

KEEPING KOSHER

KC Market coming to Boynton Beach.



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Democratic debate gets heated

Back and forth between Crist and Fried testy in their one debate before governor primary

By **Anthony Man**
South Florida Sun Sentinel

The increasingly heated primary contest between Charlie Crist and Nikki Fried got even hotter Thursday as the two met for their only

debate before Florida's Democratic voters decide who they'll choose to challenge Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis.

The 58-minute exchange was often contentious.

"Look, we both want to beat Ron

DeSantis, but I have been doing it for four years as your only state-wide elected Democrat. So you have a choice. We can keep losing or we can try something new," Fried said — gesturing toward Crist when she said "keep losing."

Crist's response: "Sadly, I have to say you just heard the voice of desperation. Unfortunately for Nikki, she's losing this campaign,

and that's unfortunate. But you want somebody to win, and who can win in November?"

Neither seemed to score an explosive triumph or devastating self-inflicted wound that would upend the contest. And each campaign asserted that its candidate came out ahead. Fried's campaign said she was "absolutely dominating," while Crist's

campaign said he was "absolutely crushing."

Voters are already receiving their mail ballots for the Aug. 23 primary. In Broward, the Supervisor of Elections Office planned to send out 300,000 primary ballots on Thursday.

With the campaign nearing its

Turn to Debate, Page 6

Buying frenzy starts to cool

More homes are headed to market

By **Amber Randall**
South Florida Sun Sentinel

More inventory is coming back to the housing market and closed sales are plummeting as the buyer frenzy of the past year starts to taper.

Here is the latest on the South Florida housing market in terms of sale prices, inventory levels and rents:

Sales are plummeting

Closed sales in South Florida dropped in June over 30% in Palm Beach County, 20% in Broward County and 26.1% in Miami-Dade County, according to the latest data

