdoors in," says Ms. Prosun Roy.

The double-height family room was created to preserve the view of the wooded ravine, says Ms. Prosun Roy.

Upstairs, the primary suite has a bedroom and bathroom divided by a double vanity and a floor-to-ceiling cabinet with glass doors. There's a sitting area, fireplace, walk-in shower and standalone tub.

There are three additional bedrooms on that floor.

Ms. Prosun Roy likes to create unexpected moments throughout the house.

On the lower level, for example, she hid a small movie theatre behind a wall of books in the recreation room.

Her children like to pivot the bookshelf away to reveal the secret room to visitors.

"That's a fun little thing for the kids to show their friends."

THE BEST FEATURE

Mr. Prosun Roy positioned the new home farther from the ravine than the original house in order to mitigate the concerns of the TRCA, she says.

An existing pool was grandfathered, so she left it in place and had it refurbished.

The canopy outside the family room extends over the sitting area next to the pool.

A lower canopy serves as the balcony for the primary suite and shelters the outdoor kitchen and dining area.

The backyard also provides an outdoor kitchen, pizza oven, cabana, pergola, and landscaped grounds.

Loft sells for $115,000 below 2023 purchase price

10 Morrison St., No. 409, Toronto
FASHION DISTRICT

Asking price: $660,000 (March, 2026)
Previous asking prices: $679,000 (February, 2026); $719,000 (January, 2026)
Selling price: $630,000 (June, 2026)
Previous selling prices: $745,000 (August, 2023); $415,000 (August, 2012); $347,000 (April, 2009); $308,757 (January, 2009)
Taxes: $3,650 (2025)
Days on the market: 77
Property days on market: 147
Listing agent: Dino Capocci, Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd.

THE ACTION This one-bedroom-plus-den unit in a 10-storey building near Spadina Avenue, between King and Queen Streets has a few assets not held by other competing properties nearby, like an assigned parking spot and a loft-style design. It drew some interest from buyers earlier this year when priced at $719,000, but no offers. Two price cuts failed to shake things up.

"The unit has a coveted parking spot and locker, which downtown in smaller condos you don't see a lot of that," said agent Dino Capocci. "It's a really nice, boutique building with unique finishes to it versus some towers downtown."

"We had a few buyers who were back two or three times, and a lot of buyers are doing that, knowing there's no urgency because there's so much out there."

This summer, the seller received one offer for the unit and negotiated a $630,000 deal. Though the sale was $115,000 less than they paid in 2023, it was preferable to finding a renter until the market rebounds.

"We had gone over the comparables and what the value is now, regardless of what they paid," said Mr. Capocci.

"I don't have any clients who want to rent with all the news about troublesome tenants and the [Landlord and Tenant Board] not being favourable for landlords and owners."

WHAT THEY GOT This nearly 20-year-old unit has hardwood flooring and sliding doors to the bedroom and the south-facing balcony.

■ Set back from the windows, there is a den, a renovated bathroom and a Scavolini kitchen with stainless-steel appliances.

■ Monthly fees of $634 cover water and heating.

THE AGENT'S TAKE "The location is second to none," said Mr. Capocci.

– SYDNIA YU

Climbdown on price and HST rebate grease sale of condo

1414 Bayview Ave., No. 308, Toronto
MOUNT PLEASANT EAST

Asking price: $1.05-million (April, 2026)
Previous asking prices: $1,198,000 (January, 2026); $1.21-million (October, 2025); $1,339,900 (July 28, 2025); $1,465,000 (July 15, 2025)
Selling price: $1,025,000 (June, 2026)
Taxes: $5,025 (2026)
Days on the market: 45
Property days on market: 316
Listing agent: Christopher Bibby, Re/Max Hallmark Bibby Group Realty

THE ACTION Last year, Toronto-based Gairloch Developments completed an eight-storey building on Bayview Avenue with roughly 40 suites, marketed primarily to downsizers and empty-nesters. Agent Christopher Bibby was assigned some inventory to sell, including this two-bedroom unit with a west-facing terrace. The process lasted nearly a year. The list price started at $1,465,000, with other models in the building asking for much more, including a two-storey penthouse priced at over $4.4-million.

"This one moved the fastest," said Mr. Bibby. "The price point was digestible, definitely the most reasonably priced unit with exterior space.

