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& PACIFIC
WEEKEND
EDITION

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STARS AND STRIPES®

stripes.com

Volume 80 Edition 55 ©SS 2021

FRIDAY, JULY 2, 2021

平成12年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く)
発行所 星条旗新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥100

\$1.00



EFFRAIN LOPEZ/U.S. Air Force

An MQ-1 Predator flies over the Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, Calif., in 2012. The drone was a catalyst for extraordinary growth and change in the world of unmanned aerial vehicles, but it also raised ethical questions regarding death by remote control.

Revolutionary war

As Afghanistan War nears end, details emerge about how Predator changed combat

By GARY ROBBINS
The San Diego Union-Tribune

“We’ve got him! Mission accomplished!” Alec Bierbauer could hardly believe his eyes as he stood before a floor-to-ceiling TV at CIA Headquarters in Virginia, watching live video stream from an outpost in Afghanistan. He was transfixed by footage of a tall man in a white robe.

A fragile, camera-toting surveillance drone built by San Diego’s General Atomics was stalking Osama bin Laden as it quietly looped over his compound near Kandahar on Sept. 28, 2000.

The remotely operated drone had a fearsome name — Predator — and it had unexpectedly found the terrorist leader during an experimental flight whose historic importance wouldn’t be fully realized in the moment.

The elation was quickly erased by exasperation.

The Predator had yet to be equipped with missiles. And it was unclear whether the U.S. had the legal authority to kill him. The al-Qaida leader got away, and a year later the terrorist group attacked the World Trade Center and other targets in the United States, killing nearly 3,000 people.

The 9/11 attack triggered the war in Afghanistan, where upward of 2,400 American troops have died.

SEE REVOLUTIONARY ON PAGE 6

US military shifts Army basing from Qatar to Jordan

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. has closed sprawling bases in Qatar that once stored warehouses full of weaponry and transferred the remaining supplies to Jordan, in a move that analysts say positions Washington to deal better with Iran and reflects the military’s changing priorities in the region.

Military leaders shuttered U.S. Army Camp As Sayliyah-Main last month, along with Camp As Sayliyah-South, and an ammunition supply point named Falcon, an Army statement last week said.

Camp As Sayliyah was known among many service members for its Rest and Recuperation Pass Program, which gave some 200,000 deployed troops a four-day vacation. The program ran from 2002 to 2011 and offered travelers up to two glasses of beer or wine a day, along with golf and beach trips.

The camp also served as a forward staging area for U.S. supplies in the Middle East, with 27 warehouses storing tanks, armored personnel carriers and a variety of equipment, the Army statement said.

Supplies from the three bases, as well as a support mission based there, are now part of Area Support Group-Jordan, a U.S. Central Command statement said.

Closing the bases and moving the mission to Jordan could benefit the U.S. in potential disputes with Iran, said Kamran Bokhari, a national security and policy expert focusing on the region at the Washington-based Center for Global Policy.

The Biden administration has signaled a desire to negotiate a

SEE QATAR ON PAGE 5

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	Azores	Change in price	Belgium	Turkey
Germany	\$3.366	\$3.799	\$4.052	\$3.575	..	..	\$3.952	..
Change in price	+3.1 cents	+3.5 cents	+3.3 cents	+1.3 cents	..	..	+3.3 cents	..
Netherlands	..	\$4.280	\$4.583	\$4.253	..	\$3.076	\$3.301	\$3.166
Change in price	..	+9.3 cents	+9.9 cents	+5.7 cents	..	-8.1 cents	-8.6 cents	-8.3 cents
U.K.	..	\$3.698	\$3.951	\$3.474	..	..	\$3.873	\$4.102*
Change in price	..	+3.5 cents	+3.3 cents	+1.3 cents	..	..	+3.3 cents	No change

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	Change in price	Guam
Japan	..	\$3.839	..	\$3.369	\$3.169	..	\$3.859
Change in price	..	+3.0 cents	..	+2.0 cents	+3.0 cents	..	+4.0 cents
Okinawa	\$3.159	..	..	\$3.369	\$3.169	\$3.599	\$3.849
Change in price	+3.0 cents	..	..	+2.0 cents	+3.0 cents	+3.0 cents	+3.0 cents

*DieselEFD **Midgrade
For the week of July 2-8

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	Commercial rates	South Korea (Won)
Euro costs (July 2)	\$1.16	1132.50
Dollar buys (July 2)	0.8208	Switzerland (Franc)
British pound (July 2)	\$1.35	..9242
Japanese yen (July 2)	108.00	Thailand (Baht)
South Korean won (July 2)	1104.00	32.05
		Turkey (NewLira)
		8.6747

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

Interest Rates	
Prime rate	3.25
Interest Rates Discount rate	0.75
Federal funds market rate	0.10
3-month bill	0.05
30-year bond	2.06

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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MILITARY

Former Pentagon chief Rumsfeld dies at age 88

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Donald Rumsfeld, the two-time defense secretary and one-time presidential candidate whose reputation as a skilled bureaucrat and visionary of a modern U.S. military was unraveled by the long and costly Iraq war, died Tuesday. He was 88.

In a statement Wednesday, Rumsfeld's family said he "was surrounded by family in his beloved Taos, New Mexico."

President George W. Bush, under whom Rumsfeld served as Pentagon chief, hailed his "steady service as a wartime secretary of defense — a duty he carried out with strength, skill, and honor."

Regarded by former colleagues as equally smart and combative, patriotic and politically cunning, Rumsfeld had a storied career in government under four presi-

dents and nearly a quarter century in corporate America.

After retiring in 2008 he headed the Rumsfeld Foundation to promote public service and to work with charities that provide services and support for military families and wounded veterans.

"Rummy," as he was often called, was ambitious, witty, energetic, engaging and capable of great personal warmth. But he irritated many with his confrontational style. An accomplished wrestler in college, Rumsfeld relished verbal sparring and elevated it to an art form; a biting humor was a favorite weapon.

Still, he built a network of loyalists who admired his work ethic, intelligence and impatience with all who failed to share his sense of urgency.

Rumsfeld is the only person to



SUSAN WALSH/AP

With former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld next to him, President George W. Bush concludes his remarks during a Sept. 11 memorial ceremony at the Pentagon in September 2008.

serve twice as Pentagon chief. The first time, in 1975-77, he was the youngest ever. The next time, in 2001-06, he was the oldest.

He made a brief run for the 1988 Republican presidential nomination, a spectacular flop that he once described as humbling for a man used to success at the highest levels of the government, including stints as White House chief of staff, U.S. ambassador and member of Congress.

For all Rumsfeld's achievements, it was the setbacks in Iraq

in the twilight of his career that will likely etch the most vivid features of his legacy.

Nine months into his second tour as defense secretary, on Sept. 11, 2001, suicide hijackers attacked the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon, thrusting the nation into wars for which the military was ill-prepared. Rumsfeld oversaw the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and toppling of the Taliban regime. Frequently presiding at televised briefings on the war, Rumsfeld

became something of a TV star, applauded for his blunt talk and uncompromising style.

By 2002 the Bush administration's attention shifted to Iraq, which played no role in the Sept. 11 attacks. The war effort in Afghanistan took a back seat to Iraq, opening the way for the Taliban to make a comeback and prevent the U.S. from sealing the success of its initial invasion.

Rumsfeld is survived by his wife, Joyce, three children and seven grandchildren.

SEAL will oversee special ops efforts to combat terror in Africa

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Rear Adm. Milton J. Sands, an officer with previous stints on multiple Navy SEAL teams, took over Thursday as head of the military's special operations mission in Africa.

Sands replaced Maj. Gen. Dagvin Anderson, who led Special Operations Command Africa for the past

two years, during a change of command ceremony at the unit's Stuttgart headquarters.

A key moment during Anderson's tenure was overseeing the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia in January. The effort to relocate about 700 troops and equipment out of Somalia involved sending thousands of additional troops to the region, along with ships and fighter



Sands

planes, to ensure the safety of personnel during the mission.

The sudden departure of U.S. forces was ordered by former President Donald Trump during his last weeks in office.

Sands will oversee a special operations mission in Somalia that, for now, mostly relies on rotating troops in and out of the country to support local forces in their battle against the al-Qaida aligned militant group al-Shabab. Sands also will contend with terrorist threats in other parts of Africa, such as the greater Sahara region, where Islamic State-linked groups have emerged as a force.

Sands previously served as commander of the Naval Service Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill. Other assignments included two tours with SEAL Team 2 and command of SEAL Team 8. He is a 1992 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy.

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Lawyers seek visa for Afghan whose American boss was kidnapped

By PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — A refugee advocacy group has filed a lawsuit on behalf of an Afghan engineer who says he supported the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan "at great personal risk," but was denied a U.S. visa because his supervisor was kidnapped and couldn't verify his eligibility.

The lawsuit, submitted last week, seeks to overrule the U.S. government's decision to reject the Afghan man's Special Immigrant Visa application.

"We felt this is what we needed to do to vindicate his rights," Katie Austin, an attorney with the International Refugee Assistance Project, which filed the litigation, said in a phone interview Wednesday.

The man, whose name was not revealed because of security con-

cerns, submitted his visa application in 2016. It included a reference letter from his supervisor, Mark Randall Frerichs, a Navy veteran, according to the complaint filed in District of Columbia federal court.

Two years later, after confirming the authenticity of Frerichs' letter, the government agreed the man was eligible for a visa and allowed him and his family to proceed to the latter stages of the application process, the complaint said.

But in 2020, after suspected Taliban-affiliated militants kidnapped Frerichs and he was unable to "re-verify" the letter, the government revoked the initial authorization, resulting in the application being rejected, the complaint added.

"Our client's story is emblematic of the problems with the SIV program, which is plagued not only by delays but also by faulty decision-

making that can be the difference between life and death," Austin said in a separate statement Wednesday.

"Now more than ever, it is critical for U.S. officials to afford our Afghan allies the protections that Congress intended," Austin said.

Congress enacted the Afghan Allies Protection Act in 2009 to enable certain Afghans who worked for the U.S. government in Afghanistan to immigrate to the U.S. with their families through the SIV program.

As the U.S. continues its final withdrawal from the country, President Joe Biden has come under increasing pressure to do more to help the roughly 18,000 people who have applied for SIVs and believe their lives are at risk in Afghanistan because they worked for the United States.

The administration last month

said it would evacuate the applicants to a location outside the mainland U.S., possibly Guam, where they could complete the application process. Administering the visas has been delayed since last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The man being represented by the International Refugee Assistance Project, described as managing numerous sensitive construction projects on behalf of the U.S., has already fled with his family to India, the group said.

Meanwhile, the government continues to offer a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to the location, recover and return of Frerichs, who was working as a contractor in eastern Khost province when he disappeared in January 2020.

Speaking to reporters in Washington last week, Afghan President

Ashraf Ghani said Biden did not mention Frerichs' disappearance during a meeting at the White House.

Frerichs' supporters have expressed concern that the U.S. exit could make it more difficult to bring him back home, particularly because the U.S. will have weaker intelligence capabilities.

Stars and Stripes reporter J.P. Lawrence contributed to this report.
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Correction

A story in Thursday's edition about a WWII aircraft converted into a motor home should have referred to the aircraft as the R4D, a Navy variant of the C-47 transport plane.

MILITARY

Pacific bases prep for July Fourth crowds

By SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Big turnouts are expected at Independence Day celebrations on bases across the Pacific, thanks to relaxed rules spurred by fewer coronavirus cases and more vaccinations.

“People are starving to get out and do things,” Richard King, a civilian event planner at Yokota, told Stars and Stripes this week.

Vaccinations of troops, their family members and local base workers in Japan and South Korea have resulted in relaxed pandemic rules in recent weeks. For example, most bases have authorized fully vaccinated people to return to bars and nightclubs that had been off-limits since early last year.

For many, it’s a welcome respite from restrictions that also caused

the cancellation of on-base events, including last fall’s Yokota Friendship Festival, which attracted 125,000 people the year before the pandemic.

Military event planners got an indication of the community’s hunger for entertainment when they held Rhythm and Blues, an annual beer and music festival at Yokota on May 2, King said.

The event, which typically includes acts flown in from the United States, attracted about 800 people in 2018 and 2019, he said. It was canceled last year.

This spring’s event, featuring the Air Force Band of the Pacific, brought out more than triple that number with 2,500 attendees, according to King.

“That told us people are hungry to get out and do something,” he said.

King expects a similar-sized

crowd at Yokota’s Celebrate America Independence Day event, which will kick off at 2 p.m. Friday on the base’s Samurai Field.

The event, also canceled last year to slow the spread of the coronavirus, marks a return to fireworks and other festivities marking the nation’s founding in 1776.

The PACAF band will headline, supported by two local acts playing family-friendly rock, country and jazz. Celebrate America will also include motorcycle stunt riders, street performers, caricature artists and games, King said.

Yokota isn’t the only American base in the Pacific that’s bringing back Independence Day celebrations.

Others include Camp Zama, home of U.S. Army Japan just outside Tokyo, which is slated to celebrate from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. Satur-

day. The event, which won’t feature fireworks, will include the U.S. Army Japan Band, a glow-stick dance party, a Nerf battle and prize giveaways, garrison spokesman Tim Flack said in an email Monday.

People can attend the closed-post event regardless of their vaccination status, but attendees will be required to practice social distancing and wear masks except when eating and drinking, he said.

Organizers had expected about 1,500 people to turn out for fireworks and other celebrations at Yokosuka Naval Base, 35 miles south of Tokyo; however, most of those events have been postponed until July 10 because of expected inclement weather.

“We have been waiting for this kind of activity for over a year and I am looking forward to seeing the faces of our community members

once again,” Capt. Rich Jarrett told Stars and Stripes in email before the event was postponed.

At the largest U.S. base in South Korea, Camp Humphreys, troops and their families will celebrate with rides, attractions and performances at Downtown Plaza starting at 3 p.m. Saturday. Fireworks begin at 8:45 p.m.

Guam Freedom Rocks, an event slated for Sunday at Sumay Cove Marina on Naval Base Guam, will include fireworks and festival attractions.

“All attendees are reminded that face coverings are required in public spaces for those who are not fully vaccinated and when social distancing can’t be maintained,” the base announced Thursday.

Stars and Stripes reporter Alex Wilson contributed to this report.
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Four-legged Marines transfer to Air Force

By SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIRBASE, Japan — A pair of black Labrador retrievers have gone from green to blue, moving from the III Marine Expeditionary Force to new jobs with the Air Force’s 374th Security Forces Squadron in Tokyo.

Splash and Allie — 4- and 5-year-old females — flew from Camp Hanson on Okinawa to the home of U.S. Forces Japan and 5th Air Force in the Japanese capital this spring, said Tech. Sgt. Seth Shannon, the security forces squadron’s kennel master.

The dogs, which cost \$100,000 to train, came from a deployment program that the Marines are downsizing, Shannon said during a recent interview at Yokota’s kennels.

Splash and Allie give the squadron enhanced capabilities that could come in handy on a deployment, he said. Unlike Yokota’s other military working dogs, they can

work off-leash, sniffing out explosives far from their handlers who can direct them with hand signals.

The Labradors aren’t trained to bite and detain intruders like Yokota’s other dogs, all German shepherds and Belgian Malinois, said Shannon, who once deployed to the United Arab Emirates as a handler.

Last week, the airmen put the former “devil dogs” through their paces on an obstacle course near the kennels. Their reward was getting to chase down a tennis ball hurled by their masters.

“They would love to be petted,” Shannon said of the dogs, but added that it’s Air Force policy not to let people, other than their handlers, touch them.

In January, U.S. Forces Japan commander Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider pinned an Air Force Achievement Medal on Shannon for his efforts to overcome coronavirus restrictions and procure 11 other military working dogs for bases in Japan last year.



Theron Godbold/Stars and Stripes

Tech. Sgt. Seth Shannon, the 374th Security Forces Squadron’s kennel master, holds military working dog Allie at Yokota Air Base, Japan, on June 25.

Defense attorney: Marine played minor role in soldier’s hazing death

Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — A defense attorney for a U.S. Marine told jurors Wednesday that he played a minor role in the hazing of a U.S. Green Beret and should not be found guilty of murder and other crimes in the soldier’s death.

Speaking inside a Navy base in Virginia, Marine Lt. Col. Timothy Kuhn said that Mario Madera-Rodriguez never touched Staff Sgt. Logan Melgar during the fatal hazing incident in Africa in 2017

until he tried to help revive him.

“Facts have been manipulated and moved around like a puzzle to fit the government’s theory,” Kuhn said.

Kuhn spoke during closing arguments at the trial for Madera-Rodriguez. The Marine is the last of four American servicemembers to face a court-martial in Melgar’s killing.

Madera-Rodriguez, who belongs to a special operations group in the Marines known as the Raid-

ers, is the only one of the four men to plead not guilty. The others, who include another Marine and two Navy SEALs, have already made plea deals with military prosecutors.

Military prosecutors have said the men were angry over Melgar’s perceived slights during their time in Mali. In particular, some were upset that they missed a party at the French embassy in the capital city of Bamako because Melgar and the others got separat-

ed in traffic.

Their plan was to choke Melgar into unconsciousness and then humiliate him while filming it on a phone camera, prosecutors said.

Despite the “textbook” risks and known dangers of such chokeholds, “they do it anyway,” military prosecutor Benjamin Garcia said Wednesday during his closing argument.

Navy Cmdr. Garcia told the jurors that Madera-Rodriguez chose to get some duct tape to help

tie up the Green Beret. And Garcia said Madera-Rodriguez chose to help restrain him while a Navy SEAL applied the chokehold. Melgar died of strangulation.

“They tied him up, and he could not tap out,” Garcia said.

Much of the closing argument from Madera-Rodriguez’s defense attorneys was held in closed session because classified information was discussed. But in open court, his attorneys disputed much of the government’s case.

MILITARY

Naval Academy boosts intensity on Induction Day

BY HEATHER MONGILIO
The Capital

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Emma Single will miss music the most during the six-week Plebe Summer.

That, and Netflix.

That's just part of not having a phone. Already, the incoming plebe will have turned in her phone, her wallet, her watch, practically any personal belonging with few exceptions.

She prepared for the six weeks. She went surfing, hung out with her family. Tuesday night, she watched Pixar's "Luca." On the way to the academy, Single listened to music. When it comes to her phone, she had not yet parted with it despite knowing she would give it up for several weeks.

"I'm going cold turkey," she said.

For Single, arriving on campus for Induction Day is the beginning of a journey sought after since her freshman year in high school when she attended an academy lacrosse game.

The Naval Academy welcomed 1,186 new midshipmen to the Yard Tuesday and Wednesday as part of the two-day Induction Day.

There are still some challenges to overcome, as the pandemic is not completely over, said Lt. Col. Todd McCarthy, plebe summer officer in charge. Still, this year there are no restrictions and plebe

summer is moving forward.

The plebes this year will not have to spend two weeks in a restriction of movement period, confined to their rooms. They will be able to participate in close contact activities.

"And this year, we're trying to turn up the discipline a little bit," McCarthy said. "We're trying to turn up the intensity a little bit."

But the Class of 2025 looks ready, he said. They are dedicated and motivated.

"I mean, they're excited," McCarthy said. "I can see it, and I can feel it. Everybody can."

On the Yard, the only sign of the deadly pandemic, which altered much of the academy's last year and resulted in a shortened plebe summer, were white masks which each of the midshipmen wore as they made their way through Alumni Hall.

Even those came off after the plebes read their Reef Points, as long as they were vaccinated.

Single, 19, is from Millersville and an Old Mill High School graduate. But she comes to the academy with a year of collegiate experience already underneath her white belt.

Prior to coming to the academy, she attended Louisiana State University for a year. As someone who ultimately wanted to attend the academy, she participated in the ci-



PAUL W. GILLESPIE, THE (ANNAPOLIS, MD.) CAPITAL GAZETTE/TNS

Incoming plebes read their Reef Points as they wait to move out. The Naval Academy welcomed incoming freshman, or what they call plebes, during Induction Day, on Wednesday, to begin their plebe summer.

vilian preparatory program, which allows people to go through similar training as those who attend the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Rhode Island.

Now, Single is at the academy and Wednesday evening she'll take the oath swearing her into the military.

"Part of it doesn't feel real, to be honest," she said, standing on the sidewalk outside of Alumni Hall, where Induction Day procedures took place. "I am absolutely over the moon though."

To start her induction process, Single first had to check-in and then follow the winding path through Alumni Hall that would lead her to each station.

She would receive her name badge.

She would start giving her paperwork.

She would learn the proper way to address every officer or older

midshipman.

She would get yelled at.

Her uncle, a class of 1995 graduate, told her not to take the shouts personally.

But the detailers, the people in charge of I-Day, certainly tried. A set of four spent hours in the faces of plebes, telling them to hurry as they had to grab their bags and head to the next station.

If it was a question, the proper response is sir, yes, sir. Or ma'am, yes, ma'am. But if it is acknowledgment, it should be sir, aye, sir. That tripped up many of the soon-to-be midshipmen.

Emily Messinese, of Manches-ter, Md., was ahead of Single by about an hour and a half. And she received a fair amount of shouts as she made her way through Alumni Hall.

After receiving her uniform, she needed to get her name badge back on. She did not do it fast

enough, and a detailer made sure she knew it.

Messinese wants to serve, she said. That's why she applied to and chose the Naval Academy.

She first visited in eighth grade, and the Gerstell Academy graduate said she became more serious about attending in high school.

She wants the opportunities that come with a career in the military, and she is looking forward to being part of the brigade.

She wanted a different college experience than most of her high school classmates, and she'll get that during the summer training.

But first, Messinese needed to get through Induction Day.

Wednesday evening Single and Messinese were slated to stand with the other members of the class of 2025 and take the oath, officially making them midshipmen.

Then plebe summer began.

Qatar: Move part of larger shift in CENTCOM area of responsibility

FROM PAGE 1

deal with Iran to ensure the country does not develop nuclear weapons. The Trump administration pulled out of a multilateral deal signed in 2015 with Iran, calling the limits on Tehran inadequate.

Moving U.S. troops to Jordan decreases the threat of rocket attacks in the Gulf region from Ira-

nian-backed militias. The threat of missile strikes against U.S. troops like last year's attack on al Asad Air Base, which left more than 100 injured, is an important tool in Tehran's negotiating strategy, Bokhari said.

"You want to be able to deny the Iranians that leverage, in a negotiation," Bokhari said. "If they're signaling that they have your

bases in missile range, that decreases your leverage behind the scenes."

The closure of the three bases comes as the U.S. shifts resources throughout the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

This includes the U.S. drawdown from Afghanistan after 20 years there, as well as the withdrawal of eight Patriot antimissile

batteries from Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

As troops leave Afghanistan, the stated U.S. goal has been to shift its military focus from counterinsurgency and conflicts in the Middle East to competing with powerful near-peer rivals, such as China.

"It's about, 'let's start pivoting to Asia,' for real this time," said An-

drew Watkins, a senior Afghanistan analyst at International Crisis Group, a nonprofit think tank based in Brussels.

The U.S. will continue to use Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, a basing hub for CENTCOM, last week's Army statement said.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Revolutionary: Drones develop bigger military presence

FROM PAGE 1

But as the war nears its 20th anniversary in October — and the Biden administration works to pull out all U.S. troops as early as next month — it is clear that Bierbauer was right to marvel at what he'd seen years earlier, and to shake his head at the naysayers who said that drones would never amount to much.

In a defining moment, a slow, propeller-driven plane that resembles an upside-down ice cream scoop showed with great clarity that it could quietly loiter high in the sky, find and monitor people, share full-motion video with allies around the world, and set the stage for precision attacks.

Or to use a less polite term, targeted killings.

And, it could do so from afar. The Predator team that found bin Laden involved CIA, Air Force and General Atomics operators who weren't directly in harm's way.

The mission was secret, so only a handful of people knew this. But the scope of the drone's abilities wouldn't remain unknown, especially after the war started. A Predator later made it possible for a Marine jet fighter to kill Mohammed Atef, the military chief of al-Qaida. It was part of a larger, successful effort to strike al-Qaida and the Taliban.

Few people better understand how this all unfolded than Bierbauer and retired Air Force Col. Mark Cooter, who helped carry out some of the Predator's first missions in Afghanistan, with the aid of General Atomics.

They provide an insider's account in their expansive new book, "Never Mind: We'll Do It Ourselves: The Inside Story of How a Team of Renegades Broke Rules, Shattered Barriers, and Launched A Drone Warfare Revolution."

Calling it a revolution isn't hyperbole. The Predator has been a catalyst for extraordinary growth and change in the world of unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs.

The Department of Defense now operates thousands of drones across all of its major services, using them for everything from training operators to conducting surveillance, reconnaissance and intelligence gathering, which can lead to airstrikes and other forms of attack.

The drones range from the new 1.16-ounce Black Hornet, a palm-size vehicle that can carry supplies, to the well-established RQ-4 Global Hawk, a nearly 48-foot long high-altitude, long-duration surveillance aircraft developed by San Diego's Northrop Grumman division.

Drones are especially popular with the Air Force, which has been expanding its drone program so fast it doesn't have enough pilots to operate them all, according to a



EFFRAIN LOPEZ/U.S. Air Force

The 163rd Reconnaissance Wing MQ-1 Predator is shown during post-flight inspection at dusk from Southern California Logistics Airport in 2012.

'[Predator] changed the way we wage war, altered the military.'

Richard Whittle
British historian

2020 report by the Government Accountability Office.

The Navy also broadly uses drones, including flying them off its speedy littoral combat ships to perform reconnaissance. It's also developing unmanned "ghost" ships, some of which operate at the surface and others, like the new Echo Voyager mini-sub, that move below it.

Death from above

Adding missiles to the Predator and its larger, more capable successor, Reaper, engendered fierce criticism and raised questions about the morality of death by remote control. They became widely used in the Middle East, where airstrikes have killed many civilians, defense analysts say.

Those ethical questions become even more tangled as the command-and-control concept behind the early Predator — with a "pilot" calling the shots from afar — moves toward more autonomous operations involving artificial intelligence, which could eventually make decisions without human input.

The issue worries Bierbauer, who told the San Diego Union-Tribune that the decision to use weapons "is a weighty and hard thought matter that needs to keep humans in the process."

There are more drones to come, and soon.

Boeing is testing Loyal Wingman, a drone that is meant to shadow and shield a manned fighter aircraft. And design work is beginning on LongShot, an air-launched drone that will be packed with

weapons. General Atomics and Northrop Grumman are among the early contractors.

The Predator "changed the way we wage war, altered the military, altered the CIA, reshaped the defense and aviation industries and is spreading in the civilian world faster than the Federal Aviation Administration can govern it," renowned British historian Richard Whittle told CNET in 2014.

With another 20 years of technical advances, drone operators could largely replace human pilots in broad swaths of aviation.

"Some day soon we will have remote-operated passenger planes, air-taxis, even more automated farms, swarms of planes for fire-fighting," said Henrik Christensen, director of the Contextual Robotics Institute at the University of California, San Diego.

'Persistent stare'

Cooter and Bierbauer's book, which underwent a national security review that took more than three years, is part war story, part political thriller, and part tutorial on military drones, a technology little understood by the public.

Both men were mid-level insiders in an effort by the U.S. in 2000 to quickly transform General Atomics' modest Predator drone into a robust spy-in-the-sky that could gather "actionable intelligence" against bin Laden and al-Qaeda, the source of escalating attacks against American interests.

At the time, Cooter was an Air Force officer and intelligence expert who had experience flying Predator. Bierbauer was an intel-

ligence operations officer for the CIA. They came from different cultures but were both pro-drone, partly because there was little alternative.

As many authors have noted, the U.S. wasn't willing to place large numbers of troops in Afghanistan in 2000. Satellites were helpful but couldn't linger overhead. Nor could high-altitude reconnaissance planes. And it was hard to cultivate a ground network of informants. Most of Afghanistan was controlled by the Taliban, which had given al-Qaida safe haven. The U.S. did pick up some information about bin Laden's movements, but it wasn't timely enough to act on.

The solution seemed to be remotely-operated drones, a fairly primitive technology that had been developed in fits and starts over decades. But drones had cameras that could fix on people and places for hours. The military calls it "persistent stare."

A dubious spy

In early 2000, President Bill Clinton was upset by the lack of progress the U.S. was making in tracking down bin Laden, who had been involved in the bombing of two U.S. embassies in East Africa in 1998. The attacks killed more than 200 people.

Clinton basically gave the CIA and Pentagon nine months to solve the problem. And they decided that upgrading the Predator had to be part of the solution.

It was a daunting task.

Cooter told the Union-Tribune the plane "only had a max speed of about 120 knots, it normally flew at about 70 knots. It didn't have any self-protection, like a receiver that would have warned if it had been picked up on radar. And it couldn't talk to other planes."

Predator also didn't have a big history of doing time-sensitive

surveillance, which would be required for missions into Afghanistan. A large team of analysts was needed to evaluate data quickly and determine where the drone should go and what it should do.

"Afghanistan is huge. You can't just aimlessly fly around," Bierbauer said.

The U.S. also could not launch and land Predator from inside Afghanistan. It would have to create a forward operating base in a neighboring country to avoid detection, reprisals and political turmoil.

Solutions fell into place, including one that enabled the drone's operators to eavesdrop on Taliban air defenses.

But it was a tense time. There was so much concern that the forward operating base in Uzbekistan would be discovered that a decision was made to fly the drone only at night. Trouble quickly followed.

In late summer, on the first test flight, the Predator crashed and was destroyed. The drone's operators didn't have access to all of the data they would have during a daytime flight, leading to an operational error.

Science project

The team had a second Predator, which began secret surveillance flights on Sept. 7. Three weeks later, the drone discovered a man believed to be bin Laden outside Kandahar, during Friday prayers.

"I think everybody's collective reaction was we got him, this is it," Bierbauer told the Union-Tribune. "It was probably 20, 30 seconds of just jaw-hanging disbelief and then, 'Now what?'"

The U.S. had the ability to launch an airstrike from submarines in the Indian Ocean. And that appeared to be the plan. But it didn't happen.

There were legal questions about whether the U.S. had the right to essentially assassinate bin Laden, analysts say. There also was concern about the blowback that would occur if such an airstrike went awry in any way.

Cooter says he isn't sure who made the final decision in the matter, but he's unhappy about how things turned out.

"It's like you're on a football team and you draw up a play and you know your responsibility, but the play doesn't work because someone doesn't do what you thought they were going to do," he said.

But he also draws positives from that moment, adding: "The team put eyes on bin Laden and brought the Predator home safely. We did what we were supposed to do. We went from humble beginnings to where we are now with unmanned aerial vehicles in the U.S. arsenal."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Vaccine rates of Marines, airmen below average

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The rate of active-duty members of the Marine Corps and Air Force receiving at least one coronavirus vaccine lags behind the national vaccination rate, Army Lt. Gen. Ronald J. Place, director of the Defense Health Agency, said Wednesday.

About 58% of active-duty Marines and 61% of active-duty airmen are at least partially vaccinated against the coronavirus as of Wednesday, Place told reporters at the Pentagon.

Nationwide, about 65.7% of adults had received at least one dose of the vaccine as of Monday, according to the latest statistics from the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Some of the disparity could be attributed to the ages of active-duty service members, said Dr. Terry Adirim, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. The most-vaccinated demographic of Americans are people ages 65 or older with 87.5% having re-

ceived at least one shot, which skews the national average higher, according to the CDC.

“I don’t want to put too fine a point on this, but 31% of our active duty are under the age of 35, which is one of the populations that’s perhaps the toughest to have vaccinated nationally,” Adirim said.

Still, the Navy and Army’s partial-vaccination rates are above the national rate, with 77% of active-duty sailors and 70% of active-duty soldiers having received at least one vaccine, Place said. He could not provide numbers on how many active-duty service members were fully vaccinated.

Wednesday was the first time this year that Place broke down active-duty vaccination rates with Pentagon reporters in his near-monthly coronavirus news briefings. Typically, the DHA directs reporters to vaccine data posted on the Defense Department website that lumps active duty, Reserve and National Guard troops together.



KARIS MATTINGLY/U.S. Marine Corp

A Marine receives the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at the naval hospital on Camp Foster, Okinawa, on Feb. 18.

The shots remain optional for the military while the vaccine is under emergency-use authorization, though Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is considering whether to mandate the shot for all troops once the vaccinations receive full Food and Drug Administration authorization, acting Navy Secretary Thomas Harker told the House Armed Services Committee on June 15.

It was also unclear Wednesday why nearly 20% fewer active-duty Marines have received at least one coronavirus vaccine compared to the active-duty sailors in their sister service. However, Navy officials have said the service’s de-

cision to allow vaccinated sailors to avoid quarantines before patrols and during port visits might serve as an incentive to get the shot.

Place urged all service members to receive the vaccine because the rate of coronavirus hospitalizations has dropped since the vaccine rolled out. Compared to a peak of 240 troops with coronavirus in the hospital on Jan. 8, there were 21 as of Wednesday — none of whom had been vaccinated, Place said.

“The benefits of vaccination are remarkably clear,” he said.

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US jobless claims fall to 364K in a new low

By PAUL WISEMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment aid fell again last week to the lowest level since the pandemic struck last year, further evidence that the job market and the broader economy are rebounding rapidly from the coronavirus recession.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that jobless claims dropped by 51,000 to 364,000. Applications for unemployment benefits have fallen more or less steadily since the year began. The rollout of vaccines has sharply reduced new COVID-19 cases, giving consumers the confidence to shop, travel, eat out and attend public events as the economy recovers.

All that pent-up spending has generated such demand for workers, notably at restaurants and tourism businesses, that many employers have been struggling to fill jobs just as the number of posted openings has reached a record high. But many economists expect hiring to catch up with demand in the coming months, especially as federal unemployment aid programs end and more people pursue jobs.

On Friday, according to the data provider FactSet, the government is expected to report that employers added 675,000 jobs in June. That would be a substantial number but still not at a pace that would allow the economy to quickly regain its pre-pandemic level of employment. The job market remains nearly 7 million jobs short of that level.

Some businesses have complained that expanded federal aid to the unemployed — especially a \$300-a-week supplemental benefit, intended to cushion the economic blow from the pandemic — has discouraged some people from looking for a job.

But other factors, too, are believed to have contributed to the shortage of people seeking work again: Difficulty arranging or affording child care, lingering fears of COVID-19, early retirements by older workers, a slowdown in immigration and a decision by some people to seek new careers rather than return to their old jobs.

Responding to the criticism about the duration of expanded jobless benefits, dozens of states began dropping the expanded federal aid starting last month. Nationally, the \$300-a-week federal benefit will end Sept. 6.

Eighth Army issues mask mandate as clusters pop up

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

Eighth Army has ordered all its soldiers, regardless of vaccination status, to wear masks after a pair of new coronavirus clusters appeared at bases on the Korean peninsula.

The order from Lt. Gen. Willard Bursell III was sent out Thursday via a mass notification system and lasts from Friday to July 10. It applies to all Army personnel in “unit facilities,” including offices, communal areas in barracks and “any locations in which personnel congregate, interact, hold meetings, and must work together.”

The move is designed to provide more time for surveillance testing, which could prevent another outbreak, according to the order.

USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams announced recently that two small clusters had broken out at Camp Humphreys, the largest U.S. base on the peninsula, and at Camp Casey, north of Seoul.

The command reported 10 new cases of the coronavirus respiratory disease on Wednesday evening. The new patients — nine service

members and one family member — tested positive between Saturday and Tuesday, a statement said.

Four service members at Casey, one at Camp Carroll, and a dependent of a service member stationed at K-16 in Seoul tested positive after coming into close contact with positive individuals, the statement said.

One service member stationed at Humphreys, one at Casey and another at K-16 tested positive Monday and Tuesday after developing COVID-19 symptoms, according to the statement. Another service member assigned to Casey tested positive on Tuesday prior to returning to the United States.

USFK also announced in the statement that approximately 80% of its community has been vaccinated, and less than 1% of its active-duty force is infected with COVID-19.

South Korea added 762 new cases at midnight Wednesday and three deaths, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency’s Central Disease

Control Headquarters. The government has counted over 155,000 COVID-19 cases during the pandemic and 2,000 deaths, the WHO said.

The Marine Corps on Okinawa has loosened some of its pandemic-related rules.

Masks are no longer required for fully vaccinated personnel unless they are in a “shared space with host nation citizens” or where masks are mandated, according to a Thursday Facebook post by Marine Corps Installations Pacific.

Marines also no longer have to fill out contract-tracing logs, the post said.

U.S. military bases in Japan announced three new COVID-19 infections as of 7 p.m. Thursday.

U.S. Army Japan had two people test positive between June 23 and Wednesday, an Army statement said. One is a recent arrival to Japan who tested positive in quarantine, and the other came up positive after developing COVID-19 symptoms.

Kadena Air Base had one individual test positive for COVID-19, according to a base Facebook post

Wednesday night. That person self-isolated after developing symptoms and is in quarantine.

Japan reported 1,751 new coronavirus infections Thursday, 39 fewer than the same day last week, according to public broadcaster NHK and the World Health Organization. There were 24 deaths nationwide.

The government has counted approximately 800,000 COVID-19 cases during the pandemic and 14,500 deaths, the WHO said.

Tokyo on Thursday reported another 673 coronavirus infections and two deaths, according to NHK, which cited metropolitan government data. That’s 103 more than the same day last week.

Okinawa prefecture, home to most U.S. troops in Japan, reported another 63 new infections Thursday, one more than the same day last week, according to NHK. There were four deaths.

Okinawa remains in a state of emergency until July 11.

Stars and Stripes and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.
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NATION

Trump firm's CFO surrenders as charges loom

By MICHAEL R. SISAK
Associated Press

The Trump Organization's longtime chief financial officer, Allen Weisselberg, surrendered to authorities early Thursday ahead of an expected court appearance on the first criminal indictment in a two-year investigation into business practices at Donald Trump's company.

Weisselberg was photographed walking into the complex that houses criminal courts and the Manhattan district attorney's office at around 6:20 a.m. with his lawyer.

New York prosecutors were expected to announce an indictment Thursday accusing Weisselberg and Trump's namesake company of tax crimes related to fringe benefits for employees.

The case against Weisselberg — a loyal lieutenant to Trump and his real estate-developer father, Fred — could give prosecutors the

means to pressure the executive into cooperating and telling them what he knows about Trump's business dealings.

The Trump Organization issued a statement defending Weisselberg, saying the 48-year employee is being used by the Manhattan district attorney's office as "a pawn in a scorched-earth attempt to harm the former president." It said neither the IRS nor any other district attorney would ever think of bringing such charges over employee benefits. "This is not justice; this is politics," the organization said.