Turn to Market, Page 2

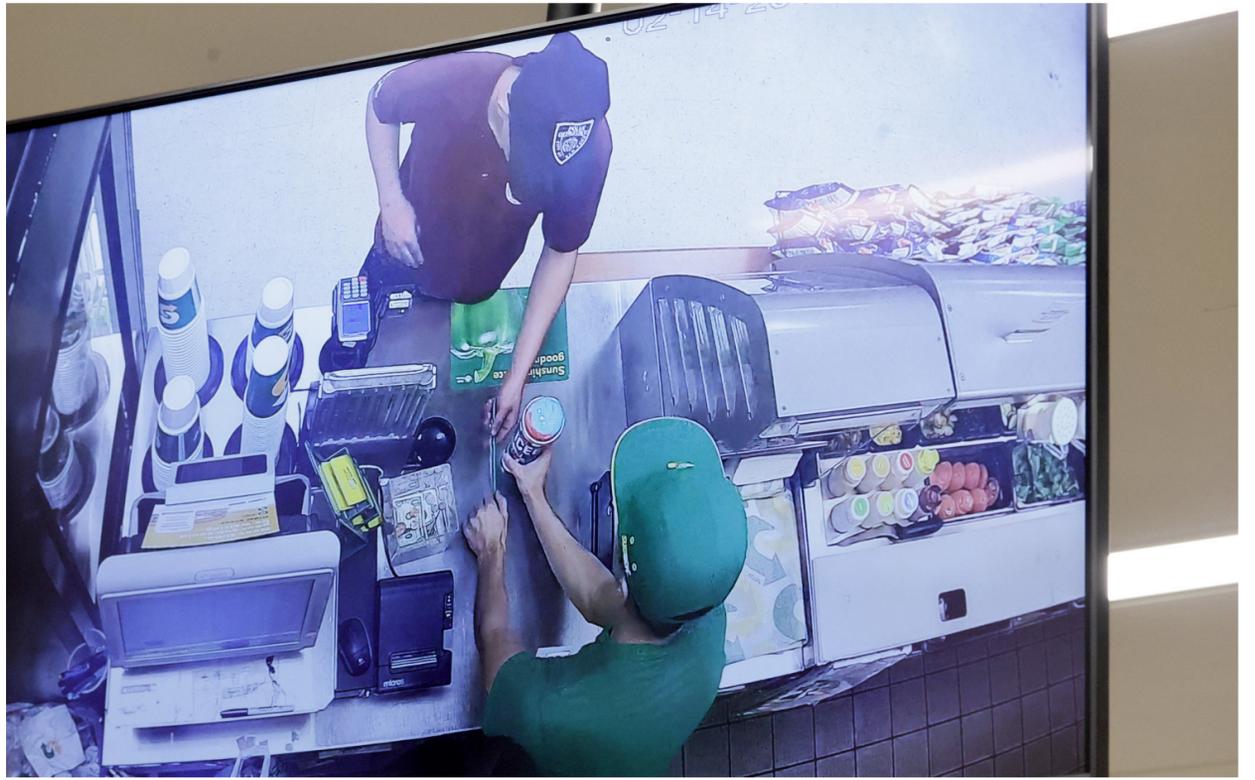
Biden tests positive for COVID-19

By **Zeke Miller, Chris Megerian and Josh Boak**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden tested positive for COVID-19 on Thursday and is experiencing "very mild symptoms," the White House said, as new variants of the highly contagious virus challenge the nation's efforts to get back to normal after two and a half years of pandemic disruptions.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden has begun taking Paxlovid, an antiviral

Turn to Biden, Page 2



Surveillance video shown in court Thursday reveals defendant Nikolas Cruz buying a beverage in a Subway inside a Coral Springs Walmart shortly after the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland. Cruz pleaded guilty to 17 counts of premeditated murder and 17 counts of attempted murder and is on trial at the Broward County Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale to determine his sentence.

MIKE STOCKER/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL PHOTOS

Shooter calmly went inside fast-food places, videos show



Former Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School student John Wilford points out the defendant while testifying Thursday about encountering Cruz at a McDonald's shortly after the school shooting. Wilford's sister, Madeleine, was shot and severely injured in the shooting.

He slipped away during the panic and chaos at Parkland High School

By **Natalia Galicza**
South Florida Sun Sentinel

For three days, survivors of the Parkland mass shooting provided graphic witness accounts of the chaos and uncertainty at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Feb. 14, 2018. Students and teachers displayed their scars and braces, their firsthand accounts of the murders, their confusion at whether the alarm that blared that Wednesday afternoon signified a drill or a real threat.

But on Thursday, the fourth

day of the trial, the jury was offered something else: A look at the confessed gunman and his composure after he fled.

Surveillance videos shared in the courtroom showed Nikolas Cruz ordering an ICEE at a Subway inside a Coral Springs Walmart and slipping into a booth at a nearby McDonald's.

At Subway, Cruz didn't appear in a hurry. He tapped his fingers against a counter while he waited for a cherry-and-blue raspberry swirled drink. He often glanced over to his right, but otherwise seemed to be an ordinary patron.

He then headed to McDonald's, where he tried to catch a ride with

Turn to Trial, Page 9

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LOCAL & STATE

RETAIL ROUNDUP

Kosher grocery taking over former Publix

By Ron Hurtibise
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Kosher foods retailer KC Market plans to become South Florida's largest kosher supermarket when it takes over a 40,000 square-foot former Publix site in western Palm Beach County.

It will be a giant step forward for the company, which has been operating an 11,000 square-foot location in Hollywood for the past decade.

Construction will begin soon on renovations at the site in Village Square at Golf shopping center in Boynton Beach, says Joseph Gopin, who owns the business with his sister Sarah Gopin.

The grand opening is expected

in August 2023, after the Gopins plan to open a 10,000 square-foot version next April on the site of the new oceanfront Oasis Hallandale condominium towers in Hallandale Beach.

Village Square at Golf is located at the intersection of South Military Trail and West Woolbright Road in the Village of Golf subdivision.

Once open, the Boynton store will offer a large selection of kosher meats and dairy foods, fresh bakery items, wines, and a variety of prepared foods and takeout options, made daily onsite.

It will also include two independently operated kosher restaurants, a custom sandwich station and a pizza station, along with

several concessions currently operated by independent vendors at the Hollywood store, Gopin said.

Those include Bunches O Bagels, offering custom-made bagel sandwiches, a salad bar called Fancy Plants, Roll Masters Sushi, a hummus maker and a kosher fish market.

Gopin says Boynton Beach is a perfect location for the new store because there's nothing like it serving western Palm Beach County's growing Jewish population.