"The building, on the west side, has larger balconies and terraces, overlooking a single-family, freehold residential setting. It has a very tranquil, almost backyard feel."

Securing the $1,025,000 deal in June came weeks after the vacant space was furnished and relisted for $1.05-million. Buyers were also energized by the HST rebate for new homes announced this spring.

"Our [potential buyers], maybe be put their search on hold because their home prices were going down. But this year, we've seen a bit of a recovery on the freehold side and it brought people back into the marketplace," Mr. Bibby said.

"As we adjusted the pricing, added the staging, and the HST rebate came into play, things all kind of fell into place."

WHAT THEY GOT This unit has a combined living and dining area with sliding doors to a terrace.

■ There are two full bathrooms and a kitchen with Caesarstone countertops, an island and Miele appliances.

■ The unit has a storage locker and one parking spot. Monthly fees of $1,016 cover concierge and use of a lounge, a co-working space and a private courtyard.

THE AGENT'S TAKE "It's a beautiful building," Mr. Bibby said.

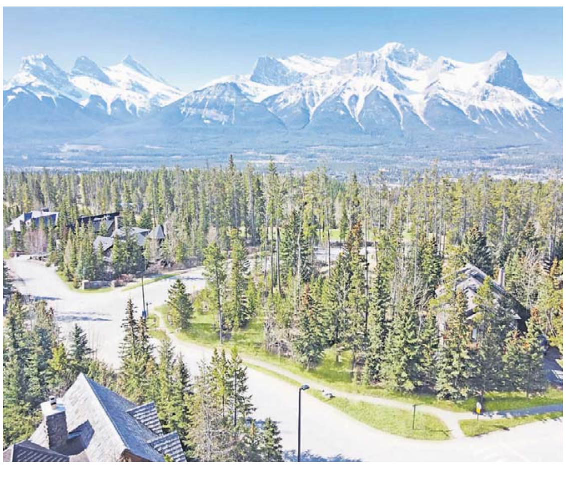
"There was a very playful, artistic side in the finishes, and they were not typical for the neighbourhood."

– SYDNIA YU

Lot buyer gets a building site with mountain and fairway views

105 Stonecreek Rd., Canmore, Alta.
CANMORE

Asking price: $1,899,000 (May, 2026)
Selling price: $1.8-million (June, 2026)
Taxes: $5,588 (2026)
Days on the market: 57
Listing agents: Brad Hawker and Drew Betts, Royal LePage Solutions



THE ACTION The owner of this 0.19-acre lot might have imagined building a home that made the most of its panoramic views south and west towards Silvertip Golf Course, as well as the mountain peaks of Three Sisters and Mount Rundle. But a change of plans this spring led them instead to put the vacant land on the slopes of Mount Lady Macdonald up for sale.

"It's a glorious lot, right on the tee box, with some of the best views in all of Canmore," said agent Drew Betts.

"There are a lot of homes with stunning views, similar to this, but most lots have been built on or purchased, which makes this a rare piece."

Mr. Betts was concerned the lot's premium price, due to its size measuring 8,127 square feet, might shrink its buyer pool and lengthen its time on the market, yet one buyer arranged a $1.8-million sale two months after its launch.

"For a lot, it sold on the faster side of things," Mr. Betts said.

"Silvertip lots are generally larger than a town-centre lot, maybe 5,000 to 6,500 square feet."

WHAT THEY GOT This lot is mostly flat terrain, fronting onto a winding street and backing onto the eighth hole of the golf course.

■ The building envelope is 3,469 square feet.

THE AGENT'S TAKE "The beauty of Silvertip is how it's starting to grow now," Mr. Betts said.

"They've had the golf course for many years, but now they've got a restaurant, winter experiences and weddings.

"There's a [food] market now, so you can stay up in Silvertip and not have to go into town if you don't want to."

– SYDNIA YU

Photos of a pool in June ignite buyer interest for bungalow

202 Park Home Ave., Toronto
WILLOWDALE WEST

Asking price: $999,000 (June, 2026)
Previous asking prices: $1,388,000 (April, 2026); $1,488,000 (Mar. 27); $1,188,000 (Mar. 12)
Selling price: $1.3-million (June, 2026)
Previous selling prices: $877,500 (November, 2013); $564,623 (April, 2009); $590,000 (June, 2007); $230,000 (October, 1994)
Taxes: $8,739 (2025)
Days on the market: Nine
Property days on market: 98
Listing agents: Andrew Ipekian and Eli Younan, Keller Williams Referred Urban Realty

THE ACTION A few blocks west of Mel Lastman Square on Yonge Street, this raised bungalow was put up for sale in March at an asking price of $1,188,000 and got five offers, but the sellers rejected all of them as being inadequate. The property's price was raised to $1,488,000 and got one more offer, but that too was rejected.

