**Politics**

Summer's the perfect time for Trump to announce 2024 plans

Despite how high the temperatures are already, the summer of 2022 is going to get hotter.

Domestically, gas prices are at historic highs, inflation is at 9%, a level unseen in 40 years, and our neglected southern border has a welcome sign that says, “We don’t care if you cross illegally.”

Internationally, the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine is producing historic food shortages, the U.S. dollar risks being supplanted by the Chinese yuan as the reserve currency, and the once-prideful energy-independent United States of America is begging Iran, Venezuela and OPEC for petroleum that can be produced domestically. President Joe Biden, aka the “gas price factory,” has transformed our robust nation into a three-ring circus.

It would be reasonable to anticipate that Democrats would act quickly and effectively to both domestic and international issues given the crucial midterm elections looming large. Responding to an all-but partisan January 6th committee, making history as America’s first congressional kangaroo court. It is evident that the January 6th committee’s aim is to hurl everything at the wall and hope something sticks. This is a sheer act of desperation by Democrats, who are signaling that they have given up on their capacity to beat Republicans in the midterm terms on their own accomplishments while in the majority in both the House and Senate. The Democrats’ most consistent audience is the American people, who have to choose between buying groceries or filling up the tank is a resoundingly “drop dead.”

The Democrats are floundering. According to a recent poll by the New York Times/Siena College, a majority of Democratic primary voters (64%) would rather see the party pick someone other than Biden for the 2024 race. Another statistical body blow to the Democrats comes from a June 1–20, 2022 Gallup survey, which shows that just 16% of Americans approve of the way Congress is handling its job, while 82% disapprove. These poll results paint a very bleak picture for a Democratic victory in the 2022 midterms and the 2024 presidential election. When there’s blood in the water, sharks will swarm, and in the world of politics, the biggest shark is former President Donald Trump.

With a war chest of more than $100 million, a large, energized base that flocks to Save America Trump rallies, and several electoral wins for Trump-backed Republican candidates, the former president is in a very good position to push the GOP to victory in 2022. However, nothing will shake up stumbling Democrats and political opponents in his own party more than the announcement of a presidential run in 2024. Trump told New York Magazine, “I’ve already made that choice” regarding 2024. Trump should make his candidacy for the 2024 election known this summer. The numerous Republican candidates in the midterm elections will receive a boost from Trump’s visibility as the party’s leader. The morale of the candidates will be lifted by large-scale Trump rallies. Early data from congressional and gubernatorial races in critical battleground states will allow the Trump campaign to pinpoint initiatives and observe what works in real time. Efforts made at the grass-roots level to aid mid-term candidates will, in turn, help Trump garner more of the support crucial to his eventual success in securing the Republican nomination.

It’s not necessary for Trump to campaign on the slogan “Save America” or “Make America Great Again” to be a strong contender in 2024; “Do You Like $5 Gas?” would do just fine. The summer of 2022 is a prime time for Donald Trump to make his presidential campaign announcement.

Rasheed Walters is an entrepreneur, political commentator and historian. He resides in Boston. Follow him on Twitter @rasheedwalters.

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**Ticketmaster**

Did Springsteen freeze out fans with high ticket prices?

By Tony Norman

Tribune News Service

There’s a line that comes immediately to mind about the latest kerfuffle between Bruce Springsteen and Ticketmaster that has seen tickets for his upcoming tour surge as high as $5,000 a pop: “Well, I got a job and tried to put my money away / But I got debts no honest man can pay.”

Hardcore fans, especially those desperately trying to get tickets to a Springsteen show in the era of dynamic pricing, will connect with those lyrics from “Atlantic City,” arguably the best cut from his album having a 1982 masterpiece “Nebraska.”

We’ve all seen the headlines in recent days about ridiculously high ticket prices “angering” the Boss’ longtime working-and-middle-class fans who’ve waited to buy tickets since his last tour seven years ago.

They want to know why it should cost several paychecks to cover one or two tickets plus gas, a dinner, parking and a souvenir T-shirt or two.

The angst of them took to social media denouncing both Springsteen and Ticketmaster. You can’t just blame the algorithms, they said. Someone saw the first Springsteen tour in seven years as a golden opportunity to make killing.

I have nothing whatsoever to do with the price of tickets,” E Street Band guitarist Stevie Van Zandt wrote on Twitter.

Springsteen fans know this. They aren’t naive about supply and demand. They’ve done the math: According to every actuarial table, Springsteen, 73, is likely in the twilight of the touring phase of his career.

For older boomers, this may be their last chance to see him before the Grim Reaper comes knocking on their doors, too. Consequently, everyone expects to pay a premium to see the Boss at this point, especially if he’s only averaging two tours a decade.

No one expects him to be doing three-hour shows well into his 80s like some other than Biden for the 2024 race. Another statistical body blow to the Democrats comes from a June 1–20, 2022 Gallup survey, which shows that just 16% of Americans approve of the way Congress is handling its job, while 82% disapprove. These poll results paint a very bleak picture for a Democratic victory in the 2022 midterms and the 2024 presidential election. When there’s blood in the water, sharks will swarm, and in the world of politics, the biggest shark is former President Donald Trump.

With a war chest of more than $100 million, a large, energized base that flocks to Save America Trump rallies, and several electoral wins for Trump-backed Republican candidates, the former president is in a very good position to push the GOP to victory in 2022. However, nothing will shake up stumbling Democrats and political opponents in his own party more than the announcement of a presidential run in 2024. Trump told New York Magazine, “I’ve already made that choice” regarding 2024.

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