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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

DOW JONES | News Corp ****** TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2026 ~ VOL. CCLXXXVIII NO. 23 WSJ.com ★★★★ $5.00

DJIA 52210.08 ▲ 262.83 0.51% NASDAQ 24932.08 ▼ 0.2% STOXX 600 644.62 ▲ 0.02% 10-YR. TREAS. ▲ 9/32, yield 4.640% OIL $82.61 ▼ $6.70 GOLD $4,074.50 ▲ $6.90 EURO $1.1368 YEN 163.75

What's News

Business & Finance

◆ **Memory-chip maker** CXMT soared in its stock-market debut to become the most valuable company listed in mainland China. **A1**

◆ **Sector rotation in** U.S. stocks helped keep major indexes on a relatively even keel, with the Nasdaq falling 0.2% and the Dow and S&P 500 rising 0.5% and less than 0.1%, respectively. **B10**

◆ **Oil prices plunged** more than 5% after the U.S. paused military strikes against Iran, raising the prospect of renewed diplomatic efforts to end the war. **B10**

◆ **Ford joined the** competition to build the Army's newest tactical truck, a pickup that would double on the battlefield as a stealthy power bank on wheels. **B1**

◆ **Cracker Barrel CEO** Julie Masino, who proposed changes at the restaurant chain that alienated some diners, will step down and cede the role to an Outback veteran. **B1**

◆ **J&J agreed to pay** up to $5.5 billion to resolve remaining lawsuits that alleged the company's talc products caused ovarian cancer. **B1**

◆ **A former JPMorgan** Chase employee accused the bank's leveraged finance team of racial discrimination and harassment in a lawsuit brought in federal court. **B1**

◆ **Audi cut its full-year** guidance as a worsening market in China and escalating tensions in the Middle East weigh on the automaker's performance. **B3**

◆ **Porsche said that it** would cut 5,000 jobs as part of a broader agreement with worker representatives and their powerful union. **B3**

Worldwide

◆ **Ukrainian drones have** hit military-supply lines connecting Russia and Iran through the Caspian Sea, exploiting a new front in two increasingly intertwined wars. **A1**

◆ **A lull in fighting** between the U.S. and Iran has accelerated diplomacy aimed at finding a short-term fix to restart shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. **A6**

◆ **Saudi Arabia said it** intercepted a number of drones that Iran-backed militias in Iraq had launched at the kingdom's oil facilities. **A6**

◆ **The Trump administration** asked the Supreme Court to allow federal agencies to implement an executive order that would curb mail-in ballots ahead of the midterm elections. **A3**

◆ **New York City halted** construction work at another Manhattan office tower that is being converted into apartments over structural concerns. **A3**

◆ **Three people were killed** and four others wounded in what authorities believe was a gang-related shooting at a Seattle food festival. **A2**

◆ **Trump in recent weeks** expressed optimism about Ukraine and Volodymyr Zelensky in a remarkable change of fortune for Kyiv's wartime leader. **A7**

◆ **Entries from Anthony** Fauci's Covid-era journals released by Sen. Rand Paul reveal the doctor's efforts to placate Trump while focusing on his media image. **A3**

◆ **Former FBI Director** James Comey urged a judge to throw out federal charges against him in connection with an image he posted on social media. **A2**

CONTENTS

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Monsoon Floods Death Toll Tops 100 in Pakistan

RAHAT DAR/EPA/SHUTTERSTOCK

SWAMPED: People wade through floodwaters Monday after the Ravi River overflowed in Lahore, Pakistan. Flooding triggered by heavy monsoon rains has claimed more than 100 lives in the nation in the past month, and more rain is forecast. **A8**

Fed Chairman Is Now Getting His Wish: A 'Good Family Fight'

Warsh's tight-lipped approach to economy faces test this week as rate panel meets

By Nick Timiraos

On the evening of June 15, before the first day of his first policy meeting as Federal Reserve chairman, Kevin Warsh sat down to dinner with the 18 officials who set interest rates alongside him. Gathered around a rectangular table, he announced his plan: five panels of outside experts would spend the next few months examining how the Fed reads the economy and explains itself.

Governor Christopher Waller, a former economics professor with a reputation for saying what others won't, put Warsh on the spot, according to several people familiar with the dinner. What's the point of all this, he asked. Tell me who you're putting on these groups, he said, and I'll tell you what they'll say. There were no brilliant ideas out there that everyone had somehow missed.

The dinner was an early sign of the central tension of Warsh's chairmanship. He is determined to remake the Fed and convinced it can't afford to wait. Last year, Warsh persuaded the most rate-cut-hungry president in modern memory to hand the central bank to him despite his long record of worrying about inflation. Now he faces another tricky sale: convincing his colleagues to abandon the intellectual habits of an economics profession he thinks led it astray.

The Fed meets again this week with an outcome that is unusually uncertain. Many expect it to hold rates steady, but a renewed inflation scare has put a surprise increase in play. Part of why it is so hard to call is Warsh's signature early move on Fed reform: He is saying less—about the economy, about where policy is headed, about his own thinking—and that silence is generating its own tension.

Last month's dinnertime exchange was, in one sense, exactly what Warsh says he wants: a "good family fight," in the phrase he uses often, over outcomes not settled in advance. Waller had obliged, insinuating Warsh was importing outside authority to

Please turn to page A2

Sizzling Debut Propels Chinese Chip Firm

CXMT vaults to top value of a firm listed in mainland China; competition for U.S.

By Raffaele Huang And Shradha Dinesh

Memory-chip maker CXMT soared in its stock-market debut to become the most valuable company listed in mainland China, capping the rise of an upstart whose products are sought by Apple and adding to fears of competition for U.S. chip makers.