"Maybe the timing wasn't right," said agent Andrew Ipekian. "There were a lot of homes for sale around that time.

"In this market, it's ever-changing, and there's not only one way to do something. You have to be innovative and try different ways."

In June, the seller took a new tack, slashing the asking price $999,000.

That, coupled with new photographs of the pool in season, reignited buyer interest. Four new purchase offers were received, with the sellers agreeing to a $1.3-million deal.

"We waited for the pool to open, ordered new photos, and positioned the pool as the prime selling feature of the home," Mr. Ipekian said. "We ended up selling for a good number.

"Not many homes have pools in this price [range]. Some newer homes have it, but they were significantly more expensive – over $1-million more."

WHAT THEY GOT This bungalow has an attached garage, three bedrooms, two kitchens and two full bathrooms.

- There are living and dining rooms on the main floor.
- The basement has a recreation area with a separate entrance to the 50- by 135-foot lot, as well as one bedroom with an exit to the yard.

THE AGENT'S TAKE "One key selling factor is its location and accessibility to transit and major highways," Mr. Ipekian said.

"It's an older home situated on a wider lot. If someone wanted to do an addition or rebuild the house some time down the road, it was a great opportunity for someone to get into the neighbourhood at a good price."

– SYDNIA YU

Early over-asking offer on North York home tops rival bid

135 Bombay Ave., Toronto
NORTH YORK

Asking price: $1,295,000 (May, 2026)
Selling price: $1.81-million (May, 2026)
Previous selling prices: $1.28-million (May, 2014); $774,900 (February, 2006); $480,000 (May, 1999)
Taxes: $10,195 (2025)
Days on the market: One
Listing agent: Andre Kutyan, Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd.

THE ACTION Agent Andre Kutyan looked for multiple offers for this four-bedroom house near Earl Bales Park by setting a very low initial asking price.

One buyer added $515,000 to that in a formal offer within 24 hours, a week ahead of the date set by the seller to review offers. Another buyer rushed to assemble a rival bid but could not outdo the first bidder's $1.81-million offer.

"It was aggressively priced below market value on purpose," said Mr. Kutyan.

"We had good offers verbally, and my sellers would have transacted on the offer day at one of those prices, but when we started hearing north of $1.8-million, it became a strong consideration to look at."

The 74-year-old home stood out not least for its unusually large 50- by 177-foot lot size, roughly 10 feet wider and 40 feet deeper than the neighbourhood average.

"There were properties sitting on the market in the area, but this was a bit of a unicorn," Mr. Kutyan said.

"There were lots of different types of buyers, end users looking to live in the home, renovate and add on, and even some people looking at it from a land perspective."

WHAT THEY GOT This two-storey house has an attached garage and 2,053 square feet of living space, including an updated kitchen, four bathrooms and a family room with an exit to a south-facing patio.

- There is a formal dining room and entertaining areas with wood-burning fireplaces on the main and lower levels.

THE AGENT'S TAKE "The house has a main floor family room addition and a primary bedroom addition; it's not your typical 80-year-old home," Mr. Kutyan said.

"You have the proximity to everything along Avenue Road, and the benefits of everything in the area, without paying the price of being south of Wilson Avenue and the 401 [highway]."

– SYDNIA YU

Two offers for Bedford Park home next to new construction

144 Haddington Ave., Toronto
BEDFORD PARK-NORTOWN

Asking price: $3,295,000 (June, 2026)
Selling price: $3.24-million (July, 2026)
Previous selling prices: $1,617,640 (August, 2013); $1,375,000 (August, 2009); $1,255,000 (November, 2006)
Taxes: $14,282 (2025)
Days on the market: 11
Listing agents: Robert Greenberg and Mahsa Parseh, Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd.

THE ACTION This four-bedroom house, across from an elementary school and 200 metres west of Avenue Road, was on the market for about three months last fall, but couldn't find a buyer. A second agent brought it back this summer with updated photography and a reduced asking price. Dozens of potential buyers arranged private tours or attended the open houses. Shortly after Canada Day, two purchase offers were submitted.

