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STARS AND STRIPES®

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Protesters in Turkey assault 2 from Wasp

By Alison Bath
Stars and Stripes

Two U.S. service members from an amphibious assault ship visiting a city in western Turkey are safe after they were assaulted Monday by a group of protesters who have attacked American military personnel in previous years.

Turkish authorities said they detained 15 members of the Youth Union of Turkey, also known as TGB, in the physical assault of the service members in the city of Izmir, the Associated Press reported on Monday, citing the Turkish news agency Anadolu.

Video posted by TGB to its X account on Monday shows several men holding another man while putting a bag on his head as a crowd yelled, "Yankee go home." The video also shows a second man coming to the aid of the man held by the group.

"US soldiers, who carry the blood of our soldiers and thousands of Palestinians on their hands, cannot defile our country," the group said in the post.

U.S. service members have not been part of the fighting in Gaza since the war between Israel and Hamas began in October 2023.

USS Wasp, which includes embarked elements of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, arrived in Izmir on Sunday as part of a scheduled port visit. The ship recently trained with the Turkish navy.

The Wasp Amphibious Ready Group has been on duty in the Mediterranean since late June. The ARG is part of a naval buildup in the eastern Mediterranean, as the Pentagon works to deter Iran from attacking Israel in retalia-

SEE ASSAULT ON PAGE 5

Eric Stanton/U.S. Navy

Sailors observe the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington from the hangar bay of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan prior to cross decking while in-port Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., on Aug. 2. Lack of U.S. aircraft carriers in the Western Pacific has left a gap in capabilities should a conflict arise but does not provide a threat to security, experts say.

No carrier, no problem

Experts downplay impact of absence of large ships in Indo-Pacific

By Alex Wilson
Stars and Stripes

The absence of a U.S. aircraft carrier in the Indo-Pacific poses no immediate risk to regional security but exposes the U.S. Navy's inability to project a complete global presence, a defense expert said.

With the USS Ronald Reagan back in Washington state and its replacement, the USS George Washington, yet to deploy from San Diego, the 7th Fleet is temporarily without a carrier homeported at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan.

"The lack of deployed carriers in the Pacific is not a security threat today," Mark Cancian, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Thursday. "However, it does mean that the U.S. has fewer tools available if a crisis or conflict occurs."

The Pentagon on Aug. 2 ordered the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, making its way across the Pacific, to relieve the USS Theodore Roosevelt in the Persian Gulf. Three weeks later, the Pentagon decided to keep both carriers and their strike groups in that area as conflict intensified between Israel and Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

Meanwhile, the Ronald Reagan, operating from Japan for nearly a decade, returned to the United States for scheduled maintenance on Aug. 13.

SEE CARRIER ON PAGE 5

MILITARY
Navy recruiting efforts see notable results after years of eased requirements
Page 5

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Inflation falls in Europe to set up ECB rate cut

Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany — Inflation in the 20 European Union countries that use the euro fell sharply to 2.2% in August, opening the door for the European Central Bank to cut interest rates as the ECB and the U.S. Federal Reserve prepare to lower borrowing costs to support growth and jobs.

The August figure was down from 2.6% in July, according to figures Friday from European Union statistics agency Eurostat. Energy prices fell in August by 3%, helping lower the overall figure, while inflation fell to 2% in Germany, the eurozone's largest economy.

The monthly figure is now close to the ECB's target of 2%, the level considered best for the economy. The central bank is charged with maintaining stable prices under the treaty that set up the European Union. Not all of the EU's 27 countries use the euro.

Economists expect the ECB to cut its key rate by a quarter point from 3.75% at its Sept. 12 meeting, while the Fed is expected to cut rates from a 23-year high of 5.25%-5.5% at its Sept. 17-18 policy meeting.

The lower German inflation figure "tilts the balance toward a September rate cut," said Carsten Brzeski, global chief of macro at ING bank.

Economists caution that the path downward to 2% may yet be a bumpy one. The ECB has said it expects inflation to fluctuate going forward but to fall to its target by the end of next year.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Sept. 3)	$1.08
British pound (Sept. 3)	$1.29
Japanese yen (Sept. 3)	141.00
South Korean won (Sept. 3)	1300.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3768
Britain (Pound)	1.3141
Canada (Dollar)	1.3501
China(Yuan)	7.1137
Denmark (Krone)	6.7393
Egypt (Pound)	48.5402
Euro	0.9035
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7968
Hungary (Forint)	354.74
Israel (Shekel)	3.6503
Japan (Yen)	146.97
Kuwait(Dinar)	0.3055
Norway (Krone)	10.6015
Philippines (Peso)	56.49
Poland (Zloty)	3.86
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7525
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3073
South Korea (Won)	1339.58
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8522
Thailand (Baht)	34.17
Turkey (NewLira)	33.9271

(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	8.50
Interest Rates Discount rate	6.00
Federal funds market rate	5.33
3-month bill	5.11
30-year bond	4.20

WEATHER OUTLOOK

TUESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

TUESDAY IN EUROPE

WEDNESDAY 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

US withholding $5M for F-35s lacking upgrade

By Tony Capaccio
Bloomberg

The Pentagon is withholding $5 million from Lockheed Martin Corp. for each F-35 aircraft that doesn't yet have advanced hardware and software to meet specifications, the Defense Department's F-35 program office and the company said.