The charges against the Trump Organization and Weisselberg remained sealed but were to be unveiled ahead of an afternoon arraignment at a state court in Manhattan, according to two people familiar with the matter.

The people were not authorized to speak about an ongoing investi-



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President-elect Donald Trump, his chief financial officer Allen Weisselberg, center, and his son Donald Trump Jr. attend a news conference at Trump Tower in New York in 2017.

gation and did so on condition of anonymity.

There was no indication Trump himself would be charged at this stage of the investigation, jointly pursued by Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. and New York Attorney General Letitia James, both Democrats.

Trump did not respond to reporters' shouted questions about the New York case as he visited Texas on Wednesday, but earlier in the week, the Republican had

blasted the New York prosecutors as "rude, nasty, and totally biased" and said his company's actions were "standard practice throughout the U.S. business community, and in no way a crime."

The planned charges were said to be linked to benefits the company gave to top executives, like the use of apartments, cars and school tuition, the people familiar with the matter told the AP.

Weisselberg's lawyer, Mary Mulligan, declined to comment.

The Manhattan district attorney's office declined to comment.

Vance, who leaves office at the end of the year, has been conducting a wide-ranging investigation into a variety of matters involving Trump and the Trump Organization.

His office has looked into hush-money payments paid to women on Trump's behalf and truthfulness in the company's property valuations and tax assessments, among other matters.

Pelosi selects Cheney for panel investigating riot

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Thursday named Republican Rep. Liz Cheney and seven Democrats to a new select committee to investigate the violent Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol.

Rep. Bennie Thompson, chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, will lead the panel. It will investigate what went wrong around the Capitol when hundreds of supporters of then-President Donald Trump broke into the building, hunted for lawmakers and interrupted the congressional certification of Democrat Joe Biden's election victory.

Cheney, R-Wyo., said in a statement that she is "honored" to serve on the committee and that "Congress is obligated to conduct a full investigation of the most serious attack on our Capitol since 1814."

The House approved the panel on Wednesday over the objections Republicans. Cheney, who was removed from GOP leadership this year because of her criticism of Trump, was one of only two Republicans who supported forming the committee.

Pelosi, D-Calif., formed the committee after Senate Republicans blocked an independent, bipartisan probe.

Besides Thompson, D-Miss., the other Democratic members of the panel will be Reps. Jamie Raskin of Maryland, Zoe Lofgren of California, Elaine Luria of Virginia, Stephanie Murphy of Florida and Pete Aguilar of Texas.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy had threatened to strip Republicans of committee assignments if they accept an appointment from Pelosi to



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi greets police officers and their family members during the vote to create a select committee to investigate the Jan. 6 Capitol riot Wednesday.

join the committee, a top House GOP aide said Thursday. The warning by McCarthy, R-Calif., underscores party leaders' opposition to the committee and their desire to shape the narrative about its work as much as they can. Republicans have complained that the panel will be dominated by Democrats and will produce a skewed, partisan report, even though the GOP previously scuttled an earlier Democratic attempt to form a bipartisan commission.

McCarthy told a closed-door meeting of first-term House GOP members on Wednesday that he, not Pelosi controls Republicans' committee assignments, the aide said. He told them that if Pelosi names them to the committee and they accept, they should plan on getting all their committee assignments from her — an apparent threat to remove them from their current panels.

2nd Oath Keeper pleads guilty to riot conspiracy

Associated Press

An Alabama man who stormed the U.S. Capitol with other members of the Oath Keepers extremist group pleaded guilty Wednesday to conspiracy and is cooperating with prosecutors in another major boost for the Justice Department in its sweeping Jan. 6 investigation.

Mark Grods, 54, is the second member of the far-right Oath Keepers group to admit to participating in a conspiracy to block the certification of President Joe Biden's victory and agree to cooperate in the Department of Justice's massive investigation. Grods' case was kept secret until Wednesday to protect the investigation and his safety before he testified in front of a grand jury, according to court documents.

The cooperation agreements are certain to put pressure on the more than a dozen other defendants associated with the far-right Oath Keepers who are still fighting the allegations. It's the largest conspiracy case that authorities have brought so far in the Jan. 6 attack.

Grods, of Mobile, pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy and ob-

struction of an official proceeding. U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta said Grods would likely face around four to five years in prison under federal sentencing guidelines. But prosecutors are likely to ask for even less time in exchange for his cooperation against others.

Grods and his attorney did not speak to reporters as they left federal court in Washington on Wednesday. The judge told Grods he could not have any contact with other people associated with the Oath Keepers.

Last week, prosecutors secured the first guilty plea in the Oath Keepers conspiracy case with defendant Graydon Young, 55, of Englewood, Fla., who was arrested in February. Young has also agreed to cooperate with investigators.

Authorities say members of the Oath Keepers came to Washington intent on stopping the peaceful transition of power and were ready to use violence if necessary. Prosecutors have said members of the group prepared in the weeks leading up to Jan. 6 as if they were heading to war and dressed that day in battle gear, like helmets and tactical vests.

NATION

Justices uphold Ariz. voting restrictions

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld voting restrictions in Arizona in a decision that could make it harder to challenge other voting measures put in place by Republican lawmakers following last year's elections.

The court, by a 6-3 vote, reversed a lower court ruling in deciding that Arizona's limits on who can return early ballots for another person and refusal to count ballots cast in the wrong precinct are not racially discriminatory.

The federal appeals court in San Francisco had held that the measures disproportionately affected

Black, Hispanic and Native American voters in violation of the landmark Voting Rights Act.

Justice Samuel Alito wrote for a conservative majority that the state's interest in the integrity of elections justified the measures.

The court rejected the idea that showing that a state law disproportionately affects minority voters is enough to prove a violation of the law.

In dissent, Justice Elena Kagan wrote that the court was weakening the landmark voting rights law for the second time in eight years.

"What is tragic here is that the Court has (yet again) rewritten — in order to weaken — a statute that stands as a monument to Ameri-

ca's greatness, and protects against its basest impulses. What is tragic is that the Court has damaged a statute designed to bring about 'the end of discrimination in voting.' I respectfully dissent," Kagan wrote, joined by the other two liberal justices.

The challenged Arizona provisions remained in effect in 2020 because the case was still making its way through the courts.

President Joe Biden narrowly won Arizona last year, and since 2018, the state has elected two Democratic senators.

The ruling comes eight years after the high court took away what had been the Justice Department's most effective tool for com-

bating discriminatory voting laws — a different provision of the voting rights law that required the federal government or a court to clear voting changes before they could take effect in Arizona and other states, mainly in the South, with a history of discrimination.

Many of the measures that have been enacted since then would never have been allowed to take effect if the advance clearance provision of the Voting Rights Act had remained in force.

Left in place was section 2 of the law, with its prohibition on rules that make it harder for minorities to exercise their right to vote. At the heart of the Arizona case was the standard for proving a viola-

tion of the law.

Alito cautioned that the court did not on Thursday "announce a test to govern all ... claims involving rules, like those at issue here, that specify the time, place, or manner for casting ballots."

Many Republicans continue to question the election's outcome, despite the absence of evidence. Republican elected officials have responded by enacting restrictions on early voting and mailed-in ballots, as well as tougher voter identification laws.

Lawsuits challenging laws enacted in Florida and Georgia, including a Justice Department suit in Georgia last week, allege violations of the voting rights law.

Safety concerns halt rescue efforts at condo collapse site

By TERRY SPENCER
Associated Press

SURFSIDE, Fla. — Rescue efforts at the site of a partially collapsed Florida condominium building were halted Thursday out of concern about the stability of the remaining structure, officials said.

Search crews that have been atop the pile of rubble for the last week stopped work shortly after 2 a.m., Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava told a news conference.

The stoppage came on the same day that President Joe Biden visited the area and offered comfort to the grieving and federal support for the ongoing efforts to search for the missing and rebuild after.

"This is life and death," Biden said in a briefing about the collapse. "We can do it, just the simple act of everyone doing what needs to be done, makes a difference."

The president said he believed the federal government has "the power to pick up 100% of the cost" of the search and cleanup and urged the local officials to turn to Washington for assistance.

"You all know it, because a lot of you have been through it as well," Biden said. "There's gonna be a lot of pain and anxiety and suffering and even the need for psychological help in the days and months that follow. And so, we're not going anywhere."

The president's visit comes a week after Champlain Towers South, a 12-story beachfront condominium building in Surfside, suddenly came crashing down, leaving a pancaked rubble.

Searchers going through the ruins found the remains of six people Wednesday, bringing the number of confirmed dead to 18. The number of residents unaccounted for stands at 145.

Concerns remained that the



LYNNE SLADKY/AP

Rescue workers search in the rubble at the Champlain Towers South condominium in Surfside, Fla., on Wednesday. Many people are still unaccounted for after the building partially collapsed last week.

still standing portion of the complex could also collapse and work at the site appeared to have paused early Thursday. During a meeting with families Wednesday, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Assistant Chief Raide Jadallah said officials are concerned about the stability of that portion of the building.

"What we know is that the columns on the east side of the building are kind of, of concern, not compromised, but just right now of concern," Jadallah said. "Hypothetically, worst-case scenario: If these columns are truly really bad, we are worried they could collapse right back into the parking garage."

Families were asking if they could add tension rods but he said

structural engineers say that is not possible.

Psaki said the president and first lady also want to make sure that state and local officials have the resources and support they need under an emergency declaration approved by Biden for Miami-Dade. She emphasized Wednesday that the White House is being careful to coordinate with officials on the ground to ensure that Biden's visit doesn't do anything to "pull away" from the ongoing search and rescue effort.

State Fire Marshal Jimmy Patronis said he hopes to emphasize to Biden that there is a need for mental health resources to treat rescue workers for post-traumatic stress disorder.

"These guys are so blindly fo-

cused on the mission of saving lives, and unfortunately they see things they can't unsee," Patronis said.

"We want to make sure that when they ultimately do go home, that we're giving them the strength ... to be able to get back to work without fear of nightmares and challenges."

Since the tragedy, Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican, and Cava, a Democrat, have projected a united and cooperative front as they respond to the crisis.

Previously, they had sometimes sparred over how best to respond to the coronavirus outbreak, with clashes over wearing masks and other measures to control the pandemic. But no signs of partisanship have been evident in

Surfside.

DeSantis has spoken appreciatively of the aid coming from Washington, even commending the Biden administration for "stepping up to the plate."

"We really appreciate having the support of the president," DeSantis said at a Friday news conference in Surfside — although hours before, he had blasted Biden's border policies during a press conference in the state's Panhandle.

DeSantis, who is up for reelection next year, is said to be exploring a run for the presidency in 2024.

Among the remains found Wednesday were those of a mother and her two daughters, ages 4 and 10, a loss that Cava called "too great to bear."

Miami-Dade police identified the children as 10-year-old Lucia Guara and 4-year-old Emma Guara, and their mother as 42-year-old Anaely Rodriguez. The remains of their father, Marcus Guara, 52, were pulled from the rubble Saturday and identified Monday.

The cause of the collapse is under investigation. A 2018 engineering report found that the building's ground-floor pool deck was resting on a concrete slab that had "major structural damage" and needed extensive repairs. The report also found "abundant cracking" of concrete columns, beams and walls in the parking garage.

Just two months before the building came down, the president of its board wrote a letter to residents saying that structural problems identified in the 2018 inspection had "gotten significantly worse" and that major repairs would cost at least \$15.5 million. With bids for the work still pending, the building suddenly collapsed June 24.

NATION

Memberships plunge for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts

By DAVID CRARY
Associated Press

America's most iconic youth organizations — the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of the USA — have been jolted by unprecedented one-year drops in membership, due partly to the pandemic, and partly to social trends that have been shrinking their ranks for decades.

While both organizations insist they'll survive, the dramatic declines raise questions about how effectively they'll be able to carry out their time-honored missions — teaching skills and teamwork, providing outdoor adventure, encouraging community service.

Membership for the BSA's flagship Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA programs dropped from 1.97 million in 2019 to 1.12 million in 2020, a 43% plunge, according to figures provided to The Associated Press. Court records show membership has fallen further since then, to about 762,000.

The Girl Scouts say their youth membership fell by nearly 30%, from about 1.4 million in 2019-

2020 to just over 1 million this year.

Both groups, like several other U.S. youth organizations, have experienced declining membership for many years. The Girl Scouts reported youth membership of about 2.8 million in 2003. The BSA had more than 4 million boys participating in the 1970s.

Reasons for the drop include competition from sports leagues, a perception by some families that they are old-fashioned, and busy family schedules. The pandemic brought a particular challenge.

In Lawrence, N.J., 8-year-old Joey Yaros stopped attending meetings while most in-person gatherings were shut down, and might not go back, even though his father and three brothers all earned the elite Eagle Scout rank. Joey was already struggling with virtual school classes, and the family didn't pressure him to also participate in virtual Cub Scout activities.

"If there are den meetings in the fall, we'll see if he gets back in the swing of it," said his father, high school history teacher Jay Yaros.

"There are a lot of interesting things for kids to do these days, and scouting doesn't seem to be keeping up."

The Boy Scouts' problems are compounded by their decision to seek bankruptcy protection in February 2020 to cope with thousands of lawsuits filed by men who allege they were molested as youngsters by scout leaders. The case is proceeding slowly in federal bankruptcy court as lawyers negotiate creation of a trust fund for victims that will likely entail hundreds of millions of dollars in contributions from the BSA and its 252 local councils.

To provide those funds, some councils may have to sell cherished camp properties, the BSA's president and CEO, Roger Mosby, told the AP.

"We understand that this is a difficult and often emotional decision, but in some instances may be a necessary step as we work toward our shared imperatives of equitably compensating survivors and continuing Scouting's mission," Mosby said in a written re-



BARRY BEDLAN / AP

Members of Troop 298 of Frisco, Texas, embark on a 12-day trek across the Philmont Scout Ranch, outside Cimarron, N.M., in June.

ply to AP's queries.

The pandemic, the membership drop and rising costs of liability insurance have strained BSA finances. A disclosure statement in the bankruptcy case says its gross revenues dropped from \$394 million in 2019 to \$187 million last year.

In response, the Boy Scouts' annual youth membership fee will rise from \$66 to \$72 on August 1. The BSA also says some councils may merge to consolidate resources.

The Girl Scouts have bureaucratic complications of their own. There is ongoing litigation pitting the national headquarters against two of the 111 local councils — based in Fairbanks, Alaska, and Nashville, Tenn. — which refuse

to implement a nationwide technology platform.

Despite the varied challenges, Mosby and other Boy Scout officials, as well as the Girl Scouts' leadership, say there's reason for optimism. They say their summer camps are full, special events are sold out, and they're expecting many thousands of families — some new to scouting, some who left during the pandemic — to sign up now that activities are occurring in-person rather than virtually.

"We knew some girls would take a pause," said Girl Scouts spokeswoman Kelly Parisi. "But as the pandemic goes in the rear-view mirror, we've seen a substantial rebound... We feel really good going into the fall recruitment."

Los Angeles considering stricter limits on homeless encampments

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles city leaders are poised to pass sweeping restrictions Thursday on one of the nation's largest homeless populations, making it illegal to pitch tents on many sidewalks, beneath overpasses and near parks.

The measure before the City Council is billed as a humane approach to get people off streets and restore access to public spaces, and it wouldn't be enforced until someone has turned down an offer of shelter. It would severely limit the number of places where homeless encampments have been allowed to grow and become a common sight across the city.

"There are right ways and wrong ways to disrupt the status quo and improve conditions on the street," Councilmember Mark Ridley-Thomas, coauthor of the measure, said in a statement. "I am governed by a fundamental position: Before the unhoused are restricted from occupying public space, they should be ... offered a suitable alternative for housing."

Among other limits, the ordinance would ban sitting, lying, sleeping or storing personal property on sidewalks that block hand-



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

A jogger passes a homeless encampment in the Venice Beach section of Los Angeles in June.

icap access, near driveways and within 500 feet of schools, day care centers, libraries or parks.

The measure, which was unexpectedly announced at Tuesday's meeting, would replace a more punitive anti-camping proposal. Police would only get involved if there's a crime, Ridley-Thomas said.

An advocate for the homeless said the measure is loosely written to allow broad interpretation for enforcement and will make most of the city off-limits to people liv-

ing on the street.

"Draconian is definitely the correct word," said Pete White of the LA Community Action Network. "I think it's impossible to comply."

White said that an ordinance that limited where people could park RVs and sleep in cars overnight left little more than 5% of streets available for parking.

Homelessness has become a crisis of "epic proportions," the measure says. It remains near the top of political agendas across the state.

UNC trustees OK tenure for journalist Hannah-Jones

Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Trustees at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill approved tenure Wednesday for Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, capping weeks of tension that began when a board member halted the process over questions about her teaching credentials.

The board voted 9-4 to accept the tenure application at a special meeting that included a closed-door session that had sparked a protest by supporters of Hannah-Jones. At one point, a student said, she was manhandled by a campus police officer trying to get her out of the ballroom where the meeting was held.

"Today we took another important step in creating an even better university," trustee Gene Davis said after the vote was announced. "We welcome Nikole Hannah-Jones back to Chapel Hill."

Davis said that in granting tenure to Hannah-Jones the board was reaffirming its commitment to the university's highest values of "academic freedom, open scholarly inquiry, commitment to diversity of all types, including viewpoint diversity, and promotion of constructive disagreement and civil public discourse."

The university had announced in April that Hannah-Jones — who won a Pulitzer Prize for her work on The New York Times Magazine's 1619 Project focusing on America's history of slavery — would be joining the journalism school's faculty. It said she would take up the Knight Chair in Race and Investigative Journalism in July with a five-year contract.

But Hannah-Jones' attorneys announced last week that she would not report for work without tenure, prompting a call by Student Body President Lamar Richards, who's also a trustee, for the board to convene a special meeting no later than Wednesday.

Hannah-Jones said in a statement Wednesday evening that she was honored and grateful for the widespread support she received in her fight for tenure. She said the tenure issue is about more than just her.

"This fight is about ensuring the journalistic and academic freedom of Black writers, researchers, teachers, and students," said Hannah-Jones, who didn't attend the meeting.

In a statement posted to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund website, Hannah-Jones didn't immediately commit to coming to UNC.

FAITH

When all congregants can return, will they?

By DAVID SHARP
Associated Press

WALDOBORO, Maine — With millions of people having stayed home from places of worship during the coronavirus pandemic, struggling congregations have one key question: How many of them will return?

As the pandemic recedes in the United States and in-person services resume, worries of a deepening slide in attendance are universal.

Some houses of worship won't make it.

Smaller organizations with older congregations that struggled to adapt during the pandemic are in the greatest danger of a downward spiral from which they can't recover, said the Rev. Gloria E. White-Hammond, lecturer at the Harvard Divinity School and co-pastor of a church in Boston.

On the Maine coast, the pandemic proved to be the last straw for the 164-year-old Waldoboro United Methodist Church.

Even before COVID-19 swept the world, weekly attendance had dipped to 25 or 30 at the white-clapboard New England church that could hold several hundred worshippers. The number further dwindled to five or six before the final service was held Sunday, said the Rev. Gregory Foster.

The remaining congregants realized they couldn't continue to maintain the structure, and decided to



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

A member of Waldoboro United Methodist Church sings a hymn during a service last month in Waldoboro, Maine. The drop in attendance at the church, in part due to COVID-19, forced its closure.

fold the tent, Foster said.

"We can't entirely blame everything on COVID. But that was just the final blow. Some people have not been back at all," he said.

In Virginia, the Mount Clifton United Methodist Church experienced a similar fate. The church can seat more than 100 but the number of weekly worshippers dwindled to 10 to 15, even before the pandemic.

The small church built on a hill in the Shenandoah Valley in the 1880s may be rented to another congregation, or it may be put up for sale.

"It's a complicated picture overall, but the pandemic was the straw

that broke the camel's back," said the Rev. Darlene Wilkins, who oversaw Mount Clifton. "It just became next to impossible to sustain."

In the U.S., the latest challenge for places of worship comes against a backdrop of a decadeslong trend of a smaller share of the population identifying as religious.

It's too early to know the full impact of the pandemic. Surveys do show signs of hopefulness — and also cause for concern.

About three-quarters of Americans who attended religious services in person at least monthly before the pandemic say they are likely to

do so again in the next few weeks, according to a recent AP-NORC poll. That's up slightly from the about two-thirds who said in May 2020 that they would if they were allowed to do so. But 7% said they definitely won't be attending.

Those findings are in line with a Pew Research Center survey of U.S. residents last summer. It found that 92% of people who regularly attend religious services expected to continue at the same or higher rate, while 7% say they will attend in-person services less often.

Nashville, Tenn.-based Lifeway Research, an evangelical research firm, says many churches lost steam when in-person services shut down. A small but concerning number of churchgoers are coming out of the pandemic in limbo without a church home, said Scott McConnell, Lifeway's executive director.

"That's a lot of momentum to lose and a lot of people stepping out of the habit" of weekly worship, McConnell said.

Those that are successful in reemerging from the COVID-19 lockdowns will likely be those that did a better job adapting to the pandemic, said White-Hammond. Eight in 10 congregants in the U.S. reported that their services were being streamed online, Pew said.

Those that kept a connection with congregants and relied less on the physical passing of the plate for donations stand a better chance of

emerging unscathed, White-Hammond said.

In Charlotte, N.C., Temple Beth El was closed during the pandemic but kept congregants in touch through events like "challah day." Volunteers baked over 900 loaves of the bread, which were delivered to homes so worshippers could share them over a Shabbat meal.

There will be no returning to "normal" after the pandemic, said Rabbi Dusty Klass. "There were people who went home and may never come back to the sanctuary. They may just pray from their couch. It's up to us to make sure they have the opportunity."

The All Dulles Area Muslim Society, whose main campus is in Sterling, Va., said some of its 11 locations have reopened to worshippers with safety measures.

"If COVID is gone 100%, I firmly believe our community would be fully back because people crave ... to be together," said Rizwan Jaka, chair of interfaith and media relations.

In Maine, Waldoboro's final service Sunday was emotional, with both smiles and tears, as nearly 60 gathered in the sanctuary. Foster preached about new beginnings and encouraged people to continue their faith.

Grant said some hope the building will come alive again with a new congregation: "We have to be positive — and pray."

US Catholic schools seek rebound from grim year

Associated Press

The organization overseeing Catholic schools in the United States got a new chief executive this week as it seeks to rebound from its biggest one-year enrollment drop since the 1970s.

Amid the pandemic, more than 200 schools closed permanently, and enrollment at the 5,981 remaining schools fell by 6.4% — or more than 111,000 students — for the 2020-2021 academic year, according to the National Catholic Educational Association.

Total enrollment was about 1.63 million, down from a peak of more than 5.2 million in the early 1960s.

On Wednesday, the NCEA installed a new president and CEO, Lincoln Snyder, who served as superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Sacramento, Calif., since 2015. Based on trends in that diocese, where enrollment is up 3% from September 2019, Snyder is cautiously optimistic that many Catholic schools nationwide can slow or stop the enrollment decline in the coming year.

Economic hardships caused by the pandemic forced some families to pull their children out of Catholic

schools because they couldn't afford the tuition, Snyder said. But in Sacramento, he said, those losses were offset by an influx of families new to Catholic schools who were attracted by the system's educational strengths and its handling of the pandemic.

"We had low infection rates ... very few documented cases (of COVID-19) on site," he said. "We showed we could have kids in class and still be safe — and that seems to have been respected by parents."

Of the 209 Catholic schools that closed or were consolidated last year, the biggest impact was felt by urban communities and non-Catholic families, the NCEA said. In its latest annual report, it expressed regret, saying the closure of Catholic schools in underserved areas eliminates "pathways of opportunity" for the affected families.

Snyder said the NCEA wouldn't know until September whether Catholic schools collectively have been able to halt the enrollment decline.

"I believe it's possible," he said. "I'm optimistic that with the right resources and people, Catholic schools can grow."

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WORLD

China's Xi gives defiant anniversary speech

Associated Press

BEIJING — Chinese President Xi Jinping warned Thursday that anyone who tries to bully China “will face broken heads and bloodshed,” in a defiant speech hailing the country’s rise that elicited loud cheers from an carefully chosen crowd at a celebration of the centenary of the founding of the ruling Communist Party.

In unusually forceful language, Xi appeared to be hitting back at the U.S. and others that have criticized the rising power’s trade and technology policies, military expansion and human rights record. In an hourlong speech, he also said the nation must stick to its one-party rule, emphasizing the communists’ role in lifting China to global prominence.

The rally — which featured a military flyover and people waving Chinese flags and singing patriotic songs — in some ways recalled the mass events held by Mao Zedong, communist China’s founding leader. Xi even wore a gray buttoned-up suit like the ones favored by Mao and spoke from the same balcony atop Tiananmen Gate where the revolutionary leader declared the start of communist rule in 1949. More than 70,000 people attended Thursday, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Xi, who heads the party and is thought to be considering a third term starting next year, received the biggest applause when he said the party had restored China’s dignity after decades of subjugation to Western powers and Japan in the 19th and 20th centuries, and turned it into the world’s second largest economy in recent decades.

“The Chinese people will absolutely not allow any foreign force to bully, oppress or enslave us and anyone who attempts to do so will face broken heads and bloodshed in front of the iron Great Wall of the 1.4 billion Chinese people,”



Ng HAN GUAN / AP

Chinese flags are waved during a rehearsal for a ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the ruling Chinese Communist Party at Tiananmen Gate in Beijing on Thursday.

said Xi, who has eliminated limits on his time in office, prompting speculation that he could rule for life, as Mao did.

The strong language appeared aimed at revving up and playing to a domestic audience. The strongest elements of it — the references to bashing heads and bloodshed — were left out of state media’s English translation of the quote.

Xi declared that China had restored order in Hong Kong following anti-government protests in 2019 and reiterated the Communist Party’s determination to bring self-governing Taiwan under its control.

Both policies have been widely criticized by Western democracies. They have accused the Communist Party of abusing its power at home, including detaining more than 1 million Uyghurs and other mainly Muslim minorities for political reeducation in the northwest region of Xinjiang, and for imprisoning or intimidating into



XIE HUANCHI / AP

Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a speech at a ceremony marking the centenary of the ruling Communist Party in Beijing on Thursday.

silence those it sees as potential opponents from Tibet to Hong Kong.

As part of a continuing crackdown on anti-government protests in the city that long enjoyed freedoms not seen on the mainland,

police in Hong Kong sealed off Victoria Park on Thursday. In the past, the park was the starting point for annual pro-democracy marches on July 1, the anniversary of the British return of Hong Kong to China in 1997.

Xi also said the party would retain absolute control over the military, which now has the world’s second-largest annual budget after the U.S. “We will turn the people’s military into a world-class military, with even stronger capabilities and even more reliable means to safeguard the nation’s sovereignty, security and development interests,” he said.

Xi’s speech appears to be setting up China for a protracted struggle with the U.S., said Robert Sutter of George Washington University’s Elliot School of International Affairs. He said China is pursuing “its very self-centered policy goals at the expense of others and of the prevailing world order.”

China and the U.S. are increasingly at odds over the former’s claims to almost the entire South China Sea and to unpopulated islands held by Japan, an American ally. The U.S. has also boosted ties and military sales to Taiwan to dissuade China from taking the self-governing democratic island by force. Elsewhere, the Chinese and Indian armies clashed last year over a disputed border high in the mountains.

Taiwan, commenting on the anniversary, accused China of seeking to upend the international order with ambitions of becoming a regional or even global hegemon. “Democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of the law are Taiwanese society’s core values, and the gap with the other side’s authoritarian political system is considerable,” a government statement said.

The Tiananmen Square event was the climax of weeks of ceremonies and displays praising the role of the Communist Party in bringing vast improvements in quality of life and expanding China’s economic, political and military influence. Those accomplishments, coupled with harsh repression of any critics, have helped the party remain in power.

Kim vows to boost China ties

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said Thursday he’ll push to further upgrade relations with China, his main ally, as he struggles to navigate his country out of a deepening crisis linked to the pandemic.

Kim made the comments in a message to Chinese President Xi Jinping congratulating him on the 100th founding anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

“The Workers’ Party of Korea, by its firm unity with the Chinese Communist Party, would raise (North Korea)-China friendship

to a new strategic point as required by the times and as desired by the peoples of the two countries,” Kim was quoted as saying.

In an apparent reference to the United States, Kim said that “hostile forces’ vicious slander and all-round pressure upon the Chinese Communist Party are no more than a last-ditch attempt and they can never check the ongoing advance of the Chinese people,” according to KCNA.

Kim’s message came a day after state media said he had told a powerful Politburo meeting that a “crucial” lapse in the anti-virus campaign has caused a “great crisis.” He did not elaborate.

Registered sex workers in Germany drop sharply amid restrictions from pandemic

Associated Press

BERLIN — The number of people registered as sex workers with German authorities declined sharply last year as coronavirus restrictions shut brothels for months, official data showed Thursday.

Legislation in 2002 legalized and regulated prostitution in Germany, giving sex workers social benefits, and they are now obliged to register. But brothels have been closed for much of the time since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020 as part of wider lock-

downs.

At the end of last year, 24,940 prostitutes were officially registered with authorities, the Federal Statistical Office said. That was down from some 40,400 a year earlier — a 38% drop.

One-fifth of the registered sex workers were German citizens. They were joined by 8,800 Romanians, 2,800 Bulgarians and 1,800 Hungarians, among others.

It isn’t clear how accurate a picture the figures paint of the state of the business. Among other issues, registration proc-

esses were also disrupted by the pandemic and it has taken time to get reporting processes established over recent years.

By some past estimates, more than two-thirds of sex workers aren’t registered. The statistics office noted that it is unable to give information on unregistered sex workers and brothels.

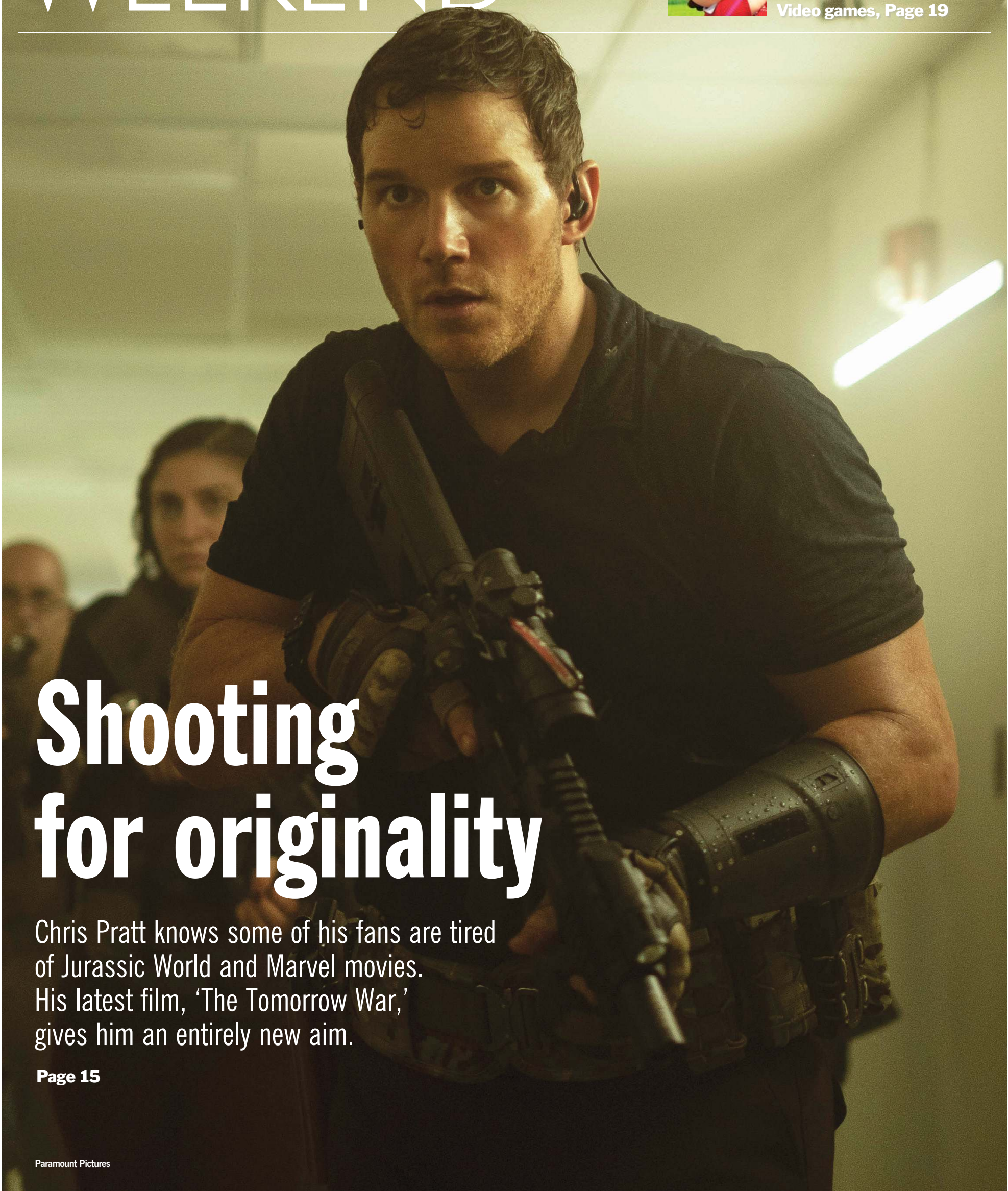
The number of officially sanctioned establishments offering sex services — the vast majority of them brothels or the like — stood at 2,290 at the end of last year, a 5% rise from the 2,170 registered a year earlier.

WEEKEND



Mario Golf excels at core mechanics

Video games, Page 19



Shooting for originality

Chris Pratt knows some of his fans are tired of Jurassic World and Marvel movies. His latest film, 'The Tomorrow War,' gives him an entirely new aim.

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Paramount Pictures

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



LUCA BRUNO/AP

A view of the stage during “Pagliacci” (Clowns) lyric opera June 25 at the Arena di Verona theatre in Verona, Italy. The Verona Arena amphitheater has resumed staging full operas.

A virtual stand-in

3D video replaces huge sets in Verona as full operas resume

BY COLLEEN BARRY
Associated Press

The Verona Arena amphitheater in northern Italy has returned to staging full operas for the first time since the pandemic — but with one big difference.

The monumental sets that normally fill the vast amphitheater stage have been replaced by dynamic, 3D images broadcast on huge LED screens, recreating a Sicilian village or a Fellini-esque film backlot.

Distancing rules meant that stagehands moving sets had to be limited in the cramped backstage in the open-air Roman-era amphitheater, setting in motion a reimagining of the 98th Verona Arena Opera Festival.

For this season, technology is standing in for the sets for which the Arena is famous, ones big enough to fill the vast stage and engage even audience members sitting far away in the uppermost seats.

“We understood already last year in November that we needed to have another plan, in the eventuality that we couldn’t use the big sets,” said the Arena’s general manager, Cecilia Gasdia. “After all, the Verona Arena is used to doing huge shows, a little pharaonic, with great artistic quality.”

Deputy creative director Stefano Trespidi tapped technical wizards at DWOK, an Italian company specializing in advanced video design that helped create La Scala’s all-virtual 2020 season premiere and designed virtual sets for a production of “Aida” at the Sydney opera.

“They are artists and technicians at the same time, and that is not easy,” Trespidi said. “This is a great innovation; innovations need time to take hold. The process that we started today, we don’t know where it will take us. Certainly, it will take us forward.”

The June 25 season-opening premiere was a double-bill of Pietro Mascagni’s “Cavalleria rusticana” and Ruggiero Leoncavallo’s “Pagliacci,” a production planned for the 2020 season that was never staged due to restrictions that limited performances to concerts. In fact, wooden sets for last year’s “Cavalleria” remain unfinished at the Arena’s cavernous workshop at the edge of the city, set aside for perhaps a future edition.

Instead, a Sicilian village was created on 400 square meters of LED screens, with projections of a hillside, a church façade and craggy buildings, all with three-dimensional depth. Moving clouds gave the scene dynamism, while singers and actors moved up and down a physical staircase and through a foreground filled with tables and chairs to create a central piazza.

While “Cavalleria rusticana” was nostalgically staged in black, white and gray, the “Pagliacci” cast was dressed in bright technicolor costumes, against a more spare backdrop inspired by a Fellini film set, and underlining the collision of real life and theater in the opera.

The video component also includes cameo imagery from Italian museums in each of the five new operas, including also “Aida,” “Nabucco” and “La Traviata.” The collaborations, including with the Vatican Museum, the Uffizi and Turin’s Egyptian Museum, are meant as a gesture of solidarity with another cultural branch that also suffered from restrictions during the pandemic.

“They found this wonderful solution that works very well,” said tenor Yusif Eyvazof, who is singing the role of Canio/Pagliaccio. “It is really so beautiful to see, that you don’t see it is not a real set. And the audience can see a real show, and not just a concert.”

Eyvazof said the screens had an added benefit: “It is very comfortable for the voice. It is a wall, that gives also acoustic support, and this is very important in the Arena, because we sing outdoors.”

Ongoing virus restrictions mean that the Arena, for now, can seat a maximum of 6,000 guests, instead of the pre-pandemic 13,500. Orchestra musicians are separated by two-meter distances, the chorus is spread stage left in the amphitheater seating like a Greek choir, and non-singing cast members wear masks when the stage is crowded.

For many in the crowd, just seeing live theater was a treat, and the new technology is a new element to absorb.

“Even being used to the big sets of the Arena, it is still very beautiful,” said Guia Veronese, a regular at the Arena whose 8-year-old son was singing in the Pagliacci boys’ choir. “It almost seems real at a certain point.”

GADGETS

Shotgun mic provides clear, controllable audio

BY GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Comica, makers of professional audio equipment, claims their innovative all-in-one Traxshot is the first of a kind. The transformable professional broadcast all-in-one super-cardioid shotgun microphone changes shape to switch modes as you need them.

The microphone works with DSL and mirrorless cameras, computers and even smartphones to provide crystal-clear and controllable audio with no setup. It’s simply plug-and-play, which is essentially plug-and-record.

It has an air-float shock-absorption design with rubber rings built in to brace the microphone on top of the attachment plate. Its solid construction features full metal material, giving the user better shielding and stability with recordings. On top is a dual boom mic, which can be angled to the area where the audio is being captured. Each mic is built with a windproof design to reduce basic wind and other background noises.