CXMT, founded just a decade ago, sported a market capitalization equivalent to $484 billion after its opening day of trading in Shanghai, topping Industrial & Commercial Bank of China to become the most valuable company listed in a mainland Chinese market. CXMT's market value was just short of China-based internet company Tencent, which is listed in Hong Kong and is the most valuable company in that market.

CXMT is China's national champion in the fast-growing business for memory chips dominated until now by three companies: SK Hynix and Samsung of South Korea and Micron Technology of the U.S.

CXMT's offering came as chip stocks in the U.S. again declined, weighing on the Nasdaq Composite Index. Shares of Nvidia fell 5% Monday, dragging its value below that of Apple. In addition to concerns about the CXMT debut, the Wall Street Journal reported that Nvidia in talks to provide a roughly $250 billion backstop for a massive OpenAI data-center project, intensifying inves-

Please turn to page A4

◆ Apple reclaims market-cap crown as Nvidia slips.... B10

Ukraine, Iran Wars Converge In Caspian

By Jared Malsin

ISTANBUL—Ukrainian drones have hit military-supply lines connecting Russia and Iran through the Caspian Sea, exploiting a new front in two increasingly intertwined wars.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky claimed responsibility for the strikes, saying in a tweet Saturday: "We also achieved very strong results with long-range strikes in the Caspian Sea—including vessels used in military cargo shipments involving Iran, as well as a warship."

The Security Service of Ukraine, an intelligence agency, said that it launched drone strikes in the Caspian against a Russian oil field, a Russian missile boat and ships used to transport Iranian drones to Russia.

The strikes, part of a long-range drone campaign that also has reached deep into Russia, have brought Iran and Ukraine one step closer to a direct confrontation.

For years, Iran has supplied lethal drones that Russia has used against Ukraine, while the Kremlin has helped Tehran this year with intelligence to assist in its response to the U.S. and Israeli bombing campaigns.

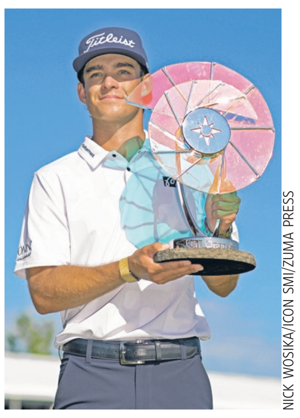
Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, blamed Zel-

Please turn to page A6

◆ Iran, Oman seek pact on Strait of Hormuz............... A6

◆ Oil prices fall after U.S. pauses strikes................. B10

INSIDE



NICK WOSIKA/ICON SMI/ZUMA PRESS

SPORTS

Golf's next prodigy, barely a month after turning pro, wins his first PGA Tour title. **A16**

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Cracker Barrel's CEO, who walked back controversial changes, is stepping down. **B1**

U.S. Cities Face Drop in Children

Big metro areas confront rapid decline of resident families with kids

By Rachel Louise Ensign And Paul Overberg

When Fernando and Patricia Escobedo moved to the Willows, an affluent neighborhood in El Paso, Texas, 25 years ago, kids were everywhere.

About half of the homes on their cul-de-sac had children. Growing up, the couple's twin daughters used to ride their scooters outside with other neighborhood kids. At an annual block party, they jumped around in a bouncy house and climbed into the local firetruck.

The twins are now in college—and the neighborhood feels a lot different. The Escobedos also have a 12-year-old at home, and Fernando said she is one of a few children under 18 on the block. The local elementary school

Please turn to page A9

You Think You've Found the One. Then You Crunch the Numbers.

* * *

Young adults are consulting spreadsheets to grade their dates; 'friends feedback' tab

By Molly Reinmann

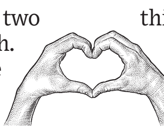
Carolyn Travis was smitten by a man she met in an entrepreneurship course. It took a spreadsheet to realize the relationship was doomed.

After a few dates, the 27-year-old debriefed her two best friends over lunch. When she went to the bathroom, they got to work. They plugged Travis's core values into an app one of the friends built to assess compatibility. Then they entered everything they knew about her date, an engineer more than a decade her senior.

The spreadsheet crunched the numbers. The result? A portrait of incompatibility.

Her perspective shifted. She saw him a few more times before breaking things off. Now she uses the app, called Spread, to track all of her dating data.

"Talking with friends is one thing, but having that visual representation of what I want versus what I'm allowing is another," said Travis, a child-welfare advocate.



Love hackers

Travis is among a cohort of spreadsheet singles, or "love hackers," who believe data could hold the cure to their dating woes. They say dating apps that spit out an unlim-

Please turn to page A11

Whistleblower Set Off Probe of Dodgers Owner

The problems for Mark Walter's sprawling sports and finance empire began with an internal whistleblower complaint.

By Margot Patrick, Justin Baer, Andrew Beaton and Dave Michaels

The complaint questioned how Walter's asset-management firm, Guggenheim Investments, booked revenue from dealings with insurance companies and had drawn interest from federal prosecutors by last year, people familiar with the matter said.

Within months, the investigation evolved to focus on investments in private credit, a lending business that has boomed on Wall Street in the past decade and a half and which supplied the financial firepower for Walter's 2012 acquisition of the Los Angeles Dodgers alongside partners.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan and the Securities and Exchange Commission are now examining how around $16 billion in loans extended to companies tied to Walter or his conglomerate, TWG Global, wound up on the books of insurance companies he owns after passing through a third entity, the people familiar with the matter said. The authorities are trying to determine whether the activity constituted fraud, one of the people said.

Such related-party transactions must be disclosed to insurance regulators, a rule meant to limit conflicts of interest and protect policyholders. Walter's insurance firms said in recent filings that they had reviewed

Please turn to page A2