"We have coordinated the terms and conditions with Lockheed Martin," the program office said in a statement Thursday to Bloomberg News. "Approximately $5 million per aircraft is being withheld and will be released as combat capability is delivered."

The announcement gives investors, analysts and taxpayers a sense of the cash incentive at stake for the No. 1 defense contractor as it seeks to move beyond a years-long saga of problems involving its top defense program. Neither Lockheed nor the Pentagon revealed how many planes are subject to withholding.

Lockheed has projected delivering 75 to 110 of the aircraft by Dec. 31. Still, the $5 million per plane won't be released until the fully compliant software is ready, according to the Pentagon.

In a Securities and Exchange Commission filing Tuesday, Lockheed said the Pentagon is withholding a portion of final aircraft delivery payments until the full upgraded hardware and software combat capability, known as TR-3, is qualified and delivered. But the contractor didn't specify how much is at stake for each of the fighter jets. Until now, neither had the Pentagon.

Lockheed said in its filing that it "is making significant investments in development labs and digital infrastructure."

The Defense Department decided in July that deliveries of the fighter jets could resume after a yearlong halt, with improvements to be made later.

That allows pilots to begin training on the F-35s. Eighteen of the planes had been delivered as of Aug. 19.

Camp Lejeune revamps WWII-era airfield for Marine aviation training

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps has reopened Camp Davis South in North Carolina — the World War II home of Army anti-aircraft artillery training — with an upgraded airfield that can handle all the Corps' planes and helicopters, according to the service.

The Marines spent 18 months and some $28 million completing the renovation of the airfield on Camp Lejeune's Greater Sandy Run Training Area, service officials at the sprawling North Carolina installation said this week. The airfield features a 4,525-foot airstrip with 3,600 feet of asphalt runway and concrete turnarounds at each end specially designed to handle the high heat produced by vertical take-off and landing aircraft, such as the Marines' version of the F-35 Lightning II stealth fighter jet.

Daniela Chicas Torres/U.S. Marine Corps

Aerial drone photograph of the newly resurfaced Camp Davis South outlying landing field taken on Camp Lejeune, N.C., on Aug. 23.

Col. Ralph Rizzo, the commander responsible for Camp Lejeune's infrastructure, called Davis South's reopening "a significant milestone."

"Aviation and ground units across the region will be able to use this runway to exercise the full spectrum of training capabilities in preparation for missions around the globe, to include simulating austere airfield conditions," Rizzo said.

In total, the Camp Davis airfield encompasses some 275 acres of training ground, which features old buildings, aircraft hangars and grounded aircraft that the Corps plans to use to simulate attacks on an airfield, according to Camp Lejeune officials.

The revamp saw the entire runway — built during World War II for small planes to tow targets for anti-aircraft artillery training — torn up and resurfaced with three layers of rock, gravel and asphalt, according to the Marines. It can now handle any aircraft in the Marines' arsenal and others as large as the Air Force's 174-foot-long C-17 Globemaster III transport jet.

The airfield was initially constructed in 1941. At its height during World War II, it boasted some 20,000 troops — the vast majority preparing to ship out to Europe or the Pacific, officials said. After the war's end, the Army closed Camp Davis in 1946.

The Navy purchased what is now the Greater Sandy Run Training Area, which includes Camp Davis, in 1992. Camp Lejeune Marines have since used the Camp Davis airfield primarily for helicopter training.

Judge orders Air Force engineer detained in classified records case

By Salvador Rizzo
The Washington Post

A civilian engineer for the Air Force who is accused of mishandling more than 150 pages of classified documents will be held in jail as he awaits trial, a federal judge in Alexandria, Va., ruled Thursday.

U.S. District Judge Michael S. Nachmanoff said that granting pretrial release to Gokhan Gun, 50, would pose a "grave risk to national security." Nachmanoff reversed an earlier ruling from a magistrate judge, Ivan D. Davis, who found that Gun should be released.

Gun, a dual citizen of Turkey and the United States, was arrested last month shortly before he was scheduled to fly to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. As a driver from a ride-hailing service arrived at his Falls Church, Va., residence, federal agents moved in with search warrants, finding a backpack that contained a document marked "top secret" alongside clothing, keys, a notebook and a list of Gun's intelligence community security clearances, according to testimony from an FBI agent Thursday.

U.S. officials said the engineer specialized in wireless communications at the Joint Warfare Analysis Center in King George County, Va., which works to target adversaries' technical infrastructure.

Over several months, Gun printed 155 pages of top-secret documents at his workplace and took the records home, according to authorities. The largest batch — 82 pages marked top secret — had been printed two days before the trip to Mexico, which Gun described as a fishing excursion, according to court records. Stacks of papers with classification markings were found in his dining room, prosecutors said.

Authorities charged Gun with unauthorized removal and retention of classified information, for which the maximum sentence would be five years in prison if he is convicted. Based on new information since the arrest, the U.S. attorney's office for the Eastern District of Virginia is also planning to charge him with mishandling national defense information, which is punishable by a maximum of 10 years in prison, prosecutors said. Gun's possible motives for taking the records remain under investigation, Assistant U.S. Attorney John T. Gibbs said at the hearing Thursday.

Navy Capt. David Taft, the commander of the Joint Warfare Analysis Center, submitted a court declaration warning that, if released from jail, Gun would be able to disclose information that could cause "catastrophic loss of sensitive technologies, negatively impact sensitive military operations, and undermine years of associated research and development that has been focused on the nation's hardest problems."

