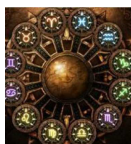




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## GREENFIELD

# LEARNING TO RIDE

Greenfield Elementary holds bike reveal for kindergarten students



PHOTO BY SKYE MASON

Greenfield Elementary School's physical education teacher Mike Ricupero shows off one of the Strider balance bikes to the kindergarten teachers.

By Skye Mason

**GREENFIELD, N.Y.** Greenfield Elementary School recently held a bike reveal for kindergarten students.

Twenty-four Strider balance bikes and helmets were donated to Greenfield Elementary School by the founder of Saratoga Shredders, Anna Laloe, as a way to make the kindergarten students excited to learn how to ride bikes and be able to ride bikes as part of their physical education classes.

The bike reveal was presented to Greenfield Elementary School's physical education teacher Mike Ricupero by the founder of Saratoga Shredders, Anna Laloe, as a way to make the kindergarten students excited to learn how to ride bikes and be able to ride bikes as part of their physical education classes.

When asked how he felt about the donation of the bikes, Ricupero said, "I'm super excited. When I was presented the opportunity to do this here

**BIKES » PAGE 2**



PHOTO BY SKYE MASON

Three of the kindergarteners ride some of the new Strider balance bikes donated to Greenfield Elementary School by the Saratoga Shredders organization as part of the "All-Kids Bike" program.

## BUSINESS

# Twitter's plan to charge for crucial tool prompts outcry

By Barbara Ortutay  
AP Technology Writer

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria, thousands of volunteer software developers have been using a crucial Twitter tool to comb the platform for calls for help — including from people trapped in collapsed buildings — and connect people with rescue organizations.

They could lose access as soon as Monday unless they pay Twitter a monthly fee of at least \$100 — prohibitive for many volunteers and nonprofits on shoestring budgets.

"That's not just for rescue efforts which unfortunately we're coming to the end of, but for logistics planning too as people go to Twitter to broadcast their needs," said Sedat Kapanoglu, the founder of Ekşi Sözlük, Turkey's most popular social platform, who has been advising some of the volunteers in their efforts.

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## POLITICS

# Haley faces 'high-wire act' in 2024 bid against Trump

By Meg Kinnard and Steve Peoples  
(Associated Press)

**CHARLESTON, S.C.** Few have navigated the turbulent politics of the Trump era like Nikki Haley.

In early 2016, the then-South Carolina governor said she was "embarrassed" by candidate Donald Trump and decried his reluctance to condemn white supremacists. Nine months later, she agreed to join his Cabinet, serving as a key validator as Trump sought to win over skeptical world leaders and voters at home.

And shortly after Trump left the White House, Haley, whose resume by then included an ambassadorship to the United Nations, vowed not to

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Turn to the Community Page today and every day for upcoming area activities and a look at local history. **PAGE A4**



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**MediaNews Group**



PHOTO BY SKYE MASON

Greenfield Elementary School's physical education teacher Mike Ricupero gets kids excited about the unveiling of 24 Strider balance bikes and helmets.



PHOTO BY SKYE MASON

Some of the individuals who made the bike reveal at Greenfield Elementary School happen.



PHOTO BY SKYE MASON

Kindergarteners check out the new bikes donated to Greenfield Elementary School by the Saratoga Shredders organization as part of the "All-Kids Bike" program.

Bikes

FROM PAGE 1

at Greenfield, Anna had come to me and you could tell from the get-go that she had the passion for riding and with her background and with her connections through the Saratoga Shredders, this was an opportunity that I couldn't really pass up."

When the Strider balance bikes were unveiled, the kindergarteners were excited to be able to use the bikes at school during their P.E. classes.

"I think the kids are ex-

cited," Ricupero said. "I think they're ready to go. I think it's perfect."

"You know, Greenfield being a Saratoga Springs school that's kind of off the beaten path a little bit, I think it's an awesome opportunity for us to be able to expose the kids to riding bikes, getting out more, especially with the pandemic," he continued. "Just post-pandemic, just getting out, riding a bike, trail riding, there's a lot of opportunities here in Saratoga and the general community."

"It's an opportunity that we want to take advantage of because we have a lot of

trail systems, we have opportunities like Kalabus Perry and Gurney Lane up in Queensbury. This is an opportunity to scale as well to the upper grade levels for middle school and high school. I think starting here at the elementary level and hopefully, expanding it to the other elementary levels is going to be an awesome experience."

When asked how a balance bike works, Ricupero explained, "They don't have pedals to start with, so the kids are going to go through a nine-lesson course without pedals. And then when they

get the hang of riding and balancing and being comfortable on the bike, then we'll install the pedals."