"We had it priced well, and there was a lack of inventory," said agent Robert Greenberg. "We had a lot of traffic."

His client, concerned by the disturbance created by a home under construction next door that might discourage buyers, accepted a strong offer of $3.24-million.

"Some people are opposed to being next to a construction site, but in the long run, it adds value to the street when you have all new homes," Mr. Greenberg said.

"It's in proximity to Avenue Road and all the amenities, shopping, transportation and highway, which are all big sellers for the neighbourhood."

WHAT THEY GOT This two-storey house, on a 42- by 130-foot lot, has 3,280 square feet of living space and a double garage accessible through a refinished basement.

- The living and dining rooms were also remodelled recently.
- Off the eat-in kitchen, the family room has a gas fireplace and three sets of doors to a deck, cabana and an in-ground pool with a waterfall feature.
- There are five bathrooms, including a seven-piece primary bathroom upstairs.

THE AGENT'S TAKE "It had a beautiful front elevation," Mr. Greenberg said.

"The backyard was beautiful, a very private oasis. You couldn't even see other houses beside you or behind you."

– SYDNIA YU

Lack of public engagement scuppered villages plan, say experts

Initiative called for increasing height and density up to six storeys in specific areas

KERRY GOLD VANCOUVER

Vancouver introduced a plan to create small shopping and residential areas throughout the city as part of its official development plan, adopted in 2022.

In 2024, planning began for 17 "villages," which required rezoning of intersections in low-density neighbourhoods to add six-storey multifamily buildings with shops and improvements to the streets. On July 28, after considerable taxpayer expense, a three-day public hearing and much public outcry, the plan was shot down in a 10-1 vote by the mayor and council, with OneCity Councillor Lucy Maloney the only vote in favour.

Planning experts say the failure of the plan exposed the city's weak spot: public engagement. They say policy makers need to learn how to engage residents and develop density plans that communities can embrace.

Tim Barton, senior consultant with consultancy firm Street Matters, worked with the city's transportation planning team for nine years until late last year. His work included transportation planning for the villages plan. The Vancouver Plan document estimated that 260,000 more residents will be living in the city by 2050. The idea was to create walkable neighbourhoods away from busy streets and add housing for people who might not otherwise be able to live in Vancouver, said Mr. Barton. He and his wife had relocated to Coquitlam from the West End to find more suitable housing, so he says he personally understood the assignment.

The intersection of Knight Street and East 33rd Avenue in Vancouver was one of 17 'villages' that would have been rezoned by a city development plan. KERRY GOLD/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Mr. Barton has responded on LinkedIn to public comments by Mayor Ken Sim, that staff had "overstepped" when they came up with the villages plan.

"Staff work at the direction of council, and this thing has been going on for two years," he said.

"My personal thought, and someone else might tell me I'm wrong … the direction was, fairly early on in this council term, was, 'We want you to get on and do the villages.' And I was thinking, well, that makes sense because it's the least dense piece out of these different things that you could have asked staff to work on. And so, it might have appeared like it was maybe the low-hanging fruit, if that makes sense. It was going to be the least controversial. And yet it failed."

Mr. Barton said despite criticism, city staff did public engagement that went beyond notices in the mail. He said he met face-to-face with residents at several public events. But, he added, the engagement process needs to improve.

"There is a question about how, in general, we engage with people on controversial topics. And there are different ways of doing engagement," he said. "There are co-creation type models and things that take a lot more time and might even involve an elected body handing a bit of power over to some of those groups. If we're going to grow as a region and we're going to accommodate density … we have to figure out the best way, as a society and as a people and as residents in Metro Vancouver, to do that, and to bring the public along with us.

"I think if you could have that more nuanced conversation with people, I think you could get a better outcome."

The plan had called for increasing height and density up to six storeys in specific areas, most of them dominated by detached housing, with a sprinkling of shops. It included an estimated 550 blocks and more than 13,000 properties. The upzoning meant potential speculation and tax increases based on development potential. Only residents who've been in their homes for at least a decade could apply for an exemption to the "highest and best use" market valuation.

Vancouver planner Larry Beasley, former co-director of planning for the city, who famously helped shape downtown towers, called the city's approach "brutal and naïve."