"If Mr. Gun were to pass that information to an adversary, it would certainly help that adversary develop countermeasures to mitigate identified vulnerabilities and defeat the attack, placing military plans and personnel at risk," Taft said.

Gun's attorney, Rammy Barbari, said prosecutors had not provided evidence that his client shared classified information with anyone or planned to do so. He disputed that Gun was preparing to travel with the backpack containing a list of his security clearances and a document marked top secret.

"Those two documents would be more than enough to pique the interest of our foreign adversaries and would establish that the defendant had the ability to deliver more information like that in the future," prosecutors said in a court filing.

At the hearing, Nachmanoff zeroed in on where the backpack was located, what was inside and how agents came to search it. The judge requested that an FBI agent who was part of the search team take the stand to answer those questions. Afterward, Nachmanoff said it would be concerning if Gun planned to take the backpack to Mexico — or if he left it unattended and accessible to anyone on his unlocked porch during a five-day trip.

Gun, who moved to the United States in 2001 and became a naturalized citizen in 2021, has been detained since his Aug. 9 arrest. He has no family in the United States.

His girlfriend at first offered to serve as his court-mandated custodian during pretrial release, then backed out because "circumstances have proved difficult," Barbari said in a court filing. He did not provide details and declined to comment after the hearing Thursday.

EUROPE

American WWII airmen honored by Czechs, Slovaks

By Lydia Gordon
Stars and Stripes

SLAVICIN, Czech Republic — American families and friends joined Czechs and Slovakians on Monday to commemorate 80 years since a tragic air battle that took the lives of 41 Army airmen during World War II.

The memorial in this southeastern Czech town near the Slovakian border honored the service members of the Army's 15th Air Force, 2nd Bomb Group, who fought in Mission 263, now known as the Battle Over the White Carpathians, on Aug. 29, 1944.

Attendees spent four days visiting museums, crash sites and cemeteries across the Czech Republic and Slovakia, where some of the American service members were buried by the residents who first found them.

About 40 people traveled from the U.S. to pay respects to the fallen in this relatively little-known battle. Soviet domination over Czechoslovakia through 1989 meant that this chapter in WWII history was largely concealed.

It wasn't until recently that some of the attending family members said they gained closure by hearing what really happened over the mountains of Czechoslovakia.

"It was probably three years ago … we found a video in Slavicin of the ceremony, and I saw [my great uncle's] name on the gravestone," Air Force Lt. Col. Sasha Heath, the great-niece of pilot 2nd Lt. Theo Heath, said Saturday.

"It's not D-Day or some huge battle that we all know about, but it matters to [the residents] because it's their country, and I can't get over how welcoming and appreciative people are here," Heath added.

On the morning of the battle, four squadrons composed of B-24 Liberators and B-17 Flying Fortresses with the 2nd Bomb Group departed from Foggia, Italy, to destroy a mass of Nazi armaments. Only three squadrons returned.

Unknown to the Americans, Nazi forces were warned of their arrival and mimicked American escort flyers to stave off detection. By the time the rear squadron became aware of the deception, it was too late.

All eight planes in the 20th Bombardment Squadron formation were shot down, along with two from the 429th and 49th Squadrons.

However, their sacrifice wasn't in vain. The bombers were able to warn three forward groups, who successfully bombed the vital Nazi armaments.

About 100 airmen fell from the sky that day. Of the 41 that died, 40 were from the 20th Bombardment Squadron.

Eight decades later, Czechs and Slovaks continue to commemorate the battle. Many residents have constructed memorials at the crash sites, tend to the graves and continue to search for lost artifacts within the mountains.

PHOTOS BY LYDIA GORDON/Stars and Stripes

A Czech veteran salutes the grave site of a fallen American during the 80th commemoration of the Battle over the White Carpathians in Sanov, Czech Republic, on Monday.

"I don't know if words can describe how meaningful and heartwarming it is that [the Czech and Slovak residents] recognize the sacrifice of the Americans, and all Allied service members throughout the entire war who fought for their freedom," said Kellylynn Charles, the great-niece of 2nd Lt. Russell Meyrick, bombardier of the B-17 bomber 'Tail End Charlie' and who was killed in action.

"To see the local Czech people continue that commemoration, generation after generation, and bring their children every year to remind them of the sacrifice is something you don't see often in the States," Charles said.

Amid Russia's ongoing war on Ukraine and tensions on NATO's eastern flank, speakers urged others to stand up against evil by remembering the sacrifices that led to the freedoms of today.

Among the attendees was U.S. Ambassador to Czech Republic Bijan Sabet, who spoke at the cemetery, where 28 of the service members were initially buried by enemy forces in a mass grave.

A Slovakian soldier lays a wreath at the grave of a fallen American WWII soldier during the 80th commemoration of the Battle over the White Carpathians in Nova Bosaca, Slovakia, on Aug. 30.

"The lesson we can all learn is that our democracy and our freedoms cannot be taken for granted," Sabet said in an interview Saturday. "[The commemoration] serves as a stark reminder of the importance of standing up for liberty and freedom and the fight against tyranny and occupation."

Americans get look at where loved ones liberated Belgium

By Phillip Walter Wellman
Stars and Stripes

CENDRON, Belgium — Technician fifth grade Alfonso Coppola was one of the first American troops to enter Belgium during World War II to free it from Nazi occupation.

On Monday, Philip and Loretta Coppola stood on the same road that their father marched on, joining the commemoration of Belgium's liberation exactly 80 years ago.