The flexible shotgun mic has four modes; bi-directional, mono and 30- and 90-degree stereo. The latter has the movable mics separating depending on the angle needed. A small display shows the modes, battery levels and other settings.

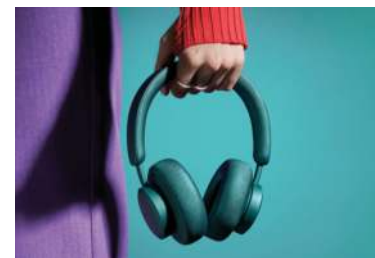
If your recording area has higher wind that needs extra blocking, a high-density muff slides onto each microphone just like a sock to filter the higher-level wind noise. A cold shoe is built onto the bottom of the Traxshot for each mounting and connects to the camera with the included cable.

The Traxshot has a frequency range of 20 to 20,000 kHz. It runs off of a built-in rechargeable (USB-C) lithium battery. Charging takes about three hours and the battery can last up to 20 hours in standby mode.

Online: comica-audio.com; \$143

Earlier this year, Urbanista launched the Miami, active noise-canceling wireless over-the-head headphones.

No matter how good the audio is from any headphones, a feature I find critical is comfort. Without a good feel and fit, it doesn’t matter how good the audio is. Urbanista has given the Miami headphones the theme “Designed for Life in Motion,” and instantly when you have the



URBANISTA/TNS

Urbanista Miami includes active noise-canceling, Bluetooth 5.0, up to 50 hours battery life, 40 hours with ANC on.

headphones on your head, the comfort of the smooth, cushioned shells produces a custom fit and feels great.

Before I heard the sound, I read the features and saw that the Miamis have all the necessary features needed at a budget-friendly price.

This includes active noise canceling, Bluetooth 5.0, up to 50 hours (750 mAh) battery life, 40 hours with ANC on. They charge via USB-C, play with ambient sound mode and on-ear detection, which has shot up high on my list of wanted features. With the help of built-in sensors, this pauses the music when the headphone is removed from your head.

Everything is controlled with the on-ear controls for power, sound modes, volume and track selections.

Inside each ear cup is a 40 mm driver, producing a nice, heavy, but not head-pounding bass sound. This worked great for all types of playlists as well as some talk radio.

The adjustable Miamis have a brushed aluminum look. They are available in four attractive Miami-inspired colors: pearl white, midnight black, ruby red (my review unit) and teal green.

The active noise-canceling mode blocks outside sounds, street noise or other distractions. With ambient sound mode, important sounds are filtered in, keeping you alert to the environment around you.

Each ear cups folds flat to fit in the included hard zippered travel case with the included auxiliary cable, airline adapter and a USB Type C charging cable.

Online: urbanista.com; \$149

Comica Traxshot
COMICA/TNS

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Perks of star status

Chris Pratt now in a position to pick the roles he wants such as his latest, 'The Tomorrow War'

BY LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Chris Pratt may be a loyal star of two of the biggest movie franchises of the moment, between Marvel and "Jurassic World," but even he craves something different sometimes.

"I heard the grumblings that people were getting tired of those things," said Pratt in a recent interview. "I felt inclined to try to do something original."

That's when Zach Dean's script for what would become "The Tomorrow War," which debuts on Amazon Prime Video this weekend, ended up in his hands. It wasn't based on a toy or a comic book or a theme park ride. There was no "brand" attached to it, or even a bestseller sticker.

Then titled "Ghost Draft," it was a dark and emotional sci-fi action epic about a generation of people who get drafted to go 30 years in the future to fight a losing war against aliens. And the production company Skydance was already on board.

But they needed a name, and Pratt has found himself in a rare position in Hollywood where his involvement alone can get a movie off the ground. So, he attached himself to star as Dan Forester, a scientist and father of a young daughter, who gets drafted for the dangerous mission. Pratt also decided he'd serve as an executive producer for the first time, too, meaning he got to be involved in casting, script notes and some creative decisions.

And there was a problem they needed to deal with immediately: "Ghost Draft" was way too dark.

"It was 'Children of Men' and then some," said director Chris McKay.

"It made 'Children of Men' look like a comedy," Pratt added.

If they were going to get more than \$20 million to make it and feasibly attract the whole family to a theater, they'd need to lighten it up a little: Less hopeless dystopia, more "Independence Day."

It's part of the reason "Robot Chicken" alum McKay, who also directed "The LEGO Batman Movie," cast people like "Veep's" Sam Richardson, "Mr. Show's" Mary Lynn Rajskub and "The Birthday Boys'" Mike Mitchell in supporting roles. They are, he said, "comedy generators."

"I like movies like 'Aliens' where you've got suspense, you've got action, but you've also got people who are having real human reactions to things, and there's situational or character-based humor," McKay said.

And there's the dramatic element of family stakes with an estranged father (J.K. Simmons) and a loving family (Betty Gilpin and Ryan Kiera Armstrong) that he's leaving behind unwillingly. For McKay, who is making his live-action directorial debut, the opportunity to blend scope and heart was a dream.

"I was a genre kid. I grew up on John Carpenter, Steven Spielberg, Joe Dante, George Miller, Kathryn Bigelow, James Cameron. Those are the movies that made me want to be a filmmaker," McKay said. "(This) has, it has a scale of the kinds of things that I loved as a kid."

And he and Pratt got to go all-out, having their "Star

"I heard the grumblings that people were getting tired of those things [Marvel, 'Jurassic World']. I felt inclined to try to do something original."

Chris Pratt
star of "The Tomorrow War"

Wars' in Tunisia" moment, shooting on location on oil rigs and glaciers instead of primarily on studio lots in front of green screens. It didn't make things easy on them: In Iceland, they became the first people ever to put a crane on one of the glaciers, only feet away from a particularly harrowing cliff's edge with a 3,000-foot drop. But they hope it gives the film a different feel than something entirely generated on the computer.

If it seems a little epic for a streaming service, it's because it is. "The Tomorrow

War" was, up until the postproduction phase, going to be a big theatrical release from Paramount Pictures. But like many studio films during the pandemic, it was sold to Amazon (this one in a deal worth a reported \$200 million). McKay said great pains were taken to ensure

that the sound mix and coloring would feel as close to a theatrical release as possible. He likes that Amazon subscribers everywhere will have immediate access to it.

Pratt is back in Los Angeles with his wife, Katherine Schwarzenegger, and 10-month-old daughter after spending much of last year shooting "Jurassic World: Dominion" in the U.K. And he's proud of "The Tomorrow War" and being in a position to help films that he wants to see get made.

"I feel a little bit more like it's my baby in a way than I do on other films," he said.

"For so long, any role that I got was the result of someone else saying yes to me. Now I'm in this rare space where if I'm doing a role, it's because I've said yes. And that is really cool. And I don't know how long that will last or when it will end, but until it does I'm going to do the things that I want to do. And this is a perfect example of the kind of thing that I wanted to do. It's big and commercial. And it's fun and it's moving," Pratt added. "We want to make ... a big splash, and we want people to think that this is the coolest movie they've seen in years. And I think that's what we did."



Frank Masi

Chris Pratt stars in "The Tomorrow War," a sci-fi action film — not based on a toy, book, comic or theme park ride — about a group of people drafted to go 30 years into the future to fight a losing war against aliens.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



CLAUDETTE BARIUS, WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT/AP

Director Steven Soderbergh, right, with actors, Don Cheadle, left, and Benicio Del Toro, center, on the set of "No Sudden Move."

Returning to the scene of the crime

Soderbergh and Cheadle go back to Detroit for the 1950s heist caper 'No Sudden Move'

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

During the pandemic, Steven Soderbergh has shot two feature films, released a pair of movies, written a sequel to his first film (1989's "Sex, Lies and Videotape"), re-edited some of his older movies (mostly for fun) and co-produced the Academy Awards.

It's an amount of accomplishment that really puts to shame the 1,000-piece puzzle some of us are still proud of assembling last May.

Yet at a time when much of Hollywood is going through profound change, Soderbergh has, like few others, seized an uncertain moment.

"I think it's fair to say that I'm the cockroach of this industry," he said smiling on a recent interview by Zoom. "I can find a way to survive in any version that I'm confronted with."

Soderbergh has averaged a film every one of his 35 years in movies, amassing a nimble, frenetic body of work spanning experimental iPhone indies ("High Flying Bird," "Unsane") to commercial crowd-pleasers ("Ocean's Eleven," "Erin Brockovich," "Magic Mike"). His latest, "No Sudden Move," nearly didn't happen. It was initially scheduled to begin shooting in April 2020. The pandemic scuttled those plans but by early fall, after he helped create return-to-set safety protocols, Soderbergh remounted it — albeit without one star, George Clooney, who withdrew out of health concerns for his asthmatic son.

Still, "No Sudden Move," now streaming on HBO Max, doesn't lack for stars. And while Clooney's presence would have reinforced a spirit of get-the-band-back-together, "No Sudden Move" remains a cousin to one of Soderbergh's most celebrated movies: 1998's "Out of Sight," the

slinky, sublime caper adapted from Elmore Leonard.

That film opened in Miami sunshine but descended into wintery Detroit. Twenty-three years later, "No Sudden Move" returns Soderbergh to the Motor City with Don Cheadle, who memorably played Maurice "Snoop" Miller in "Out of Sight." Since then, Cheadle has co-starred in four more films with Soderbergh ("Traffic," the "Ocean's" movies). But he's front and center this time.

"This was designed as a vehicle for Don, whether he wanted it or not," Soderbergh says. "Literally: I wanted to see this guy walking, walking, walking — and we parachute into this story."

"No Sudden Move" opens with Cheadle, as Curt Goynes, strolling through 1950s Detroit. Soderbergh and screenwriter Ed Solomon conceived of the film from the start as a heist movie with a trio of thieves brought together not unlike those in Robert Wise's electric 1959 noir "Odds Against Tomorrow." (That was one inspiration. The classic '70s crime film "The Friends of Eddie Coyle" was another.)

But while working on the script, Solomon came upon the history of the automotive industry's efforts to avoid emissions controls. "No Sudden Move" begins with three hired guns (Cheadle, Benicio del Toro, Kieran Culkin), but in a multiplying series of double-crosses, expands in scope to encapsulate some of Detroit's original sins, a little like how "Chinatown" does for Los Angeles. The rest of the cast includes Bill Duke, Jon Hamm, David Har-

bour, Julia Fox, Brendan Frazier, Matt Damon and Ray Liotta.

"We were able to talk about redlining and community and the devastation of Detroit and the greed of the car manufacturers without proselytizing or hitting it on the head," says Cheadle. "It was all part of the narrative intrigue. It felt in a lot of ways like 'Out of Sight 2.0' or 1.0, 30 years beforehand — revisiting that kind of energy."

Cheadle wasn't necessarily eager to return to a film set at the time. But he also realized that if he didn't, a stuck-at-home Soderbergh would probably keep writing and sending him scripts. The



director managed the shoot without incident by utilizing frequent testing in two mobile COVID-19 testing units that were personally paid for. The central cast and crew members were kept in a quarantine bubble.

"I know that I put Steven through some version of hell in my uncertainty about coming back," Cheadle says. "I lost family members to COVID. I was really gun-shy about even leaving my house."

Cheadle smiles. "I also blame him for 'Contagion,'" referring to Soderbergh's prophetic pandemic drama from 2011. "I think he's Patient Zero."

Soderbergh recently shot his third film for HBO Max, "KIMI," a pandemic-set thriller with Zoë Kravitz. "No Sudden Move," a period crime film for adults, is very much the kind of movie that before the streaming floodgates opened would have been unlikely to get made.

"It's a really good time for somebody who makes things. I honestly would not like to be running these companies. Nobody knows what's coming. Nobody knows what's a cyclical thing as opposed to a real secular change," says Soderbergh. "I have a long history with Warner. We both seem to be in sync with the purpose of my deal, which is for me to be really busy."

Other things never change. "No Sudden Move" is Soderbergh's sixth heist film, a cycle begun with "Out of Sight" that includes the three "Ocean's" films and "Logan Lucky," a self-financed meta-heist movie in that it sought to pull one over on Hollywood, too. The genre, the director says, encourages a filmmaker to bring something to the table — to "style it up." "It's just made for the movies," he says.

Director Steven Soderbergh

EVAN AGOSTINI, INVISION/AP

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

'Oceans 11' with a social conscience

'No Sudden Move' a deliberate, yet high-spirited thriller

By MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN
The Washington Post

Set in 1954 Detroit against a backdrop of simmering racial tension, Steven Soderbergh's smart, socially aware, slyly twisty and noirish crime drama "No Sudden Move" mostly lives up to its name, which is intended both literally and ironically. There's a deliberateness — born as much of cinematic affectation as actual, character-driven caution — in the way that a character slowly sips his hot coffee or lays an envelope full of cash on the dashboard of a car, patting it with his hand for good measure.

It boasts the kind of dialogue, written by Ed Solomon ("Men in Black"), in which people say things that you don't hear every day, like "I'm going to punch you now" or (unless there's a gun pointed at your head) "I'm going to slowly reach for the phone." Other lines are more commonplace, like announcing "That's the plan," just before the plan goes kablooeey.

And yet, with all this care and



Warner Bros.

Benicio Del Toro, left, and Don Cheadle are petty criminals in "No Sudden Move."

steadiness, "No Sudden Move" is a remarkably effervescent affair: not so much frothy as high-spirited, even when the story seems to be moving with the studied grace of a mime.

That story gets underway with consummate simplicity: A mob bagman (Brendan Fraser) hires three petty criminals (Don Cheadle, Benicio Del Toro and Kieran Culkin, the squirreliest of the bunch, which should tell you something about his character's fate). They're told to "babysit" a mother and her kids (Amy Seimetz, Noah Jupe and Lucy Holt)

while the father (David Harbour), an auto executive, is compelled — here's where the persuasion of guns comes in — to retrieve a document from an office safe and bring it home, for a reason, and a client, unknown.

Things do not go accordingly, and Cheadle's Curt must improvise. He's the smart one. There's a running joke about the intelligence of Del Toro's Ronald, and it isn't flattering.

Soon, Curt and Ronald are on the lam with the document, pursued by a detective (Jon Hamm). Eventually, they manage to sniff

out the man — correction: men — who want it, each of whom promises a successively richer payday than the one before him. It's best to let the precise nature of the document — and the true backstory that Solomon mined for the film's inspiration — reveal itself in the fullness of the film, which follows a deliciously winding path, to a denouement that is as satisfying as it is surprising.

Much of what's surprising has to do with Cheadle's character, who has recently been released from prison, and carries a second

document, retrieved from a suitcase he left with a woman while he was behind bars. It's both a liability and, more importantly, as it turns out, leverage.

This being the '50s, segregation, prejudice and bigotry are still very much out in the open: Ronald, despite his slow-wittedness, is being paid more than Curt. And when things go south, and there's a bounty placed on the two men's heads, Ronald's bounty is higher.

Solomon and Soderbergh's story plies an unspoken social code that Curt navigates, brilliantly: For Curt, it's the Black bellhop at a hotel rendezvous who, despite being a total stranger, is more trustworthy than any white character. And in the aftermath of a restaurant shootout, when Curt is pursuing a white guy through the kitchen, it's the Black help who silently indicate he-went-thataway, a bitter, wordless joke premised on the fugitive and the pursuer's race.

"No Sudden Move" could also refer to the snail's pace of social change. But race is just a subtext — albeit an enriching one — in a piece of entertainment that feels like watching, say, "Ocean's 11," but with a social conscience.

"No Sudden Move" is rated R for coarse language throughout, some violence and sexual references. Running time: 115 minutes. Available on HBO Max.

Casting, social satire make 'Boss Baby' sequel better than original

By THOMAS FLOYD
The Washington Post

For a family flick ostensibly in the business of cheap laughs, 2017's "The Boss Baby" worked overtime to diversify its appeal.

The hook — toss a superintelligent infant in a three-piece suit and give him Alec Baldwin's raspy timbre — was ludicrous. The humor was hit-and-miss. And the world-building behind the movie's infantile corporate culture (loosely adapted from Marla Frazee's 2010 picture book) wasn't particularly coherent. But thanks to some unabashed heart, the film earned more than \$500 million at the global box office and an Oscar nomination for best animated feature.

Unsurprisingly, DreamWorks Animation has doubled down on what made the first movie successful with the follow-up, "The Boss Baby: Family Business." That means there's a severe case of sequel-itis, as returning director Tom McGrath and screenwriter Michael McCullers go to farcical lengths to re-create the original movie's gags, story beats and character dynamics. Still, "Family Business" manages to largely improve on its predecessor, with the help of savvy casting and surprisingly pointed social satire.

When the sequel reintroduces the Templeton brothers — Tim (voice of James Marsden, replacing Tobey Maguire) and Ted (Baldwin) — the siblings have grown



DreamWorks Animation LLC.

From left, Tina Templeton (voice of Amy Sedaris), Ted Templeton (Alec Baldwin) and Tim Templeton (James Marsden) star in "The Boss Baby: Family Business."

up and grown apart. Ted is now a hedge-fund manager with no time for family, and no memory of his exploits as the first film's titular tyke. Older brother Tim, meanwhile, is a stay-at-home father of two with a breadwinner wife (Eva Longoria) and an omnipresent inner child.

In a bittersweet prologue, "Family Business" quickly states its heartstring-tugging intentions. As a rumination on aging, Tim's blink-and-you-miss-it journey from childhood to fatherhood hits hard. So does his loving but strained relationship with his 7-year-old daughter, Tabitha (Ariana Greenblatt), a gifted student with a goldfish named Dr. Hawking and a routine of reciting the periodic table before bed. While Tim is trying to vicariously live

through his children, Tabitha is swiftly outgrowing her father's childlike whimsy.

This is still a "Boss Baby" movie, though, so it's not long before things get weird. As telegraphed in the first installment's final moments, Tim's infant daughter, Tina (Amy Sedaris), reveals herself as a pint-size genius sent to Earth from the guardians of Baby Corp. — just like her uncle before her. Something sinister is unfolding at older sister Tabitha's hyper-modern school, and Tina needs her uncle Ted to remember his Boss Baby beginnings and work with his estranged brother to crack the case. To infiltrate the school, the adult siblings guzzle a magic baby formula that temporarily shrinks them to their ages from the first movie.

Sedaris freshens the film by bringing her own manic energy and wit to the Boss Baby gimmick — so much so that one wishes the movie had committed to her character, rather than finding an excuse to re-infantilize Baldwin's Ted. Jeff Goldblum, as the dubious head of Tabitha's school, is another inspired casting choice. Following in the "Thor: Ragnarok" tradition of simply letting Goldblum be Goldblum, the movie lets him embrace his idiosyncratic tics to the point of self-parody.

Like its title character, this "Boss Baby" sequel is also smarter than you'd think. Tabitha's school experience skewers the unreasonable expectations placed on children to stand out. When a recital opens with students singing about how boomers are destroying the world for future generations, Tina and Tabitha's grandparents (Lisa Kudrow and Jimmy Kimmel) drolly dwell on that darkness. The movie's most piercing barbs are left for the tech world and the inevitability that our phones will make zombies of us all.

Does that make the Boss Baby franchise a bold cinematic bet? Not exactly. But as a safe play for parents and kids alike, it's tough to complain about the return on your investment.

"The Boss Baby: Family Business" is rated PG for rude humor, mildly coarse language and some action. Running time: 107 minutes. Now playing at theaters; also available on Peacock Premium streaming.

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

Six weeks of soul

Documentary offers proof of 'Black Woodstock,' the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, through unseen footage, interviews

By GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

Every boomer-era music festival and record album has been mythologized, eulogized really, euthanized to the point where the mere mention of Woodstock induces me into the kind of catatonic stupor that even Jimi Hendrix's electrifying "Star-Spangled Banner" couldn't begin to rouse me from.

This unrelenting nostalgia makes Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson's new documentary, "Summer of Soul," all the more astonishing. For six weeks in the summer of 1969, the same summer as Woodstock, the Harlem Cultural Festival was headlined by artists including Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone, Sly & the Family Stone, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Mahalia Jackson, Abbey Lincoln and Max Roach, and B.B. King. An estimated 300,000 people, mostly Black locals, attended the concerts, staged in part as a way to provide healing, unity and release a year after Martin Luther King's assassination had convulsed Harlem. The event was filmed to spectacular effect but, we're told, "the footage sat in a basement for 50 years" because there was no interest in a "Black Woodstock."

"Nobody ever heard of the Harlem Cultural Festival," says Cyril "Bullwhip" Innis Jr., a Black Panther who was part of the security detail at the event. "Nobody would believe it happened."

"Summer of Soul (... or, When the Revo-

lution Could Not Be Televised)" offers glorious proof: showcasing the music; offering a thought-provoking history lesson about the Black cultural and political transformation taking place outside the festival; and presenting a rejoinder to anyone still oblivious to the ways that history celebrates certain achievements while roundly ignoring other equally important stories.

You may know Thompson as a member of the Roots and as the musical director for "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon." If you've read his book, "Mo' Meta Blues: The World According to Questlove," you're aware that he's also inquisitive and a first-rate music geek, making him the perfect person to crate-dig through the musical and cultural history documented in this film. His respect and enthusiasm for the material jumps off the screen. "Summer of Love" won both the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at this year's Sundance Film Festival. It's hard to quantify the elation produced at a virtual event, but let's just say it made people happy at a time when we needed a little sunshine in our lives.

Musically, there's something for everyone, ranging from Motown hits to the sunny pop-soul of the 5th Dimension. There are jams from the likes of South African jazz legend Hugh Masekela, Cuban percussionist Mongo Santamaría and conga drum master Ray Barretto, and there's also Mavis Staples thrilling at the



SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

Sly Stone performs at the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, featured in "Summer of Soul."

chance to sing the hymn "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" with gospel great Mahalia Jackson. Jesse Jackson introduced the latter song, recalling it was Martin Luther King's favorite and how the civil rights activist mentioned it moments before he was assassinated.

"It was just an unreal moment for me," Staples recalls of performing the hymn with her idol for an audience comprising tens of thousands of Black people, an extraordinary gathering. Their rendition is charged and cathartic. Between the context and the raw power of the performance, I've never seen anything quite like it. And, frankly, it's stunning that no one else had seen it, outside of those who witnessed it, until "Summer of Soul."

And even some of the people who were

there have had trouble believing they saw it. The film features interviews with Staples and Jackson and other well-known figures, but the most beautiful moments come from attendees watching the footage of an event that they thought might have been too good to be true.

"You put memories away and sometimes you don't even know if they're real," says Musa Jackson, wiping away tears as he talks to an off-camera Thompson. "So it's almost confirmation that what I knew was real. I knew I was not crazy, brother. But now I know I'm not. And this is just confirmation and not only that ... but how beautiful it was."

"Summer of Soul" is rated PG-13 for brief drug material, some disturbing historical images and smoking. Running time: 117 minutes. Now in theaters and streaming on Hulu.

'Ice Road' scenery great but plot, character development thin

By JOCELYN NOVECK
Associated Press

It's intriguing to imagine Liam Neeson's management team, contemplating his next film. Perhaps "Uber Express"? Maybe "Lyfted Up"?

There's just something symbiotic about Neeson and vehicles — not only cars, but planes ("Non-Stop"), suburban commuter trains ("The Commuter") and even snowplows ("Cold Pursuit").

And now in "The Ice Road," this durable action hero improbably pushing 70 is at the wheel of a big ol' truck — not your normal truck, but a 65,000-pound rig. And not on regular roads, of course. On ice roads, meaning frozen lakes or oceans, where the spring thaw brings treacherous conditions and one wrong move sends you straight into the freezing abyss.

Luckily, Neeson has a way of lending his rough-hewn dignity to even the most perfunctory of plots — because this one, it must be said, is perfunctory. All you need to understand are three elements: Good guys, bad guys — no subtlety here — and the fact



Netflix

Liam Neeson reprises his old-school action-hero ways in "The Ice Road" as a truck driver asked to bring a wellhead to trapped miners.

that ice is very slippery, very cold and has a tendency to melt in sunshine. Got it?

In this latest installment of the Neeson vehicular canon, written and directed by Jonathan Henleigh, Neeson is Mike McCann, a long-haul trucker who's also the caretaker of his brother, Gurty, a war veteran suffering from PTSD. Mike can't manage to hold onto a job very long — he's had 11 jobs in eight years, and we watch him get fired from

his latest after he decks a guy making fun of his brother's war-induced aphasia. But his luck may be about to change.

A methane accident causes a diamond mine to explode up in remote Manitoba, Canada, killing eight miners and trapping 26. There's a 30-hour oxygen window, but rescuers first need a wellhead. The only way to get the wellhead to the mine is by truck.

But this is April, when the ice roads leading to the mine are

melting. No trucker would attempt such a suicidal mission.

Well, almost no trucker.

Mike responds to an alert from Jim Goldenrod, organizer of the impossible rescue, offering his driving skills (yes, Neeson still has a special set of skills) and brother Gurty (Marcus Thomas) as an ace mechanic. The duo is soon hired, joined on the mission by Goldenrod himself (Laurence Fishburne, sadly underused here) and Tantoo (Amber Midthunder), a feisty young driver for whom the job is more personal than financial — her brother's trapped in the mine.

There's one more passenger in the three-rig convoy: an insurance guy from the company that runs the mine, apparently needed for his actuarial skills (Benjamin Walker, whose considerable acting talents aren't really mined here, if you'll excuse the pun).

In a film that's big on great scenery but skimps on character development and backstory, we know from the outset who the good guys are — especially Mike and Gurty. We also know soon enough who the bad guys are; they're cartoonish as can be. As

for the ice, well, there's lots, and it gets thinner and thinner — which one could say of the plot if one wanted to grab low-hanging fruit off the tree of potential puns.

More low-hanging fruit is offered in the lyrics of the Johnny Cash song on the country-infused soundtrack: "All I do is drive, drive, drive," it goes (sung by Jason Isbell here). "Try to stay alive." And while you might be thinking back to these lyrics as you watch Neeson's Mike do just that — drive, drive, drive — you might also focus on the "alive" part.

That's because Neeson's durability as an action hero seems more remarkable as the years go on. Yes, he's older and brittle and paler here, and there's not even a hint of a love interest — unless you count Mike's believable love for his brother, the only developed relationship in the script. But, just like Mike, he gets the job done, and he's the reason to watch this.

"The Ice Road" has been rated PG-13 for strong language and sequences of action and violence. Running time: 103 minutes. Now streaming on Netflix.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

Mario brings putting green to living room

Mario Golf: Super Rush combines core mechanics, iconic characters

BY SHANNON LIAO
The Washington Post

Mario Golf: Super Rush, which came out June 25, retails for \$59.99, but its small scope feels like it merits a lower price. The story mode, called Golf Adventure, took me under 20 hours to complete. The ending, which I won't spoil, hit abruptly.

The game's strength, then, is in the robustness of its core mechanics. Changing wind speeds, various terrain obstacles like Chain Chomps and Piranha Plants and large puddles of water can all ruin your golf game. You must brave

those challenges to get the ball into the hole in as few strokes as possible. If you're familiar with the sport, you'll likely find something compelling in this package.

The series dates back to the late 1980s, when games were still being released on floppy disks and inserted into the Nintendo Famicom Disk System. Like in the previous games, in Super Rush you can play as Mario or any of a series of familiar faces. The game has been updated with better graphics, though in some moments, when it's raining and the character is jumping around a lot, the visuals grow blurry. There's a story mode where you complete golf challenges to defeat big bosses, as well as a regular golf mode for playing against friends or computer foes.

Mario Golf supports up to four players at a time and two people per Switch. The network play mode lets you play against people online, but in my room where the Wi-Fi signal was weak, the game got very laggy.

Learning to master Mario Golf is one of the game's most compelling challenges. When the wind is blowing at 20 miles per

hour facing left, you can curve the ball powerfully to the right to counteract that. You have to watch the power gauge to nail the timing on your shot, which the narrator will confirm by exclaiming "Nice shot!" Those mechanics, which play out in just a few seconds, make the difference between an eagle (two strokes below par, which is good) and a triple bogey (three strokes above par; bad).

Turn on motion controls — which let you swing the Joy-Cons as if you were swinging a golf club — and the game becomes a way to bring golf to your living room. Coming off a year when putting greens were not easily accessible, that's no small thing.

That said, Mario Golf is not exactly a one-to-one golf simulator. While in real golf, you're not allowed to interfere with other players' balls and mess up their position in respect to the hole, Mario Golf allows and encourages all manner of cheating in the form of "special moves." After charging up a gauge, characters can unleash moves like a bomb that tosses away all the balls in its radius, or Luigi's icy floor that makes balls roll away. These dirty tactics get even more aggressive in a mode called Battle Golf, which bears no resemblance to the real sport.

In the story mode, Golf Adventure, gamers play as a Mii character they customize (unfortunately, playing as Mario is not an option). The plot mostly serves to introduce players to various courses, such as Bowser Highlands. It rarely thrills and is pretty simple to complete — with one exception.

In Wildweather Woods, Toad tells the player to complete nine holes in the middle of some cliffs and wild terrain. That, coupled with a 30-minute time limit, made that portion easily the most challenging part of the game, and one of the most frustratingly fun. I breezed through the tutorial and the game's early courses; Now, I had to truly understand how to combat the elements to get my ball into the hole.



Nintendo photos

Turning on Mario Golf: Super Rush's motion controls — which let you swing the Joy-Cons as if you were swinging a golf club — brings the game to your living room.

The Golf Adventure mode is littered with mysterious characters standing around that the player can talk to, but their dialogue is dull: Mostly, they share tips or express their thoughts about the weather. Gone are the creative flourishes of Super Mario Odyssey or Paper Mario: The Origami King. After speaking to a few dozen of these characters, I decided to stop talking to them unless I needed their permission to enter a competition.

Golf Adventure's world is similarly too small. I found myself running into a black loading screen every time I walked down a path, and unlike some games that add tips or something fun to look at on the loading screen, Mario Golf just blacks out.

As with every Mario game, part of the joy comes from seeing the beloved cast of characters. Sixteen characters are unlocked right off the bat, including Mario, Pauline, Luigi, Princess Peach and Bowser; each of them has special moves, as well as happy reactions for when they perform well, and sad emotes for when they finish last.

Franchise villains Wario and Waluigi are also present. As described in the game, Wario always makes par, which comes in handy when teaming up with the duo later on.

I've never been a particularly good golfer. When the tiny ball flies away, I usually have no idea where it went. Mario Golf puts all that aside, easily giving you a way to track the ball's trajectory. In Speed Golf mode and parts of Golf Adventure, you're required



As in previous Mario titles, you can play as Mario or as one of the series' other beloved characters. Sixteen are unlocked from the start.

to chase after the ball quickly, run into your enemies to slow them down and dodge obstacles.

Going through the game's various golf challenges also gives you a better understanding of each golf club's range and abilities. For instance, later on in Golf Adventure, you unlock the lob wedge, which is great for getting the ball out of a tough spot where it's directly facing a tall obstacle. But the lob wedge has a tendency to push the ball too far forward, so it's better to aim for a slightly shorter distance with it.

That's in contrast to when you get much closer to the hole, and use a different club, which the game nicknames the par club. The par club is pretty weak, so you'll need to overshoot it. This was all too much to grasp at the start, especially as someone with a mere beginner's understanding of clubs. But while passing Golf Adventure's biggest challenges, I picked up this knowledge quite

naturally as the game continued.

The game doesn't explicitly spell any of this out, so a lot of the fun is playing, scoring a bunch of triple bogeys and then analyzing what went wrong. In Golf Adventure, there are multiple bosses to take down. Powerful boss attacks had my character scrambling about to dodge them. Once the attack was out of the way, I counterattacked by completing quick technical challenges.

Is a love of Mario and/or golf enough to carry Mario Golf as a whole? It has just enough to keep players interested. During a multiplayer session with Nintendo, I got to run around in Battle Golf and Speed Golf. Much of the fun came from other people's reactions to landing bogeys or particularly clean shots. If you happen to have a gaggle of friends who love golf, this just might be the game for you.

Platform: Nintendo Switch
Online: mariogolf.nintendo.com

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Helsinki locals scrub away their cares at public saunas

Until European travel becomes fully open to Americans, here's a reminder of the fun that awaits us.

I'm in Helsinki, surveying the city from a rooftop restaurant. The setting sun glints off the cruise ships in the harbor as fish merchants take down their stalls in the market. But a fleshier scene on the rooftop below me steals my attention.

It's six bankers wrapped in white towels enjoying a sauna. In all proper Finnish office buildings, a rooftop sauna is an essential part of the design. Free snacks and drinks at the sauna after work is almost an expected perk. One rotund fellow is so pink from the heat that — with his white towel wrapped around his waist — he reminds me of a pool ball.

As a tourist, I'm not invited to join the bankers on the rooftop, and the few remaining public saunas in Helsinki are in gritty neighborhoods. In this affluent city, most people have private saunas in their homes or cabins. Rough working-class neighborhoods are most likely to need — and therefore have — a public sauna. So I get on the subway and head for Kotiharjun Sauna in the scruffy district. At first glance, it's clear that this place is the local hangout — and rarely sees a tourist. Outside, a vertical neon sign in simple red letters reads: SAUNA. Under it, big Finnish guys wrapped only in small towels fill a clutter of white plastic chairs. They are expertly relaxing.

As there isn't a word of English anywhere, I rely on the young attendant at the window for instructions. He explains the process: Pay seven euros, grab a towel, strip, stow everything in an old wooden locker, wear the key like a bracelet, shower, enter the sauna ... and reeeelax.

"Is it mixed?" I ask.

"No, there's a sauna upstairs for women."

"What about getting a scrub?"

Pointing to an aproned woman, he says, "Talk directly with her ... six euros extra."

The sauna is far from the sleek, cedar pre-fab den of steam I expected. Six crude concrete steps with dark wooden railings and rustic walls create a barn-like amphitheater of steam and heat. The third step up is all the heat I can take. Everyone else is twice as high, sitting on the top level for maximum steam and maximum heat.



Rick Steves

Naked with their hair wet and stringy, people look both more timeless and somehow more Finnish. There's virtually no indication of what century we're in.

Each guy has a tin bucket between his legs for splashing cool water on his face. I ask about the bin of birch twigs that sits on the bottom step. Slapping your skin with these, one man explains, enhances your circulation. The roughed-up leaves emit a refreshing birch aroma as well as chlorophyll, which opens the sinuses.

Part two of a good sauna is the scrub down. The woman in the apron scrubs men one at a time all day long. She's finishing up with a guy sitting on a plastic chair, dousing him with water. After his work-over, he looks like a lifeless Viking Gummy.

Awkwardly I ask, "Me next?"

She welcomes me to her table. She reminds me of a Stalin-era Soviet tractor driver.

I ask, "Up or down?"

She pushes me flat ... belly up ... and says, "This is good. Now, I wash you twice."



Rick Steves

Locals grab a towel, pull up a chair and relax at a rustic sauna in a workaday Helsinki neighborhood.

Lying there naked, I feel like a salmon on a cleaning table, ready for gutting. With sudsy mitts, she works me over. Then she hoses me off, which makes me feel even more like a salmon. It's extremely relaxing. Moving from deep in my scalp to between my toes, she washes me a second time.

Stepping out into the gritty Helsinki neighborhood, I'm clean, relaxed, and assured that — for bankers, laborers and tourists, too — the sauna is the great equalizer.

Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) writes European guidebooks, hosts travel shows on public TV and radio, and organizes European tours. You can email Rick at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

An altitude adjustment can help travelers beat the heat

In the event of a northern European heat wave, there's often not much in the way of air conditioning to save the day. So where can one go to beat the heat? Up! According to the scientific theory known as the standard lapse rate, air temperature can be expected to fall by roughly 3.5° F for every 1,000 feet of altitude gained, making this a great time of year for exploration of some of Europe's most charming high-altitude villages and towns. This trio of high places offers plenty to do and see:

Germany: The municipality of Oberstdorf, located in the Allgäu region of the Bavarian Alps, is made up of five villages: Oberstdorf itself, at 2,667 feet above sea level, and Kornau, Reichenbach, Rubi, Schöllang and Tiefenbach. These specks on the map count as not only the country's southernmost settlements but also among Germany's highest towns. A skier's dream in winter, the area offers plenty of summertime pursuits too.

The Fellhorn, a mountain peak straddling the German-Austrian border, can be reached by cable car in all seasons. A hiking path between the Kanzelwand and the Fellhorn middle station is signposted with information about the blossoming beauty of Allgäu's "flower mountain," an area famous for its alpenrose, which despite its name is actually a type of rhododendron. Online: tinyurl.com/yyrdr4vs

When great tastes are among one's travel goals, what's called for is a visit to a "Sennealpe." At this special type of Alpine dairy, cheese is made from the happy,

grass-fed cows living on the premises. The Alpe Schlapplod, found in the middle of a nature reserve on the Fellhorn, is a favorite destination of hikers. Germany's largest and highest-altitude dairy welcomes visitors from May through October. Although no guided tours will be offered in 2021 due to the pandemic, guests can sample the wares on its terrace. Online: alpe-schlapplod.de



Karen Bradbury

Another unique attraction of the area is the Heini-Klopfer-Skilflugschanze, a 236-foot-high hill dedicated to the sport of ski flying, a sport akin to ski jumping but in which athletes can achieve much greater distances. One of only five such facilities in the world, the foot of the tower is easily reached by means of a barrier-free inclined elevator. Guided tours familiarize visitors with the facility and this fascinating adrenaline sport. Online: tinyurl.com/whwc8xp6

Italy: Sestriere, Italy's highest village, hovers 6,676 feet above sea level in the Susa Valley. Ensnared by mountains, Sestriere is home to one of the country's largest ski resorts and regularly hosts major ski competitions. Sporty types will find the area equally appealing during the warm months of the year.

Golfers can enjoy a round at the Circolo Golf Sestrieres, Europe's highest 18-hole course. The par-65 course, which shares space with the slopes of the Vialattea ski



iStock

Cable cars help visitors ascend to the Fellhorn mountain peak on the German-Austrian border in all seasons.

resort, also includes a putting green and a driving range. Visitors with a valid handicap certificate from their home clubs are welcome.

Cyclists can also have a field day in this area that has served as both start and arrival point to the Tour de France and the Giro d'Italia. Road, mountain and e-bikes can be rented at a handful of shops right in town, and instructors stand ready to accompany those looking to up their game. The Downtower Downhill Biking Track is reserved for expert bikers only.