"By the end of lesson nine, most of the children are going to be able to get as comfortable as they can in nine lessons when riding a bike with pedals."

When asked how she became a part of the Greenfield Elementary Bike Reveal, Laloe said, "I am the founder of a kids on mountain bikes program called Saratoga Shredders, we've been a 501c3 nonprofit organization for the past couple years and we've grown to quite a few kids in the area, but it's always been a

goal of mine to be able to have it within the P.E. program of a school."

"Mountain biking will always be a fringe sport, but if we can have it as part of a P.E. program, just like they do soccer, basketball, and gymnastics, then it re-moves all those barriers for kids that don't necessarily have access to the sport of biking."

When asked what she thinks the kids think about the new bikes, Laloe said, "I think they're excited. I don't think a lot of them understand the concept of a balance bike because it's initially kind of a European concept, most kids

in the U.S. learn on training wheels, which is not a great way to learn how to ride a bike because it takes away the balance aspect."

"So if you are taught how to balance and steer using a balance bike, then you put the pedals on, all you need to do is to learn the direction that the pedals need to move and then you're off, so you never need the training wheels."

"The fact that they will get on bikes, but then in a couple of weeks, they will be able to ride with pedals around the gym and outside in their driveways — they're gonna love it."

Twitter

FROM PAGE 1

Nonprofits, researchers and others need the tool, known as the API, or Application Developer Interface, to analyze Twitter data because the sheer amount of information makes it impossible for a human to go through by hand.

Kapanoglu says hundreds of "good Samaritans" have been giving out their own, premium paid API access keys (Twitter already offered a paid version with more features) for use in the rescue efforts. But he says this isn't "sustainable or the right way" to do this. It might even be against Twitter's rules.

Monday is the deadline Twitter set for shutting off free access to its API, an added challenge for the thousands of developers in Turkey and beyond who are working around the clock to harness Twitter's unique, open ecosystem for disaster relief.

"For Turkish coders working with Twitter API for disaster monitoring purposes, this is particularly worrying — and I'd imagine it is similarly worrying for others around the world that are using Twitter data to monitor emergencies and politically con-

tested events," said Akin Unver, a professor of international relations at Ozyegin University in Istanbul.

The new fees are just the latest complication for programmers, academics and others trying to use the API — and they say communicating with anyone at the company has become essentially impossible since Elon Musk took over.

The API payroll is Musk's latest attempt to squeeze revenue out of Twitter, which is on the hook for about \$1 billion in yearly interest payments from the billionaire's acquisition, completed in October.

It's not just disaster relief groups that are concerned. Academic and non-governmental researchers for years have used Twitter to study the spread of misinformation and hate speech or research public health or how people behave online.

Rebekah Tromble, director of the Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics at George Washington University, used the Twitter API to track conversations on Twitter to see what kinds of tweets elicited attacks from trolls — and what got them to go away — in one study.

"With so little information from Twitter about the practicalities of this new policy, the specifics of it, we just don't know where to go. We have no way to do

the planning. And for many of us who are in the field, running programs, running projects that have real world consequences, that's pretty scary," she said.

Twitter wasn't alone but was unique among social media companies in making its API open and free. TikTok, for instance, is working on it now but so far has not released its API. Facebook's is more limited because the company is very protective of the data it collects.

Tromble said social platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and others are taking steps to increase researcher access and transparency — largely due to new European regulations. Twitter, on the other hand, is moving in the opposite direction.

"They've gone from first in class to absolute dead last," she said.

It costs money to maintain an API. As a private company, Twitter is free to charge for its tools. But researchers and developers say it wouldn't take much for Musk to carve out exceptions for academic research and nonprofits.

"No other technology has changed society as quickly and as profoundly as social media. Having access to the thoughts and emotions of other people worldwide, that's a fundamen-

tal change to society," said Kristina Lerman, a computer science professor at the University of Southern California who studies misinformation. "And you can't understand it without access to data, access to observe."

Takeshi Kawamoto, a Japanese software developer who runs a popular earthquake alert bot with more than 3 million followers, created the account back in 2007 as a hobby.

There are an incredible number of such bots on Twitter — useful, friendly or quirky accounts set up by people or group with a specific interest. There are weather bots, tools that combine long Twitter threads into one easy-to-read file, bots that send quotes from famous books or people, bots that remind you to stand up and stretch at random intervals during the day, bots that insert a little bit of nonsense and weirdness into your Twitter scrolling.

The earthquake bot Kawamoto created didn't take off until the devastating 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster that hit Japan, when people turned to it for information about quakes and aftershocks.