The siblings only recently learned about their father's efforts in Belgium after doing their own research. Alfonso Coppola, like many soldiers who fought in Europe, didn't like to talk about the war when he returned to the United States.

"I understand why," Loretta Coppola said. "But we should know what they went through, it's part of the world's history."

The Coppolas joined a gathering at the France-Belgium border that was smaller and more somber than the liberation celebration in nearby Mons a day before. But the message conveyed was similar: those enjoying freedom today have a duty to remember the efforts and sacrifices of the past.

Christel Delahaye, the president of a local group called the Duty to Remember Association, runs a small war museum in the village of Monceau-Imbrechies.

She organized a separate ceremony on Monday dedicated to the first 12 U.S. soldiers who died on Belgian soil during the liberation.

"Who would give their lives for people they don't know, for the freedom of people they don't know?" Delahaye said on the sidelines of the ceremony. "We want to show our gratitude to the American troops, we want to keep their memory alive."

Delahaye's father, Paul, opened the museum in the 1980s and launched the predecessor to the Duty to Remember Association, which has helped link the area to Americans related to troops who fought here.

The Coppolas donated some of their father's memorabilia, including a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star, to the museum on Saturday.

A photo they found in a 1944 copy of Stars and Stripes shows their father and his fellow soldiers in front of a Belgian customs sign at Cendron, footsteps away from where Philip and Loretta Coppola were Monday.

"He was right here. It's overwhelming," said Loretta Coppola, who was visiting Belgium for the first time.

James Jeffrey and his family also traveled to Belgium for this year's liberation commemorations.

Jeffrey's great uncle, 1st Lt. Robert Benninger, was a crewmember of a B-17 bomber known as the Susan Ruth, which was shot down near Macquenoise, Belgium, in February 1944. Benninger survived the crash but German soldiers later found him hiding with Belgians and killed him.

Jeffrey's daughter, Grace Jeffrey, said she was impressed by the young reenactors she saw throughout the memorial weekend.

"These are people who have inherited the history, the understanding and the knowledge," she said. "Similarly, it's important for us to continue that story."

Steven Snyder, whose father, Howard, piloted the Susan Ruth and survived the war, was also in Belgium with his family.

"World War II was 80 years ago. It's fading in people's memories and we cannot let that happen," said Snyder, who has visited the area several times.

Steven's son, Clayton, named his 2-year old son after his grandfather and plans to bring him to Belgium when he's older to pass on the memories.

"We have a very specific family story tied to this event and we want to make it mean something," Clayton Snyder said. "It's a responsibility but also an honor."

MILITARY

Navy touts results of recruiting efforts

Loosened requirements help service turn the tide on enlistment issues

By Caitlyn Burchett
Stars and Stripes

Navy officials said Thursday that they are seeing significant results in recruiting after years of loosening requirements to combat missed enlistment goals, putting the service on track to boost its force by more than 40,000 sailors by the year's end.

"I am very proud to announce the Navy has had its best stretch of recruiting results since 2020," Rear Adm. James Waters, commander of Navy Recruiting Command, told reporters.

More than 36,700 individuals have joined the Navy since October 2023, with about 4,000 new recruits committing to the sea service each month. The Navy is on schedule to meet its goal of 40,600 recruits for fiscal 2024, though the service won't be able to put them all through boot camp before the fiscal year ends Sept. 30.

"I have got one boot camp," said Rear Adm. Jeffrey Czerewko, commander of Naval Education and Training Command in Pensacola, Fla.

The service set its recruiting goal of active-duty sailors for fiscal 2024 to attempt to make up for shortfalls of years prior. In 2022 and 2023, the Navy only contracted 22,000 and 30,000 sailors, respectively. Those same years, the Navy also emptied its delayed-entry pool, a program that allows people to sign up for the armed forces up to one year before they start basic training.

"But the real 'what' behind the bend in the curve for Navy recruiting is multifaceted," Waters said.

Waters ticked off several factors that he said contributed to the recruiting surge, such as making it easier to join the Navy, focusing on meeting recruiter needs, and removing barriers or friction that hindered enlistment efforts.

The Navy felt pressured to loosen requirements, including accepting recruits with lower test scores and bringing in recruits who didn't have high school diplomas or a GED diploma or certificate.

The loosened requirements allowed the service to accept up to 20% of prospective sailors who receive a category 4 score — the second-lowest score level — on an entrance test that measures cognitive ability. The military has traditionally accepted very low numbers of category 4 scorers, and candidates with category 5 scores are ineligible to serve.

Vice Adm. Rick Cheeseman told The Associated Press that roughly 17% of its recruits this year are category 4.

Many of those sailors, the rear admirals said, are then put through the Future Sailor Preparatory Course, modeled after one set up two years ago by the Army, which has been successful. The Navy began its program in April 2023 and so far about 2,900 recruits have taken the academic course and at least 1,850 have completed it.

Christopher M. O'Grady/U.S. Navy

Graduating sailors during a Navy Recruit Training Command's review at Great Lakes, Ill., on Jul. 25. More than 40,000 recruits train annually at the service's only boot camp.

"We are helping these human beings move on to the next level and showing them what the Navy has to offer them," Czerewko said.

The Navy also has achieved almost 100% staffing of its recruiter billets, which Waters described as his No. 1 priority.

"Their job is to prospect, build trust-based relationships and close," he said.