In a strongly worded letter to the city he sent in June, he wrote that the plan could trigger speculation in some areas and cause land values to plummet in others, such as the homes overshadowed by six-storey buildings. Residents had raised concerns about the lack of transition between houses and low-rises, as well as loss of trees, and cherished neighbourhood shops that would be lost to new development.

"The result will be community displacements, victimization, physical blight, existing retail stress, and ironically, a difficult and risky development scenario," wrote Mr. Beasley.

"With no co-ordination or focus to manage these random moves or concerns, the unintended negative results are inevitable."

Instead of blanket rezoning for 17 villages, they could have added modest density around existing neighbourhood centres, he said in an interview.

"They could have said, 'We're going to work with the community to find out where the opportunities are, and what scale works best in this neighbourhood versus this neighbourhood,' " said Mr. Beasley. "Do that in a few neighbourhoods at a time, rather than the whole system, because otherwise, you're just setting off speculation like mad.

"I always found solutions when I worked with the community … rather than people getting a letter in the mail telling them that their homes are being rezoned against their wishes."

Mr. Beasley said he hadn't seen such an angry public response in years. The city's 2023 rezoning of single-family properties to allow up to six strata-titled units likely contributed to the outrage, he said.

"I think it was the last straw, and a lot of people were already angry because of the multiplex policy, which was just passed without much community involvement. The scale wasn't right, the neighbourliness wasn't right. The trees were all being lost."

Mr. Beasley and planner Sandy James, director of Walk Metro Vancouver and former city planner, are part of a professional group known as Housing Reset that opposed the villages plan. The group, comprising urbanists, planners, architects and academics with decades of experience, regularly comment on housing policy, and are currently working on a set of proposed solutions for Vancouver's growing pains. Ms. James believes the council decision to nix the plan was motivated by civic elections this fall. She also believes it's not over, and a modified version of the plan will reappear before a new council.

"They wanted to do a blanket rezoning that was spread too thinly, and they made it a developer type of plan, and created a false construct of new communities, not looking at existing commercial areas and how to strengthen them – even though those areas have 10 to 15 per cent vacancies," said Ms. James.

She also cites a failure to appreciate the distinct character of each neighbourhood with a one-size-fits-all approach, and a lack of engagement with those distinct neighbourhoods. Blanket rezoning, she said, serves developer interests above community interests because the developer will always choose the maximum zoning allowed even if it doesn't make sense for adjacent housing.

"We are a city of neighbourhoods, so use those parks, use those schools, and look at opportunities to put higher density in those communities instead of creating false constructs," she said.

"We used to have a planning department that had very strong relationships with the community and knew how to do public participation, and that was part of our planning – and it made us different than any other city in North America. That was our strength."

Buyer 'did very well' in deal for home near the beach

DONE DEAL

4300 Dollar Rd., North Vancouver, B.C.
NORTH VANCOUVER

Asking price: $2,298,800 (April 13)
Selling price: $2,285,000 (May 12)
Taxes: $6,383.98 (2025)
Days on market: 29
Listing agents: Patricia Houlihan, Century 21 In Town Realty

THE ACTION Although it showed well, the buyers' market meant a lower sale price than the property deserved, says listing agent Patricia Houlihan.

"The buyer did very well," she said. "However, the sellers also did well, as [a comparable] home down from them at 542 Dollarton Highway sold eight months earlier for only $20,000 more, despite the market declining on a monthly basis since that sale.

"I think their attention to detail in making their home and lot spectacular helped us significantly."

WHAT THEY GOT This modest-looking home, built in 1967, belied an impressive renovation, with a south-facing panoramic ocean view and bright, spacious layout.

■ With 2,338 square feet of living space, the property has three bedrooms, two fireplaces and an above-grade one-bedroom suite as a mortgage helper.

■ The home is within walking distance of the beach, with a two-car garage and mature garden. It sits on a large, nearly 15,000-square-foot private lot.*

THE AGENT'S TAKE "This was an amazingly well-done home that had fabulous ocean views … all located in a five-minute walk from both beach and Cates Park, across the street from Dollarton Centre shops and restaurants," said Ms. Houlihan.

"Fortunately, the sellers realized that, despite how amazing their home is, it is only worth what buyers will pay in a particular market."

The sale completed July 23.
– KERRY GOLD