The Sestriere Sport Center, billed as Italy's largest sports center, offers a gym, squash courts, climbing gym, athletic track, football pitch, fitness room, sport

fishing lake, wellness area and a children's fun zone. Courses from spinning to total body workouts are offered with advance reservations. Other local offerings include hiking, horseback riding, tennis and a swimming pool. Online: sestriere.it/en/summer-in-sestriere

Scotland: Perched in the Lowther Hills at an altitude of 1,532 feet, Wanlockhead is Scotland's highest village. This town some 50 miles southeast of Glasgow tells the story of the rise and fall of a local industry.

For many centuries, the village's economy was fueled by lead; other minerals mined locally included zinc, copper, silver and gold. The Museum of Lead Mining offers insight into the mining process and the lives of the miners and their families. Visitors can follow a trail leading through the village, an 18th-century Miners' Library, past industrial relics and into the Lochnell Lead Mine itself. The Straitsteps Cottages offer a glimpse of daily life of long-ago mining families. Another area offers the chance to pan for gold.

The Leadhills and Wanlockhead Light Railway, which once transported refined lead, closed back in 1938, but a length of small-gauge track has been re-opened, and on summer weekends when coronavirus is a thing of the past, trips between Wanlockhead and Leadhills should once again be offered. With the driving left to someone else, a stop at the Wanlockhead Inn, Scotland's highest pub, is a fitting end to a hard day's play. Online: tinyurl.com/kn5m89hw

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



PHOTOS BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

The outside of Hofbrau Brewery in Bamberg, Germany. Bamberg is known for its rauchbier, or smoked beer, which attracts people from far and wide.



Downtown Bamberg, Germany, in June. The history of Bamberg's rauchbier, or smoked beer, is as rich as the history of the city that made it famous.



Outside of the Schlenkerla brewery on June 21 in Bamberg, Germany.



The Regnitz River runs through Bamberg, Germany, in Upper Franconia.

On the QT

Address: Schlenkerla Brewery, Dominikanerstrasse 6, 96049. Hofbrau, Karolinenstrasse 7, 96049. Bamberg is about 60 miles from both Grafenwoehr and Vilseck.

Hours: Schlenkerla Brewery is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Hofbrau is open Sunday-Thursday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11 p.m. to 12 a.m. Hours may vary on holidays.

Information: Schlenkerla: website: schlenkerla.de, Phone: +49 0951 56050
Hofbrau: website: hofbraeu-bamberg.de, Phone: +49 0951 53321

Immanuel Johnson

Taste the history

Smoked beer dating back to the Middle Ages makes Bamberg a memorable destination

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

Germany's fame as the land of beer has been safely established for hundreds of years. But one town in particular is famous for a very special brew that attracts visitors from far and wide.

Bamberg, an agricultural and tourist center in northern Bavaria, is home to the Aecht Schlenkerla Rauchbier. Lore has it that this smoked beer dates to the Middle Ages, when the malt was accidentally smoked before being added to the brewing process.

The smoked malt results in a very distinctive taste, which is best sampled at Bamberg's historic Schlenkerla brewery. It's located directly beneath the cathedral, which opens for visitors as early as 9:30 a.m. At the brewery tavern, the beer is tapped directly from wooden barrels in keeping with an old tradition.

You will likely see a decent-sized crowd gathered outside. With coronavirus restrictions easing, you can make conversation with some of the locals or tourists who hang outside the brewery as well.

But if you're a beer enthusiast, don't end your tour at Schlenkerla. Bamberg, which dates back to the 9th century, has many

more breweries to discover — at a leisurely pace, of course.

Have something to eat to soak up the brew and between strolling over the bridges that overlook the Regnitz River. The old town is considered one of the best-preserved in Germany and its city hall, perched on a small island in the middle of the river, is a breathtaking sight.

When you're ready for that next round, the Hofbrau restaurant has pleasant outdoor seating, along with all the beer, wursts, schnitzels and traditional German foods you can imagine.

Bamberg was home to a U.S. Army garrison for 69 years, until its closure in 2004. The Army first arrived in April 1945, when after a short fight it occupied the town.

It takes just under two hours to get to the city by car from the Grafenwoehr and the Vilseck training areas. If you drive there and want the best beer experience, there are a number of affordable room options — please don't drink and drive. A train tacks on a bit more time.

I would also recommend grabbing some smoked beer in bottles, as keepsakes to bring back home.

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The Aecht Schlenkerla rauchbier at Hofbrau on June 21 in Bamberg, Germany. City lore states that the smoky brew dates back to the Middle Ages.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING



The Trio of Parmigiana appetizer at Johnny Take Uè in Naples includes three samples: traditional eggplant, potato and bechamel and zucchini and tomato. The skillfully prepared bites were the highlight of the meal.

PHOTOS BY ALISON BATH/Stars and Stripes

Johnny Take Uè

Address: Corso Vittorio Emanuele, 84 80121 Naples

Phone: +39 0817618861

Hours: 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. lunch daily; 7:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. for dine-in, takeout and delivery

Menu: Available in English and Italian at johnnypizzaportafoglio.it/en/pizzerie-takeue

Prices: Appetizers and salads, 9-10 euros; pizza, 4 euros and up; meat and fish, 12 euros and up; desserts, 4.50 euro.

Alison Bath



Donna Imma's Meatballs at Johnny Take Uè are made with eggplant, provolone cheese and beef and served in a Grana Padana "basket" with seared tomatoes.

Eat like a local

Enjoy a meal at Johnny Take Uè for an authentic Neapolitan restaurant experience

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

Don't go to Johnny Take Uè just for the food. Instead, visit for the experience of eating skillfully prepared traditional Neapolitan cuisine alongside young couples, families and working people in Naples' lively Mergellina neighborhood.

Johnny Take Uè isn't a tourist trap. Sure, some visitors stumble upon the restaurant located along well-known Corso Vittorio Emanuele, but most diners are from the neighborhood.

Appetizers, pasta, meat and fish and, of course, pizza are on the diverse menu. Portions are big. If you have a large appetite, you'll be in heaven. If not, be prepared to let some food go to waste.

The Johnny Salad features greens, radicchio and rocket along with grilled eggplant, hard-boiled egg and black olives. If you like a flavorful dressing, you'll be disappointed as the salad is simply dressed with olive oil, which allows the flavors of the greens and grilled vegetables to stand out. I found the salad to be fresh and flavorful, but I needed to add salt and pepper.

The Trio of Parmigiana was a different



story. It was three tasty bites — that could easily be shared by two — of classic parmigiana with eggplant, another of zucchini, tomato, provolone cheese and pepper and finally of potato, bechamel, fior di latte cheese, baked ham and grated cheese. This appetizer was the best item on the table during my visit, with the standout being the eggplant.

Pizza choices are plentiful and inventive. I settled on the Trio of Mini Pizzas — Queen Margherita, "stuffed in the oven" (an oblong, calzone-type pizza filled with cheese and tomato sauce) and the marinara. This dish left me wishing I had chosen just one pizza as the flavors were indistinguishable and the crust on all three seemed a bit soggy.

But Donna Imma's Meatballs — eggplant, provolone cheese and beef — served on top of Grana Padana cheese and seared tomatoes were quickly devoured by my dining companion.



Interior seating at Johnny Take Uè includes a small dining area with a big television just inside the front door. More indoor seating is available on a second floor.

Sweets include the expected tiramisù and panna cotta along with an assortment of ice cream. Graffa — fried, yeasted dough dusted with sugar — also is available, and Johnny Take Uè does it one better with the addition of Nutella.

Johnny Take Uè isn't the place to get the best pizza in Naples, but if you want to try some classic local dishes while taking in the atmosphere of a traditional Neapolitan neighborhood, it's the spot to be.



The kitchen at Johnny Take Uè features a colorful pizza oven.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY PETER DEJONG/AP

A photograph with lines showing the added parts explains how Rembrandt's biggest painting, the "Night Watch," just got bigger with the help of artificial intelligence June 23 in Amsterdam. The Dutch national museum and art gallery reveals findings from a minute study of the masterpiece.

A masterpiece of a restoration

Dutch national museum enlarges Rembrandt's 'Night Watch' by combining painting, digital re-creations

BY MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

One of Rembrandt van Rijn's biggest paintings just got a bit bigger.

A marriage of art and artificial intelligence has enabled Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum to re-create parts of the iconic "Night Watch" painting that were snipped off 70 years after Rembrandt finished it.

The printed strips now hang flush to the edges of the 1642 painting in the museum's Honor Gallery. Their addition restores to the work the off-center focal point that that rebellious Golden Age master Rembrandt originally intended.

"It can breathe now," museum director Taco Dibbits said.

The crowded painting's two main characters, Captain Frans Banninck Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch, are central in the chopped-down painting. With the new digital additions — particularly a strip on the left of the painting that features two men and makes clear that a boy is looking over a balustrade — the main figures effectively are shifted to the right.

"It really gives the painting a different dynamic," Dibbits said. "And what it taught us is that Rembrandt never does what you expect."

The museum always knew the original, uncut, painting was bigger, in part thanks to a far smaller copy painted at the same time that is attributed to Gerrit Lundens.

Researchers and restorers who have painstakingly pored over the work for nearly two years using a battery of high-tech scanners, X-rays and digital photography combined the vast amount of data they generated with the Lundens copy to re-create and print the missing strips.

"We made an incredibly detailed photo of the Night Watch and through artificial intelligence or what they call a neural network, we taught the computer what color Rembrandt used in the Night Watch, which colors, what

his brush strokes looked like," Dibbits said.

The machine learning also enabled the museum to remove distortions in perspective that are present in the Lundens copy because the artist was sitting at one corner while he painted Rembrandt's painting.

The reason the 1642 group portrait of an Amsterdam civil militia was trimmed is simple: It was moved from

"It really gives the painting a different dynamic. And what it taught us is that Rembrandt never does what you expect."

Taco Dibbits

Dutch national museum director

the militia's club house to the town hall, and there it didn't fit on a wall between two doors. A bit of very analog cropping with a pair of scissors ensued, and the painting took on the dimensions that have now been known for centuries. The fate of the pieces of canvas that were trimmed off remains a mystery.

The digital re-creation that will be on show in coming months come as part of research and restoration project called "Operation Night Watch" that began just under two years ago, before the global pandemic emptied museums for months.

Under relaxations of the Dutch COVID-19 lockdown, the museum is now welcoming more visitors, but still only about half of its normal capacity.

During the restoration project, the painting was en-



A copy of the "Night Watch" attributed to painter Gerrit Lundens served as the basis for artificial intelligence allowing Rembrandt's biggest painting to get bigger. It's displayed next to the painting.

cased in a specially designed glass room and studied in unprecedented detail from canvas to the final layer of varnish.

Among that mound of data, researchers created the most detailed photograph ever made of the painting by combining 528 digital exposures.

The 1642 painting last underwent significant restoration more than 40 years ago after it was slashed by a knife-wielding man and is starting to show blanching in parts of the canvas.

Dibbits said the new printed additions are not intended to trick visitors into thinking the painting is bigger, but to give a clearer idea of what it was supposed to look like.

"Rembrandt would have definitely done it more beautifully, but this comes very close," he said.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

'Aloha': More than a greeting

How to support Hawaii as a responsible traveler, in 6 tips from the people who live there

BY NATALIE B. COMPTON
The Washington Post

Throughout the pandemic, American travelers have been drawn to Hawaii, despite the hurdles it took to get there. From March to October 2020, travelers had to undergo a 14-day quarantine to escape to paradise, and from October onward had to follow the "Safe Travels" program protocols that required precise testing, among other steps.

Nonetheless, travelers are flying to Hawaii en masse, but with mixed feelings from locals. The economy is heavily dependent on tourism, but early in the pandemic, they had the unique experience of having the islands to themselves without tourists. Since then, their return has gotten off to a rocky start.

There were countless reports of tourists parking illegally along highways to take advantage of photo ops, trespassing into clearly marked private property, leading local officials to increase fines for offenders and install additional signage. Then there were the visitors who broke quarantine requirements, not all of whom ended up in jail for the punishable offense. Local organizations like Hawaii Quarantine Kapu Breakers emerged to help law enforcement hold violators accountable by documenting tourist misbehavior.

"We have to remember that prior to the pandemic, we were already at unsustainable levels," said Timothy Lara, owner of Hawaiian Paddle Sports and a former board member of the Sustainable Tourism Association of Hawaii. "There was already a negative sentiment toward (tourism) as an industry, so that's why when it started to pop off, you had people protesting at the airports and other places."

As accounts of the bad behavior reverberate throughout the local community, tourists continue to flood Hawaii. Is the relationship between residents and visitors salvageable? Is there a way for travelers to visit and have a positive impact? I flew to Hawaii to find out what locals want travelers to know about visiting in the vaccine era.



RYAN SIPHERS/The Washington Post

A peaceful scene at Ka'anapali Beach Hotel on Maui. Even during the pandemic, and despite a required 14-day quarantine, people were drawn to Hawaii with mixed feelings from the locals.

Think about where your money is going

As Hawaii recovers from pandemic setbacks, think about where your time and money is going, and consider options that bring the most benefit to the destination.

Sarah Hofstadter, spokesperson for grass-roots organization Hale Hawaii, founded in 2020 to advocate for stricter COVID policies on the islands, encourages travelers to shop locally whenever possible, whether that's staying at a family-owned hotel or eating at stand-alone restaurants. Although chains do employ locals, Hofstadter said more of the money you spend at a mom-and-pop shop goes directly into the community.

Maui native Lesley Cummings, co-owner of Aloha Missions, a Hawaiian lifestyle brand that supports the local region through community service projects, agreed.

"You're putting food on the table for a local family that lives here," Cummings said. "And I think those people who own the shops and restaurants, they really want to give (tourists) the best experience on this island."

Choose where to stay thoughtfully

Finding a place to stay during my weeklong trip to Hawaii was a challenge. Even a month out from the trip, options were extremely limited. The locally owned hotels I found in Maui where I'd be based, like the Iao Valley Inn or the Old Wailuku Inn, were booked or out of my price range, and I was left looking at vacation rentals and homes on Airbnb.

Like many popular travel destinations around the world, Hawaii has a complicated relationship with the Airbnbs that have proliferated throughout the state in the past decade. They can bring income to locals who rent out their homes, or price locals out of their communities.

I ended up reserving a Vrbo condo that promised to donate 10 percent of the booking proceeds to help Hawaiian whales. The last few nights of my trip, I stayed in a camper van I'd rented from a local on Airbnb.

Lara said if you're planning a camper van stay, too, **SEE ALOHA ON PAGE 25**

For many outsiders, aloha is just a term for hello and goodbye ... For people who live in Hawaii, the meaning of aloha goes much deeper. It's a lifestyle, a reciprocal value that's centered on kindness and respect.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Aloha: Locals offer tips for making your stay in Hawaii harmonious

FROM PAGE 24

park overnight in designated places for them — not always the norm from what he's seen around Maui.

"We already have a lot of homelessness in Hawaii, and now visitors are sleeping on the side of the road without facilities," he said. "Almost every morning where we go kayaking from, we show up and those people sleeping there ... right next to their truck or their cars, they've gone to the bathroom."

Don't add to the problem, despite what you may hear from other car campers. Obtain the right permit or book a campsite where you're allowed to park and sleep legally.

Be considerate about how you get around

On the note of car culture, some of the major concerns Hawaii locals have had with the return of tourists have been car-related. People are lamenting the rental car shortage and how tourists are reserving U-Hauls as a last resort. (I ended up getting a car through Turo, a peer-to-peer service that connected me with a local who was renting out his truck for a relatively reasonable price.)

Illegal parking and reckless driving are other significant pain points.

"Don't drive like it's the L.A. freeway," Cummings said. "Drive with aloha."

If you're planning on relying on Uber or Lyft as your primary mode of transportation during your visit, don't (unless you know you won't need a car most of the time). Hawaii is experiencing the same ride-hailing app issues as the rest of the country. Rides may be more expensive, take much longer to arrive or not be available at all.

Eat with local farmers and chefs in mind

In a place where 85 to 90 percent of food is imported, visitors in Hawaii have the power to support the underdogs: local farmers and restaurants. That doesn't have to be a sacrifice for travelers. Hawaii is full of incredible ingredients to be found at incredible places to eat.

Maui native Clifford Nae'ole, cultural adviser at the Ritz-Carlton in Kapalua on Maui where he's worked since 1992, recommends seeking out food trucks and plate-lunch restaurants, which serve quintessentially Hawaiian dishes of meat, rice and sides. Cummings suggests wandering around smaller towns to find local food establishments. Hofstadter encourages travelers to shop at farmers markets and drink at local breweries.

For example, Maui Brewing, which donates money to local schools and produced much-needed hand sanitizer during the pandemic. You can go a step further and help locals in need by donating to organizations like the Maui Food Bank.

Find activities that give back

At the Ka'anapali Beach Hotel, Ka'ena Wojcieszki educates guests about Hawaiian culture, sending them off with a lei ceremony or taking them through a hula demonstration.

"I'll teach them the basics, but my goal is for them to leave with a different mind-set," the Maui native said. "Sometimes the goal is hard to reach."

Wojcieszki sees guests come with preconceived notions of Hawaii customs and traditions, but said she believes she and other locals have the power to change their perspectives.

Nae'ole said he thinks visitors who take more time to understand Hawaii, and its values like aloha, will have a more meaningful trip.

"We want people to be tied to this place," Nae'ole said. Ways to make that connection are learning some of the Hawaiian language, talking to locals, taking a surf lesson with a local guide, learning about the local arts, volunteering for a beach cleanup.

You can find those opportunities outside of a hotel setting. Lara recommends researching activities through STAH, the Sustainable Tourism Association of Hawaii.

One STAH-recognized stand-out is PacWhale Eco-Adventures, an ecotourism operation whose profits directly fund marine research. On its Molokini and Turtle Arches snorkel tour, I swam near sea turtles and learned about spinner dolphins while also having the satisfaction of knowing my ticket price helped support environmental stewardship.

Learn about aloha

The PacWhale Eco-Adventures model fits into the consensus I got from locals in Hawaii: Try to leave this place better than you found it. As travelers, we can shift our behavior from taking away from a place to giving back to it. It comes back to the concept of aloha.

For many outsiders, aloha is just a term for hello and goodbye, a word you see on T-shirts and bumper stickers. For people who live in Hawaii, the meaning of aloha goes much deeper. It's a lifestyle, a reciprocal value that's centered on kindness and respect.

A common frustration for locals is seeing tourists think



PHOTOS BY RYAN SIPHERS/The Washington Post

The Ka'anapali Beach Hotel departure kukui nut ceremony. The hotel offers activities that teach tourists a little about island culture and create a sense of connection to the state.

aloha is about Hawaiian hospitality, not a two-way street.

"We get a lot of entitled people who say: 'Well, where's the Aloha? I thought this was the Aloha State,'" said Kainoa Horcajo, a Maui-born Hawaiian cultural consultant. "And for us, aloha is first, is given. You give it and you give it without expectation of return. You don't come into a house, a building, a relationship and expect to be given aloha in order to get it back."

In addition to aloha, Lara would like more tourists to understand the concept of kuleana, a Hawaiian word for responsibility, broadly speaking.

"The premise is for every right or privilege we have in life, we have responsibility in correlation with it," Lara said. "We have the right to access the ocean and play in the ocean. We also have responsibility, care for the ocean. If we have the right, the privilege to visit Hawaii, then we also have a responsibility to have a light



Maui's beautiful foliage is a great photo opportunity. Locals would prefer if you didn't park on the side of the road to take the picture.

footprint while we're visiting."

Lara said tourists may not think bending or breaking the rules is a sign of disrespect. Does it really matter if just one tourist pulls over to take a photo on the highway, or sneaks through private property to a "secret" beach?

"Individually, if you were the only person to do that, then it probably wouldn't be a big deal,"

Lara said. "But when there's 3 million people visiting Maui who also have the same attitude or do the same thing, then it does become a problem."

For Kai'ai Fong, a bartender at the Spago in the Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea, his advice is even more straightforward.

"Respect the people, the culture, all of that fun stuff," he said. "Just be a good person."

Vaccinated Americans entering Hawaii can bypass testing, quarantine starting July 8

By AMANDA FINNEGAN
The Washington Post

Vaccinated Americans entering Hawaii will no longer face testing or quarantine requirements starting July 8, Gov. David Ige announced June 24.

Travelers from the continental United States will have to upload their vaccination cards to the state's Safe Travels Program site and will also have to present their card upon arrival.

"We anticipate that on or about July 8, Hawai'i will have achieved a 60% vaccination rate. Our residents have sacrificed and worked hard to get to this point, but we still have more to do," Ige said in a statement. "Please get vaccinated to protect yourselves and your loved ones."

Ige said that when the state hits its goal of a 70

percent vaccination rate, all travel restrictions will be lifted.

Ige said last month that this change was on the horizon when he announced restrictions were lifting on inter-island travel, but only when 60 percent of the state's population was fully vaccinated.

Since October 2020, U.S. travelers have been required follow precise coronavirus testing requirements and present a negative result upon arrival in the state, or quarantine for 10 days. From March to October 2020, travelers had to quarantine for 14 days.

Ige also said June 24 that social gatherings will no longer be limited and restaurants can operate at full capacity when the state meets a 70 percent vaccination rate.

WEEKEND: FOOD

Even better than butter

Substituting oil in baking recipes is easier, faster and just as delicious

BY JESSIE SHEEHAN

Special to The Washington Post

I am the queen of the baking shortcut, for despite my deep and powerful love of all things sweet, I'm impatient and awfully fond of instant gratification. I gravitate toward recipes with short ingredient lists and instructions that don't require any heavy equipment (stand mixer, I'm looking at you) and can be assembled using only one or two bowls.

So, although I enjoy the texture achieved by creaming together butter and sugar in a mixer for a fluffy yellow cake or a chewy sugar cookie, what I really dig is a baked good that calls for oil rather than butter.

Baking with oil not only requires less work and results in fewer dirty dishes than butter, but it also produces tender, moist baked goods that get better with age and boast an impressively long shelf life. As such, I not only search out baking recipes calling for oil, but when developing such recipes myself, which I do for a living, I try to create those that are oil-based.

Below is a breakdown of some of the impressive attributes of an oil-based baked good, as well as tips for substituting oil for butter in your favorite baking recipes.

Why bake with oil?

Baking with oil is faster and easier than baking with butter. Because oil does not need to be melted and then cooled, or creamed for 5 minutes until fluffy, and is instead added straight to the recipe's wet ingredients, assembly is faster and there is no need to dirty a saucepan or pull out your mixer.

Baking with oil produces moist and tender baked goods. Because oil is liquid at room temperature, it produces exceptionally moist baked goods. Butter, on the other hand, is solid at room temp, and therefore baked goods made with it are (arguably) a tad more dry. Baked goods calling for oil are also extra tender because there is less opportunity to develop the gluten in the flour by overmixing the batter. Overmixing a thicker batter, like one with creamed butter, is hard to avoid and can result in a tougher treat. Moreover, butter contains water, which also contributes to gluten

development. Oil, on the other hand, has no water and is 100% fat.

Baked goods made with oil have a long shelf life and actually age better. A baked good made with butter typically begins to dry out after a day or two on the counter, while the flavor and texture of those made with oil intensify over time. In short, nothing says "make-ahead dessert" like an oil-based baked good.

How to substitute oil

Substitute oil in any of your baking recipes calling for melted butter. I always get a little giddy when I see a recipe calling for melted butter, like a cake or even some cookies, because I know I can substitute oil in its stead. Because they are both liquid fats, not only will substituting oil for the butter not negatively affect the baked good, but it will actually improve it (for all the reasons listed above). However, if a recipe calls for creaming butter, you may indeed run into trouble if you substitute, as the texture of the baked good is probably dependent on that creaming process.

Substitute $\frac{3}{4}$ of the melted butter in a recipe with oil. Because butter is about 80% fat and 20% water, and oil is 100% fat, when substituting oil for melted butter in baking recipes it is a good idea to use a little less oil, about $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{7}{8}$ the amount of butter. So, if a recipe calls for 8 tablespoons of butter, you would substitute with 6 or 7 tablespoons of oil. Some bakers recommend a one-to-one substitution, but in my experience, a touch less is just about perfect.

Substitute the melted butter in your recipe with nut, seed or olive oil for more flavor. Adding flavored oils to baked goods makes them extra flavorful in ways butter can only dream about. For example, try substituting walnut oil in a banana bread that calls for walnuts and a peppery olive oil in a muffin recipe calling for cheese and prosciutto. Using a complementary flavored oil subtly enhances the ingredients already present, elevating them.

So consider giving oil a try the next time you come across melted butter in a recipe. You may discover that butter might just need to watch its back.



Hazelnut Chiffon Cake With Nutella Ganache

Active time: 30 minutes

Total time: 3 hours, 15 minutes (includes cooling time)

Servings: 12 to 16

A chiffon cake is a splendidly tall, wildly easy, oil-based cake. It is rich in flavor from egg yolks, yet wonderfully light in texture because of copious amounts of stiffly peaked whites. The cake is whisked together in a single bowl except for the whipped whites, which get added at the end.

Ground hazelnuts replace some of the flour and contribute wonderful texture (and color) to the cake's moist, airy crumb. And a ganache made of Nutella, or your favorite brand of hazelnut chocolate spread, not only adds some welcome sweetness, but also beautifully compliments the flavor and texture of the ground hazelnuts in the cake.

Notes: Chiffon cakes are traditionally baked in an ungreased tube pan with a removable bottom, in a low oven, for a long time. And it is when the cake emerges from the oven that the drama begins. Rather than cool the cake right side up on a rack, the cake is turned upside down to cool. Many tube pans come with tabs or feet that allow you to invert the pan for cooling. If yours does not, suspend the pan on the neck of a bottle, such as a wine bottle. This will help the cake retain its height. (If you don't have a suitable pan or a bottle that works with your pan, the cake should deflate only slightly.)

There is no need to peel the hazelnuts, as the skins add color and texture, too. If you do not have a food processor, consider buying hazelnut flour.

Make ahead: Make the cake up to 36 hours before you want to serve it and store it at room temperature, unglazed and covered with a large bowl or tightly wrapped in plastic wrap. It is even better on the second day.

Storage notes: Leftover cake can be lightly wrapped in plastic wrap or covered with a large bowl and stored at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Ingredients

For the cake:

7 large eggs, cold or at room temperature, whites and yolks separated

1 $\frac{3}{8}$ cups (335 grams) granulated sugar, divided

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (180 milliliters) cold tap water

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 milliliters) vegetable or hazelnut oil

1 tablespoon baking powder

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt

2 cups (225 grams) cake flour

1 cup (130 grams) whole hazelnuts, finely ground in a food processor, or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (130 grams) hazelnut flour or hazelnut meal

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar

Chopped hazelnuts, for decorating

For the ganache:

1 cup (285 grams) Nutella or another chocolate-hazelnut spread

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 milliliters) heavy cream

1 tablespoon vegetable or hazelnut oil

Directions

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 325 degrees. Have ready an ungreased 10- to 12-cup tube pan with a removable bottom.

In a large bowl, whisk the egg yolks, 1 cup (200 grams) of the sugar and the water for about 30 seconds, until the mixture lightens slightly in color. Whisk in the oil, baking powder, vanilla and salt.

Sift the cake flour into the bowl, add the ground hazelnuts and whisk until just combined.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whip the egg whites and cream of tartar on medium-low until the egg whites become frothy, about 2 minutes. Next, whip the mixture on medium-high until, when you lift the whisk out, a soft peak forms and flop over at the tip, about 3 minutes.

With the mixer on medium, slowly add the remaining $\frac{3}{8}$ cup (135 grams) of granulated sugar to the egg whites. Increase the speed to medium-high and continue whisking until stiff peaks form, about 3 minutes. If they flop over, they need more time; if they hold a point, you're set.

Gently fold a third of the whipped whites into the batter until they disappear. Be sure to fold with the lightest touch, so as not to deflate the whipped egg whites. Add another third and fold them in, followed by the final one, folding until just combined.

Transfer the batter to the pan, smooth the top with a small offset spatula and bake for 1 hour to 1 hour and 10 minutes, or until the top springs back when pressed with a fingertip and a cake tester inserted in the middle comes out with a moist crumb.

Remove from the oven and, if possible, invert the cake onto a thin-necked bottle, such as a wine bottle.

Cooling the cake upside down keeps it from slightly deflating (see notes). Let cool for about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or until it comes to room temperature.

To remove the cake from the pan, gently run a long knife around the outside edge of the cake and around the inside tube.

Remove the sides of the pan, run the knife between the bottom of the cake and the pan and carefully lift the cake off the pan. Place it on a cooling rack set over a baking sheet.

To make the ganache, place the Nutella in a small bowl. In a small saucepan over medium heat, warm the cream until tiny bubbles appear around the edges, about 3 to 5 minutes.

Pour the cream over Nutella and let it sit for about 1 minute. Using a fork, begin stirring from the center of the bowl until the cream and Nutella are thoroughly combined. Add the oil and continue to stir until emulsified.

Generously drizzle the cooled cake with the ganache, letting it decoratively drip down the sides. You will have some ganache left over.

Let the glazed cake set briefly, about 15 minutes, before serving. Slice and serve with more ganache.

WEEKEND: BOOKS



DREAMSTIME/TNS

Joe Coulombe's memoir, "Becoming Trader Joe," which was published after his death in 2020, is much more than a "how-to" guide for entrepreneurs. It is also a tour of California's shifting economy and culture from the 1960s to 1990s, guided by one of its most original thinkers.

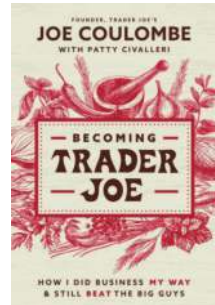
Finding 'room to do something different'

Trader Joe's founder explains how the grocery chain became successful in his posthumously published memoir

BY MARY McNAMARA
Los Angeles Times

There are two iconic pieces of signage in Los Angeles. One is big and tall and says "Hollywood"; the other is small and red and says "Trader Joe's."

For Angelenos, both are simply a part of the landscape. Just as we groan when visitors want a Hollywood sign selfie — "Oh, my God. Why?" — we gasp when they say they don't live near a Trader Joe's — "Oh, my God. How?"



Can it honestly be called "life" if there is no Spiced Cider or two-buck Chuck? No Reduced-Guilt Mac & Cheese, Chocolatey

Coated Chocolate Chip Dunkers or Crisp Pasadena Salad With Chicken? Who would choose to live somewhere you cannot buy TJ's peanut butter-filled pretzels or Tempting Trail Mix, which is basically just candy?

It's hard to think of any other market that holds so much sway over its customers, especially a chain with problematic parking and such a frankly bizarre inventory. How did a store that sells 15 kinds of dark chocolate and zero kinds of aluminum foil, a chain that proudly advertises popular items with limited availability, even come into being, never mind become wildly successful?

Founder Joe Coulombe will tell you exactly how in his posthumously published new memoir, "Becoming Trader Joe."

In the early 2000s, decades after he had sold it to the German family that also owns Aldi's, Coulombe wrote a "how I did it" history of Trader Joe's, a chronicle of the clever end-runs, deep research and influences that powered the now-national chain. The tone is conversational, one man's view of the world through the wine, spirit and grocery business,

filled with the type of puns, literary references and bold-faced pronouncements that mark the store's signage and its legendary promotional leaflet, the Fearless Flyer.

According to Patty Civalieri, who shepherded the book to publication, Coulombe did not imagine the book would ever be published; he wrote it simply to ensure there would be a record. In 2007, he gave it to original Trader Joe's employee and longtime friend Leroy Watson, and told him to do whatever he wanted with it.

Watson knew the Trader Joe's story almost as well as Coulombe, but he had no idea what to do with a book. Eleven years later, he approached Civalieri, a friend who has published several travel guides, and asked her advice.

"I read the book and fell in love," Civalieri says. "Joe's voice was in every sentence."

So at Watson's behest, and with Coulombe's blessing, she edited the manuscript "for grammar and flow," added some images and pitched it to her agent.

Coulombe died in the pre-pandemic days of 2020. Through "Becoming Trader Joe: How I Did Business My Way & Still Beat the Big Guys," Coulombe is still telling us how it's done.

Though clearly written for fellow entrepreneurs and business types — for all his folksiness, Coulombe had a Master of



Business Administration from Stanford — and published under HarperCollins' Leadership imprint, "Becoming Trader Joe" is much more than a "how-to" guide. Moving from the 1960s to the 1990s, it is also a tour of California's shifting economy and culture, guided by one of its most original thinkers.

As anyone who has ever enjoyed, say, TJ's now-defunct Sir Isaac Newtons or the Bagel Spinoza might surmise, Coulombe drew inspiration from a breathtaking variety of sources. Ernest

Hemingway, Buckminster Fuller, Barbara Tuchman, Jose Ortega y Gasset and the Whole Earth Catalog, not to mention the state Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, all contributed in some way to a market that, in fighting the conformity of corporate brands, became one of the most famous brands of all.

Coulombe, who remained personally involved in every aspect of the chain for years after he sold it, was always happy to discuss the two articles that revealed to him an emerging demographic: A 1965 Scientific American piece on how the GI Bill had dramatically increased the number of college graduates and a Wall Street Journal story from that same year announcing that the Boeing 747 would slash the cost of international travel.

Coulombe, trying to figure out how he could turn his struggling Pronto Markets around, decided that educated people who could now afford the trips they dreamed of might crave the type of products they associated with travel, also at prices they could afford.

In 1966, Coulombe writes, "The op-ed pieces in the LA Times fretted about how we would spend all that leisure time since the thirty-five-hour workweek was now a sure thing ... so Trader Joe's was conceived in an atmosphere of fun-leisure-party prosperity."

The name and Tiki bar motif came from sources as varied as Disneyland's Jungle Cruise, the songs "Yellow Bird" and "Beyond the Reef" and, of course, Trader Vic's, then at the zenith of its Beverly Hilton glory.

Coulombe's tale is a crazy-like-a-fox exploration of California culture through the lens of one wildly creative and well-read man always looking for a new way over, around or through. Entrepreneurs will no doubt find plenty of inspiration, but fans will find a fascinating origin story.

If nothing else, Trader Joe's "normalized" previ-

ously outlier foods, from trail mix to frozen tacos. Did you know that for many years, TJ's was one of the few markets offering extra-large eggs, almond butter, wild rice and real maple syrup? That it got into fruit and nuts, because the only local company that packaged bran insisted on shipping those as well? That Trader Joe's was among the first grocery stores in the U.S. to accept credit cards and that in the early days, it had its own winery?

There were plenty of mistakes and misfires — Coulombe's dream of building a store in one of Fuller's geodesic domes didn't pan out. He had to walk back claims that a Trader Joe's brand of dog food was based on a formula devised at the University of California, Davis (though the store still sells the no-corn kibble). And, as evidenced by the recent controversy over culturally modified brands including Trader Jose and Trader Ming, not all of the linguistic whimsy has worked.

But two things never changed: Inexpensive wine and well-paid workers. Coulombe devotes several chapters to the importance of paying workers well — minimal turnover, fewer worries about unionization — which, given the current conflicts over raising the minimum wage, feels just as relevant as it did more than half a century ago.

And then there is the food. It's hard to imagine a Whole Foods without the path cut by Trader Joe's.

More important, though many may argue about the names or even the quality of some of its offerings, TJ's predicted — and helped create — the international and intercultural exploration that has redefined American cuisine.

For Civalieri, working on the book reminded her how big an imprint Trader Joe's had on the culture of food.

"Back in the '60s and '70s, our culture was all about processed food, canned food, homogenized brands," she says. "Joe found room to do something different. And that changed everything."



WEEKEND: MUSIC

Changing his tune

How songwriting saint Johnta Austin rewrote his career

BY MESFIN FEKADU
Associated Press

It's the early '90s and a preteen Johnta Austin is in the studio working on his debut album with a pair of unknown producers named Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo.

Trading ideas, hearing beats and writing melodies — along with a future Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter named Joe — the artists were vibing out and creating magic.

Until Austin hit puberty.

"I got signed when I was 13, dropped when I was 15," Austin explained. "My voice changed and the administration that signed me left."

One of the songs he worked on for himself, the sultry R&B balled "Sweet Lady," caught the interest of new signee Tyrese, who replaced Austin on the RCA Records roster.

"I was like, 'I don't want to do a song for this guy.' In my mind at this time, this guy took my spot, even though we had never met each other," he said.

But Austin put his businessman hat on and gave the song away. Released in 1998, "Sweet Lady" became a hit, earned Tyrese his first Grammy nomination and helped his debut album go platinum.

Fast forward nearly three decades after he first was signed, Austin now has two Grammy Awards and has co-written a handful of other multi-platinum hits deemed R&B classics, including Mariah Carey's "We Belong Together" and Mary J. Blige's "Be Without You." And the debut album he first worked on at 13 finally came out — when Austin was 39 in 2019.

"It's been a long time coming. Definitely happy to have this album out," he said of "Love, Sex & Religion."

In an interview with The Associated Press, Austin — who turned 41 Monday — talks about his career, the Grammys, getting dance tips from Janet Jackson and writing hits for Carey, Blige, Aaliyah and more.

We miss you

Austin originally wrote the song "Miss You" with Ginuwine for the R&B crooner's album, but then Aaliyah heard the track and wanted to record it.

"She loved 'Miss You.' She was like, 'This is amazing. I want to cut it,'" Austin recalled.

But Austin had sent her another song, "I Don't Wanna," and his team wanted the late icon to record that track. So they made a deal.

"My manager at the time was like, 'You have to cut 'I Don't Wanna' to get ('Miss You),'"

Austin revealed. "Miss You" was released in 2002 following Aaliyah's tragic death a year prior, and the music video was a tribute to her life and legacy, with everyone from Jay-Z to Missy Elliott making cameos.



AP

The song "Miss You," written by Johnta Austin with Ginuwine, was released in 2002, the year after the tragic death of R&B singer/actress Aaliyah (above) in a plane crash. She was 22. The music video was a tribute to her life and legacy.