Much of those conversations focus on what the Navy experience could be like for individuals on a case-by-case basis, Waters said.

Another key component to meeting recruiting goals, the rear admirals said, has been reducing the time it takes to make medical waiver decisions. Medical waivers can be given to candidates who might not meet established physical qualifications but might be able to serve without posing a danger to themselves or the Navy's mission. In 2021, the process could take about 23 days. Now, the service can approve or deny a medical waiver within three days.

"Friction is being removed from the system. The impact on the psychology of the organization, in my opinion, and the morale increase of being able to see the fruits of your labors, as [Waters] talked, within zero to three days instead of months, has energized that organization," Czerewko said.

More than 1,100 new recruits will be put through boot camp each week through the fiscal year's end.

"We are focused now on normalizing the behavior so that we are steady into [fiscal 2025] and can ship across the year at a more steady rate than what we saw in '24," Waters said.

Carrier: Moves show limits on global naval power

FROM PAGE 1

Its replacement, the George Washington, began operations in the Eastern Pacific on Aug. 25, but was back in port at Naval Air Station North Island on Wednesday, according to information posted on the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service.

The U.S. 3rd Fleet did not respond to emails requesting comment on Wednesday and Friday.

U.S. aircraft carriers have been a regular presence in the region since the USS Midway first deployed to Japan in 1973, but the current situation highlights the difficulty in projecting naval power on a global scale.

"Some strategists would have the United States withdraw from Europe and the Middle East to focus on the Pacific," Cancian said. "That might be attractive in theory, but recent events in Ukraine and the Middle East show that it is just not possible."

The Navy is too small to cover the Pacific, the Middle East and Europe simultaneously, Cancian added.

"It needs to be bigger," he wrote. The Navy is plagued with recruiting and manpower shortages, maintenance backlogs, delays in shipbuilding and a shrinking fleet, but hopes to grow its fleet from 296 to 381 ships over the next 30 years, according to an Aug. 8 report from the Congressional Research Service.

The Navy has declined to comment on when the George Washington would arrive at Yokosuka, but until then the Indo-Pacific isn't completely exposed.

USS America, homeported at Sasebo Naval Base, and USS Boxer and their amphibious ready groups, as well as numerous guided-missile destroyers and cruisers, are in the area. Those ships, along with allied military forces, demonstrate "our collective resolve to ensure security and stability in the region," Pacific Fleet spokeswoman Lt. Cmdr. Christina Hough said by email Friday.

An amphibious ready group is typically composed of an amphibious assault ship, amphibious transport dock and a dock landing ship and carry more than 4,000 sailors and Marines and numerous aircraft, tanks and other vehicles. The "large, powerful ships" show that the U.S. has not abandoned the region, and their capabilities are great for humanitarian assistance and the protection of U.S. facilities in the region, Cancian said.

However, they lack the "full range of combat power" of a carrier strike group, he wrote.

"In these situations, other forces are often tasked to cover portions of a [carrier strike group's] missions," Cancian added. "For example, the Air Force aircraft on Okinawa are likely tasked with providing some air defense and air striking power in the western Pacific."

Assault: US Embassy in Ankara confirms attack

FROM PAGE 1

tion for the assassination of a top Hamas official in Tehran in July.

Iran blames the killing on Israel, which has not acknowledged responsibility for the bombing that killed Ismail Haniyeh.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa said it had seen social media reports of service members assaulted in Izmir and was working to confirm the details of what happened.

The U.S. Embassy in Ankara, in a post to its X account, confirmed that an assault of U.S. service members had occurred but did not provide additional details.

This isn't the first time TGB has protested the U.S. by putting hoods over Americans' heads.

In November 2021, the group attacked a Navy civilian embarked on USS Mount Whitney during a port call in Istanbul. That attack was preceded by a 2014 assault of a group of service members from the destroyer USS Ross who were dressed in civilian clothes.

The protesters threw red paint on at least one service member and put a plastic sack over his head, calling him a murderer, the pro-government Turkish newspaper Daily Sabah reported at the time.

The newspaper said putting hoods on U.S. service members is viewed as revenge for a 2003 incident in Iraq, in which U.S. military personnel detained and put hoods on Turkish soldiers operating as part of a special operations team.

U.S. officials had accused the soldiers of plotting to kill an American-backed Iraqi official, The New York Times reported at the time.

MIDEAST

Pier reviewed: Gaza effort offers lessons for Army

By Lolita C. Baldor
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It was their most challenging mission.

U.S. Army soldiers in the 7th Transportation Brigade had previously set up a pier during training and in exercises overseas but never had dealt with the wild combination of turbulent weather, security threats and sweeping personnel restrictions that surrounded the Gaza humanitarian aid project.

Designed as a temporary solution to get badly needed food and supplies to desperate Palestinians, the so-called Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore system, or JLOTS, faced a series of setbacks over the spring and summer.

Service members struggled with what Col. Sam Miller, who was commander during the project, called the biggest "organizational leadership challenge" he had ever experienced.

Speaking to The Associated Press after much of the unit returned home, Miller said the Army learned a number of lessons during the four-month mission. It began when President Joe Biden announced in his

Tsafrir Abayov/AP

A U.S. Army landing craft is seen beached in Ashdod, Israel, in May, after being swept by wind and current from the temporary humanitarian pier in Gaza.

State of the Union speech in March that the pier would be built and lasted through July 17, when the Pentagon formally declared that the mission was over and the pier was being permanently dismantled.

