

NBA

Cavaliers clinch spot
in playoffs, **B1**

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LOW: 30
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PUTIN PLANS TO STATION NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN BELARUS

Ukraine calls for emergency U.N. meeting

Karl Ritter
The Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine's government on Sunday called for an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council to "counter the Kremlin's nuclear blackmail" after Russian President Vladimir Putin revealed plans to station tactical atomic weapons in Belarus.

One Ukrainian official said Russia "took Belarus as a nuclear hostage."

Further heightening tensions, an explosion deep inside Russia wounded three people Sunday. Russian authorities blamed a Ukrainian drone for

the blast, which damaged residential buildings in a town just 110 miles south of Moscow.

Russia has said the plan to station tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus comes in response to the West's increasing military support for Ukraine. Putin announced the plan in a TV interview that aired Saturday, saying it was triggered by a U.K. decision this past week to provide Ukraine with armor-piercing rounds containing depleted uranium.

Putin argued that by deploying its tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, Russia was following the lead of the United States. He noted that Washing-

ton has nuclear weapons based in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey.

"We are doing what they have been doing for decades, stationing them in certain allied countries, preparing the launch platforms and training their crews," he said.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry condemned the move in a statement Sunday and demanded an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council.

"Ukraine expects effective action to counter the Kremlin's nuclear blackmail by the U.K., China, the U.S. and France," the statement read, saying these countries "have a special respon-

sibility" regarding nuclear aggression. "The world must be united against someone who endangers the future of human civilization," the statement said.

Ukraine has not commented on Sunday's explosion inside Russia. It left a crater about 50 feet in diameter and 16 feet deep, according to media reports.

Russian state-run news agency Tass reported authorities identified the drone as a Ukrainian Tu-141. The Soviet-era drone was reintroduced in Ukraine in 2014, and has a range of about 620 miles.

The explosion took place in the

town of Kireyevsk in the Tula region, about 180 miles from the border with Ukraine. Russia's Defense Ministry said the drone crashed after an electronic jamming system disabled its navigation.

Similar drone attacks have been common during the war, although Ukraine hardly ever acknowledges responsibility. On Monday, Russia said Ukrainian drones attacked civilian facilities in the town of Dzhankoi in Russia-annexed Crimea. Ukraine's military said several Russian cruise missiles were destroyed, but did not specifically claim responsibility.

See **UKRAINE, A6**

Nonprofit's event offers pets



MASON SAVOIA / GAZETTE

Brunswick resident Regina Kutz holds a kitten during the Kitten Open House event at Kitten Crazy, Inc. in Medina on Sunday.

Visitors come to Kitten Open House seeking to foster, adopt

Mason Savoia
The Gazette

MEDINA — Kittens and cats were adopted throughout the afternoon at Kitten Crazy, Inc. on Sunday.

For Kitten Crazy, Inc.'s, 930 Lafayette Road, Medina, first ever annual Kitten Open House event, residents from the

county and surrounding areas flocked to see what cats and kittens, which were primarily domestic shorthairs, were available for fostering and adoption.

"We wanted people to come through and see just what we do," Kitten Crazy Founder and Executive Director Wendy Mirrotto said. "The way we do rescue is used as a model to do things in other

rescues. We have free roaming cats in the adoption center. We wanted people to see how much care we provide these animals. We medically take care of every one. Most of our cats are moms, kittens, and newborns. We brought them all on premises today so people can see the kittens today, teeny tots and all."

See **KITTEN, A2**

CHATNAM TOWNSHIP

Pancake breakfast raises nearly \$50K

Mason Savoia
The Gazette

CHATNAM TWP. — The annual Sugarbush Pancake Breakfasts came to a close Sunday afternoon.

"(It's been) very successful with more people than last year," Sugarbush Co-Chair Steve Arters said. "We've served about 1,500 people a weekend. 700 a Saturday. 800 a Sunday."

The Sugarbush Pancake Breakfasts brought people together at Chatham Memorial Hall throughout the weekends of March, raising money for local township groups like The Chatham Volunteer Firemen's Association.

"We're probably close to about \$50,000," Arters said. "We give most of it all back. A

lot of it goes to the fire association. We support Chatham baseball teams here on the field. We give them quite a bit of money and keep the fields in shape. We give the historical society some money, and both churches, boy scouts, and the 4-H."

Arters said he observed younger people volunteering and attending the Sugarbush Pancake Breakfasts more this year than years prior.

"It's kind of different," he said. "They're all volunteers and they come from everywhere to volunteer. They aren't necessarily people from Chatham Township. We have a lot of young kids that love to volunteer, waitress, and clean the tables."

See **PANCAKE, A2**



MASON SAVOIA / GAZETTE

Volunteers work in the kitchen of the Chatham Memorial Hall on the final Sunday of the 2023 Sugarbush Pancake Breakfasts.

BRUNSWICK HILLS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Families visit FOP Lodge for annual Easter Bunny Brunch



MASON SAVOIA / GAZETTE

The Almasie family takes a photo with the Easter Bunny at the FOP Lodge in Brunswick.

Mason Savoia
The Gazette

BRUNSWICK — Residents and their families came to the FOP Lodge in Brunswick to partake in the Brunswick Hills Police Department's annual Easter Bunny Brunch.

Sponsored by numerous Brunswick Hills companies and restaurants, the event allowed for people to eat a variety of snacks and pizza, as well as take photos with the Easter Bunny, color eggs, and socialize to raise money for the Brunswick Hills Police Department to put on other events and aid local citizens.

"All the donations go back to the police department and police association," Brunswick Hills Police Chief Tim Sopkovich said. "Throughout the year we have people that we feed, people that need food or clothing. We

assist families. The donations go back into the community wherever it's needed. A lot of it is just helping back our community. We buy school supplies at the beginning of the year with this donation. With that, a lot of donations from this come in."

Sopkovich has hosted the event since 2015. He said that he enjoys seeing people come together in support of the police.

"We've held it every year," Sopkovich said. "We had 200 tickets that sold in the matter of days. We get a lot of donations locally from all the local businesses in Brunswick Hills. They donate the pizzas and sandwich trays. It's just a good way to get the community together. It gets parents and grandparents with their children. We have the Easter Bunny here and people get their pictures taken. You get

to see people that support the police department come out."

Sopkovich said that different items like calculators or backpacks are purchased for elementary school students locally through money and donations of the event and other ones.

"This goes for the (Brunswick Hills Police) Association so we can put on events like this," Brunswick Hills patrolman Wayne Fisher said.

"The locations have changed, but I think every year it's always been a success," Sopkovich said. "We put smiles on kids' faces. The families enjoy coming here. It's all about the kids and building that relationship so that they know the police are here to help."

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