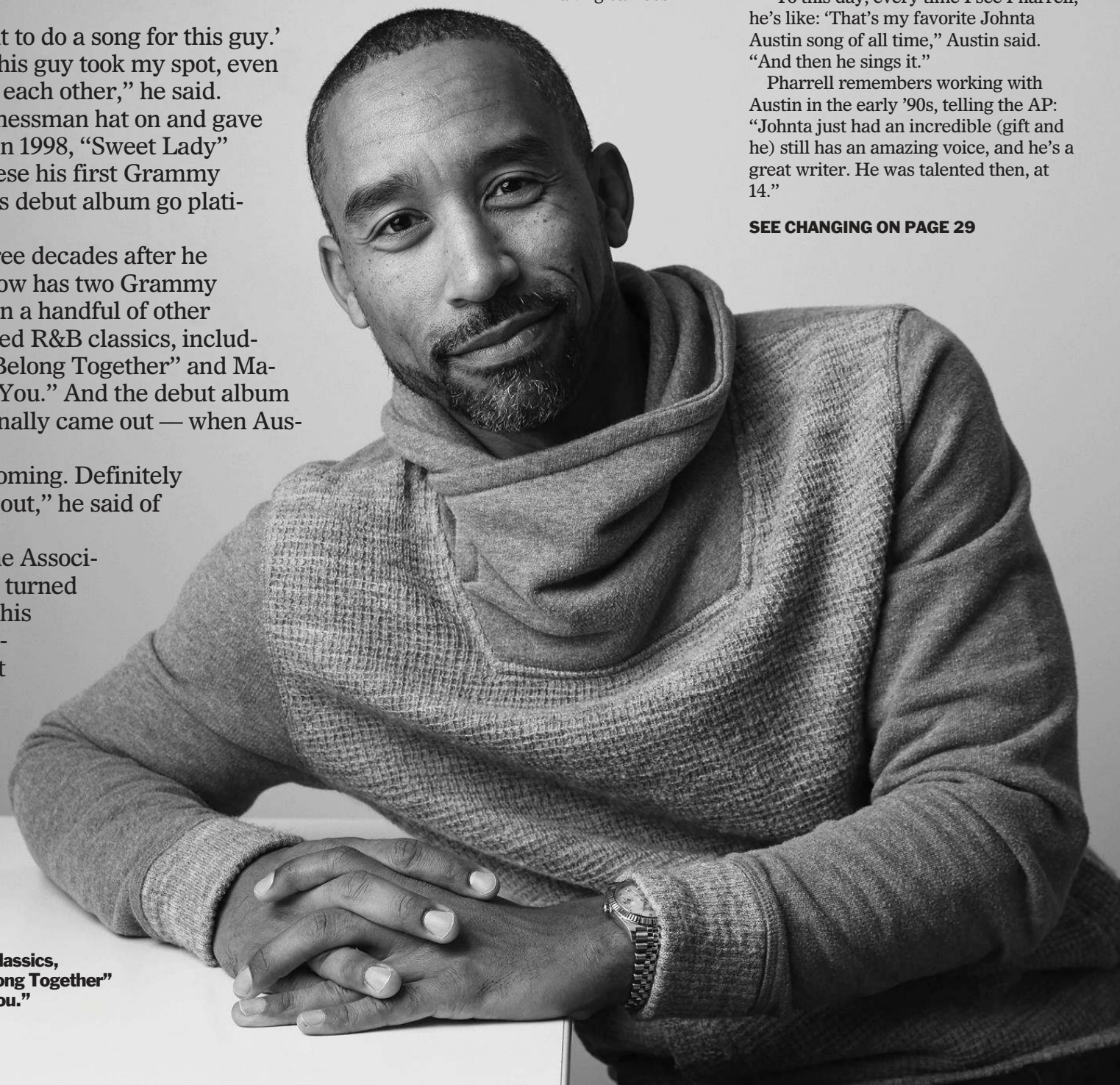
Pharrell's favorite

Aaliyah's "I Don't Wanna," released in 2000, not only became a hit on the pop and R&B charts — it is Pharrell's No. 1 pick from Austin's rich catalog.

"To this day, every time I see Pharrell, he's like: 'That's my favorite Johnta Austin song of all time,'" Austin said. "And then he sings it."

Pharrell remembers working with Austin in the early '90s, telling the AP: "Johnta just had an incredible (gift and he) still has an amazing voice, and he's a great writer. He was talented then, at 14."

SEE CHANGING ON PAGE 29



Johnta Austin poses for a portrait in New York on Nov. 6, 2019. Austin has two Grammy Awards and has co-written a handful of other multiplatinum hits deemed R&B classics, including Mariah Carey's "We Belong Together" and Mary J. Blige's "Be Without You."

AP

WEEKEND: MUSIC

5 albums that need to be on your radar in July

BY JIM HARRINGTON
The Mercury News

It's a big month for new album releases, highlighted by offerings from two of pop music's biggest stars — Lana Del Rey and Billie Eilish.

Here's a look at some of the top releases for July:

'Blue Banisters,' Lana Del Rey

Del Rey has been on quite a roll over the past 10 years, beginning with the deliriously good major label debut "Born to Die" in 2012 and continuing through such stellar efforts as 2014's "Ultraviolence" and 2017's "Lust for Life." All told, she's fashioned one of the best pop music catalogs of the past decade. And we can't hear this new addition — Del Rey's eighth studio album overall — which quickly follows the March release of "Chemtrails over the Country Club." "Blue Banisters" is due out July 4.

'Happier Than Ever,' Billie Eilish

Millions of fans around the globe have been breathlessly awaiting Eilish's sophomore effort, which follows 2019's multipla-



'Happier Than Ever,' the second album from Billie Eilish, will drop July 30.

tinum-selling, multi-Grammy-winning debut "When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?" From what we've heard from the four singles released already — "Therefore I Am," "My Future," "Your Power" and "Lost Cause" — those fans will likely be happier than ever with "Happier Than Ever." Due out July 30.



Los Lobos pay tribute to fellow musical greats on "Native Sons," out July 30.

'Into the Mystery,' Needtobreathe

The South Carolina alt-rock troupe returns with its eighth studio album, which follows 2020's "Out of Body." One of the standout cuts in the set is "I Wanna Remember," which finds lead vocalist

Bear Rinehart crooning alongside country music superstar Carrie Underwood. The album is due out July 30.

'Native Sons,' Los Lobos

Los Lobos pays tribute to some fellow musical greats from Los Angeles — including Buffalo Springfield, War, the Blasters and Jackson Browne — on this collection of (mostly) covers. (The title cut is the only original on the album.) Of particular note is the group's wonderful version of the Beach Boys' "Sail On, Sailor," which will hopefully be a staple of Los Lobos live sets for years to come. Due out July 30.

'Heart in Motion (30th Anniversary Edition),' Amy Grant

The acclaimed vocalist is celebrating the 30th anniversary of her biggest-selling album — 1991's quintuple-platinum-selling "Heart in Motion" — by offering up an expanded two-disc set for fans. The collection includes a remastered version of the original Grammy-nominated album as well as bonus disc filled with new mixes and never-before-heard tunes. Due out July 9.

Changing: Austin says friend Usher's success kept him in music

FROM PAGE 28

Of those days, Austin remembers being in producer Dallas Austin's recording studio in Atlanta while "Pharrell was walking around in these big space boots."

"They were young kids. I remember Chad (Hugo) had to go back because he had classes. He had to fly back to Virginia. Pharrell, he was writing; Joe was doing the demos," he said.

Austin recalled the Neptunes duo working on some of their early successes at the time, including SWV's "Use Your Heart," which reached No. 6 on the R&B charts.

"'Use Your Heart' was done in those sessions; Joe demoed that," Austin said. "You can still hear some of his old ad-libs."

Baby Usher

Imagine this: A teenage Austin and Usher running the New York City streets, visiting open mic nights and honing their performance chops.

"This was back when I had no business being in these clubs. I was 14, 15," Austin said, name-dropping clubs like Cafe Wha? and Chaz and Wilson. "That's back when on any given night, they'd pass the mic around, Joe would get the mic, Dave Hollister would get the mic, Puff (Daddy) brought 112 there one night and they performed. It was great. I would always go with Carl (Thomas) and Troy (Taylor) and pass the mic."

He added: "We took Usher down there ... This is before 'My

Way' came out. He and I knew each other since I was 12 and he was like 13 coming up in Atlanta. He did 'Call Me a Mack' for the 'Poetic Justice' soundtrack. That's how far him and I go back. He would pick me up from school. When he got his jeep, he would pick me up. Me, him, Jason Weaver were riding around. That was the crew back then."

Usher is just two years older than Austin and released his self-titled debut album in 1994. His major breakthrough came with 1997's "My Way," which featured the hits "You Make Me Wanna..." and "Nice & Slow."

Austin said Usher's success inspired him to not give up on music.

"Right around that time he dropped 'My Way' it was like, 'Now he's the man.'" That was motivating for me. Then I realized I had a talent for writing songs. I was like, 'I can stay around the industry doing this.' It just motivated me to stick around and find another way in."

Rhythm Nation

Austin co-wrote multiple songs on Janet Jackson's 2006 album "20 Y.O.," including the hits "So Excited" and "Call on Me."

But one time in the studio, Austin got a dance lesson from the pop icon.

"Fred Astaire is on the TV and then I see the move. He does this move and I'm like, 'That's where Michael got that move from! She's like, 'You've never seen this?' I'm like, 'No!'"

So Austin stands up and gives



AP

Johnta Austin counts a dance lesson from Janet Jackson, above, among his career highlights. Austin co-wrote multiple songs on Jackson's 2006 album "20 Y.O.," including the hits "So Excited" and "Call on Me."

the dance a try.

"I'm playing around and she's like, 'No, no, no. You have to...' She stands up and I'm like, 'What's going on?' Janet is teaching me how to do a move that her brother did in a video. This is crazy."

Austin said working with Jackson was a lifelong dream, especially because he was always a big fan of her music.

"I'm getting called to work (with her) and she's loving the material? It's still hard to sink in when you're sitting with these people," he said. "The humility that she has; she is open to ideas and then nurturing you to be your best. It's great."

They belonged together

"We Belong Together" was the No. 1 song of the 2000s, but Austin almost didn't work on the

classic Mariah Carey track.

Austin said when he was collaborating in the studio with the pop diva and Jermaine Dupri, his "publisher wanted me to do this other project."

"I was like, 'I would love to but I'm in Atlanta working on Mariah.' They were like, 'Are you crazy? Mariah, she just did "Glitter." I can't believe you're passing this up.'"

Austin clearly made the right choice. "We Belong Together" is not just one of the most popular songs every released, it appears on Carey's "The Emancipation of Mimi," her comeback album that cemented her spot on the list of greatest singers of all time and extended her long list of No. 1 hits.

"I'd like to think we got that one right," said Austin, who also co-wrote "It's Like That," "Shake It Off," "Don't Forget About Us" and more tracks from the seminal album. "It was great. Just to be there, melodies back and forth, ideas back and forth. She's a real writer and she's fantastic."

During those recording sessions, he said "We Belong Together" was the last track they worked on. The ballad spent 14 weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and won the Grammys for best female R&B vocal performance and best R&B song, earning Austin his first gramophone.

"I don't want to say I stopped listening to the radio, but I couldn't go 30 minutes without hearing that song. That song was everywhere."

Grammy shmammy

Though "We Belong Together" won two Grammys, it didn't pick up song or record of the year — huge honors that rarely go to R&B or rap tunes.

"It was Destiny's Child who was presenting song of the year and it happened to go to U2, and I remember seeing Beyoncé turn," Austin recalled, "I don't know if the camera caught it, but Beyoncé, after she announced it, she turns to Mariah and was like, 'I'm sorry.'"

Carey also lost album of the year to U2 while Green Day won record of the year.

A year later, Austin was a song of the year nominee with Mary J. Blige's "Be Without You," which spent 15 weeks on top of the R&B charts.

"Everyone was like, 'This is the year because it was another huge comeback for Mary.' Everyone was like, 'Wow, Mary's back.' Everyone was like, 'You're going to win song of the year.'"

But they didn't. The song, also nominated for record of the year, only won two R&B Grammys.

"We won best R&B song earlier in the night and ... I remember when the Dixie Chicks performed. I'm listening to the lyrics, I turn to my manager and I go, 'We can go ahead and leave,'" he said of the Chicks' stirring political anthem "Not Ready to Make Nice."

"They had a big thing against the president at that time. When they made that song, it was like, 'We're not winning this.'"

WEEKEND: TELEVISION

BY ROBERT LLOYD

Los Angeles Times

For the third time in his career, Conan O'Brien left a late-night show June 24, ending the 11-season run of "Conan" on TBS — preceded by the end of his seven-month stint as the host of "The Tonight Show," and that by the end of 16 years' worth of "Late Night," both on NBC. Unlike those earlier departures, he does not have another talk show on the horizon, at least not on television, but will present what has so far been described only as a "variety show" on HBO Max, a TBS corporate relative.

The final "Conan" was a friendly, appealingly modest affair presented in front of an audience that seemed to include a lot of people who worked on the show and their friends and relations, to judge by the applause accorded various members of the production team in O'Brien's closing remarks. It was taped at Largo at the Coronet Theater, a cozy space long at the center of Los Angeles comedy; "Conan" has been based there for a year, playing until lately to a crowd of cardboard cut-outs and crew members, with O'Brien, his guest and more-than-a-sidekick Andy Richter keeping more than the recommended social distance. The last couple of weeks have introduced live audiences, however, and there has been a lot of sincere, sentimental hugging as the show has lowered its shutters. Even so, it has been a more measured affair than the host's last days at "Late Night," when he took his set apart with an ax.

It was "fitting," said O'Brien, that final guest Jack Black had actually injured himself rehearsing a filmed musical piece in which he was supposed to appear to injure himself; he came onstage with a cane in his hand and a foot in a brace. One waited to see if it were a bit, but it wasn't.

"When Carson and Letterman and all these legends go off the air, everything is meticulous," O'Brien said. ("Johnny would have had Jack shot," Richter joked. "That's how they did it then.") Black did manage to rise and sing to the tune of "My Way": "He's tall, he's really pale, he has red hair, like Howdy Doody / But more, much more than this, he did it Cone's way."

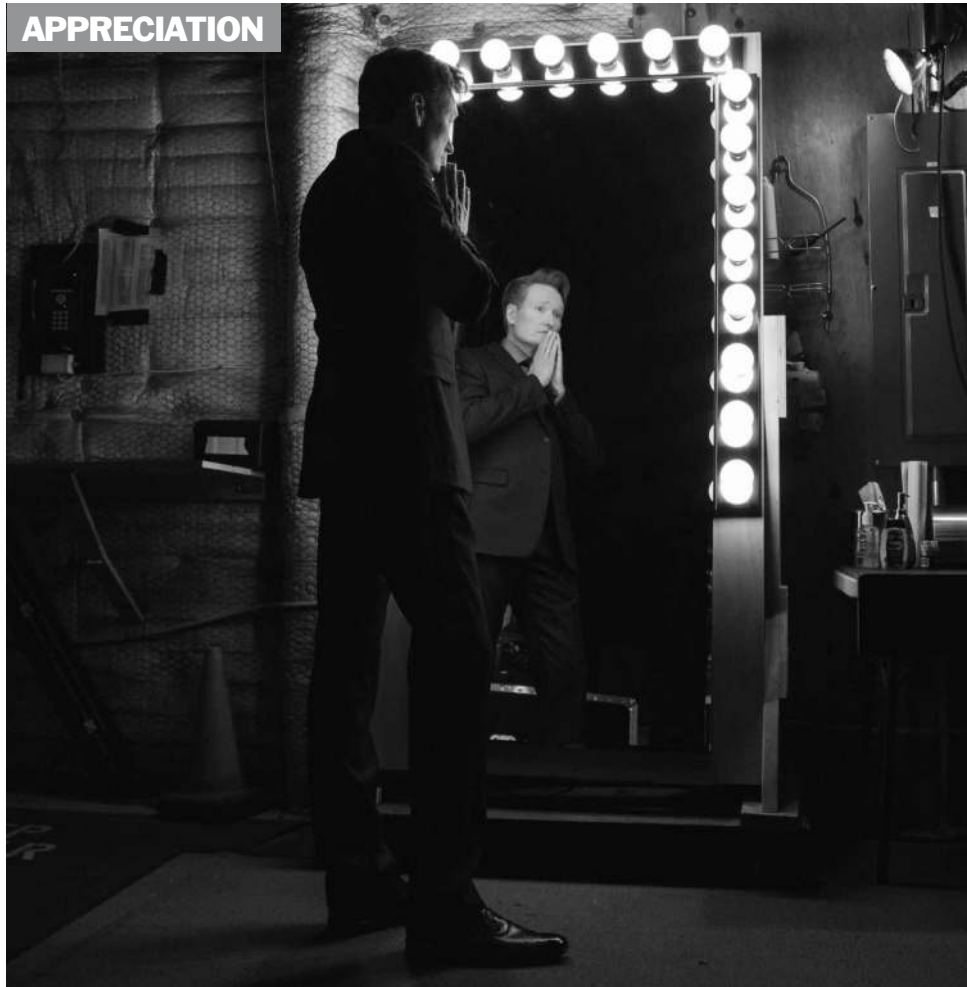
Conan's final episodes included visits by Martin Short, J.B. Smoove, Tig Notaro, Patton Oswalt, Mila Kunis and Dana Carvey. Seth Rogen got him to take a hit of a joint he happened to have on him.

"I'm like a narc that to prove he was not a narc took some drugs," O'Brien said. "I think it metabolizes and becomes more orange pompadour."

Paul Rudd, in a tuxedo, crashed Bill Hader's segment to prank the host once more with a clip of "Mac and Me," the awful "E.T." knockoff he substitutes for whatever film he's supposedly there to promote.

Will Ferrell, who also appeared on the last night of O'Brien's "Late Night," Zoomed in to record a packet of farewells for future last shows: "Congratulations on an outstanding run on your HBO Max show; people would say that six episodes isn't a lot, but you packed enough entertainment in them for eight episodes." And, "I'm truly going to miss your Delta flight talk show, 'Wheels Up,' available on select flights from Atlanta to Tampa."

O'Brien himself announced "my new career posing as Conan O'Brien on Hollywood Boulevard." An "exit interview"



BRINSON+BANKS/For The Washington Post

Conan O'Brien looks in a mirror on the set of "Conan" in Burbank, Calif., in 2016.

Conan's way

Throughout his late-night TV career, O'Brien has distinguished himself from other talk show hosts

conducted by Homer Simpson with an animated Conan — referencing "Marge vs. the Monorail," an episode O'Brien wrote — opened the show.

Obviously, there is some distance between O'Brien's habitual self-deprecation, whether it expresses genuine feelings and/or supports a joke, and the reality of his success, a trail that leads through the Harvard Lampoon,

of which he was president; the writers rooms of "Saturday Night Live" and "The Simpsons"; 28 years of talk shows, which requires being funny night after night; and a highly successful podcast, "Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend," which requires being natural in an unnatural setting.

NBC paid him more than \$30 million to walk away from "The Tonight Show," which is a rarefied sort of failure, a disappointment stood on the shoulders of great success.

This self-consciousness is what sets him apart from Jimmy and Jimmy and James and Stephen; they are all more or less regular guys where he is an irregular one; even his whiteness is a different shade of

pale. In classic rock terms, it's the difference between being a fan of Neil Young and a fan of those other guys in that supergroup. He is a performer almost by accident, a writer who suddenly found himself — a man who needed much introduction — in David Letterman's "Late Night" chair, shot from a cannon. But that he thinks like a writer must also have influen-

ced the fictional frames his late-night shows put around the more or less nonfictional appearances of his guests.

The crazy clubhouses O'Brien and his writers and producers built undoubtedly meant more to the fans than the latest project or hairstyle of whoever happened to be passing

through that night. Some characters on O'Brien shows have the flavor of surrealist art or something a child might say to explain what a scribble represents: Sears Tower Wearing Sears Clothing; Chess Piece With a Mullet Riding a Rascal Scooter While Listening to a Ring Tone of "Little Red Corvette"; Hippie Fire Hydrant Riding a Skateboard; Redneck Parking Meter Eating Nachos Out of a Roman

Coliseum; Minty, the Candy Cane That Briefly Fell on the Ground.

His energy and his looks — Short called him a "ginger crash-test dummy" — make him hard to place chronologically; O'Brien is 58: He will have been getting AARP mailers for some time now. For late-night-retirement context, he's eight years younger than Johnny Carson was when he quit "The Tonight Show," a decade younger than David Letterman when he left "Late Show," and a year younger than Jay Leno when Leno turned the keys to "The Tonight Show" over to him in 2009, before taking them back for another four years. He has stayed in longer than his contemporaries but is getting out sooner than his elders, making sure not to stay too long at the fair.

Probably he would have found the measure of "The Tonight Show" eventually. But perhaps it worked out for the best. O'Brien's self and sensibilities truly are a little strange, a little disturbing, a little bit out of the way. It's not that I would wish less success on anyone, but TBS may have been the better fit in the long run. Bigger is not always better; budget is the mother of invention. In the end, it proved only that there is more to late night than a name or a network. If anything, it was a matter of being struck down only to become more powerful: The imbroglia made O'Brien into a cause, Coco of Team Coco; it gave him an underdog's advantage, set him on the moral high ground and laid the grounds for his future.

Speaking in the Oxford Union (as in university) in February 2020, he explained the decision to cut the show to half an hour and a single guest rather than the old late-night routine of "comedy, first guest that you want to see, second guest that you don't care about, third guest that you don't care about."

The deeper dives, less related to pushing product, are the herald of his mature phrase. (Longer cuts are available online, where Team Coco does most of its work.) O'Brien promised "Late Night" fans he wouldn't "grow up" when he moved to "The Tonight Show," but he's been doing it all along. "Connection," he has often said, is what really matters to him. The "Conan Without Borders" specials, which find him in far-flung locales, acting the genial idiot, willing participant or eager student in cultures not his own, comes out of that desire; the podcast, which goes its own way at length, is its flowering.

"I have devoted all of my adult life, all of it, to pursuing this strange phantom intersection between smart and stupid," he said in the "Conan" finale. "This really crazy and seemingly pointless pursuit to do things that are kind of stupid but have something smart in there somewhere and then there's a little tiny sort of flicker of what is a kind of a magic, I think. That's what I believe. So my advice to anyone watching right now, and it's not easy to do, but try and do what you love with people you love, and if you can manage that, it's the definition of heaven on earth."

We cannot all be Conan O'Brien; his talent is rare and, anyway, what an exhausting world that would be. There are good lessons in his life and work for the rest of us, however: You can be strange and still do all right. You can be rejected and humiliated in a public forum and still find people on your side, and go on to succeed in ways you never imagined. You might think little of yourself, but you might be wrong about that.

"I have devoted all of my adult life, all of it, to pursuing this strange phantom intersection between smart and stupid."

Conan O'Brien

from the finale of his TBS show

WEEKEND: TELEVISION



ALEX BERLINER/Disney+

Almost by accident, Wolfgang Puck created the concept of a “celebrity chef” with his decades-spanning television appearances, building a staggering global empire of restaurants, cafes and products for home cooks. But, as he discusses in his new documentary, “Wolfgang” on Disney+, at home the frenetic professional demands disrupted his family life.

The rise of the first celebrity chef

New documentary tells straightforward origin story of Wolfgang Puck and his business empire

By LUCAS SHAW
Bloomberg News

The most surprising thing about the new Disney+ documentary “Wolfgang” is that it exists at all. For one thing, Wolfgang Puck doesn’t look backward, as he notes in the movie’s opening minutes. Though Puck is America’s original celebrity chef and one of the world’s most famous, he has been reluctant to talk about his childhood, his personal life or how he built his business empire, estimated to be worth at least \$90 million. He has been singularly focused on advancing his brand, which encompasses everything from popular steakhouses to cookware.

The documentary, now streaming on Disney+, will also get some attention for putting the spotlight back on white male chefs. The current culinary moment belongs to projects such as “High on the Hog,” the celebrated Netflix series about the history of Black food.

Now 71, the Austrian-American Puck has decided to open up to director David Gelb of “Jiro Dreams of Sushi” fame. In Gelb’s “Wolfgang,” Puck talks, as he rarely does, about his childhood and his abusive stepfather, his public divorce from his second wife and business partner Barbara Lazaroff and his strained relationship with



LOS ANGELES MAGAZINE/Disney+

“Wolfgang” follows Puck as he reckons with the price of his dreams to be a chef.

his kids. (Disclosure: Puck’s oldest son is a close friend of this writer.)

The result is no revelation. Many aspects of his private life are glossed over or skipped entirely, including his first wife, Marie France Trouillot, and the affair that led to the end of his marriage to Lazaroff. This is a Disney movie, after all.

Instead, “Wolfgang” is a very traditional documentary about the origin story of the country’s first celebrity chef and how he made cooks into household names and a restaurant the hottest piece of real estate in town. At its best, the film delivers fun anecdotes about Puck’s start and footage from the early days at Spago, the restaurant that made him famous and a staple at the Oscars.

For instance: Puck invented Spago’s

famed smoked salmon pizza by accident when Joan Collins came for lunch and the kitchen was out of brioche. Collins, one of that era’s most famous TV actresses, always ordered the salmon. Puck serendipitously threw the smoked fish on a pizza for her.

Likewise, when he found out that Johnny Carson was taking home 10 pies at a time so he could freeze them, Puck began selling pizzas in supermarkets. In the process, he helped launch chefs’ direct-to-consumer products, which gave rise to such brands as the ubiquitous Rao’s and now Carbone pasta sauces.

And Puck became a staple on “Good Morning America” because Hollywood super agent Michael Ovitz took the head of ABC to dinner at Spago and got him

drunk. The chef’s TV career has endured for more than three decades.

The food aspect of the documentary basically stops two decades ago, robbing viewers of a look at how Puck turned his initial culinary genius into one of the world’s largest, most successful hospitality empires. The movie doesn’t mention his steakhouse Cut, which is now his biggest restaurant chain. Not does it talk about his vast catering business, beyond the obligatory references to the Oscars.

This approach opens the documentary to criticism, especially that “Wolfgang” subscribes to the great man theory — that Puck did it all by himself. It’s easy to forget, watching myriad images of Puck surrounded by cameras, that he’s had an army of talented people behind him, especially Lazaroff, who gets some face time but could get more credit for his rise.

Puck is an unexpected subject for Gelb, who helped initiate the U.S. obsession with culinary documentaries via his Netflix series “Chef’s Table,” which he started in 2015. Along with Anthony Bourdain, Gelb has helped food lovers discover visual stories that aren’t focused on obvious food celebrities and restaurants, and has paved the way for shows like Samin Nosrat’s “Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat” and the Mexican street-food hit “Taco Chronicles.”

By comparison, “Wolfgang” feels tailored to consumers who’ve purchased his soups or knives at local markets.

“We really feel like it’s for a broad audience,” Gelb says, describing Puck’s life story as a classic archetype about a man running from something he fears (his stepfather) only to discover what he loves (cooking).

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Brushing up on your oral care regimen

Dental experts say although regular dental appointments have resumed, you can't slack off at home

By **ALLYSON CHIU**
The Washington Post

Beyond its psychological toll, the coronavirus pandemic has wreaked havoc on our bodies: Many people have put on pounds, picked at their skin, broken their toes — and, according to dentists, damaged their teeth.

As more Americans return to dental offices, practitioners say they're seeing a significant rise in tooth-grinding and jaw-clenching likely brought on by pandemic-related stress and anxiety. They're also seeing an increase in cavities and gum disease that may be due to a combination of lapsed appointments, pandemic eating and drinking habits and less-than-stellar brushing and flossing.

In a February survey conducted by the American Dental Association, 76% of general practice dentists said the prevalence of teeth-grinding, or bruxism, among their patients had increased compared to that of pre-pandemic times. About two-thirds reported seeing a rise in associated problems of chipped and cracked teeth as well as headache and jaw pain symptoms, the survey found. Meanwhile, about 30% of respondents said they observed more tooth decay and periodontal disease, an infection of the tissues surrounding teeth, in their patients.

Brad Guyton, chief dental officer for Delta Dental of Virginia, said the increase in common problems like cavities was not as severe as many dentists had feared, perhaps because many dental practices did not stay closed for long.

"Had we been shut down for six months, that could have been catastrophic, not only to the dentists and their businesses, but more importantly, the patients that needed to get in," Guyton said.

But although dentists were able to reopen early in the pandemic, concerns about the coronavirus continued to keep many patients away, which made caring for teeth at home "even more important," said Domenica Sweier, a clinical professor at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry.

"Most people, I think, tried their best in a very unusual situation," said Ada Cooper, a spokesperson for the American Dental Association and a consumer adviser with a private dental practice in New York. "Even at that, there's no substitute for regular dental visits."

As the pandemic eases, here's some advice about brushing up on your oral care habits and dealing with bruxism.

Go back to the dentist

If you're fully vaccinated and have insurance, there's no reason not to go back to the dentist. But even if you haven't gotten the shots or you're worried about unvaccinated people in your household, dentists say it's essential to resume appointments when safe to do so.

Before the pandemic, dentist's offices were already practicing "state-of-the-art infection control," Cooper said. "We've always taken extra care to protect patients

from viruses and other pathogens."

Many dentists have since enhanced safety precautions, and more than half of the country's population now is at least partially vaccinated. But resuming regular dental appointments doesn't mean you can slack off on your personal care regimen, experts said.

"We can do the best cleaning in the world, but if you're not brushing and flossing at home, that gum disease will stay active," said Zainab Mackie, a dentist in Detroit.

Reconsider your diet

Dentists have long urged people to avoid consuming too many refined carbohydrates and sugars. But that's been a challenge during the pandemic, said Tien Jiang, an instructor in the Department of Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, who noted that working from home has led to an

increase in snacking. More Americans have also engaged in stress eating.

The reason snacking can lead to cavities is that your mouth contains bacteria that feed off food and release acid, Sweier said. This lowers the pH in your mouth and can cause enamel demineralization, a precursor to cavities.

"The more times during the day you contribute to a decrease in pH," she said, "the more times you make your teeth susceptible to cavities."

Beyond cutting down on snacks, Sweier recommended paying attention to your eating and drinking habits. Avoid nibbling on food or sipping on sugary or acidic drinks throughout the day, she said. If you do have a snack, Sweier suggested rinsing your mouth with water after or chewing sugarless gum, which can help stimulate

saliva flow. You should also stay hydrated with water, Jiang said, noting that dry mouth can lead to higher cavity risk.

Find the right tools

Oral care is highly individualized, so choose toothbrushes, toothpastes, floss and rinses that you'll consistently use, dentists say, as long as you're using them as recommended. (The American Dental Association endorses products with its Seal of Acceptance.)

Advanced electric toothbrushes have sensors that indicate when you're applying too much pressure and timers to keep track of how long you've been brushing, which can be helpful. But whether you prefer a manual or electric toothbrush, make sure it has a soft bristle head, and replace it when you notice the bristles are splayed or falling out.

The type of toothpaste and mouth rinse you should use largely depends on your oral

Focus on each quadrant of the mouth and make sure to brush where your teeth meet your gums. Brush in a circular motion and be careful not to use too much pressure.

"There can be erosion of the tooth surface or of the tissue" if you brush too hard, Guyton said. Aggressive brushing using improper technique can create notches in your teeth, potentially making them more sensitive, or lead to gum recession.

"Some people feel like the harder you scrub, the better off you are. That's not the right way to do this," he said. "Be gentle but diligent, and time is more important than the intensity."

If you use an electric toothbrush, "let the brush do the work," Sweier said. "Try not to brush with it and actively use it, but guide it like a train on a track."

And remember to brush your tongue, experts said. Tongues have "little crevices all along them, so it's so easy for bacteria to just sit there and accumulate," Mackie said.

In addition to bad breath, not cleaning your tongue well might also lead to persistent dental health problems, she said: "Even if you're brushing your teeth, the bacteria from your tongue can go onto your teeth and then you'll find yourself still having these issues."

It's equally important to floss at least once a day, especially at night before bed, and to use the proper technique. Avoid snapping floss down between your teeth, because that can traumatize your gums, Cooper said. Instead, "shimmy it between the teeth: Allow it to float very gently beneath the gum line on both sides of that tooth and the tooth next to it."

The American Dental Association has videos showing how to correctly brush and floss.

Watch for warning signs

If you're not adequately taking care of your mouth and teeth, you'll start to see or feel it.

Untreated grinding or clenching can cause headaches, jaw pain and increased tooth sensitivity. You may also wake up with soreness in your temporomandibular joint, which is where your jaw bone connects with your skull, and surrounding muscles.

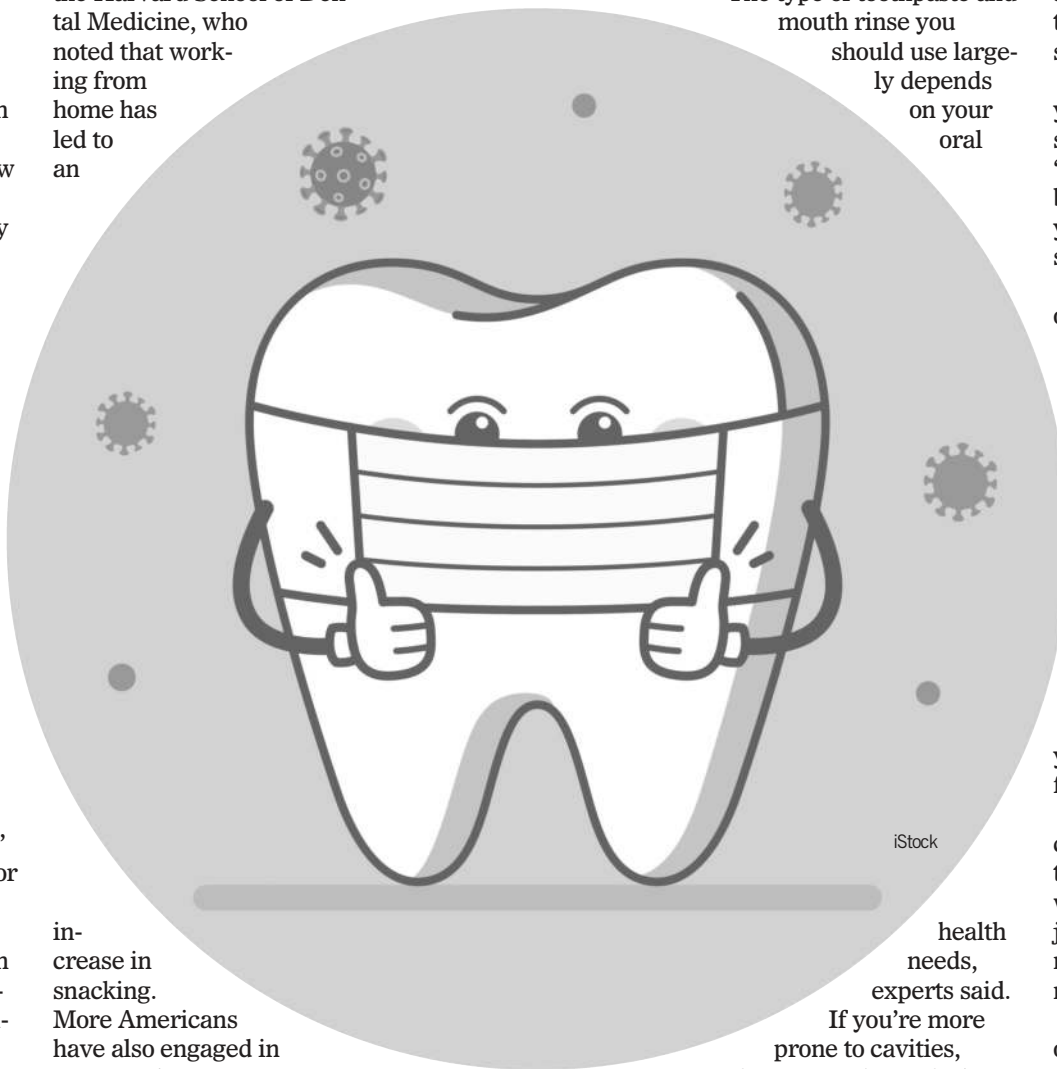
Bleeding or inflamed, swollen gums, are other signals that there may be problems with your oral health, Guyton said: "When you brush your teeth and it bleeds a little bit, that's not normal. That could be a sign of gingivitis or something more significant."

But it can be very difficult to self-diagnose dental conditions or know for sure that your oral care regimen is effective, Cooper said.

"Going to the dentist is really the best way of identifying problems before they become big issues," she said. "Oftentimes, by the time something begins to bleed, by the time something begins to hurt, the problem requires much more treatment than would have been necessary if the problem had been identified and addressed early by seeing your dentist on a regular basis."

Brush and floss properly

Brush your teeth for two minutes at least twice a day, or after you've eaten.



iStock

WEEKEND: FAMILY



PAULA BRONSTEIN/AP

Nancy Sharabarin hands money to a customer buying strawberries June 5 at a farmers market in Portland, Ore.

Fussy eater, meet fresh food

Keep your kids engaged at the farmers market with these 7 tips

BY KATIE WORKMAN
Associated Press

If there's one great way to get kids to try new foods, understand where food comes from and choose produce over chips (at least sometimes), it's a trip to the farmers market.

Along with farmers selling produce, there are makers selling everything from pickles to preserves to pesto; beekeepers offering honey; ranchers who have raised chickens, beef and pigs; fishermen and women selling their catch; bakers with breads, pies and muffins.

Shopping at a farmers market also means shopping seasonally, which makes us more aware of sustainability. It's cool for kids to start to understand that, in much of the country, strawberries are around in May and June, peaches and plums are available in mid-summer, and once apples start rolling in, fall is on the horizon. It gives all of us an appreciation for the bounty of the moment. A fresh ear of corn tastes all the sweeter in August because its availability is fleeting.

Melissa Kubin has been bringing her young son Felix to the farmers market in New Milford, Conn., since he was a baby.

"Now he runs to the car on Saturdays shouting 'farmers market!'" she says.

The big lure for Felix is "the scones at the Green Granary bakery stand — and seeing the dogs." His favorite vegetable is the carrot.

Amy Iannillo brings her four girls, ages 1 through 7, to the farmers market regularly as well. While they also love the pastries (they set up a little picnic area with folding chairs), they are all about the produce as well.

"They eat things I feel like they wouldn't normally eat because they are being introduced to it in a different environment, on their terms," Iannillo says. Right now, "it's all about the strawberries." Iannillo says the girls have come to appreciate the short season and enjoy the strawberries as much as possible.

Shopping at farmers markets also can create a sense of community, since it supports local farmers and producers.

So parents, grab your wallet and some reusable bags. Here are seven ways to get your kids engaged at the farmers market:

Encourage children to ask three questions of the farmers/producers. As you move through the market, questions will probably pop up. How many eggs does a chicken lay every day? Why are some vegetables la-

beled organic and others aren't? What does grass-fed mean? Why are different types of corn different colors?

Show up hungry! And taste as much as you can.