The Army is reviewing the $230 million pier operation and what it learned from the experience. One of the takeaways, according to a senior Army official, is that the unit needs to train under more challenging conditions to be better prepared for bad weather and other security issues it faced. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because assessments of the pier project have not been publicly released.

In a report released last week, the inspector general for the U.S. Agency for International Development said Biden ordered the pier's construction even as USAID staffers expressed concerns that it would be difficult and undercut a push to persuade Israel to open "more efficient" land crossings to get food into Gaza.

The Defense Department said the pier "achieved its goal of providing an additive means of delivering high volumes of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza to help address the acute humanitarian crisis." The U.S. military knew from the outset "there would be challenges as part of this in this complex emergency," the statement added.

The Biden administration had set a goal of the U.S. sea route and pier providing food to feed 1.5 million people for 90 days. It fell short, bringing in enough to feed about 450,000 people for a month before shutting down, the USAID inspector general's report said.

The Defense Department's watchdog also is doing an evaluation of the project.

Army soldiers often must conduct their exercises under difficult conditions designed to replicate war. Learning from the Gaza project — which was the first time the Army set up a pier in actual combat conditions — leaders say they need to find ways to make the training even more challenging.

One of the biggest difficulties of the Gaza pier mission was that no U.S. troops could step ashore — a requirement set by Biden. Instead, U.S service members were scattered across a floating city of more than 20 ships and platforms miles offshore that had to have food, water, beds, medical care and communications.

Every day, said Miller, there were as many as 1,000 trips that troops and other personnel made from ship to boat to pier to port and back.

Military leaders, he said, had to plan three or four days ahead to ensure they had everything they needed because the trip from the pier to their "safe haven" at Israel's port of Ashdod was about 30 nautical miles.

The U.S. Army official concurred that a lot of unexpected logistical issues came up that a pier operation may not usually include.

When bad weather broke the pier apart, they had to set up ways to get the pieces moved to Ashdod and repaired. Over time, Miller said, they were able to hire more tugs to help move sections of the pier more quickly.

Some of the pier's biggest problems — including the initial reluctance of aid agencies to distribute supplies throughout Gaza and later safety concerns from the violence — may not apply in other operations where troops may be quickly setting up a pier to get forces ashore for an assault or disaster response.

"There's tons of training value and experience that every one of the soldiers, sailors and others got out of this," Miller said. "There's going to be other places in the world that may have similar things, but they won't be as tough as the things that we just went through."

When the time comes, he said, "we're going to be much better at doing this type of thing."

US to give Israel, Hamas 'take it or leave it' deal

By Yasmeen Abutaleb and John Hudson
The Washington Post

U.S. officials said President Joe Biden's months-long push for a cease-fire and hostage-release deal faced renewed urgency on Sunday after Israeli forces recovered the bodies of six hostages, including Israeli American Hersh Goldberg-Polin.

The United States has been talking to Egypt and Qatar about the contours of a final "take it or leave it" deal that it plans to present to the parties in the coming weeks — one that if the two sides fail to accept could mark the end of the American-led negotiations, according to a senior administration official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private and sensitive deliberations. Biden officials said it was not immediately clear whether the discovery of the six hostages would make it more or less likely that Israel and Hamas could come to an agreement in the coming weeks.

"You can't keep negotiating this. This process has to be called at some point," said the senior official, who said the U.S., Egypt and Qatar had been working on the final proposal before the six hostages were found dead in a tunnel beneath the southern Gaza city of Rafah. "Does it derail the deal? No. If anything, it should add additional urgency in this closing phase, which we were already in."

The Israel Defense Forces said the six hostages were killed by their captors "shortly before" they were discovered. The senior administration official said the United States holds a similar assessment, believing that all six hostages were shot in the head and executed not long before their bodies were discovered.

Biden and his top aides have spent several months relentlessly trying to bring Israel and Hamas to an agreement that would see the release of the remaining living hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners and a temporary cease-fire in Gaza that they hoped would lay the groundwork for a permanent end to the war. CIA Director William Burns, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and White House Middle East Coordinator Brett McGurk are among those who have flown to the region numerous times and worked with Qatari and Egyptian negotiators to try to find an agreement.

Inside Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is facing fury and increased pressure from the hostage families, who are demanding that he address the nation. Hundreds of thousands of protesters took part in nationwide protests Sunday night, and Israel's largest labor union called for a general strike on Monday — threatening to shut down the country until Netanyahu agreed to a deal with Hamas to return the remaining captives.

The rare general strike led to disruptions around the country on Monday, while Biden added to the pressure by saying Netanyahu isn't doing enough to reach a deal for a cease-fire.

The strike was ignored in some areas, reflecting deep political divisions in Israel after nearly 11 months of fighting.

Biden spoke to reporters Monday as he arrived at the White House for a Situation Room meeting with advisers involved in negotiating a deal. Asked if Netanyahu was doing enough, Biden responded, "No."

He insisted that negotiators remain "very close" to a deal, adding, "Hope springs eternal."

Hostage families have for months accused Netanyahu of prioritizing his political survival and victory against Hamas over a deal that would bring their loved ones home.

Dennis Ross, a former American envoy to Israel, said Hamas' leader in Gaza, Yehiya Sinwar, is unlikely to change his position because no one is able to exert pressure on him, but that it remains to be seen whether pressure inside Israel could force Netanyahu to more seriously engage in negotiations.

