



Australian Seismic Blasts Stop

Julia Connor
Staff Writer

Activists in Australia have temporarily stopped the seismic blasting off of Western Australia by gas company Woodside Energy. The business formerly was allowed to blast underwater to locate gas reserves in the Scarborough gas fields. However, the federal court removed their approval on Sept. 28.

The seismic blasting is said to be able to deafen and kill endangered migrating whales, moving activists to protest. In the court hearing of the activists versus the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA), it was found that NOPSEMA did not have the power to accept this blasting plan. Environmental activists think Australia should be doing more to help reduce emissions, not search for new fossil fuels.



Photo Credit: Alex Westover/Greenpeace Australia

Henrico in the Hotseat

Cate Woodrum
Staff Writer

The Virginia ballot is in a unique position this election, particularly with the recent removal of the house speaker, republican Kevin McCarthy, for the first time in the United States. This action halts all proceedings in the house, and the American eye cannot help but turn to the upcoming election season. Not only are the statewide Senate and House races extremely competitive, but Henrico's local elections are up for hot debate as well.

Issues that the county's representatives are campaigning for are directly related to the future. The incumbent for the Senate seat, Siobhan Dunnivant, is a pro-life OBGYN, anti-gun control, and opposes the expansion of Obamacare. Schuyler VanValkenburg, the democrat running against her, is a teacher at Glen Allen and is running off the promise to guarantee access to abortions, advocate for 'common sense' gun laws, and improve access to healthcare. For the House seat in the 58th district, Rodney Willet is running for the area in a tight race for the Henrico County Board of Supervisors. This election will have a direct effect on Freeman specifically, as many public school-related decisions are decided on the board.



Photo Credit: Ava Flournoy

Sacrifices of the 2024 Olympics

Cate Woodrum
Staff Writer

In preparation for the 2024 Summer Olympics, France has begun moving homeless people out of Paris. Although the French government has claimed there is no connection between the relocation of many homeless in the capital and Paris hosting the 2024 Olympic games, non-governmental organizations and elected officials have voiced their speculations. Thousands of people find themselves at least temporarily out of permanent housing in the city, largely due to the high cost of rent and limited access to affordable housing in the area. Some of the homeless people in Paris are hopeful that this move will offer better housing and opportunities, but for the most part, the Parisians are scared and frustrated about the prospect of being forced to leave their city.

Each week, anywhere from 50 to 150 people are collected by government buses and taken to one of ten locations across France. This change in procedure is also affecting asylum seekers, who have found themselves not welcomed onto French land. French President Emmanuel Macron said that France is doing their part to help those less fortunate and will continue to donate money and do what it can; however, the French "cannot take in all the misery in the world."

The most significant issue is that these homeless camps outside of Paris only house people for three weeks. After these three weeks, masses of people are forced to return to the streets, forced to either settle in the completely new cities they were bused to or go back and keep trying to make a life in Paris.



Photo Credit: AP Photo/Michel Euler

Russia's Focus on the HRC

Julia Connor
Staff Writer

Russia is trying to be re-elected into the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), after being suspended for invading Ukraine, almost 18 months ago. Russia is now listed as a candidate for election on the UN website for a 2024-2026 term.

Russia has been focused on HRC because the country can use its admission to rebut Western criticism and receive support from other countries involved in HRO.

If Russia gained reinstatement, anger would surge from the West. Several nations that lead The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) expressed their distaste for Russia's illegal invasion and attempt to conquer Ukraine believing it should disqualify them from membership to HRC and to all international bodies.

Bob Menendez Bribery

Julia Connor
Staff Writer

Bob Menendez was released from jail on bail of \$100,000 after accepting the terms of pretrial supervision and having to surrender his passports. Menendez is a New Jersey senator, accused of accepting bribes from three New Jersey businessmen in exchange for sensitive U.S. government secrets and of aiding the government of Egypt secretly. Evidence of these bribes comes from a 2022 F.B.I raid of the Menendez residence where they seized around 500K in cash. Menendez claims this cash was money he earned and he consistently withdraws cash from the bank as he generally has a distrust of banks and a need for an emergency fund. Other alleged bribes were found as well, including a Mercedes convertible and at least 13 gold bars.

Menendez did not attend his court hearing on Oct. 2 as his lawyer stated he has senatorial duties requiring him to be in DC. During this hearing, he was charged with conspiracy to commit bribery, conspiracy to commit honest services fraud, and conspiracy to commit extortion under the color of official right by the federal judge. A court date was also set, for May 6th, leaving the defense to have until Dec. 4 to submit evidence. Evidence has been hard to collect as much of it is government-classified.

Many people have been plastering posters with "Resign" as a protest to Menendez still holding office. These protestors are very upset considering this is the second time Menendez is being charged with bribery and corruption. His first charge was in 2015, as he was assumed to be involved in a bribery scheme. He was accused of taking gifts from a business in exchange for intervening in a dispute with the government of the Dominican Republic.