"There's been a major move of people from the Northeast to South Florida, and a lot of them are members of the Jewish community," he said. "Boynton is one of the last areas in South Florida where

you can still buy a house at a decent price, but the surrounding areas — West Palm Beach and Delray Beach are much underserved when it comes to kosher."

Gopin is a self-described "non-practicing rabbi" who moved to South Florida 16 years ago and operated two farmer's markets, including Hallandale Farmers Market on North Federal Highway between 2004 and 2010.

He opened KC Market, also known as Kosher Central, about 10 years ago.

"I like serving people," he said. "I like helping people. Serving people with good food. That's what it's all about."

For a taste of what KC Market

will offer, consumers can visit the company's Hollywood store at 5650 Stirling Road or check it out online at koshercentral.com.

Verizon franchise opens in Davie

Wireless Zone, the nation's largest Verizon retailer, has opened a new store in Davie at 4787 S. University Dr. It's one of 21 Wireless Zone locations in Florida and nine operated by franchisee JH Cellular.

The store enables consumers to try out the latest wireless devices and purchase accessories and

Turn to Retail, Page 4

Free eye exams for kids



David Dominguez, 11, of Coral Spring, is fitted for dilation glasses after getting a free eye exam Thursday during the Coral Springs Middle Summer Youth Program at Coral Springs Middle School. The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program provided no-cost eye examinations and prescription glasses to underserved school children attending the Coral Springs Summer Youth Program.

CARLINE JEAN/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

From courthouse to golf course

Hall of Famer Lawrence Taylor sex offender charge reduced

By Chris Perkins
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Lawrence Taylor, the Hall of Fame football player, Broward resident and avid golfer, had a good morning Thursday. He walked out of a Broward courthouse with no jail time and no significant fine on sex offender charges, and, presumably, he made his tee time that was scheduled for an hour after his hearing.

The 63-year-old Taylor ended up having one of his two charges reduced to a misdemeanor and the other charge dropped, and walked out of the courthouse a free man.

"Not only didn't he get [no] jail time," Taylor's attorney, Mark Eglarsh said, "but no probation, no house arrest, no nothing."

"He's simply paying court costs and the cost of prosecution and he's done with this case, so it was an offer he couldn't refuse."

Taylor, asked what his next move would be, didn't hide his plans.

"Man, I've got a tee time in one hour," he said. "I'm going to the golf course. Simple."

Taylor was arrested Dec. 16 for not reporting his address change to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles and the Broward Sheriff's Office. He was facing two felony charges that carried a maximum of 10 years in prison.

Taylor's status as a sex offender, and requirement to report an address change, is rooted in a plea agreement from a 2010 episode in which he had sex with a 16-year-old who Taylor said claimed to be 19-year-old. He pleaded guilty to two misdemeanors — sexual misconduct and sex with an underage prostitute — and got six years' probation.

The Broward County charges were filed because Taylor moved out of his house and into a hotel and didn't report an address change.

"He was instructed by a law enforcement officer because he was having friction with his soon-to-be ex-wife to get out of the house," Eglarsh said. "So he spent some time in a hotel and because of that time in the hotel, and he didn't officially change his address, they said you violated the law."

Taylor redefined the line-backer position in the NFL with his ability to rush the passer and disrupt offenses. He was the No. 2 pick in the 1981 NFL Draft by the New York Giants after his standout college career at North Carolina. Taylor was a three-time

Turn to Charge, Page 4

Army veterans surprised with mortgage-free home

By Olivia Lloyd
South Florida Sun Sentinel

WELLINGTON — As a giant American flag dangling from a crane came into view, Jose Jimenez started to suspect something was going on.

He and his wife Alex Jimenez, along with their 3-year-old son Mateo, thought they were going to the Arden community in Loxahatchee to move forward in the interview process with Operation Finally Home. The organization provides mortgage-free homes and home modifications to wounded and ill veterans and first responders. Jose and Alex are both U.S. Army veterans who met while they were serving in Afghanistan.

There was no interview. A home was already theirs. Or the plot of land at least.

A motorcade of Patriot Guard Riders with American flags escorted the family's car to an unfinished part of the community. A line of local homeowners and people with the home-building company Lennar waved American flags and held up signs welcoming the family as they drove up to the site where their home will stand.

"We're here to honor their service," said Rusty Carroll, the president of Operation Finally Home. "But why we're really here today is to celebrate their future."