Kawamoto was ready to shut down the bot when Twitter first announced it

was going to charge for API access. Paying \$1,200 a year for an account that is decidedly not making a profit was not going to be possible. Last week, Twitter announced that it would make a small exception to offer "write-only" API access for free to accounts that send fewer than 1,500 tweets a month.

This might help, but Kawamoto says the 1,500 limit will present a problem after a big earthquake with a lot of aftershocks. He would like to ask Musk to allow accounts to post more than 1,500 tweets on a pay-as-you-go basis.

So far, San Francisco-based Twitter has offered no other exceptions, although it's possible that Musk will see one of the many tweets from developers working on earthquake relief who have been pleading for a solution.

For Mark Sample and his small army of Twitter bots, such as one that would send carefully curated quotes from Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" at random intervals, it's too late. The Moby Dick bot, as well as one that sent out computer clip art from 1994 and one called "weird satellite" have all left Twitter. Some have moved to Mastodon, the social platform that some discouraged Twitter users have been migrating to.

Sample's bots were part of "weird Twitter," a quirky subculture of Twitter that peaked in the mid-2010s and included strange, fun, nonsensical bots sending bursts of randomness into people's feeds.

"I'm kind of going through a mourning process, kind of grieving," said Sample, a professor of digital studies at Davidson College in North Carolina. With the API "Twitter was doing something that none of the other social media platforms did, which is kind of like having this open playground. I mean, there were ways that people could take advantage of it and distort things and use it in malevolent ways. But it was also this terrific playground for hobbyists and creative people. None of the other social media platforms had that."

For Sample, the breaking point was not the API announcement. It came last fall when Musk began mass firing Twitter workers and going after journalists who questioned or criticized him, he said. Building apps for a platform when someone just shut it all down on a whim, he said, is "not a good use of our time and creative energy."

"I mean, it had a good run," he said. "It's like 15 years or whatever. So it's a pretty good run. And maybe it's time for something else."

Haley

FROM PAGE 1

step in the way if he ran for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination. Yet on Wednesday, she is poised to become the first major Republican candidate to enter the race against him.

"It's going to be quite the high-wire act," said veteran Republican strategist Terry Sullivan. "She says she's always been an underdog. She will be again."

The 51-year-old Haley may be the first to take on Trump, but a half-dozen or more high-profile Republicans are expected to join the GOP's 2024 presidential nomination contest over the coming months. Some would-be competitors may be more popular than Haley even in South Carolina, where she lives and has established a campaign headquarters.

Likely rivals include Sen. Tim Scott, a fellow South

Carolinian and perhaps the most celebrated elected official in a state where Trump has already locked up endorsements from the governor and its senior senator, Lindsey Graham. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence could also be formidable foes should they run, as widely expected.

Indeed, on the eve of this week's announcement, there is broad agreement that Haley — the only Republican woman of color expected in the 2024 contest, a politician who loves to remind people that she has never lost an election — is about to be tested as never before.

Trump has stepped up his attacks on Haley in recent weeks. But allies defend the former governor, who is the daughter of Indian immigrants, as a savvy executive uniquely positioned to lead a new generation of Republicans. They understand that the fight ahead could get ugly.

"She took the bull by the horns and said, 'That doesn't matter to me, I'm going to run,'" said longtime supporter Gavin J. Smith. "She did that when she ran for governor, and that's why you're going to see when she runs for president."

Perhaps more than anyone this young presidential primary season, Haley personifies the Republican Party's shifting views on Trump. Her reversal on whether to challenge the former president was based on concerns about his divisive leadership or policy disagreements than the growing belief within the GOP that Trump is losing political strength.

Haley, like the vast majority of her party, largely supported Trump even after he inspired a violent attack on the U.S. Capitol. It was not until Trump-backed candidates across several key states were defeated in last fall's mid-term elections that a wave

of high-profile Republicans began to openly weigh 2024 bids against him.

New York-based Republican donor Eric Levine says he's convinced that another

Trump Republican nomination would lead to his party's destruction. Haley, he said, is among the three favorite Trump alternatives.

"I think as a woman of

color and a daughter of legal immigrants from India, she'd give the Democratic Party no reason to exist. All their woke crap goes out the window," Levine said. "I think she's a spectacular candidate."

Haley's announcement will take place Wednesday in Charleston, the historic coastal city where her campaign will be based. Almost immediately, she'll travel to meet voters in New Hampshire and Iowa.

She's entrusted her campaign to a section of senior staff led by longtime aides, Betsy Ankeny, who heads up Haley's PAC, will

**HALEY • PAGE 5**

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