

**Arlington Heights Memorial Library**  
**Arlington Heights Senior Center**  
**Current Events Discussion Group (since 09/07/89)**  
**Session 1704, July 25, 2024 (Janet McDonnell, Moderator)**  
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The meeting will begin with an open discussion on any topic not on the agenda.

**5 reasons Democrats think Harris is the strongest Biden replacement, The Hill, 7/23/24**

<https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/4788317-kamala-harris-donald-trump-joe-biden/>

Democrats on Capitol Hill and across the nation swiftly threw their support behind Harris's presidential run this week, racing against the clock to coalesce around a new candidate following President Biden's sudden withdrawal from the race. Here's why Democrats rallied so quickly around the vice president: **Her name recognition.** While Harris will only be on the campaign trail for a few months, her experience in the White House gives her a credibility that makes her a "natural choice," political strategists said. **Access to Biden's fundraising and campaign apparatus.** The likely access to the millions of dollars remaining from Biden's campaign could prove vital to Harris's fast-track bid. **Black voters are a core constituency.** Harris presents an opportunity for Democrats to reenergize and engage with this base, which has expressed increasing frustrations with the direction of the country. **Her youth.** Harris's age could boost the youth vote, political strategists told The Hill, relieving alarm about Gen Z in particular feeling apathetic about the 2024 race. **Her prosecutorial experience.** Democrats are contrasting her role in law with Trump, who was convicted of 34 criminal counts in a hush money case earlier this year and faces various other criminal and civil legal battles.

**Questions:** What are Harris's strengths and weaknesses as a candidate?

**OPINION from Michelle Goldberg: The Trump Shooter and the Growing Nihilism of Young Men, NY Times, 7/16/24**

<https://tinyurl.com/2ewwbt5u>

(You will need to enter AHML username and password to access the full article.)

Since the attempted assassination of Donald Trump, some of the ex-president's allies have rushed to blame those who tried to warn of the danger he poses to democracy. But the more we learn about the shooter, the less it makes sense to analyze his actions in conventional ideological terms. The reporting that has emerged so far describes him as an outcast, not an activist. A classmate told CBS News that he was bullied relentlessly. He appears to have had a passion for gun culture. Some who study terrorism and violent extremism find the shooter's history of humiliation and obsession with firearms familiar. Last year, Jacob Ware, a research fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote a report called "The Third Generation of Online Extremism," describing how online radicalization has changed over time. For those radicalized online in recent years, Ware wrote, "Not only are organizations less important; ideologies are less important." The rise of post-ideological terror is clearly a political issue, stemming from social isolation, hopelessness and anomie among young men, coupled with the easy availability of guns. But it's an issue that our politics is proving wholly unable to reckon with.

**Questions:** Do you agree with this analysis? Can our politics change to reckon with this threat?

**Israel's Netanyahu walks political tightrope on Washington trip following Biden's exit from race, AP News, 7/22/24**

<https://tinyurl.com/bdte4tbu>

With efforts ongoing to bring about a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, rising concerns about the war spreading to Lebanon and Yemen, and the U.S. in the midst of a dizzying election campaign, Netanyahu's speech to Congress has the potential to cause disarray on both sides of the ocean. Netanyahu will deliver his congressional address with an eye on several audiences: his ultranationalist governing partners, the key to his political survival; the Biden administration, which Netanyahu counts on for diplomatic and military support; and Donald Trump's Republican Party, which could offer Netanyahu a reset in relations if he is reelected in November. The war has tested Israel's ties with its top ally as never before. The Biden administration has stood staunchly beside Israel. But it has grown increasingly alarmed about the conduct of the Israeli military, the continued difficulties of getting humanitarian aid into Gaza, as well as Israel's lack of postwar plans and the harm to civilians in Gaza. Biden has faced harsh criticism from progressive Democrats and many Arab Americans. Netanyahu has not shied away from making Israel a partisan issue. With his nationalist conservative ideology, he has been perceived as throwing his support behind Republican candidates in the past, rankling Democrats and Israelis who want to keep the U.S.-Israel relationship bipartisan.

**Questions:** What impact will Netanyahu's congressional address have here and in Israel? How will the war in Gaza impact the US presidential election?

**Stressed about politics? Here are 5 ways to take care of your mental health, NPR, 7/19/24**

<https://tinyurl.com/mtrxj9ya>

In a poll by the American Psychiatric Association, nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents said they're feeling anxious about the election. For those looking to get a handle on their stress and anxiety, here are some strategies from psychologists. 1. The first thing to do is understand what's fueling your symptoms — it's the uncertainty. When uncertainty strikes, many people start to imagine worst-case scenarios. And that's not helpful. Focusing on what we can control is a great way to help us manage our stress and anxiety. 2. Another way to exercise control is to limit how much news one consumes. Know when to step away or take a break. 3. Do things that are meaningful to you. That could involve connecting with other people on issues you care about and working toward a cause. 4. Find other healthy ways to cope. That includes doing things that bring you joy and keep you in the present moment, instead of worrying about what may or may not happen in the future. 5. Stay socially connected. As multiple studies have shown, social isolation is bad for our mental and physical health. And it is particularly harmful if our mental health is already feeling frayed.

**Questions:** Are you stressed about politics? What do you think of these 5 strategies? Do you use any of them?