Tasting might be more limited this summer as different markets adjust to shifting COVID rules. In regular times, most producers are happy to offer up a slice of plum, a sliver of cheese, a taste of homemade jam on a cracker. This is also a good way to teach kids how to ask for something politely, and show appreciation for the sampling.

Bring home one item that's completely new to you, and figure out how to use it. Our best find when the kids were little was an ostrich egg, an enormous egg that we discovered has the equivalent of 24 large chicken eggs inside it. We learned how to get the egg out of the shell without breaking it, and we made a huge amount of scrambled eggs for our neighbors, using ramps — wild leeks that were also regional and in season. We were able to keep the ostrich egg shell on our fireplace mantle for years as a memento of an interesting farmers market expedition.

Find a new cheese. Start by blending a new cheese in with something milder and pre-approved by your children for grilled cheese sandwiches. Many cheeses are locally produced, so depending on where you live, you might end up bringing home a Vermont goat cheese, a Wisconsin sharp cheddar, a California triple creme or a blue cheese from Oregon.

See what farm-raised eggs are all about. When you bring them home, crack open a farmers market egg next to a supermarket egg — check out the yolk colors to see which is more vibrant. At the market, you might ask the farmer about what their chickens eat and how that affects the yolks' color.

Ask a farmer for a recipe. Who knows how to use these products better than the people who make them? You'll likely find that the "recipe" you get is a simple one, a dish that allows the produce or other ingredient to shine without much adornment.

Create a scavenger hunt. You can plan this ahead of time or let it develop organically. Searches might include: How many red vegetables can you find? How many different kinds of apples can you count? How many colors of eggs are there (and can you find any that are speckled)? What's the biggest melon you can find?

Find the produce with the weirdest names. Kids often love silly monikers, and you might come across Chocolate Stripe Tomatoes, Cathead Apples, Donut Peaches, Russian Banana Potatoes or Dragon Kale.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



My trade secret: It's OK to laugh

During challenging times, people say, "It's OK to cry." Society universally accepts that, in order to overcome sadness, frustration and even anger, one mustn't bottle up these uncomfortable emotions. One must be granted permission to cry, without fear of judgment or reproach.

But what about laughter?

People also say, "laughter is the best medicine," yet at the same time, we are expected to act "appropriately" in the face of suffering and hardship. Apparently, there is a fine line. I hate fine lines because I tend to cross them. If we make the wrong joke at the wrong time, we are relegated to being ... DUN DUN DUN ... inappropriate.

When my husband deployed for a year in 2008, I had an all-out, snotty blubberfest on a weekly basis to "cleanse" my stress. However, I learned that crying wasn't an effective long-term strategy. By the seventh month of the deployment, I was drowning in minutia. My head swam with rational and irrational fears. Are the neighbors mad that the kids left scooters in the cul de sac? Did I pay the water bill? Are my teeth turning yellow? Am I an awful parent for serving macaroni and cheese three nights a week? Does my bunco group talk about me behind my back? Am I using the right sugar substitute? If I hate Skyping, does it make me a bad wife?

My weekly waterworks sessions weren't enough to get me through the deployment — I needed a lifeline to lead me out of chaos and back to solid ground. For me, that was laughter.

At my children's swimming lessons, I organized my scattered thoughts on a yellow legal pad. By the time they learned the crawl stroke, I had written four humorous essays about parenting, marriage and military life. Writing about my reality helped me sort out what was truly important, and what wasn't worth worrying about. Through this process, I found that crying about hardships in my life wasn't nearly as therapeutic as laughing at the ridiculous details in between.

Socrates once said, "The comic and the tragic lie inseparably close, like light and shadow." Writing and telling funny stories is my way of achieving my own sense of mindfulness during times of insecurity, hardship and even tragedy. Our whole family uses humor for fun and as a coping mechanism to approach delicate topics, get through awkward situations, deal with stress and put others at ease. So rather than tell others, "it's okay to cry," I encourage them to see the humor in car pools, chicken nuggets, juice boxes, minivans and so-called Supermoms. There is so much to smile about — you just have to know how to see it.

"You tell the best stories!" I've been told. But my life is not extraordinary. There's nothing significant that sets my family apart from other military families. I've never been nominated for Military Spouse of the Year. I'm not academically gifted. I haven't done anything to merit accolades of praise, swarms of sympathy or chants of disapproval. I haven't reached Nirvana ... yet.

For the 28 years my husband was active duty, I was a garden-variety stay-at-home mom and Navy wife with three kids, a dog and a good meatloaf recipe. If I had any unique quality, it was simply my ability to see fodder for funny stories in everyday life.

Two years after honing my knack for storytelling on that yellow legal pad in 2008, I published my first humor essay in the Washington Post and created this column, "The Meat and Potatoes of Life."

The secret I don't tell anyone is that it was by pure accident that my home-grown therapy became my career.

As life continues to challenge us all, I'll continue to tell the funny stories that helped keep me afloat during stressful times. Sure, crying is good, but I've learned that sometimes it's better to live, love, and by all means, laugh.

Read more at themeatandpotatoesoflife.com, and in Lisa's book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

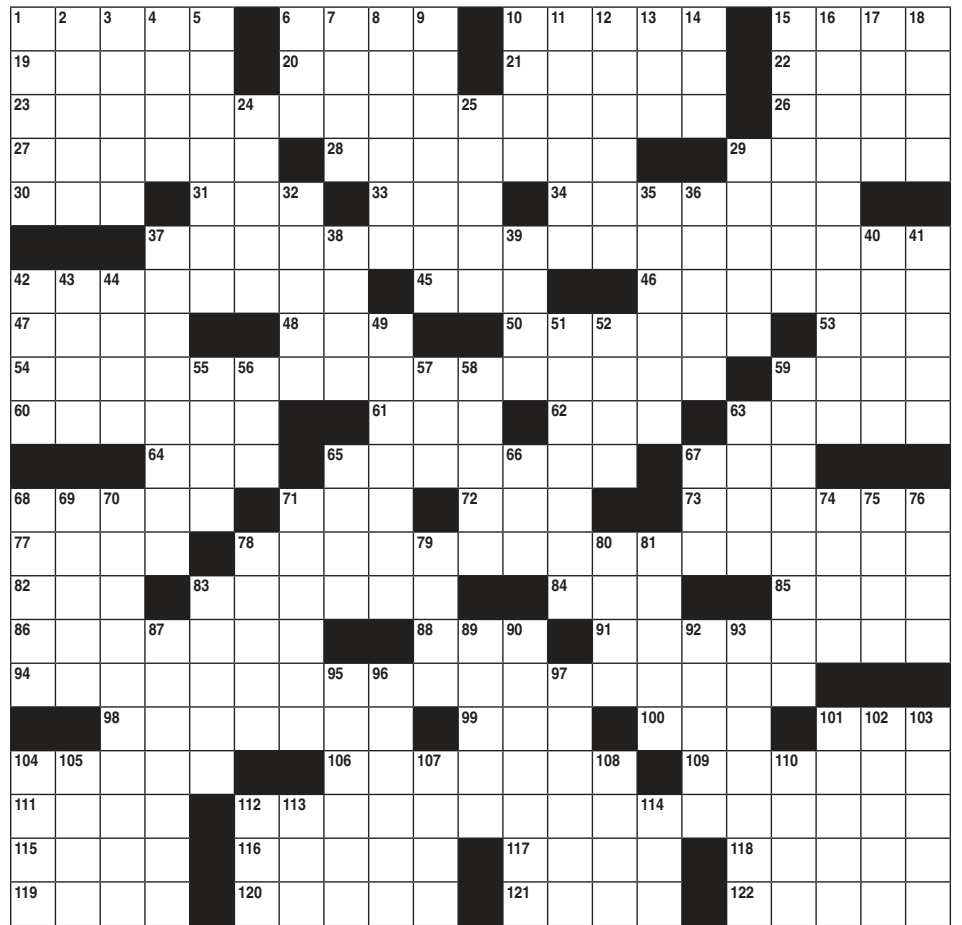
FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS

BY MICHAEL LIEBERMAN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Michael Lieberman is an appellate attorney in Washington, D.C., currently on parental leave after the birth of his first child. Although this puzzle isn't Father's Day-themed, he says it's nice that his first Sunday puzzle will run on his first Father's Day as a father. About five years ago, he and his wife started solving the Sunday Times crossword together, first on paper, then on a tablet. Michael now does the Times puzzle every day. His wife, though, favors the Spelling Bee. — W.S.

ACROSS

- 1 Home for the Devil
- 6 Fairy-tale villain
- 10 Ballet-inspired fitness method
- 15 Web designer's code
- 19 Dream interrupter, maybe
- 20 Pitcher Hershiser
- 21 They might dog a dog
- 22 "___ there!"
- 23 Prisoner accidentally causes a power outage?
- 26 Police unit, informally
- 27 "Hoo boy!"
- 28 "Your guess is as good as mine"
- 29 Small songbirds
- 30 In a manner of speaking
- 31 Kind
- 33 Year, in Brazil
- 34 Cherokee and Navajo
- 37 Southern university beefs up campus security?
- 42 Unlike bread on Passover
- 45 Pierce-Arrow competitor
- 46 Popular Hyundai
- 47 "O mio babbino caro," e.g.
- 48 Key part: Abbr.
- 50 Keeness of judgment
- 53 Chinese zodiac animal
- 54 Fellow imposes a strict palm fruit regimen?
- 59 Something that can be tried or cracked
- 60 Dead giveaway?
- 61 Put away some groceries?
- 62 ___ school
- 63 Convenient transport through urban traffic
- 64 Go bad
- 65 One seeing things with a critical eye?
- 67 ___ cannon (sci-fi weapon)
- 68 Good spice to add to guacamole (try it!)
- 71 Wizard of ___ (nickname for a good massage therapist)
- 72 U.F.C. fighting style
- 73 Heretics flout them
- 77 Early Ron Howard role
- 78 Actress de Armas writes "Mr. Gas" and "Ms. Rag"?
- 82 World's best-selling musical artists of 2020
- 83 Target of a pop-up blocker
- 84 Financial planning option, for short
- 85 Like the verse "Roses are red, violets are blue . . ." in brief
- 86 Body of water that's home to the world's largest marine reserve
- 88 The Cougars of the N.C.A.A.
- 91 New York has 28 of them
- 94 Smartphone advises on poker bets?
- 98 High-hat attitude
- 99 "Told you so"
- 100 Off-road ride, for short
- 101 Org. whose plans are up in the air?
- 104 Georgia-based insurance giant
- 106 Unnamed somebody
- 109 Ones making you duck down?
- 111 Kinks song that Weird Al Yankovic parodied as "Yoda"
- 112 Doctor acquires antibiotics?
- 115 A short one by Ogden Nash reads "Parsley/is ghsarsly"
- 116 Macabre illustrator Edward
- 117 One kind of plastic
- 118 Indian wedding adornment
- 119 Even ___
- 120 Connecticut-based insurance giant
- 121 Break
- 122 Work from Roxane Gay or Jia Tolentino
- 9 Roosevelt credited with saying "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent"
- 10 Closest of pals, for short
- 11 Hillary Clinton vis-à-vis Wellesley College
- 12 Move to a new table, maybe
- 13 Hip-hop duo ___ Sremmurd
- 14 What "... " may represent
- 15 José Martí, by birth
- 16 Social media pic designed to attract sexual attention
- 17 False
- 18 Some strong solutions
- 24 DuPont patent of 1938
- 25 Skip it
- 29 Boston airport
- 32 Work in the kitchen?
- 35 Abounded (with)
- 36 St. Kitts, St. Lucia and St. Vincent
- 37 Saint on the big screen
- 38 Pulitzer winner ___ St. Vincent Millay
- 39 Spur
- 40 Shake an Etch A Sketch, e.g.
- 41 Full
- 42 How kids might describe dad jokes
- 43 Important stretches
- 44 "___ Too Proud" (hit musical about the Temptations)
- 49 Visits overnight
- 51 Ingredient in a Negroni
- 52 Sporty trucks, in brief
- 55 Lots
- 56 Lets hit it!
- 57 What "... " may represent
- 58 ___ March
- 59 Word that appears with confetti when texted on an iPhone
- 63 Big name in synthesizers
- 65 Cardamom-spiced brew
- 66 !!!
- 67 They may be checked at the door
- 68 Yoga pose with an arched back
- 69 "High-five!"
- 70 Like fuchsia and turquoise
- 71 Actor Aziz
- 74 Spanish hand
- 75 Spanish love
- 76 Application figs.
- 78 Practiced
- 79 Birds' bills
- 80 What an integral can be used to calculate
- 81 One of the Obamas
- 83 Jellied garnish
- 87 Low bows
- 89 Kind of question
- 90 Old wheels
- 92 ___ Park, Colo.
- 93 Raw deal from a restaurant?
- 95 Categorize
- 96 "There's no one on me!"
- 97 Document with two accents
- 101 Water clover and adder's-tongue
- 102 Fight setting
- 103 Purity test
- 104 Popular dog 105-Down
- 105 See 104-Down
- 107 Daughter of Ned Stark on "Game of Thrones"
- 108 Smelt things?
- 110 Payment often made around January 1
- 112 Tour grp.
- 113 Little eggs
- 114 Business-card abbr.

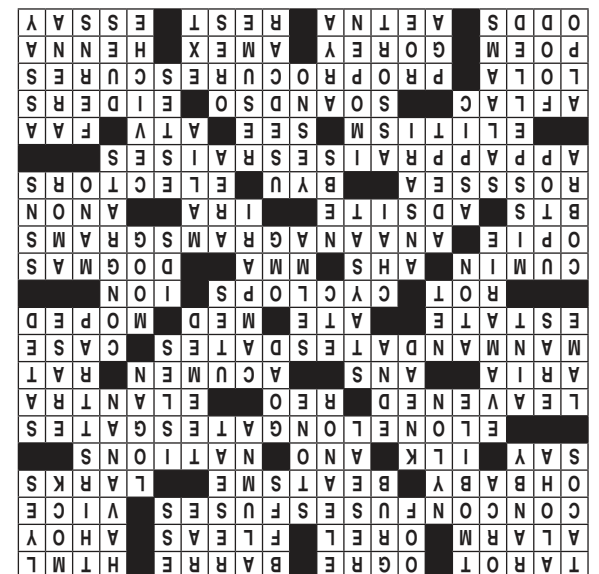


GUNSTON STREET

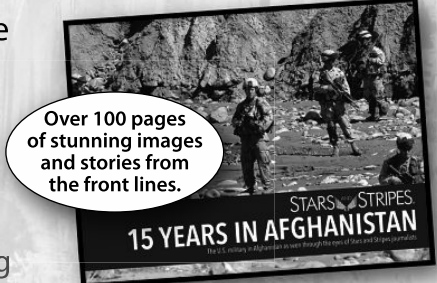


"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

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FACES

Marx still right here waiting for respect

Singer-songwriter riffs on impressive career, connections in new memoir, 'Stories to Tell'

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Richard Marx likes to gently mess with the minds of whoever comes to see his solo concerts. He'll start playing a Keith Urban or a Lionel Richie song and look out to see the reaction. "If it's a couple, I'll see one of them look at the other with this face like, 'You're kidding me. He wrote that?'"

Then hits from his career will tumble out: "Right Here Waiting," "Should Have Known Better," "Don't Mean Nothing," "Hold On to the Nights," "Take This Heart," "Hazard" and "Angelia."

"And they'll go, 'Oh, my God. He did that, too? Like, really? Seriously?'" says Marx. "On my part, there's a subtle attempt to connect all the dots."

If you've not yet seen Marx in concert, he's offering a written version with his new memoir "Stories to Tell," a series of anecdotes from a singer-songwriter who has rubbed shoulders with — and supplied songs to — music royalty.

Kenny Rogers, Whitney Houston, Madonna, Barbra Streisand, Burt Bacharach, *NSYNC, Julio Iglesias, Josh Groban, Hugh Jackman, Kenny Loggins, Luther Vandross, Paul Anka, SheDAISY, Philip Bailey and James Ingram — all make cameo appearances in Marx's life and career.

He reveals beefs with Brad Paisley, Clive Davis and Night Ranger and a crush on Olivia Newton-John. He made a Vixen song sound better with a little sonic trickery — adding someone else's guitar solo — and watched in horror as his band was held at gunpoint in Taipei.

"I have got so many — somewhere between interesting and hilarious — things that have happened in the background of

my career," he says by phone from the Los Angeles home he shares with his wife, Daisy Fuentes.

"At the end of the day, I want people to feel the same things I want them to feel about my show — that you feel like you get to know me a little bit."



STORIES TO TELL
A MEMOIR
RICHARD MARX

"Stories to Tell" is ultimately the tale of a supremely talented, instinctual songwriter who rode the wave of MTV fame for a decade or so and then, when the heat dissipated, reinvented himself as a producer and songwriter for others.

"It was just about 10 years straight where everything I put out had success. And then I put out a record that I joked went double plywood instead of double platinum," he says. "It just was like a signal that everything had shifted from me in my career. I remember thinking, 'What did I do wrong?'"

He says it took a year for him to grasp the change. "I started to think, 'Well, you know what? I had a really great turn for about 10 years. And it's not my turn now. It's somebody else's turn.'"

He was still in his 30s and "had a ton of music left" in him. "I'll make it with other people," he concluded. That shift also freed him up to be a very present father to his three sons.

Marx over his career has had 14 No. 1 songs as a writer — one in each of four different decades. He and Vandross' "Dance With My Father" won the 2004 Grammy for Song of the Year. He's written or performed



RICHARDMARX.COM

Singer and songwriter Richard Marx has released a memoir full of stories from his long career. Marx, best known for the 1989 hit song "Right Here Waiting," has also had 14 No. 1 hits as a writer, penning songs for artists from Kenny Rogers to *NSYNC.

hits on Billboard's country, adult contemporary, mainstream rock, holiday and pop charts.

The book's publication is timed to the release of a two-disc companion album with remastered versions of his biggest hits plus demos, live tracks and fresh interpretations of songs he has written for other artists.

Running through the book is Marx's conviction that he has an almost mystical ability to attract and befriend superstars, something that first happened at age 5 when he met Davy Jones of The Monkees. As he writes: "I've always had the ability to will people into my path."

"He hasn't lived a life that is deserving of VH1 'Behind the Music.' It's been pretty

even-keeled," said Sean Manning, his editor at Simon & Schuster. "But I think that he is a master craftsman. That's what I was really intrigued by — how he does what he does."

It was his humor, fearlessness, authenticity and self-awareness that led Manning to reach out to Marx just as the pandemic was gripping the nation. Luckily, Marx had already written some pages, based on the anecdotes he offers on stage.

"He's the first one that will make fun of himself," said Manning. "He doesn't wait for anyone to do that. And I think that's where you do relate to him. He doesn't take himself so seriously, which I found incredibly refreshing."

McCain is leaving 'The View,' will stay on air through July

From wire reports

Meghan McCain is calling it quits at "The View."

The controversial conservative, who has spent most of her four years on the daytime talk show being mocked or scolded by her co-stars, announced Thursday that she'll be leaving the program at the end of the month.

John McCain's daughter said that the COVID-19 pandemic, during which she left New York and went to Washington, D.C. with her husband, Ben Domenech, changed her perspective on life. Now, she said, she wants to raise daughter Liberty, who was born in September, at home.

"This show is one of the hands-down greatest, most exhilarating, wonderful privileges of my entire

life," she said. "It is a privilege to work alongside such strong, brilliant, intelligent, incredible broadcasters like the four of you. You are the most talented women on all of television."

McCain joined "The View" in October 2017, replacing J. Ed Bradley as the show's conservative voice, and she has filled that role loudly, frequently facing off with the left-leaning hosts including Joy Behar and Goldberg.

While the sparring matches have often gone viral online, even the ABC bosses seemed to have gotten sick of the antagonistic nature the show has taken on. In late May, Kim Goodwin, the newly named president of ABC News, reportedly warned McCain and Behar to stay away from personal

attacks on air after the two feuded over Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., and anti-Semitism.

Franco settles for \$2.2M in sex misconduct suit

James Franco and his co-defendants agreed to pay \$2.2 million to settle a lawsuit alleging he intimidated students at an acting and film school he founded into gratuitous and exploitative sexual situations, court filings made public Wednesday showed.

The two sides first reached a deal to settle the class-action suit in February, but it took several months to resolve details, and the dollar amount was not previously disclosed.

Actresses and ex-students Sa-

rah Tither-Kaplan and Toni Gaal, who first filed the lawsuit in October 2019 that was joined by many others, alleged that at his now-defunct school, Studio 4, Franco pushed his students into performing in increasingly explicit sex scenes on camera in an "orgy type setting" that went far beyond those acceptable on Hollywood film sets.

The settlement includes "non-economic" terms that have not been made public.

Allison Mack gets 3 years in NXIVM sex-slave case

TV actor Allison Mack, who played a key role in the scandal-ridden, cult-like group NXIVM, was sentenced to three years in prison Wednesday on charges she

manipulated women into becoming sex slaves for the group's spiritual leader.

Mack — best known for her role as a young Superman's close friend on the series "Smallville" — had previously pleaded guilty to the charges and began cooperating against NXIVM leader Keith Raniere. Prosecutors credited her with helping them mount evidence showing how Raniere created a secret society of brainwashed women who were branded with his initials.

At her sentencing in Brooklyn federal court, Mack renounced the self-improvement guru.

"I made choices I will forever regret," she said, also telling the judge she was filled with "remorse and guilt."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Dad stuck in traffic, girl, 9, helps mom give birth

MO BELTON — A suburban Kansas City family is celebrating their newest addition, born early at home with the help of the infant's 9-year-old sister.

The surprise at-home birth happened after Angelica Gunn, of Belton, started having contractions more than a week before her due date, television station WDAF reported. She called her husband, Caleb Gunn, to rush home, but he became stuck in heavy traffic.

That's when 9-year-old Aakayla Gunn stepped in to help, catching her sister Aubree Rose, as the baby was born.

"I screamed for Aakayla to come in," Angelica recounted. "And she's like, 'I can't look.' And I'm like, 'You have to.'"

Luckily for all involved, Angelica is a nurse and certified doula and was able to talk Aakayla through the delivery process.

Baby Aubree came into the world at a healthy 7 pounds, 9 ounces and provided her big sister with an unforgettable experience.

Police: Man drives into gun shop, steals firearms

ND BISMARCK — Police say a Bismarck man drove a vehicle into a gun shop storefront and stole four rifles, which were later recovered after the man was arrested.

According to police Lt. Luke Gardiner, the 22-year-old man rammed a service-type vehicle with cabinets into the front door of Double H Guns and stole what Gardiner called "a number of firearms."

Police responded to a report of a gas drive-off at a Holiday station and the vehicle fit the one that was used in the gun shop robbery. Gardiner said officers followed the vehicle. The man tried to flee but was eventually arrested.

The guns were still in the vehicle and were recovered, the Bismarck Tribune reported.

Man ticketed in dog park for tree treatment

IL NAPERVILLE — A man who said he sprayed trees in a suburban Chicago park to protect them after an anxious dog chewed off the bark has been ticketed by authorities.

Asher Thomas is accused of "altering flora" in a Naperville dog park. The ticket from the Will County Forest Preserve carries a \$225 fine, the Aurora Beacon-News reported.

"Just as you can't go around doing things to other people's property, even if intentions are good, you can't allow your dogs to do damage or spray a foreign substance on trees," said Forest Preserve Deputy Police Chief Dave Barrios.

Thomas said he regularly takes his dog, Dixie, to Whalon Lake Dog Park and learned that another owner's German shepherd had gnawed away the bark on more than a dozen



JENNY KANE/AP

Taking it all in

A tourist stands at Chicken Point Overlook in the Coconino National Forest in Sedona, Ariz.

trees. He said he used a can of tree pruning sealer to cover the wounds.

"The whole purpose was to prevent trees from being lost," said Thomas, who works for the U.S. Coast Guard. "What if I saved the trees? What if the other nine I did not spray died and the ones I treated lived?"

28 rescued when roller coaster stops, no injuries

VA WILLIAMSBURG — Fire crews helped more than two dozen people get to safety after a roller coaster at a Virginia amusement park stopped unexpectedly on Tuesday evening, officials said.

News outlets reported that 28 people were riding the Griffon roller coaster at Busch Gardens Williamsburg when it stopped.

The evacuation went smoothly and no one was injured, James City County Fire Chief Ryan Ashe said.

In a statement, Busch Gardens officials apologized and said safety is their top priority. The amusement park describes Griffon on its website as a floorless dive coaster with 205-foot drop.

It's not yet clear why the coaster stopped, Ashe said.

Boaters witness 'very dramatic' cliff collapse

MI MUNISING — A cliff wall broke away at a national park along Lake Superior in northern Michigan, stunning some

THE CENSUS

12K The value, in dollars, of live lobsters a man is charged with destroying at a Massachusetts seafood market.

Joseph A. Vaudo pleaded not guilty to charges of vandalizing property and using another's commercial dumpster at Superior Lobster & Seafood in Sandwich, the Cape Cod Times reported. Police records showed that Vaudo was the previous owner of Superior. According to the police report, Vaudo allegedly destroyed between \$8,000 to \$12,000 worth of lobsters. Video footage obtained by police showed Vaudo arriving at the property. Police described Vaudo retrieving garbage bags from his truck and disposing them in the dumpster at the market, and then turning off the power boxes. The store manager told police that when he arrived the next morning, he noticed the power boxes that kept the live seafood tank circulating were off. The lobsters were "stressed beyond normal" because of the lack of oxygen and water circulation, the newspaper reported.

boaters who captured it on video.

Sandstone and dirt crashed into the lake Saturday at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The park's cliffs are 50 feet to 200 feet above the lake.

"We could hear the cliff wall popping and cracking and within 60 seconds a section of cliff approximately 200 feet wide fell before us," Jahn Martin told WLUC-TV. "The splash and swell wave were very dramatic."

No injuries were reported.

There was a similar collapse in 2019, when kayakers on a tour narrowly escaped injury when a large section of cliff crashed into the lake.

6 hurt when deck collapses at townhouse

MD GERMANTOWN — Six people were taken to a hospital after townhouse deck collapsed in Maryland.

WTOP-FM reported that it hap-

pened when the deck separated from a home in The Woods at North Lake community in Germantown.

Nine people were barbecuing on the deck when it collapsed, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue spokesman Pete Piringier said. Six of those people were transported to the hospital, including one who was taken to a trauma center. All are expected to survive.

Piringier said a building inspector and fire code enforcement agent were called to the scene.

Sheriff: Man tried to pay bail with counterfeit bills

ME WATERBORO — A man in Maine tried to post \$200 bail with counterfeit bills, according to the sheriff's office.

Deputies responding to a report of a stolen vehicle in Waterboro stopped a man walking nearby, the York County Sheriff's Office wrote in a Facebook post. They deter-

mined that he was not involved but arrested him on an outstanding warrant for theft from a Walmart, Sheriff William King said.

The man said he had enough money to post \$200 in bail but when the bail commissioner arrived, he tried to pay with two counterfeit \$100 bills. He was denied bail and was returned to jail with the additional charge of forgery.

The man posted \$100 in bail later in the day, the sheriff's office said.

School officer fired for using stun gun in training

OH SANDUSKY — A long-time school resource officer who used a stun gun on two high school students during a self-defense training class has been fired.

Perkins Township trustees voted 3-0 to dismiss Tonya Corbin, who was a resource officer at Perkins High School. She had been on unpaid leave since June 15.

Corbin was teaching a self-defense class for female students at the school on May 19 when she brought a stun gun to the class and used it on two students, ages 17 and 18, authorities said. Corbin initially denied using the stun gun, saying she had allowed the students to use it themselves. The two students and a teacher at the school disputed that claim, and Corbin eventually admitted to deploying the stun gun, authorities said.

From wire reports

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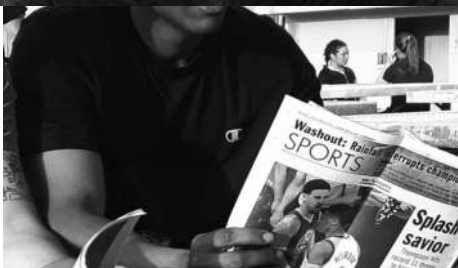
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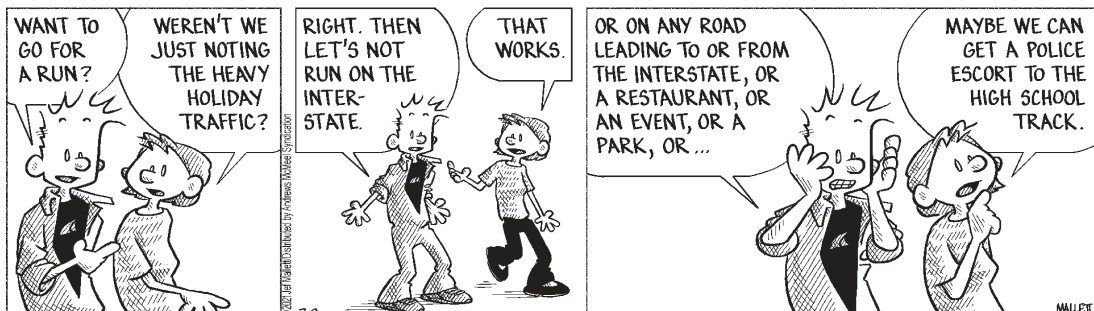
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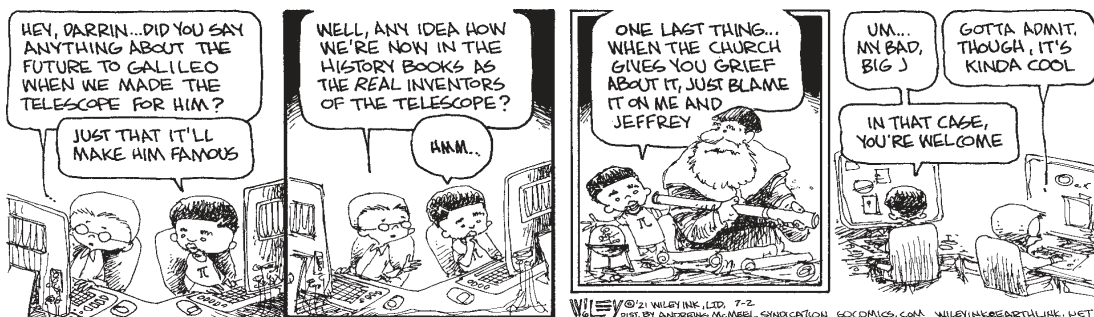
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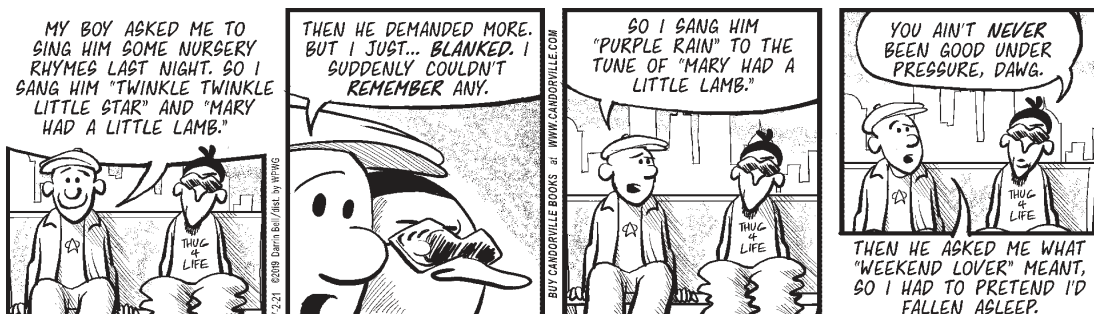
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



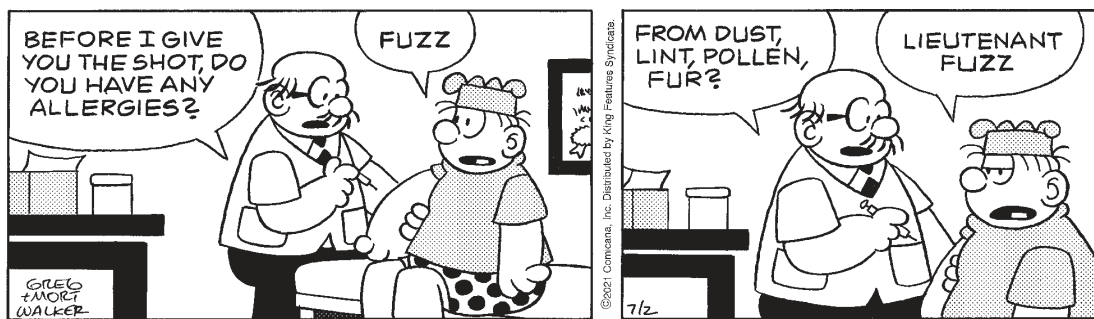
Candorville



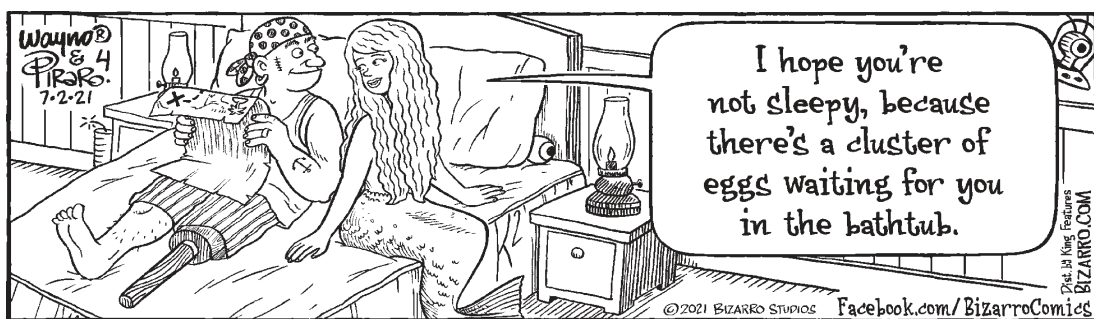
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
12						13				14		
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44				45				46				
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52				53				54				
55				56				57				

ACROSS

- 1 Defeats
- 6 Domino spot
- 9 Neb. neighbor
- 12 "Dinah" singer Waters
- 13 Prior night
- 14 Nabokov novel
- 15 Paris school
- 16 Backyard play area
- 18 Football team
- 20 Continental coin
- 21 Pen tip
- 23 Young fox
- 24 Office records
- 25 Cupid's alias
- 27 Attorney's load
- 29 Mexican state
- 31 Take-home earnings
- 35 Poet Federico Garcia —
- 37 Beget
- 38 Olympic prize
- 41 Frequently
- 43 Rent out
- 44 Winged
- 45 Hardy companion?
- 47 Courtroom area
- 49 Photo book
- 52 Poetic tribute
- 53 Caviar
- 54 Nearby
- 55 Roulette bet

- 56 Approves
- 57 Imposed a levy on

- 21 "The Matrix" role
- 22 Lyricist Gershwin
- 24 Service charge
- 26 Job interview subject

DOWN

- 1 Garden buzzer
- 2 And so on (Abbr.)
- 3 Container for pumps
- 4 Relate
- 5 Streamlined
- 6 Old Spanish coin
- 7 Tennis great Lendl
- 8 Signing need
- 9 Asian capital
- 10 Worship
- 11 Greek vacation isle
- 17 Certain believers
- 19 Parish leader
- 28 Big mix-up
- 30 Army rank (Abbr.)
- 32 Brimless hat
- 33 "Where — you?"
- 34 However
- 36 Persuades
- 38 College study
- 39 Dodge
- 40 Challenged
- 42 Pamphlet
- 45 Take a gander
- 46 Big name in scat
- 48 Buddy
- 50 Employ
- 51 Club —

Answer to Previous Puzzle

M	A	Y	A		L	A	B		T	G	I	F		
A	L	A	S		E	M	O		R	O	B	E		
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O	V	A			E	E	N			A	H	I		
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D	A	H	L	I	A				R	O	B	O	T	S
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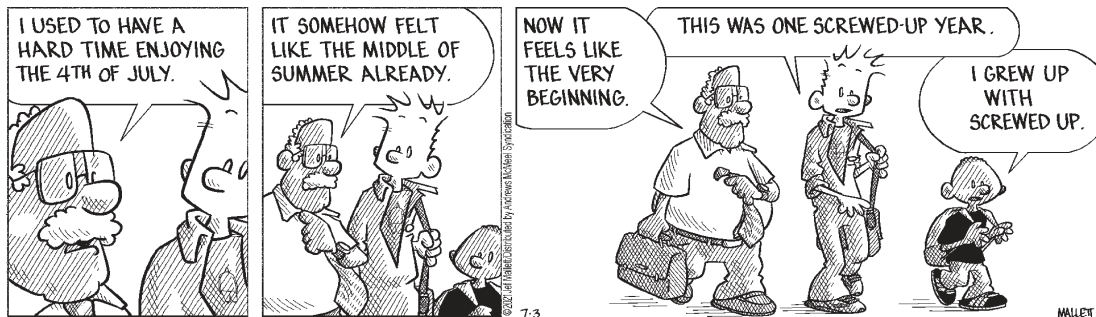
CRYPTOQUIP

P M Q J N I Y Q J N T - Y W - L N B T E
 A Y M M Y P V V N X T V ' R T Y X L , Q J N U
 J B D N Q J N I Y Q Q Y " E Y D N Q J U
 M B A T N B V Q J U V N E W . "

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WELL-KNOWN COMIC STRIP WITH A MALE FELINE WHO'S CRAZY FOR ONE TYPE OF CRACKER: "RITZ THE CAT."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals N

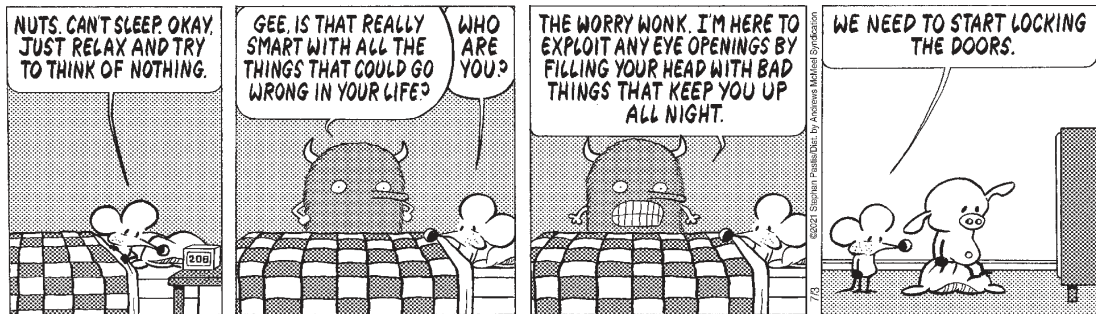
Frazz



Dilbert



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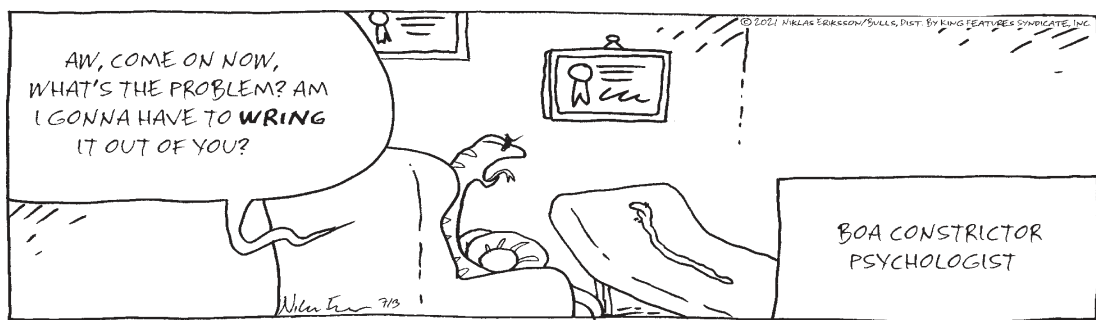
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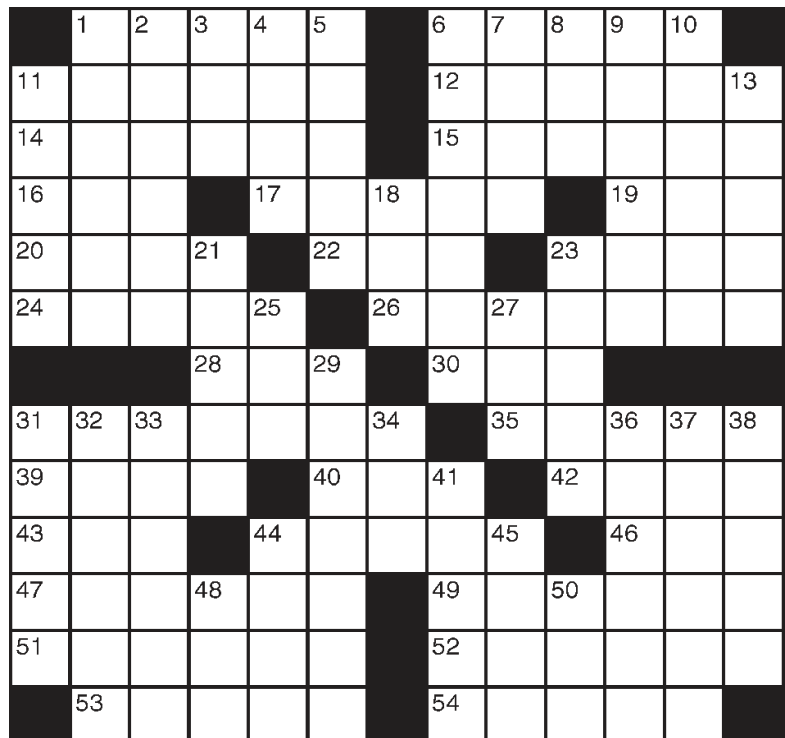
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Dismaying event?
- 6 Summa cum —
- 11 Rio's land
- 12 Letting up
- 14 Caps
- 15 Idyllic place
- 16 ICU hookups
- 17 Bigfoot's relatives
- 19 Arthur of "Maude"
- 20 Incubator noise
- 22 Pouch
- 23 Old apple spray
- 24 Fashion
- 26 Grape variety
- 28 Mandela's org.
- 30 Petty peeve
- 31 Chip material
- 35 Started
- 39 Scored 100 on
- 40 Pester
- 42 Finito
- 43 — Fail (sacred Irish stone)
- 44 Potpourri output
- 46 — tear (raging)
- 47 New York tribe
- 49 Former PLO leader
- 51 "I, Robot" author
- 52 Elvis' birthplace

DOWN

- 18 Tic- — -toe
- 21 Kilt pattern
- 23 Played a part
- 25 Env. insert
- 27 Pen tip
- 29 Curving inward
- 31 Zesty dip
- 32 Least cordial
- 33 Sheryl Sandberg bestseller
- 34 Dundee denial
- 36 Blew it
- 37 Chronicles
- 38 "Swell!"
- 41 Pesky insects
- 44 Highlander
- 45 Verifiable
- 48 Punk-rock subgenre
- 50 Mimic

Answer to Previous Puzzle



CRYPTOQUIP

LN NOVEYT TLPACQ DBYDH
 BOW SCCP O BLAB-QOPHLPA
 VEQVEP, JBCZ VLABJ'IC
 DOKKCW BLV CKWCQ SCQQZ.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN THE MOTHER-OF-PEARL CONNOISSEURS' GROUP, THEY HAVE THE MOTTO "LOVE THY NACRE AS THYSELF."
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals H

STARS AND STRIPES.