Jose deals with health complications and a traumatic brain injury from an explosive device detonation in Afghanistan in 2010.



The Jimenez family, along with representatives from the construction company Lennar, Arden and Operation Finally Home, break ground at the site of the Jimenez's new home in Loxahatchee on Thursday.

OLIVIA LLOYD/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

After the husband and wife were discharged in 2013, they traveled in an RV for years from Kansas to Michigan to Texas, among other places, before learning about Operation Finally Home from a friend Alex met during basic training.

They applied just to see what would happen. Today, the family stuck their shovels in the dirt where their home will stand.

"To me, this is the equivalent of winning the lottery," Alex said.

Jose was nearly speechless as he was handed the microphone to say a few words. Alex, in tears as she held Mateo, said now her family would be less than two hours away from her mom, who is very close with Mateo.

Their son's future was one of the first places Alex and Jose's minds went to when the surprise was revealed.

"My first thought is we have somewhere to raise our son," Jose said. "Somewhere that's stable."

Staff Sgt. Jose Jimenez served for nearly eight years and is decorated with honors including a Purple Heart. Alex Jimenez served for about three years as a U.S. Army Specialist.

"Just compared to where we are with living in the RV, it's just two different worlds," Alex said. "This is going to be amazing."

Lennar representatives said they're aiming to get the Jimenez family in their home before Christmas. They're currently staying

with Alex's family in Florida while their RV is being repaired.

Deborah Anderson, a Realtor who has lived in the community for four years, said the homes go up fast. Anderson was one of about a dozen homeowners in the community who attended Thursday's groundbreaking ceremony for the Jimenez family.

"It's amazing to have this hometown hero, and these people deserve to be helped out in this way," she said. "It's nice to see this family so happy and deserving of this."

Andrew Bazan, who organized the event with Lennar, agreed. "We can't think of a higher service," he said. "It's a great honor. We can't think of something better to give back to people who have sacrificed so much."

The agrihood community near Wellington in Palm Beach County has a community farm and miles of trails. Arden's homes start at \$450,000 and can run over \$1 million, according to their website. But the Jimenez family won't pay a mortgage through Operation Finally Home.

"If there are any other veterans out there that are searching for help, do reach out, whether it be through us or anybody else," Carroll said. "There are people and organizations and companies that are willing to help."

Staff writer Olivia Lloyd can be reached at olloyd@SunSentinel.com

SENTENCING THE PARKLAND KILLER | DAY 32

By Victoria Ballard
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Here are updates from Day 32 in the sentencing trial of confessed Parkland shooter Nikolas Cruz, 23; a jury will decide if he will be executed or sentenced to life in prison without parole. He pleaded guilty in October to 17 counts of first-degree murder and 17 counts of attempted murder in the Feb. 14, 2018, massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

■ Trying to get a ride: Witnesses on Thursday described in detail the actions of the confessed killer just after the shooting. The jury saw surveillance videos showing the gunman's interactions at two fast-food restaurants. Student John Wilford, whose older sister Madeline Wilford was seriously injured in the shooting, described how the shooter sat at a table with him and asked for a ride. Wilford said no.

■ 10 shots into classroom: Student

Benjamin Wikander recounted how he and his classmates heard loud bangs before their class began and ran into a classroom. "And then, I don't remember exactly how long [afterward], but eventually 10 shots came through the window of our classroom," he said. Wikander, then a senior, was shot in his right arm and sustained radial nerve damage that requires him to wear a brace still.

■ Gunman's arrest: Coconut Creek Police Officer Michael Leonard told

the jury he saw the gunman in a residential neighborhood southwest of the school, on the other side of the Sawgrass Expressway. Leonard pulled out his gun, ordered the shooter to the ground and arrested him.

■ Quote of the day: "I saw him sit down. I was telling [the shooter] this is all chaotic, all the helicopters and SWAT cars, and said 'What do you think it could be?'" said John Wilford, who did not know at the time that the stranger he was talking

to was the gunman.

■ Looking ahead: Testimony is scheduled to continue at 9:30 a.m. Friday.

Go to SunSentinel.com/parkland-shooting for complete coverage of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy and ongoing coverage of the sentencing trial.

Sun Sentinel staff writers Rafael Olmeda and Natalia Galicza contributed to this report.