"For now, [Sinwar] will wait to see whether the general strike in Israel leads to a softening of Prime Minister Netanyahu's conditions," Ross said in an interview. "The strike, the likely massive protest, is in support of the hostage families and their view that Netanyahu's strategy both in the negotiations and increasing IDF increase pressure on Hamas has failed."

Hamas, in a statement, blamed Israeli bombings for the deaths, adding that "if President Biden is concerned about their lives, he must stop supporting this enemy with money and weapons and pressure the occupation to end its aggression immediately."

The Israel-Gaza war has created deep divisions among Democrats and across the United States since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, when militants killed about 1,200 people and took some 250 hostage. Israel's retaliatory military campaign has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

Last week, U.S. officials were negotiating some of the final details of a "bridging proposal" they put forward between Israel and Hamas to try to hash out remaining differences.

The discussions last week focused primarily on which hostages would be exchanged for specific Palestinian prisoners held inside Israel, some of whom were detained without trial, according to one of the senior officials.

The first phase of hostages includes women, the elderly and the ill and wounded — a group that included 23-year-old Goldberg-Polin, the American-Israeli whose parents spoke at the Democratic National Convention last month. Goldberg-Polin's left arm was blown off by a grenade during the Oct. 7 attacks. Two Israeli women, Carmel Gat and Eden Yerushalmi, whose bodies were also recovered by the IDF on Saturday, were also on the list of those who would have been released in the first phase, the senior official said.

Those negotiations have taken on added complexity now that the six hostages are confirmed to be dead, the two senior administration officials said. The painstaking deliberations over which hostages will be released in exchange for specific Palestinian prisoners must now be renegotiated. Some Middle East experts said that the fewer living hostages there are, the less pressure there will be on Netanyahu to come to a deal — U.S. officials fear the number of living hostages may number only in the dozens.

"Rhetoric aside, Netanyahu has never prioritized freeing the hostages. For now, he will be under a lot more domestic pressure to accept a cease-fire deal that saves the remaining hostages," said Frank Lowenstein, a former State Department official who helped lead Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in 2014. "And if he waits this out, over time fewer living hostages could mean fewer Palestinian prisoners to release and what he sees as a more favorable negotiating position."

The Associated Press contributed to this article.

WAR IN UKRAINE

Russia launches barrage at Kyiv as schools start

By Illia Novikov and Vasilisa Stepanenko
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia launched an overnight barrage of drones and cruise and ballistic missiles at Kyiv, officials said Monday, as children prepared to return to school across Ukraine. Some pupils found classes canceled because of damage from the attack.

Several series of explosions rocked the Ukrainian capital in the early hours. Debris from intercepted missiles and drones fell in every district of Kyiv, wounding three people and damaging two kindergartens, Ukraine's Interior Ministry said. City authorities reported multiple fires.

After more than 900 days of the war, Russia and Ukraine show no sign of letting up in the fight or moving closer to the negotiating table. Both sides are pursuing ambitious ground offensives, with the Ukrainians driving into Russia's Kursk region and the Russian army pushing deeper into the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine that is part of the industrial Donbas region.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday that Ukraine's Kursk assault won't prevent Russian forces from advancing in eastern Ukraine. Ukrainian forces haven't achieved their goal of diverting Russian troops from the fighting there, he said.

"The main task that the enemy set for themselves — to stop our offensive in Donbas — they haven't achieved it," Putin told school students during a trip to southern Siberia.

However, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said last month that the aim of the Kursk incursion is to create a buffer zone that might prevent further attacks by Moscow across the border.

Putin predicted that Ukraine's Kursk offensive, which began Aug. 6, will fail and that subsequently Kyiv officials will want "to move to peace talks."

Russia launched 35 missiles of various types and 26 Shahed drones at Ukraine overnight from Sunday to Monday, the Ukrainian air force said. Nine ballistic missiles, 13 cruise missiles and 20 drones were downed, it said.

Residents of the capital hurried into the city's bomb shelters.

Oksana Argunova, an 18-year-old student at a Kyiv high school, said that she was still shaking after the nighttime scare.

"I woke up, my neighbor was shouting: 'Let's go down (to the shelter), there are big explosions.' We all ran," Argunova told The Associated Press.

Monday was the first day back at school after the summer vacation. In Ukraine, the day involves ceremonies and rituals. Students of all ages and often teachers or parents wear traditional costumes. Celebrations include concerts and dances.

Andrii Marienko/AP

Schoolchildren and their parents enter an underground school on the first day at school in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Monday. The purpose-built "bunker school" aims to provide a learning environment safe from Russian everyday airstrikes.

Small groups of children and parents gathered outside a damaged Kyiv school as firefighters put out flames and removed rubble.

One 39-year-old mother turned up at the school with her 7-year-old daughter, Sophia, unaware it had been hit. It was Sophia's first day at what for her was a new school, her mother said, after a frightening night.

"Of course, the child was scared. We hid in the bathroom, where it was relatively safe," said the mother, who provided only her first name, Olena.

"Today is one of the most important days of the year for millions of our Ukrainian children, families and teachers," Zelenskyy said on his Telegram channel.

"Ukraine is doing everything to give children as many opportunities as possible. And all our schools, all higher education institutions that are working today are proof of the resilience of our people and the strength of Ukraine," he said.

Both sides are battering each other with regular long-range drone and missile strikes, sometimes launching more than 100 weapons in aerial attacks that suggest they are still pouring resources into weapon production.