OPINION

Cosby's freeing is not a vindication

BY HARRY LITMAN

Special to The Washington Post

Wednesday was, no doubt, a bitter day for the many victims of Bill Cosby's reprehensible conduct and the millions of others that it repulsed.

But it was not a bitter day for the rule of law.

The 83-year-old Cosby is suddenly a free man after the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, in a 4-to-3 decision, overturned his 2018 conviction and 10-year sentence on three counts of sexual assault stemming from a 2004 incident in which Temple University women's basketball operations manager Andrea Constand accused Cosby of drugging her. Many other women alleged that Cosby had assaulted them in similar fashion.

They are understandably infuriated today. "I am outraged!" one accuser, Victoria Valentino, told ABC News. "My stomach is in knots."

Countless Americans share the sentiment. The critical point, however, is that the Supreme Court's decision says nothing about sexual assault laws and in no way weakens the legal tools that victims are now using to get the redress that the system has long denied them.

Even less does it vindicate Cosby or erase the fact that 12 jurors unanimously found him to have committed the sexual assaults beyond any reasonable doubt.

Rather, Justice David Wecht's opinion for the Supreme Court turned on a violation of Cosby's right not to incriminate himself. That's being called a technicality, but it's more than that — it's a bedrock constitutional right. (Disclosure: Wecht is a family friend whom I've known from Pittsburgh for many years.)

Upholding that right even in the face of repulsive conduct is exactly what courts are supposed to do.

The issue came to the fore because in 2005 then-Montgomery County, Pa., District Attorney Bruce Castor declined to prosecute Cosby for Constand's allegation. Castor concluded that he couldn't prove the case unless Cosby confessed.

But in an effort to foster some measure of justice, Castor announced in a news release that his office would not prosecute Cosby, thereby clearing the way for civil lawsuits at which Cosby would be unable to invoke his Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate himself. No formal immunity agreement was prepared, but Castor later testified that he "absolutely" meant to remove "for all time" the possibility of prosecution to force Cosby to testify in civil litigation.

Cosby, in turn, relying on Castor's assurances, went on to make inculpatory statements in depositions. In fact, he tried to assert his right not to testify at certain junctures.

The problem arose after Castor retired, when his successors decided to prosecute Cosby notwithstanding Castor's assurances. Prosecutors used Cosby's deposition testimony and evidence derived from it at the criminal trial.

The state's position throughout the appellate proceedings was that Castor's assurances were not sufficiently formal to be binding on subsequent DAs. But the Pennsylvania Supreme Court disagreed, holding that when a prosecutor makes an unconditional promise of non-prosecution, as Castor did, and the defendant relies on it, as Cosby did, due process requires that the promise be enforced.

And assuming the defendant's reliance is reasonable, that principle has to be right, not

withstanding the terrible injustice it works on victims in Cosby's case and the deflating result it provides for one of the first major prosecutions of the #MeToo era.

In fact, the prosecutors' argument that the promise had not been adequately formalized really weighs in the opposite direction. Waivers of constitutional rights, especially ones as fundamental as the Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate oneself, need to be knowing and intelligent. That means it falls to prosecutors, whose special role in the system the Supreme Court emphasized, to remove the doubt about their promises and suffer the consequences if they don't stitch it up adequately.

The bottom line is Castor's promise wasn't just a stray statement in a news release (which to be sure is not how immunity agreements are supposed to happen). It was a genuine trade-off for Cosby, offered by an authoritative representative of the commonwealth: Cosby eluded criminal charges, but he was forced to testify at civil trials and thus face a partial measure of justice.

It would engender chaos and unfairness if a prosecutor's promise could then just be ignored by his successor.

All of this may be cold comfort to the victims and the many fighters for greater justice for victims of sexual assault. But like prosecutors and victims' advocates, appellate courts, too, have a special role to play in the legal system, and they play it in the best traditions of our constitutional system when they apply the law equally to the most abhorrent defendant.

Harry Litman is a former U.S. attorney and deputy assistant attorney general. He teaches constitutional law and national security law at the University of California at Los Angeles School of Law and the University of California at San Diego Department of Political Science.

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published weekdays (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations where overseas DOD personnel are located.

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Heat wave is too extreme for Northwest's animals

BY TOVE DANOVICH

Special to The Washington Post

I knew everyone was in for a rough time when the crows went quiet. It's a baby bird season here in Portland, Ore., and a family of crows and their fledglings have taken up residence in the yard. The babies have fuzzy heads and make flying look like hard work. Their call sounds like they've swallowed a kazoo; it usually ends in a strangled garble as their parents stick food down their beaks.

I stopped hearing them Sunday. It was 100 degrees by noon; even before that, the fledglings had their beaks open and their wings out, and were panting rapidly to cool themselves. I didn't know crows could look so miserable.

The coastal portion of the Pacific Northwest is a temperate rainforest, but it no longer feels like we live in a rainy climate. There were no April showers this year; it was the driest April on record. March and May weren't much better. This past weekend, we had three days of record-breaking temperatures, peaking on Monday at 116 degrees. The air has been so hot and dry that my throat hurts from breathing. Living through a heat dome is a bit like living inside a snow globe — if someone stuck it in the oven.

No one was prepared for this. Our wildlife, plants and even our infrastructure — asphalt roads have buckled and streetcar cables have melted because of the heat — are made for a

damp, mild climate, not for Death Valley.

As temperatures climbed into the upper 90s last Friday, I watched a neighborhood group on Facebook flood with posts from people frantically looking for air conditioners. One man, giving up the search, asked whether anyone with a cool home could take his 150-pound bull mastiff for the weekend. Neighbors posted when hardware stores got shipments of 10 or 50 air conditioners. Each time, the units sold out in hours. People put booties on their dogs to keep the scorching asphalt from burning their paws. Local outdoor pools all closed, because it was too hot for lifeguards to work or for guests to spend much time out of the water.

On Sunday, at 103 degrees, I brought my eight pet chickens inside and put them in the basement bathroom. A few of my hens were panting rapidly, gasping for air. Since then, I've heard from a number of people whose chickens died despite their efforts to keep them cool.

Unprecedented is becoming the norm. In less than a year, there's been a full week where I couldn't leave my house because of the smoke from nearby wildfires, an ice storm that left thousands of Oregonians without power, and now this heat wave. It's only June.

One of my neighbors saw a raccoon come to their pond for a sip of water in broad daylight. Sparrows and hummingbirds, normally wary of humans, have hopped or buzzed within a few feet of me to get to a puddle. It seems as

though the plants, animals and insects that for so long have thrived here might not be able to survive at all in 20 years. We're already seeing native plants flowering earlier and old-growth trees dying off. The needles on the native cedars in my yard are parched and drooping.

The Pacific Northwest I remember from childhood is a green and magical place where water squeezes out of moss when you step on it and I could sleep with my windows open all summer long. A hot day meant a trip to the beach, not hiding with the lights off and curtains closed in the basement.

It is easy to conjure ways to make the ever-warming Pacific Northwest more livable for humans. Coastal areas can practice "managed retreats," so people's homes no longer lie on flood plains. We can repair asphalt that ruptured in the heat and put new wires on cable cars. More families can put air conditioning in their homes. But for the plants and creatures that live outside, all we can do is triage.

On the hottest days, I woke up at 6 a.m. to water the browning native plants in my yard. People hustled to put out bird baths and insect waterers and to try to keep them full. One Portlander on Reddit described hosing down a coyote pup that was overheating in the yard. There are no systemic fixes for all the wildlife, trees and plants that have made this region what it is — or what it was.

Tove Danovich is a freelance journalist based in Portland, Ore.

SCOREBOARD/AUTO RACING

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New England	7	2	2	23	18	13
Orlando City	6	1	3	21	18	7
Philadelphia	5	2	4	19	15	10
NYCFC	5	3	2	17	18	11
Columbus	4	3	3	15	9	7
Nashville	3	1	6	15	13	11
New York	4	5	1	13	14	13
D.C. United	4	6	1	13	10	13
CF Montréal	3	3	4	13	11	10
Atlanta	2	2	6	12	11	10
Cincinnati	3	5	1	10	9	17
Inter Miami CF	2	6	2	8	9	16
Toronto FC	1	7	2	5	12	20
Chicago	1	7	2	5	10	17

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Seattle	7	0	4	25	20	7
Sporting KC	7	3	2	23	22	15
LA Galaxy	7	3	0	21	17	15
Colorado	5	3	1	16	15	11
Minnesota	4	4	2	14	10	12
Houston	3	3	5	14	15	16
Portland	4	5	1	13	13	15
Real Salt Lake	3	2	4	13	14	11
LAFC	3	4	3	12	12	12
San Jose	3	7	1	10	12	20
FC Dallas	2	4	4	10	11	15
Austin FC	2	5	4	10	6	11
Vancouver	2	6	2	8	10	16

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Thursday's game

Portland at Austin FC

Saturday's games

New England at Columbus
 Toronto FC at D.C. United
 Miami at CF Montréal
 New York at Orlando City
 Atlanta at Chicago
 San Jose at Minnesota
 Philadelphia at Nashville
 Cincinnati at Houston
 Los Angeles FC at Real Salt Lake

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Orlando	4	1	3	15	12	8
North Carolina	4	2	1	13	12	4
Portland	4	3	0	12	12	6
Washington	3	1	3	12	8	7
Gotham FC	3	1	2	11	6	2
Louisville	3	3	1	10	6	10
Houston	3	3	1	10	8	8
Chicago	2	4	2	8	5	13
Reign FC	2	4	1	7	5	8
Kansas City	0	6	2	2	4	12

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Friday's games

Chicago at Washington
 Kansas City at Gotham FC
 Reign FC at Houston

Saturday's game

Portland at Louisville

Sunday's game

North Carolina at Orlando

Wimbledon

Wednesday

At All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club

London

Surface: Grass

Men's Singles

First Round

Aljaz Bedene, Slovenia, def. Corentin Moutet, France, 6-4, 6-4, 6-0.
 Kei Nishikori, Japan, def. Alexei Popyrin, Australia, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.
 Matteo Berrettini (7), Italy, def. Guido Pella, Argentina, 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-0.
 Ilya Ivashka, Belarus, def. Jaume Munar, Spain, 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (5).
 Jeremy Chardy, France, def. Aslan Karatsev (20), Russia, 7-6 (4), 7-6 (6), 6-3.
 Botic van de Zandschulp, Netherlands, def. Gregoire Barrere, France, 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-1, 7-6 (3).
 Yoshihito Nishioka, Japan, def. John Isner (28), United States, 7-6 (5), 2-6, 6-3, 6-7 (3), 6-4.
 Sam Querrey, United States, def. Pablo Carreno Busta (11), Spain, 7-6 (6), 6-4, 7-5.
 James Duckworth, Australia, def. Radu Albot, Moldova, 6-4, 6-4, 6-1.
 Jordan Thompson, Australia, def. Casper Ruud (12), Norway, 7-6 (6), 7-6 (3), 2-6, 2-6, 6-2.
 Marcos Giron, United States, def. Emil Ruusuvuori, Finland, 6-4, 2-6, 6-2, 0-6, 6-4.
 Daniel Elahi Galan, Colombia, def. Federico Coria, Argentina, 6-4, 4-6, 7-5, 7-5.
 Lorenzo Sonego (23), Italy, def. Pedro Sousa, Portugal, 6-2, 7-5, 6-0.
 Grigor Dimitrov (18), Bulgaria, def. Fernando Verdasco, Spain, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.
 Mikael Ymer, Sweden, def. Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, France, 7-5, 6-7 (4), 5-7, 6-4, 6-3.
 Carlos Alcaraz, Spain, def. Yasutaka Uchiyama, Japan, 6-3, 6-7 (4), 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.
 Felix Auger-Aliassime (16), Canada, def. Thiago Monteiro, Brazil, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3.
 Taylor Fritz (31), United States, def. Brandon Nakashima, United States, 7-5, 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.
 Alexander Bublik, Kazakhstan, def. Mikhail Kukushkin, Kazakhstan, 6-4, 6-2, 6-1.
 Benjamin Bonzi, France, def. Marco Trungelliti, Argentina, 6-1, 1-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.
 Steve Johnson, United States, def. Den-

PRO TENNIS

nis Novak, Austria, 7-6 (7), 6-2, 7-5.

Second Round

Denis Shapovalov (10), Canada, def. Pablo Andujar, Spain, walkover.
 Novak Djokovic (1), Serbia, def. Kevin Anderson, South Africa, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3.
 Denis Kudla, United States, def. Andreas Seppi, Italy, 6-2, 6-4, 6-2.
 Marton Fucsovics, Hungary, def. Jiri Vesely, Czech Republic, 6-3, 5-4, ret.
 Daniel Evans (22), Britain, def. Dusan Lajovic, Serbia, 6-3, 6-3, 6-4.
 Karen Khachanov (25), Russia, def. Egor Gerasimov, Belarus, 6-1, 7-6 (3), 6-3.
 Frances Tiafoe, United States, def. Vasek Pospisil, Canada, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.
 Fabio Fognini (26), Italy, def. Laslo Djere, Serbia, 6-3, 6-4, 0-6, 6-4.
 Andrey Rublev (5), Russia, def. Lloyd Harris, South Africa, 6-1, 6-2, 7-5.
 Diego Schwartzman (9), Argentina, def. Liam Broady, Britain, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-4.
 Sebastian Korda, United States, def. Antoine Hoang, France, 7-5, 6-4, 6-4.
 Dominik Koepfer, Germany, def. Kwon Soon Woo, South Korea, 6-3, 6-7 (8), 7-6 (2), 5-7, 6-3.
 Andy Murray, Britain, def. Oscar Otte, Germany, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-2.

Women's Singles

First Round

Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (16), Russia, def. Ana Bogdan, Romania, 6-2, 6-2.
 Camila Giorgi, Italy, def. Jil Teichmann, Switzerland, 6-2, 6-2.
 Karolina Muchova (19), Czech Republic, def. Zhang Shuai, China, 6-3, 6-3.
 Yulia Putintseva, Kazakhstan, def. Tsvetana Pironkova, Bulgaria, 6-3, 6-1.
 Alize Cornet, France, def. Bianca Andreescu (5), Canada, 6-2, 6-1.
 Kristyna Pliskova, Czech Republic, def. Astra Sharma, Australia, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4.
 Magda Linette, Poland, def. Amanda Anisimova, United States, 2-6, 6-3, 6-1.
 Paula Badosa (30), Spain, def. Aliona Bolsova Zadoinov, Spain, 6-2, 5-7, 6-2.
 Elina Svitolina (3), Ukraine, def. Alison van Uytvanck, Belgium, 6-3, 2-6, 6-3.
 Ajla Tomljanovic, Australia, def. Greet Minnen, Belgium, 6-2, 7-6 (5).
 Anastasiya Sevastova, Latvia, def. Zarina Diyas, Kazakhstan, 6-4, 6-1.
 Sorana Cirstea, Romania, def. Samantha

Murray Sharan, Britain, 6-3, 6-3.
 CoCo Vandeweghe, United States, def. Olga Govortsova, Belarus, 6-4, 6-2.

Sara Sorribes Tormo, Spain, def. Ana Konjuh, Croatia, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.
 Katerina Siniakova, Czech Republic, def. Wang Yafan, China, 6-1, 6-0.
 Marketa Vondrousova, Czech Republic, def. Anett Kontaveit (24), Estonia, 2-6, 6-4, 6-2.

Daria Kasatkina (31), Russia, def. Patricia Maria Tig, Romania, 6-0, 3-6, 6-3.
 Clara Burel, France, def. Ellen Perez, Australia, 6-2, 6-2.
 Victoria Azarenka (12), Belarus, def. Kateryna Kozlova, Ukraine, 6-1, 6-3.
 Kaja Juvan, Slovenia, def. Belinda Bencic (9), Switzerland, 6-3, 6-3.
 Jelena Ostapenko, Latvia, def. Leylah Annie Fernandez, Canada, 6-1, 6-2.
 Emma Raducanu, Britain, def. Vitalia Diatchenko, Russia, 7-6 (4), 6-0.

Second Round

Elise Mertens (13), Belgium, def. Zhu Lin, China, 6-2, 6-0.
 Aryna Sabalenka (2), Belarus, def. Katie Boulter, Britain, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3.
 Elena Rybakina (18), Kazakhstan, def. Claire Liu, United States, 6-4, 6-4.
 Iga Swiatek (7), Poland, def. Vera Zvonareva, Russia, 6-1, 6-3.
 Garbine Muguruza (11), Spain, def. Lesley Pattinama Kerkhove, Netherlands, 6-1, 6-4.

Madison Brengle, United States, def. Sofia Kenin (4), United States, 6-2, 6-4.
 Maria Camila Osorio Serrano, Colombia, def. Ekaterina Alexandrova (32), Russia, 7-5, 6-2.

Liudmila Samsonova, Russia, def. Jessica Pegula (22), United States, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.
 Viktorija Golubic, Switzerland, def. Danielle Collins, United States, 6-2, 6-0.
 Madison Keys (23), United States, def. Lauren Davis, United States, 6-1, 6-4.
 Karolina Pliskova (8), Czech Republic, def. Donna Vekic, Croatia, 6-2, 6-2.

Tereza Martincova, Czech Republic, def. Nadia Podoroska, Argentina, 6-3, 7-6 (5).
 Ons Jabeur (21), Tunisia, def. Venus Williams, United States, 7-5, 6-0.
 Irina-Camelia Begu, Romania, def. Petra Martic (26), Croatia, 7-5, 6-7 (7), 6-3.

Sloane Stephens, United States, def. Kristie Ahn, United States, 7-5, 6-3.

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Connecticut	11	5	.688	—
Chicago	10	8	.556	2
New York	8	9	.471	3½
Washington	7	9	.438	4
Atlanta	6	9	.400	4½
Indiana	1	15	.063	10

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Las Vegas	12	4	.750	—
Seattle	12	4	.750	—
Minnesota	8	7	.533	3½
Dallas	8	9	.471	4½
Phoenix	7	8	.467	4½
Los Angeles	6	9	.400	5½

Wednesday's games

Chicago 91, Dallas 81
 Minnesota 82, Phoenix 76
 Las Vegas 99, Los Angeles 75

Thursday's games

Connecticut at Indiana

Friday's games

Chicago at Dallas
 Atlanta at Seattle
 Las Vegas at Los Angeles

COLLEGE BASEBALL

World Series

At Omaha, Neb.

(Double Elimination; x-if necessary)

Saturday, June 19

Game 1: N.C. State 10, No. 9 Stanford 4

Game 2: No. 4 Vanderbilt 7, No. 5 Arizona 6, 12 innings

Sunday, June 20

Game 3: Virginia 6, No. 3 Tennessee 0

Game 4: No. 7 Mississippi St. 2, No. 2 Texas 1

Monday, June 21

Game 5: No. 9 Stanford 14, No. 5 Arizona 5

Game 6: N.C. State 1, No. 4 Vanderbilt 0

Tuesday, June 22

Game 7: No. 2 Texas 8, No. 3 Tennessee 4

Game 8: No. 7 Mississippi St. 6, Virginia 5

Wednesday, June 23

Game 9: No. 4 Vanderbilt 6, Stanford 5

Game 10: No. 2 Texas 6, Virginia 2

Friday, June 25

Game 11: No. 4 Vanderbilt 3, N.C. State 1

Game 12: No. 2 Texas 8, No. 7 Mississippi St. 5

Saturday, June 26

Game 13: N.C. State vs. No. 4 Vanderbilt, no-contest.

Game 14: No. 7 Mississippi St. 4, No. 2 Texas 3

Championship Series (Best-of-three)

Monday: No. 4 Vanderbilt 8, No. 7 Mississippi St. 2

Tuesday: No. 7 Mississippi St. 13, No. 4 Vanderbilt 2

Wednesday: No. 7 Mississippi St. 9, No. 4 Vanderbilt 0, No. 7 Mississippi St. wins series 2-1

CYCLING

Tour de France

Wednesday

5th Stage

A 27-kilometer (16.7-mile) ride from Change to Laval Espace Mayenne

1. Tadej Pogacar, Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates, 32m 0s.
 2. Stefan Kung, Switzerland, Groupama-FDJ, 19s behind.
 3. Jonas Vingegaard, Denmark, Jumbo-Visma, 27s behind.
 4. Wout Van Aert, Belgium, Jumbo-Visma, 30s behind.
 5. Mathieu van der Poel, Netherlands, Alpecin-Fenix, 31s behind.
 6. Kasper Asgreen, Denmark, Deceuninck-QuickStep, 37s behind.
 7. Primoz Roglic, Slovenia, Jumbo-Visma, 44s behind.
 8. Mattia Cattaneo, Italy, Deceuninck-QuickStep, 55s behind.
 9. Richie Porte, Austria, Ineos Grenadiers, same time.
 10. Alexey Lutsenko, Kazikstan, Astana-Premier Tech, 1m behind.
Also
 19. Neilson Powless, United States, EF Education-Nippo, 1m 40s behind.
 33. Sepp Kuss, United States, Jumbo-Visma, 1m 57s behind.
 119. Sean Bennett, United States, Qhubeka-NextHash, 4m 16s behind.

DEALS

Wednesday's transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball

MLB — Placed ex New York Mets General Manager Jared Porter on the ineligible list following the completion of an investigation for violation of MLB policies.

American League

BALTIMORE ORIOLES — Selected the contract of RHP Spenser Watkins from Norfolk (Triple-A East). Recalled RHP Isaac Mattson from Norfolk. Optioned LHP Alexander Wells to Norfolk. Designated INF Stevie Wilkerson for assignment. Placed RHP Travis Lakins Sr. on the 10-day IL.

CHICAGO WHITE SOX — Placed LHP Aaron Bummer on the 10-day IL, retroactive to June 28. Placed RHP Evan Marshall on the 10-day IL. Recalled LHP Jace Fry from Charlotte (Triple-A East). Reinstated RHP Michael Kopech from the 10-day IL.

DETROIT TIGERS — Recalled CF Derek Hill from Toledo (Triple-A East).

CLEVELAND INDIANS — Recalled 2B Owen Miller from Columbus (Triple-A East).

HOUSTON ASTROS — Placed C Martin Maldonado on the bereavement/family medical emergency list. Recalled C Garrett Stubbs from Sugar Land (Triple-A West). Designated RHP Francis Martes for assignment. Placed RHP Jose Urquidy on the 10-day IL. Selected the contract of LHP Ryan Hartman from Sugar Land.

KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Placed 3B Emmanuel Rivera on the 10-day IL. Recalled CF Edward Olivares from Omaha (Triple-A East).

LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Recalled RHP Aaron Slegers from Salt Lake (Triple-A West). Optioned RHP James Hoyt to Salt Lake.

MINNESOTA TWINS — Signed 2B Drew Stankiewicz to a minor league contract.

NEW YORK YANKEES — Reinstated LHP Justin Wilson from the 10-day IL and rehab assignment. Optioned RHP Albert Abreau to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (Triple-A East).

SEATTLE MARINERS — Reinstated LHP Marco Gonzales from the paternity list. Optioned INF Donovan Walton to Tacoma (Triple-A West).

TAMPA BAY RAYS — Recalled LHP Ryan Sherriff from Durham (Triple-A East). Placed LHP Ryan Thompson on the 10-day IL, retroactive to June 28.

TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Optioned RHP Anthony Castro and RHP Joel Payamps to Buffalo (Triple-A East). Designated RHP Jeremy Beasley for assignment. Activated RHP Adam Cimber. Reinstated LHP Steven Matz from the 10-day IL.

National League

ATLANTA BRAVES — Optioned LHP Sean Newcomb to Gwinnett (Triple-A East). Reinstated LHP Max Fried from the 10-day IL. Sent C Alex Jackson to Gwinnett (Triple-A East) on a rehab assignment.

CHICAGO CUBS — Placed C Jose Lobaton on the 60-day IL. Selected the contract of C Taylor Gushue from Iowa (Triple-A East).

CINCINNATI REDS — Optioned RHP Tony Santillan to Louisville (Triple-A East). Recalled RHP Ashton Goudeau from Louisville.

COLORADO ROCKIES — Sent RHP Ryan Castellani outright to Albuquerque (Triple-A West).

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Claimed RHP Bobby Wahl off waivers from Milwaukee then optioned him to Oklahoma City (Triple-A West). Transferred INF Corey Seager from 10-day IL to 60-day IL.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Selected the contract of LHP Aaron Ashby from Nashville (Triple-A East). Optioned INF/OF Pablo Reyes to Nashville. Designated RHP Bobby Wahl for assignment.

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AUTO RACING/GOLF

Wisconsin track eager for Cup race

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

Road America owns a reputation as one of the nation's foremost road courses yet hasn't hosted NASCAR's premier Cup Series since the 1950s.

That changes on the Fourth of July in a coup for a Wisconsin track that bills itself as "America's national park of speed" but until this year couldn't land a Cup date. NASCAR drivers can't wait for the opportunity to race Sunday at Elkhart Lake.

"If I wasn't driving that weekend, I would be going," said Austin Cindric, who won last year's Xfinity Series race at Road America and is competing in both the Xfinity and Cup events this time.

Road America, which opened in 1955, is located on 640 acres about halfway between Milwaukee and Green Bay. The course is just over 4 miles long, features 14 turns and is surrounded by about 1,600 campsites.

For all its history, Road America only hosted NASCAR's premier series once before, when Tim Flock won a rainy Grand National event back in 1956. The track wanted the top series back but could not get one of the elusive 36 race dates.

"They only run so many races, and a good portion of those races are run on affiliate track that are owned by NASCAR," Road America president/general manager Mike Kertscher said. "With us being an independent, that's a different conversation, for sure. So the timing had to be right."

Kertscher said Road America executives were "pretty deep in conversations" with NASCAR officials the year before the pandemic. He believes its ability to operate during the pandemic may have helped Road America earn a Cup Series date.

"I think last year, through COVID, we opened up a lot of eyes," Kertscher said. "We ran all of our events last year in a safe way. We actually ended up with more events last year than we'd originally scheduled."

Kertscher said Road America could get close to 100,000 spectators over NASCAR's entire four-day run, part of a busy summer that saw the venue host IndyCar two weeks ago.

"I think having it on July 4th weekend, it just felt like such a natural fit to us," NASCAR vice president of racing development Ben Kennedy said when the 2021 schedule was announced. "You think about everything that goes around, everything that's synonymous with that weekend, camping, cooking out, really Americana."

NASCAR officials also liked the unpredictability that Road America has provided since becoming a fixture on the Xfinity Series schedule in 2010. The track has produced 11 different winners in its 11 Xfinity races.

AJ Allmendinger, winner of the Xfinity race in 2013 and an open-wheel race in 2006, will be competing both Saturday and Sunday.

"I do think it's just such a perfect race track for stock cars because there's a lot of passing opportunities," Allmendinger said. "It can be hard on tires, so tire wear becomes an issue, and that allows for more passing."

Boosted by 'boot camp'

A major winner and No. 1, Nelly Korda credits reset with father for success

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

JOHNS CREEK, Ga. — The timing couldn't have been better in so many ways for Nelly Korda, the new face of American women in golf and No. 1 in the world.

As she stood on the first tee at Atlanta Athletic Club, tied for the lead in the KPMG Women's PGA Championship with a shot at winning her first major, older sister Jessica had just finished the front nine and made a detour on the way to No. 10.

The sisters, separated by about five years, shared a hug.

The next embrace was even more meaningful, some 4 1/2 hours later on the 18th green after 22-year-old Nelly closed out a three-shot victory that made her the first American in seven years to reach the top of the women's world ranking.

"She has a heart of gold," Nelly said. "She's the most selfless person out there. She's five years older, so she has shown me the ropes of the LPGA, the ropes of professional golf, and I've been super lucky to have been shown that because a lot of people don't get that opportunity."

Competition is part of the family DNA.

Their father is Czech-born Petr Korda, the Australian Open champion in 1992 who reached as high as No. 2 in the world in men's tennis. The youngest child, 20-year-old Sebastian, advanced to the third round at his first Wimbledon on Wednesday and is No. 50 in the men's rankings.

The girls chose golf, and the LPGA is better for it.

Jessica was runner-up at Q-school at age 17, won her first LPGA Tour event at Royal Melbourne at 18, played in her first Solheim Cup two years later and reached as high as No. 8 in the world. She started this year by winning the season opener for the sixth title of her career, and little sister took it from there.

Nelly had little evidence to suggest this stretch was coming, especially after the USGA paired the sisters together at Olympic Club for the U.S. Women's Open and she missed the cut.

Nelly went home to Florida to spend a week with her father in what she described as "boot camp," which really was a chance to reset.

She returned to shoot 62 in the Meijer LPGA Classic and win by four shots, and then she carried that momentum to Atlanta Athletic Club for a second straight victory, giving her six LPGA Tour titles, just like big sister.

Korda shot 63 in the second round to tie the Women's PGA record, and match the low score for a major at the Atlanta club that had hosted a U.S. Open, U.S. Women's Open and three PGA Championships.

The Korda sisters stand about 5 feet 11 inches with a swing both elegant and athletic, and they pack plenty of power. But there was so much more to Nelly's game in Atlanta. Korda went 49 consecutive holes without a bogey, a streak that ended when she had a five-shot lead with four holes to play and hit into the water on the par-3 15th, a hole that



JOHN BAZEMORE/AP

Nelly Korda celebrates after winning the KPMG Women's PGA Championship tournament on June 27. Korda is the first American in seven years to reach the top of the women's world ranking, and she had a lot of help from family to get there.



HYOSUB SHIN/AP

Jessica Korda reached as high as No. 8 in the rankings and has shown younger sister Nelly the ropes of the LPGA.



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/AP

His sisters chose golf, but Sebastian Korda opted for tennis like his father, and is in the third round at Wimbledon.

gave her fits all week.

By then, it really only affected the score.

Their father was already in England with their brother, though Nelly took time for a video call, and he had a message for her: "You're welcome for the boot camp," Nelly said with a laugh.

There is no sibling rivalry, only support.

They will be teammates in three weeks in Michigan at the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational, a team event. "Team Jelly," is what the younger sister called it.

More important, they will be teammates again in Tokyo. Nelly is the top-seeded player for the Olympics, and Jessica nailed down the fourth spot for the American team at No. 13 in the world. They most likely will be teammates in September in Ohio for the Solheim Cup.

On her own, Nelly will be seen as the player to carry the American flag on the LPGA Tour as a major champion and No. 1 in the

world.

She is the youngest American to win a major since Lexi Thompson was 19 when she won at Mission Hills in California in 2014. That remains the only major for Thompson, who last month lost a five-shot lead on the final day of the U.S. Open.

Korda replaced Jin Young Ko, who had been No. 1 for the last 100 weeks. The top players in women's golf since the last American at No. 1 — Stacy Lewis in 2014 at age 29 — were from South Korea, Thailand or China, along with Korean-born Lydia Ko of New Zealand.

Korda is a shot-by-shot thinker, boring but effective, setting goals and staying in the present. Her victory still fresh, she wasn't ready to think about what she wants to achieve next. For now, she is a major champion and No. 1 in the world.

"That has a lovely ring to it, not going to lie," she said with a smile.

COLLEGE SPORTS



REBECCA S. GRATZ/AP

Mississippi State infielder Kellum Clark, center, celebrates a three-run home run against Vanderbilt during the Bulldogs' 9-0 deciding win Wednesday during Game 3 of the College World Series in Omaha, Neb.

Bulldogs shut down Vandy again for 1st national title

By ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Mississippi State's first national championship had been building since 1985, when "Thunder and Lightning" — Will Clark and Rafael Palmeiro — were the stars on what's known as the best team to not win a College World Series.

The 2021 Bulldogs got the job done. Finally.

Will Bednar and Landon Sims combined on a one-hitter, Mississippi State scored early and built on its lead, and at the end, the Bulldogs were in a dogpile celebrating a 9-0 victory over Vanderbilt in the deciding third game of the College World Series finals Wednesday night.

There to see it was Ron Polk, the godfather of Mississippi State baseball and the coach of that 1985 team.

"Coach Polk is the one who built this and started it," coach Chris Lemonis said. "We run out there and play in front of the big crowds, but Polk was a big reason why, and our former players, too. This is a lot of years in the making, and a lot of fun. And I know our fans will enjoy this."

Oh, they enjoyed it. It seemed the whole town of Starkville, Miss., was at TD Ameritrade Park — loud and proud — for all three games of the finals.

When third baseman Kamren James threw to first for the final out, the Bulldogs' dugout emptied and about 100 fans jumped out of the stands to celebrate. The players walked the warning track and

reached up to high-five the fans.

"I couldn't be more happy for a team, a town, a fan base, the whole state of Mississippi, except Oxford, of course," SEC player of the year Tanner Allen said. "Those guys are always on my back. So I had to take a shot at them."

"This team overcame everything, man. From getting swept at home in front of 10,000 versus Arkansas to Missouri coming in and taking a series from us and then getting embarrassed at the SEC Tournament. We just kept playing and playing. You blink an eye, we're national champions."

Bednar, working on three days' rest, walked three of the first five batters he faced before retiring 15 in a row. He turned the game over to Sims to start the seventh, and the Commodores broke up the no-hitter when Carter Young singled into center field with one out in the eighth.

"I'll probably bust his chops tomorrow," a laughing Bednar said of Sims losing the no-no. "Win a national championship, I don't really care about that. I'm on cloud nine."

It was the first one-hitter at the CWS since 2014 and the climax of an Omaha run that seemed to get easier for Mississippi State the longer it was here. The three wins it needed to reach the finals were all decided by one run.

"When you're going to do something legendary for the first time, it was going to have to be tough," Lemonis said. "The reason we are champions is we just have a really tough, resilient group. It's been built over time. It's the accumula-

tion of the last three years."

Bednar (9-1), whose 15 strikeouts in his Omaha debut against Texas on June 20 were the most here in 25 years, fanned four against Vandy (49-18) and was named the CWS Most Outstanding Player.

"Just every time he's taken the ball here in the postseason, he's just been a champ," Lemonis said. "You need somebody to get hot for you in the postseason, and we had that with Will tonight."

The national championship is the first in a team sport for the Bulldogs (50-18) and it came in their 12th CWS appearance. Only Florida State (23) and Clemson (12) have been to Omaha at least as many times without winning a title.

Logan Tanner and Kellum Clark homered in the four-run seventh inning to put the game out of reach against a Vanderbilt offense that managed just seven hits and three runs over the last 25 innings of the finals.

"We didn't play our best baseball toward the end," Commodores coach Tim Corbin said. "Getting through regionals was emotional, getting through the super regional was emotional, and this wasn't easy here. And then there was the groundswell of momentum on the other side. You could feel it and it was real."

Mississippi State knocked out Kumar Rocker (14-4) in the fifth. It was the second time in three CWS starts that the projected top-10 draft pick wasn't at his best, in part because of more shaky defense behind him.

NCAA clears way for compensation as new laws loom

By SCHUYLER DIXON
Associated Press

DALLAS — The NCAA Board of Directors approved one of the biggest changes in the history of college athletics Wednesday, clearing the way for nearly a half-million athletes to start earning money based on their fame and celebrity without fear of endangering their eligibility or putting their school in jeopardy of violating amateurism rules that have stood for decades. The decision, expected for months as state after state passed laws intended to render NCAA rules moot on the topic, came on the eve of the market opening Thursday for athletes in a dozen states, including giants like Texas and Florida.

"This is an important day for college athletes since they all are now able to take advantage of name, image and likeness opportunities," NCAA President Mark Emmert said.

The move effectively suspends NCAA restrictions on payments to athletes for things such as sponsorship deals, online endorsements and personal appearances. It applies to all three divisions or some 460,000 athletes.

The NCAA will also allow athletes to enter into agreements with agents, though all athletes are expected to keep their school informed of any and all NIL arrangements. The NCAA said schools are responsible "for determining whether those activities are consistent with state law."

Anticipating the change, many schools already have plans in place, with some weaving NIL education into for-credit coursework.

Within hours after the NCAA announcement, a handful announced policies or updated plans on the topic, including Pitt and Indiana, which said Hoosier athletes "can be contacted directly in a variety of ways to arrange or discuss potential NIL agreements." Stanford

said much of its "NIL support" would be available for all students, not just Cardinal athletes.

Compliance officers at the NCAA's more than 1,100 schools will be busy.

Athletes must report NIL arrangements to their schools and there are limits on what they can do. Florida and Texas, for example, bar athletes from endorsing gambling and many schools have specific guidance about using — or not using — their logos or uniforms during NIL work. Kentucky warned its athletes that NIL compensation could affect need-based financial aid.

NCAA rules go back to its founding in 1906, though enforcement of infractions didn't pick up steam until the 1950s. The idea of money flowing to athletes has generally been opposed by the organization with exceptions and opposition both growing in recent years as athletes and former athletes have started to win in court. The NCAA's historic model of amateurism is changing.

The NCAA had hoped to have broader NIL rules in place months ago, but that process bogged down, as did efforts on Capitol Hill to have Congress pass a law addressing the issue. Emmert said the NCAA will continue to push for a federal law to "provide clarity on a national level."

The NCAA was forced to seek a temporary solution rather than have athletes in some states eligible for compensation while others were not. More than 10 states have laws set to go into effect Thursday that would have undercut or simply declared inert existing NCAA rules regarding NIL earnings.

Without NCAA action, athletes in some states could be making money without putting their college eligibility in jeopardy while their counterparts in other states could be in danger of breaking NCAA rules.



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

The NCAA Board of Directors cleared the way for athletes to start earning money based on their fame and celebrity.

MLB

Down in the count, but not out

Astros, others doing just fine with two strikes

BY KRISTIE RIEKEN
AND JAY COHEN
Associated Press

HOUSTON — For Yuli Gurriel and the Houston Astros, the fight is on when the count gets to two strikes.

There is nothing complicated about their success, either.

“You got to have pride,” manager Dusty Baker said. “You got to have pride in it, like when you were a kid playing strikeout with your little brother. They say strikeouts aren’t important, but you see how many games that we won just by putting the ball in play.”

The Astros are on top of the AL West, and their two-strike approach is a key part of one of baseball’s best lineups. Gurriel leads the majors with a .291 batting average with two strikes heading into play on Wednesday, and teammates Michael Brantley (.267) and Yordan Alvarez (.252) rank among the top six on the list. Baker’s club has a big league-best .205 team batting average with two strikes — easily clearing the MLB average of .161.

While strikeouts, spin rates and sticky substances have been the talk of baseball this year, Gurriel and Co. are among a group of hitters still putting up quite a fight with two strikes.

“I was taught you get more aggressive with two strikes because you don’t leave it up to the umpire, within reason,” said Baker, a former big league outfielder. “So, you search for the ball. One of the keys is not to guess. You see guys guess-

ing on your team or other teams and a lot of times they’re destined for something that they really can’t hit in the first place — a good breaking ball.”

Gurriel hit .216 with two strikes in 2020. He said he had a lot of trouble with those counts last year, so he worked on his approach in the offseason.

“A lot of times with a 3-2 count or with any two-strike count, I was taking kind of like a home-run swing and not really taking into account what the situation was,” he said through an interpreter. “So this year I’ve worked on shortening my swing up a lot with two strikes and I think that’s helped a lot.”

Houston’s 19-8 June heading into Wednesday’s game against Baltimore includes a four-game sweep of the AL Central-leading Chicago White Sox, who lost their best two-strike hitter when Nick Madrigal tore his right hamstring June 9. Madrigal hit .284 in two-strike counts this year.

“It’s the mentality. From pitch to pitch, I really don’t think that it changes,” Madrigal said. “No matter if there’s one strike or two strikes or however many strikes there are, I treat every pitch the same. For me personally, that works. I don’t know if it would work for everyone.”

With his 5-foot-8 frame and elite bat-to-ball skills, Madrigal is a throwback to a bygone era, before the three true outcomes — home runs, walks and strikeouts — took over baseball. Just like Los Angeles Angels infielder David



JULIO CORTEZ/AP

Houston’s Yordan Alvarez is greeted at home after he drove in Chas McCormick, left, and Michael Brantley on Monday. Alvarez and Brantley are among the Astros doing well at the plate with two strikes.

Fletcher, who led the majors with a .322 batting average in two-strike counts in 2020.

But some sluggers also are finding success on the brink of striking out.

Gurriel also leads baseball with a .406 on-base percentage with two strikes. Oakland Athletics first baseman Matt Olson, listed at 6-5 and 225 pounds, has a big league-best .478 slugging percentage in such situations.

“I think there’s a lot that goes into it,” Olson said. “I feel like my swing is in a better spot right now, and it’s leading to some better two-strike results.”

Olson has been choking up on his bat in spots after experimenting with the change in the offseason.

“I tried it out, and I’ve liked the way it felt,” he said. “It’s not something that I’m necessarily married

to, but for now, it’s been feeling good and working.”

Cincinnati Reds outfielder Nick Castellanos is one of the early contenders for NL MVP, and two-strike hitting is a big reason why. He ranks eighth in the majors with a .245 batting average in such situations.

Castellanos drove in seven runs during a 12-4 victory over Philadelphia on Monday, capping the performance with an RBI double on a 0-2 pitch from Enyel De Los Santos.

“I think this year as a team I would say we’ve improved over last season, really simplifying as far as not trying to do too much with two strikes and thinking about putting the ball in play,” Reds manager David Bell said.

AP Baseball Writer Janie McCauley and AP Sports Writer Mitch Stacy also contributed to this report.

Adames’ offense sparking Brewers

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — The Milwaukee Brewers acquired Willy Adames with the idea he would shore up their defense and provide an energy boost in the locker room.

Little did they know how much punch he’d provide with his bat.

The Brewers had just slipped below .500 when Adames arrived with reliever Trevor Richards in a May 21 trade that sent relievers J.P. Feyereisen and Drew Rasmussen to the Tampa Bay Rays. They’ve gone 27-10 since and have won eight straight to grab a six-game lead in the NL Central.

“I love to win,” Adames said. “That’s what I’m here for.”

Adames’ stunning turnaround at the plate has played a big role in Milwaukee’s surge.

At the time of the trade, Adames was hitting just .197 with a .254 on-base percentage, five homers and 15 RBIs in 41 games. He has batted .280 with a .362 on-base percent-

age, seven homers and 28 RBIs in 37 games with the Brewers.

The 25-year-old Adames says he didn’t make any changes to his swing when he switched teams. Brewers officials said at the time of the trade that they believed Adames was a better hitter than his struggles suggested.

One explanation he offers for the power surge is that he’s no longer hitting in Tampa Bay. Adames has batted just .217 with a .275 on-base percentage at Tropicana Field, well below his career average of .257 and on-base percentage of .324.

“I was good on the road (while with the Rays),” Adames said. “I just didn’t hit at the Trop. I was really good on the road, and now I feel like I’m on the road every time because I don’t play at the Trop anymore, you know what I mean?”

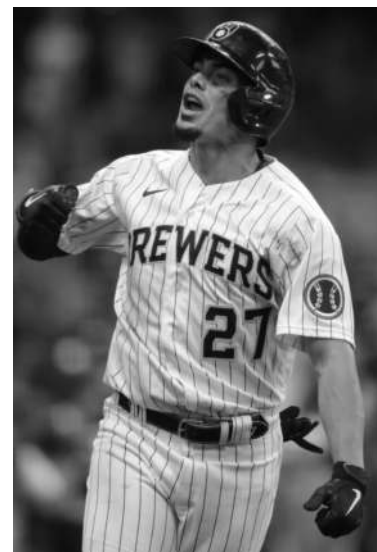
In his past 12 games, Adames has hit .333 with four homers and 14 RBIs. Those four homers include a tiebreaking blast in the

ninth at Colorado, a game-tying shot in the ninth at home against the Rockies, a three-run drive during a 10-run rally in the eighth against the Cubs and a grand slam off the Cubs two days later.

“Pick a great spot to hit a home run, and that’s where the home runs have come,” Milwaukee manager Craig Counsell said. “That’s what’s been truly incredible about his performance.”

Adames has made equally large contributions with his outgoing personality. When the Brewers announced the trade, outfielder Avisail García let his teammates know what to expect because he had played with Adames in Tampa Bay.

“That’s a guy you want to be around,” García said at the time. “Always happy, always cheering for the guys. You never see him down. We always see him working hard and playing hard. That’s what we’re getting, and I’m excited for it.”



JEFFREY PHELPS/AP

Willy Adames reacts after a home run on June 25. Adames has provided the Brewers an unexpected spark on offense.

Adames has been every bit as advertised in that regard.

“The energy he’s bringing to the Brew Crew right now is just fun,” infielder Luis Urías said. “It’s amazing.”

Scoreboard

American League East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	50	31	.617	—
Tampa Bay	47	34	.580	3
Toronto	41	37	.526	7½
New York	41	39	.513	8½
Baltimore	27	54	.333	23
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	47	32	.595	—
Cleveland	42	35	.545	4
Detroit	36	45	.444	12
Minnesota	33	45	.423	13½
Kansas City	33	46	.418	14
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	48	33	.593	—
Oakland	48	34	.585	½
Seattle	42	39	.519	6
Los Angeles	39	41	.488	8½
Texas	31	49	.388	16½

National League East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	41	35	.539	—
Washington	40	38	.513	2
Atlanta	38	41	.481	4½
Philadelphia	37	41	.474	5
Miami	34	45	.430	8½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	48	33	.593	—
Chicago	42	39	.519	6
St. Louis	40	41	.494	8
Cincinnati	39	40	.494	8
Pittsburgh	29	50	.367	18
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	50	29	.633	—
Los Angeles	49	31	.613	1½
San Diego	49	33	.598	2½
Colorado	34	47	.420	17
Arizona	22	60	.268	29½

Wednesday’s games

Detroit 9-7, Cleveland 4-1
 Washington 15, Tampa Bay 6
 Boston 6, Kansas City 2
 L.A. Angels 11, N.Y. Yankees 8
 Chicago White Sox 13, Minnesota 3
 Seattle 9, Toronto 7, 10 innings
 Baltimore 5, Houston 2
 Oakland 3, Texas 1
 St. Louis 7, Arizona 4
 Milwaukee 15, Chicago Cubs 7
 Colorado 6, Pittsburgh 2
 San Diego 7, Cincinnati 5, 6 innings
 Atlanta 20, N.Y. Mets 2
 Miami 11, Philadelphia 6

Thursday’s games

L.A. Angels at N.Y. Yankees
 Seattle at Toronto
 Kansas City at Boston
 Minnesota at Chicago White Sox
 Texas at Oakland
 Houston at Cleveland
 Miami at Philadelphia
 L.A. Dodgers at Washington
 Milwaukee at Pittsburgh
 San Diego at Cincinnati
 N.Y. Mets at Atlanta
 St. Louis at Colorado
 San Francisco at Arizona

Friday’s games

N.Y. Mets (Walker 6-3) at N.Y. Yankees (Cole 8-4)
 Tampa Bay (McClanahan 3-2) at Toronto (Manoah 1-0)
 Chicago White Sox (Lynn 7-3) at Detroit (TBD)
 Houston (McCullers Jr. 5-1) at Cleveland (Hentges 1-2)
 Minnesota (TBD) at Kansas City (Singer 3-6)
 Baltimore (Akin 0-4) at L.A. Angels (Cobb 5-3)
 Boston (Rodríguez 6-4) at Oakland (Montas 7-7)
 Texas (Gibson 6-0) at Seattle (Gilbert 2-2)
 San Diego (Paddock 4-5) at Philadelphia (Wheeler 6-4)
 L.A. Dodgers (Urias 9-3) at Washington (Scherzer 7-4)
 Milwaukee (Houser 4-5) at Pittsburgh (Brubaker 4-7)
 Chicago Cubs (Mills 3-1) at Cincinnati (Gray 1-4)
 Miami (Thompson 2-2) at Atlanta (Smyly 5-3)
 St. Louis (Oviedo 0-4) at Colorado (González 2-5)
 San Francisco (Wood 6-3) at Arizona (Galien 1-3)

Saturday’s games

N.Y. Mets at N.Y. Yankees
 Tampa Bay at Toronto
 Chicago White Sox at Detroit
 Minnesota at Kansas City
 Boston at Oakland
 Houston at Cleveland
 Baltimore at L.A. Angels
 Texas at Seattle
 Milwaukee at Pittsburgh
 San Diego at Philadelphia
 Chicago Cubs at Cincinnati
 Miami at Atlanta
 L.A. Dodgers at Washington
 St. Louis at Colorado
 San Francisco at Arizona

MLB



Above: The Washington Nationals' Kyle Schwarber hits a solo home run during the first inning of a game Tuesday against the Tampa Bay Rays at Nationals Park in Washington. Below: Schwarber hit 16 homers in 18 games, something only Sammy Sosa and Bobby Bonds did.

Nationals phenomenon: Schwarber joins elite club

Player hit 16 homers in a run of 18 games, reaching mark set by Sosa, Bonds

By NOAH TRISTER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON

As his home run-hitting binge became a national phenomenon, Kyle Schwarber tried to warn everyone how quickly it could end.

"It's the reality of this game that, you know what, I'm probably not going to keep doing this the whole year," the Washington outfielder said. "It's physically impossible to keep doing this."

That was almost a week ago.

Schwarber's exploits have now progressed into truly rarified air. Before he went 0-for-4 in Wednesday's defeat of Tampa Bay, he had hit 16 home runs in his last 18 games, a statistical run that only Barry Bonds and Sammy Sosa had previously managed. Only Albert Belle had achieved Schwarber's total of 12 homers in a 10-game span. Only Frank Howard — a star slugger in Washington a half-century earlier — had hit 11 in nine.

"That's a cool stat. I love when you guys come at me with some cool stats," Schwarber said this week after being told he now stood alongside Howard. "You're doing some things with really unbelievable players. It's just, keep riding the wave. That's kind of the biggest thing — just ride the wave, and don't get too up, don't get too down."

This slugging surge comes at a good time for Schwarber, who was



nontendered by the Chicago Cubs this past offseason and signed a one-year, \$10 million deal with the Nationals. His power is nothing new. He twice surpassed 30 homers with the Cubs, but his batting average dipped to .188 in the shortened 2020 season.

Even during this torrid stretch, he's had a few hitless games, but the home runs have come in bunches. He hit three on June 20 against the Mets, and he had four other games with two homers, most recently on Monday night.

All the while, he's tried not to let his mounting feats distract him.

"To be honest with you, I want to play stupid — that's kind of the best way to describe it," he said. "Just keep going up there ... don't remem-

ber the one before, just live in the present."

After going deep again Tuesday night against the Rays — on the first pitch he saw — Schwarber has 25 homers, second in the National League to the 26 hit by Fernando Tatis Jr.

Nationals manager Dave Martinez compared it to Andre Dawson's MVP season with the Cubs in 1987, when Martinez was a young center fielder for Chicago.

"He hit 49 home runs that year, and I led off for most of the year," said Martinez, whose Washington team has climbed above .500 thanks in part to Schwarber. "Just to watch him, like every time I got on base, there was a good chance that he was going to hit the ball out of the ballpark. It was pretty awesome. It was the first time I've ever really seen something like that."

"I'm looking at Kyle now, and you do have that sense where you're sitting up there, and you see him working counts, and I tell myself, 'I don't want to get ahead of myself, but there's a good chance that he's going to hit this ball hard, and maybe far.'"

Bonds had his run of 16 homers in 18 games in his record-setting 2001 season, when he finished with 73. Nobody is confusing Schwarber with Bonds — Schwarber has been intentionally walked just once this year, and it was back in April.

But right now, pitchers give him a good pitch to hit at their peril.

Texas turnaround: Gibson puts up the best ERA in the AL

By STEPHEN HAWKINS
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Texas Rangers manager Chris Woodward loves sharing the story of Kyle Gibson, the veteran right-hander who flopped in his first opening day start.

Gibson was 2-6 last year in his Rangers debut, then this season had a 135.00 ERA after getting only one out in the shortest opening day start in franchise history, and shortest in the majors since 1982. He is now the American League ERA leader at 2.00, and a likely first-time All-Star.

"Everybody asks me about him," Woodward said. "This guy wanted to be better. You know, he's an older guy that maybe could have just fallen into old patterns and said, 'Hey, I'm just going to do what I always do.' But he didn't. He said after last year, he wasn't satisfied, he wasn't happy."

The 33-year-old Gibson (6-0) is pitching with more confidence than he ever has less than three months after failing to get out of the first inning for the only time in his 215 starts over nine big league seasons.

His unbeaten streak of 15 games is the longest to open a season in franchise history; he got a no decision in that opener in Kansas City on April 1, when he gave up five runs while facing eight batters (four singles, three walks and a strikeout) after Texas had scored five times in the top of the first. Only one other team has more than two runs against him, and the Royals got none when they faced him again Saturday in Texas.

"Sometimes confidence follows a little bit of success. I try to not let my confidence be rooted in the results," Gibson said. "It's something that I've learned over the

135.00

Kyle Gibson's ERA after his first game this season.

SOURCE: Associated Press

years, is you can't let your confidence be shaken by one start or anything like that. A lot of my confidence on the mound comes from my preparation and comes in the work that I do beforehand."

While the slider is still his best pitch, and he relies heavily on a sinker, Gibson added a cutter this season. He was making adjustments to his delivery even between his last starts.

Gibson had a season-high 10 strikeouts, with five in a row early, over seven scoreless innings Saturday. He retired the first 12 Royals, including a seven-pitch fourth inning against the top of their lineup. The only Kansas City runners on against him were after loading the bases with no outs in the fifth, on two singles and a walk, before a strikeout and an inning-ending double play.

"It was all execution ... he was so good in the bottom of the zone," said Royals manager and former big-league catcher Mike Matheny, who pointed out Gibson's performance to his pitchers as an example of what he has emphasized to some of them.

A first-round draft pick by Minnesota, Gibson pitched his first seven big-league seasons there before signing a \$28 million, three-year deal with Texas in free agency. He was 13-7 over 160 innings for the AL Central champion Twins in 2019, even after developing ulcerative colitis after an extended bout with E. coli that he contracted during an annual mission trip before that spring.



MICHAEL AINSWORTH/AP

Texas Rangers starting pitcher Kyle Gibson has an earned run average of 2.00 after starting the season with an ERA of 135.00.

NBA PLAYOFFS/WIMBLEDON

Finals: Paul tied career playoff high with 41 points

FROM PAGE 48

jured his shoulder in the first round against the Lakers. Add in numerous surgeries and making the conference finals one other time, only to fall short.

"It's been a lot, I'm telling you," he said.

Paul reached the NBA Finals for the first time on the same Staples Center court where he helped bring the Clippers to respectability over six seasons that ended in 2017 without ever getting past the second round. The 36-year-old guard punished his old team with 31 points in the second half and tied his playoff career high of 41 — the same amount Paul George had in pushing the Clippers to a road win in Game 5.

"I'm just so happy for all the people around me," Paul said on the court after the game, "and the Clippers are my family, too. These fans, Billy Crystal, that's my family. This is a team I have the utmost respect for, I'll always be a Clipper."

"But this group right here, this group right here," he said, gesturing at his Suns teammates wearing NBA Finals hats.

The West trophy glinted under the arena lights as orange-clad Suns fans outcheered boos from Clippers fans. Paul's family, including leaping 12-year-old son, Chris, celebrated in a suite.

"This is what we set out to get tonight, so we didn't want to go back to Phoenix without it," Booker said.

Phoenix is the first team to reach the NBA Finals after a 10-year playoff drought. The Suns had the league's second-best record in this pandemic-interrupted season. They knocked off the defending champion Los Angeles Lakers in the first round and swept Denver in the semifinals.

The Suns last made the NBA Finals in 1993, when they were led by Charles Barkley and lost to Mi-

NBA scoreboard

Conference finals

(Best-of-seven)

x-if necessary

Eastern Conference

Milwaukee 2, Atlanta 2

Atlanta 116, Milwaukee 113

Milwaukee 125, Atlanta 91

Milwaukee 113, Atlanta 102

Atlanta 110, Milwaukee 88

Thursday: at Milwaukee

Saturday: at Atlanta

x-Monday: at Milwaukee

Western Conference

Phoenix 4, L.A. Clippers 2

Phoenix 120, L.A. Clippers 114

Phoenix 104, L.A. Clippers 103

L.A. Clippers 106, Phoenix 92

Phoenix 84, L.A. Clippers 80

L.A. Clippers 116, Phoenix 102

Wednesday: Phoenix 130, L.A. Clippers 103

Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls in six games.

Their only other finals appearance was in 1976, a loss to the Boston Celtics in six games.

Things got chippy in the fourth. Going into a timeout with 5:48 remaining, Paul stared at Patrick Beverley as he walked by. Beverley turned around and shoved Paul hard in the back, sending him to the floor. Beverley was ejected.

"We knew we broke them," Jae Crowder said. "There's no better sign. That's a great feeling to have."

Marcus Morris led the Clippers with 26 points despite playing with a sore knee. George had 21 points and nine rebounds coming off his career playoff high that staved off elimination and brought his team back home for another chance.

But the exhausted Clippers — who rallied from 0-2 series deficits in getting to the West finals for the first time in franchise history — had little left in the tank. They were again without two-time NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard, who has been out with a right knee sprain, and center Ivica Zubac. He missed his second straight game because of an MCL sprain in his right knee.



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Phoenix guard Devin Booker rubs the Western Conference trophy after the Suns won Game 6 of the Western Conference finals against the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday, in Los Angeles. The Suns won 130-103 to take the best-of-seven series 4-2.



ALBERTO PEZZALI/AP

Australia's Ashleigh Barty hits a return to Russia's Anna Blinkova during their second-round match Thursday at Wimbledon in London. Barty, the No. 1 seed, advanced in straight sets, 6-4, 6-3.

Barty avoids upset trend, advances to third round

Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Top-ranked Ash Barty advanced to the third round of a Wimbledon women's draw depleted of other top contenders by beating Anna Blinkova 6-4, 6-3 Thursday.

No. 3-seeded Elina Svitolina became the latest upset victim, and eight of the top 11 players in the WTA rankings are out of the tournament due to defeat, withdrawal or injury.

Barty avoided an exit by overcoming an uncharacteristically unreliable serve. She committed nine double-faults, including three in the first game, and was broken three times. But she also hit 33 winners to 12 for Blinkova.

"Not my best serving day," Barty said. "I was just out of rhythm a little bit. Some days you feel like you're 8-feet tall and you can't miss the box. Other days, like today, you feel like you're 3-foot-nothing. It's certainly nothing that will concern me over a longer period."

Barty, the 2019 French Open champion, needs two more wins to become a Wimbledon quarterfinalist for the first time.

Svitolina lost to Magda Linette, who earned the biggest victory of her career, 6-3, 6-4. The Polish player, ranked 44th, had never before beaten a top-15 opponent in a completed match.

Linette had 28 winners to just eight for Svitolina, a semifinalist at Wimbledon two years ago.

Coco Gauff was back on Centre Court after Barty and beat an op-



ALBERTO PEZZALI/AP

Coco Gauff beat an opponent twice her age, Russia's Elena Vesnina, in the second round.

ponent twice her age to reach the third round.

The 17-year-old American defeated 34-year-old Russian veteran Elena Vesnina 6-4, 6-3 to keep her on track for making another run into the second week at the All England Club.

Gauff became an instant sensation when she reached the fourth round two years ago at the age of 15 — saving two match points before beating Polona Hercog on Centre Court in the third round. She has since won two WTA titles and made the quarterfinals at this year's French Open.

Gauff had a slight wobble at 3-0 in the second set when she missed an easy forehand to be broken for the first time at this year's tourna-

ment. But she broke again to clinch the win when Vesnina double-faulted on match point.

French Open champion Barbora Krejickova extended her winning streak to 14 matches by beating Andrea Petkovic 7-5, 6-4. Krejickova seeks to become the first woman since Serena Williams in 2015 to win Roland Garros and Wimbledon back to back.

In men's play, second-seeded Daniil Medvedev saw off promising Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 to match his best result at Wimbledon by making the third round. Fourth-seeded Alexander Zverev hit 13 aces, lost only 12 points on his serve and beat Tennys Sandgren 7-5, 6-2, 6-3.

Britain advanced three men to the third round for the first time in 22 years. Cameron Norrie received a standing ovation on Court 1 when he won to join Andy Murray and Dan Evans in the round of 32 by sweeping wild card Alex Bolt 6-3, 6-1, 6-2.

No. 7 Matteo Berrettini beat Botić van de Zandschulp 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (4). No. 13 Gael Monfils lost to Pedro Martinez 6-3, 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (5).

American Shelby Rogers matched her best Wimbledon result by reaching the third round when she beat No. 15 Maria Sakrari 7-5, 6-4.

No. 16 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova swept past Kristyna Pliskova 6-3, 6-3. No. 19 Karolina Muchova and No. 30 Paula Badosa also advanced.

NHL PLAYOFFS

NOTEBOOK

Richardson's role as Habs' coach likely ends with Game 2 loss

BY MARK DIDTLER
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Luke Richardson saw a lot of positives, yet his run as acting coach of the Montreal Canadiens likely ended with the Habs down 2-0 in the Stanley Cup Final after a tough 3-1 loss to the defending champion Tampa Bay Lightning.

"We're getting better," said Richardson after Montreal outshot Tampa Bay 43-23 on Wednesday night. "And we just plan on getting better the next game and winning that Game 3."

Head coach Dominique Ducharme is expected to be back behind the bench for Game 3 on Friday night when the series shifts to Montreal.

Ducharme was required by provincial protocol in Quebec to isolate for 14 days after testing positive for the coronavirus. That two-week period ends Friday.

Richardson took over the coaching reins for the third game of the semifinal series against Vegas in which Montreal eventually won in six games. It put the tradition-rich Canadiens back in the Final for the first time since 1993.

After a 5-1 loss in Monday's series opener, Montreal controlled play for most of the first two periods Wednesday but trailed 2-1 after 40 minutes when the Lightning's Blake Coleman beat Carey Price with a diving goal in the final second.

"I thought the guys had a lot of character," Richardson said. "They came out and played hard in the third. And unfortunately it didn't go our way. But I was confident our guys would bounce back and play our style of game, and play it hard. And we did."

The Canadiens prevented Tampa Bay's dominating power play

Scoreboard

Stanley Cup Final

(Best-of-seven; x-if necessary)
Tampa Bay 2, Montreal 0

Tampa Bay 5, Montreal 1
Wednesday: Tampa Bay 3, Montreal 1
Friday: at Montreal
Monday: at Montreal
x-Wednesday, July 7: at Tampa Bay
x-Friday, July 9: at Montreal
x-Sunday, July 11: at Tampa Bay

from scoring on three chances, with Montreal converting one of their three opportunities.

Still, it wasn't enough.

"So it's a little frustrating knowing we played a good game," Richardson said. "But we did that last series. We played probably one of our best games in the last series against Vegas and we didn't come out with the win (in Game 4). And the next game we persevered. And that's what we plan to do again here."

"We're going to continue to get better," Richardson added. "And we're going to. We're going to find our offense and we're going to start scoring a few goals."

Joseph in

Mathieu Joseph replaced center Alex Killorn in the Lightning lineup, skating 6:23 in his first game since May 20. That was back in the first round when Tampa Bay beat the cross-state rival Florida Panthers.

Battered Canadiens

The Lightning were not the only team on the ice to have some attrition of injuries add up. After getting key penalty killer Joel Armia back for Game 2, Montreal was without forward Artturi Lehkonen for much of the second after he went into the boards hard on a hit from defenseman Mikhail Sergachev. Lehkonen returned for the third period.



PHILAN EBENHACK/AP

Montreal Canadiens assistant head coach Luke Richardson has been filling in for head coach Dominique Ducharme since the third game of the semifinal series against Vegas.



PHOTOS BY GERRY BROOME/AP

Above: Tampa Bay Lightning center Anthony Cirelli yells at center Blake Coleman (20) after Coleman's second-period goal on Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price in Tampa Bay's 3-1 win Wednesday in Tampa. Below: Lightning right wing Nikita Kucherov reaches for a loose puck.

Coleman, Vasilevskiy give Lightning 2-0 lead in Cup

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Andrei Vasilevskiy tried not to think about needing to outduel Carey Price while the Montreal Canadiens were making him make one difficult save after another.

Blake Coleman had no time to think when the clock was running out in a terrible second period for the Tampa Bay Lightning before singlehandedly putting his team on top.

No thinking, just winning turned out just fine for the defending champions. Vasilevskiy made a playoff career-high 42 saves to keep Tampa Bay in it, Coleman scored a one-armed, diving buzzer-beater for the winning goal and the Lightning took a two games to none lead in the Stanley Cup Final by beating Montreal 3-1 on Wednesday night.

"Whatever happens win or lose, I'm just trying to go out there and play my best game, and now we're up two games," Vasilevskiy said. "It doesn't matter: up two games, down two games, it's the same routine, same compete level."

As defenseman Ryan McDonagh said, "Thankfully, there was one guy that had his level where it needed to be" when the rest of the team did not. The Canadiens outshot Tampa Bay 43-23 and dominated long stretches of play, but they head home for Games 3 and 4 in Montreal needing to win at least one to avoid being swept by an opponent that can win many different ways.

"The message is, 'Don't stop doing what we've been doing all playoffs,'" said Canadiens veteran winger Corey Perry, who lost to the Lightning in the 2020 final with Dallas. "You continue to play your game, continue to do the things that got you here, you're going to be successful."

It was more Montreal's style of play to give up a ton of shots, rely on Price to bail them out and buckle down with any kind of lead. Days after coach Jon Cooper said, "Part of our success has been trying not to rely on Vasilevskiy," they did just that in Game 2 of the Final, and it worked.



Chants of "Va-sy! Va-sy!" from the crowd of 17,166 echoed through Amalie Arena after the Vezina Trophy runner-up made one difficult save after another. No player got a bigger roar during pregame introductions, and he was the focus all night with the Canadiens flinging the puck at him from all angles in a much better performance than the series opener.

"It's no secret he's the reason we were still in this game," Coleman said about Vasilevskiy. "(Then) we made the big plays when it mattered."

But Tampa Bay showed again why it is the favorite to repeat by taking blow after blow and responding. Missing fourth-leading scorer Alex Killorn because of an injury from Game 1 and with defenseman Mikhail Sergachev and forwards Tyler Johnson and Ross Colton wincing in obvious pain, the Lightning managed to beat Price three times on goals by Anthony Cirelli, Coleman and Ondrej Palat despite a major shot discrepancy.

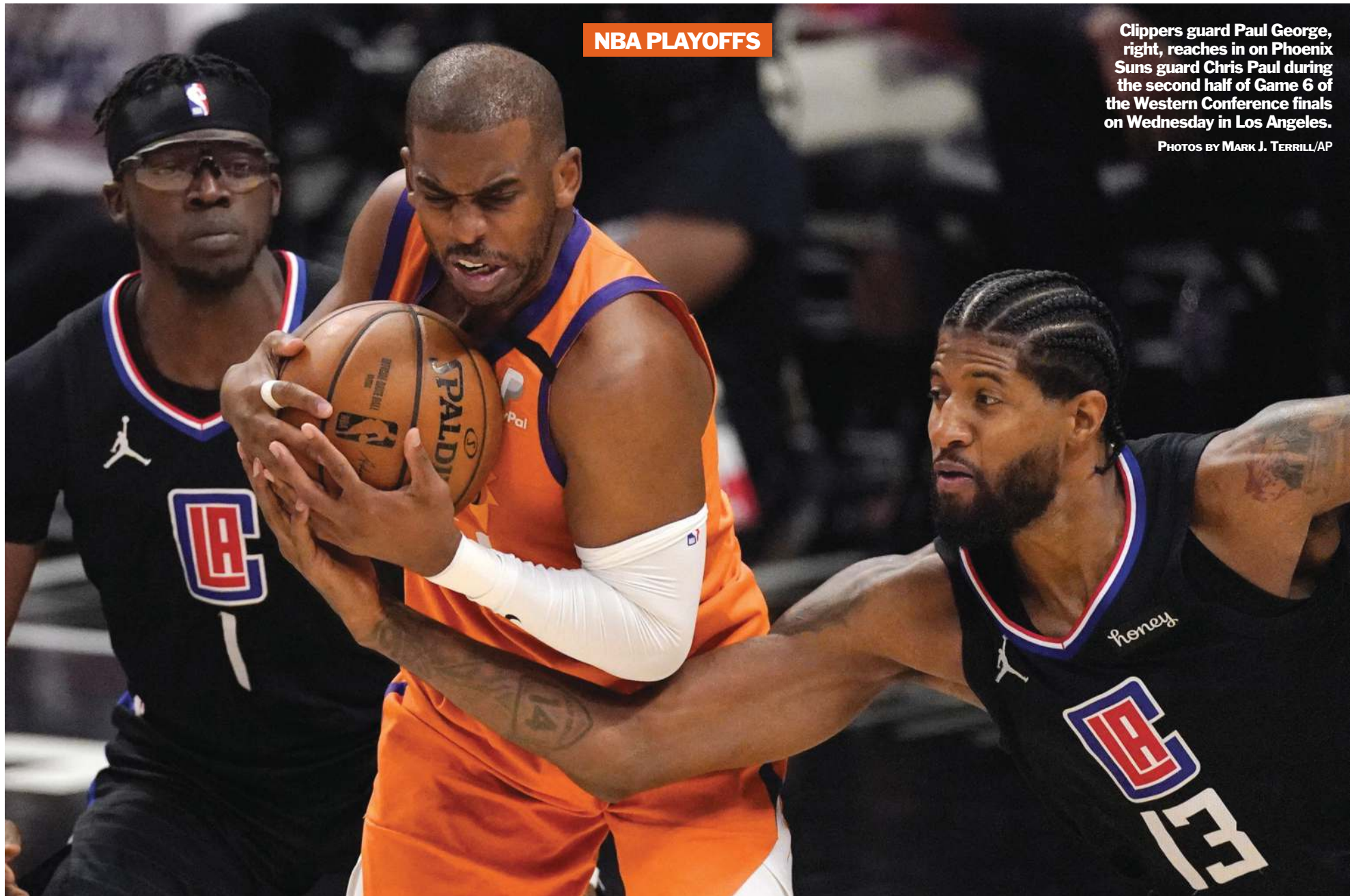
Cooper said, "Our team game was off." And Montreal was on.

"I thought we played a pretty solid game all around," Canadiens captain Shea Weber said. "We did make a couple of mistakes that obviously hurt us."

SPORTS



National champions
Mississippi State dethrones
Vanderbilt » College World Series, Page 43



NBA PLAYOFFS

Clippers guard Paul George, right, reaches in on Phoenix Suns guard Chris Paul during the second half of Game 6 of the Western Conference finals on Wednesday in Los Angeles.

PHOTOS BY MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Paul leads Suns into Finals

Veteran point guard in uncharted territory as Phoenix seeks 1st title

By **BETH HARRIS**
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Tears welled in Chris Paul's eyes. A message in black ink on his shoes said it all: Can't give up now.

Not when, after 16 years, he will finally play for an NBA title.

Paul led the Phoenix Suns into their first NBA Finals in 28 years, beating the Los Angeles Clippers 130-103 on Wednesday night to close out the Western Conference finals in six games.

"I was on a don't-lose mission," Paul said. "Just a lot of emotion. A lot of (things) going on."

Paul scored 41 points and Devin Booker added 22

to send the Suns to their third Finals appearance in franchise history. They will face either the Atlanta Hawks or Milwaukee Bucks, who are tied 2-2 in the East finals.

"He was tired," Phoenix coach Monty Williams said of Paul. "He was still making those kind of plays, getting to the basket, threes, orchestrating everything."

"He has persevered through a lot — injuries, play-off heartbreak."

Paul missed the first two games against the Clippers after testing positive for the coronavirus. He in-

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Phoenix head coach Monty Williams, right, hugs Dario Saric after the Suns wrapped up the series and earned a berth in the NBA Finals.

Lightning take 2-0 lead in Stanley Cup Final » Page 47