Russian air defenses intercepted 158 Ukrainian drones overnight, including two over Moscow and nine over the surrounding region, the Defense Ministry said.

The Ukrainian headquarters of the Danish humanitarian organization DanChurchAid was destroyed by missile fragments, its head Jonas Noddekær said.

Elsewhere, 18 people were injured in a Sunday evening strike on a center for social and psychological rehabilitation of children and an orphanage in Ukraine's northeastern city of Sumy, regional authorities said.

The regional prosecutor's office said there were no children in the facility when the strike hit, but people in surrounding residential buildings suffered injuries, including six children.

The educational center was partially destroyed and caught fire, and the buildings around it were damaged by the shockwave, State Emergency Services said.

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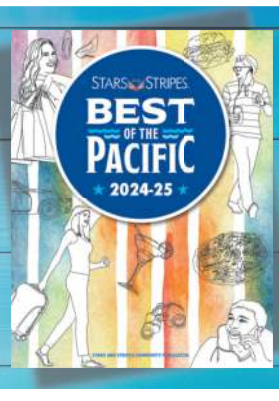

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NATION

Hard drugs illegal again in Oregon

By Ben Brasch
The Washington Post

As of Sunday it is, once again, illegal to possess small amounts of hard drugs in Oregon. A first-in-the-nation law decriminalizing drugs expired, as communities across America struggle to curb fentanyl use and overdose deaths.

Sunday marked the end of an experiment that drug-reform advocates called a pioneering and progressive measure to better help people. Oregon legislators reassessed Measure 110 this year and decided to again make it a misdemeanor to possess a minor amount of drugs — essentially anything besides marijuana. Selling and manufacturing illicit drugs was and is still illegal in Oregon.

Those who supported the measure said it sought to help instead of simply handcuff, by offering services as opposed to the stigma of an arrest, which can make it harder to find a job or place to live. The most vocal advocate was the Drug Policy Alliance, which spent more than $4 million on the campaign.

The measure required officers to hand out $100 citations instead of jail time, and that citation could be waived if the person called a state-funded hotline and enrolled in an assessment for treatment. Those services were funded by hundreds of millions of dollars in marijuana tax revenue. (Marijuana has been legal in Oregon since 2015.)

The alliance and others used Portugal, which decriminalized certain hard drugs in 2001, as a model — despite Portugal mulling changes of its own to the law.

The Oregon campaign emphasized a study showing that Black and Native American people were more likely to be convicted of drug crimes than White people and must deal with the consequences for decades.

The vote came in November 2020 during a wave of calls for criminal justice reform that crested after the murder of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, by police in Minnesota.

The measure passed with support from 60% of voters.

But the program's problems were clear right away.

Because of decades of underinvestment in behavioral health services, there weren't enough providers to care for drug users, experts said. The health care system was already stretched thin by the COVID-19 pandemic. When the measure passed, state officials said Oregon ranked last in the nation for providing access to substance-use disorder treatment. Then state auditors raised concerns about the way the Oregon Health Authority managed grants meant for substance-abuse programs.

Then there was fentanyl. Up to 50 times stronger than heroin, fentanyl in 2021 was just hitting its peak on the West Coast after wreaking havoc elsewhere in the nation. This past January, the soaring number of fentanyl overdoses prompted state and local leaders to declare a 90-day state of emergency in downtown Portland.

Supported by polling that showed citizens no longer backed decriminalization, The Post reported, politicians and business leaders filed initiatives to let voters to "fix and improve" the law.

Soon after, Oregon legislators convened. On Feb. 29, the Oregon House of Representatives voted 51-7 to recriminalize drugs, with bipartisan support. The Oregon Senate did the same by a vote of 21-8 the next day. Gov. Tina Kotek, a Democrat, signed recriminalization into law April 1.

JACK BROOK/AP

New Orleans District Attorney Jason Williams defended his office's use of post-conviction relief to void convictions or revise sentences at a press conference on Aug. 19 in New Orleans, La.

District attorney's progressive policies facing blowback in La.

By Jack Brook
AP/Report for America

NEW ORLEANS — New Orleans District Attorney Jason Williams promised to address the city's history of prosecutorial and police misconduct when he was elected four years ago, but now he's facing an investigation by Republican politicians who are concerned he is abusing his power.

Williams, a Black Democrat in an overwhelmingly conservative district, replaced a hard-nosed, tough-on-crime incumbent when he was elected in 2020. Since then, he's focused on responding to what he describes as the "sins of the past" in New Orleans, and in a state which has one of the highest incarceration rates in the country. Conservative lawmakers and officials are concerned he is arbitrarily putting people convicted of violent crimes back on the streets given the state's high homicide rates in recent years.

Over the past three years, Williams' office reports having voided convictions or reduced sentences in several hundred cases via a process known as post-conviction relief that allows the court to consider new evidence after all other appeals have been exhausted. The landmark civil rights division of Williams' office has reviewed old cases, leading to exonerations and plea-deal releases based on constitutional violations or legal practices his office considers unjust. Critics point out post-conviction relief was employed sparingly in the past by the district attorney's office.

Williams has agreed to appear before a state senate committee on Sept. 5 over his office's use of post-conviction relief.

A new law passed by a Republican-dominated Legislature earlier this year went into effect in August, effectively stripping Williams of his ability to engage in post-conviction relief without the approval of the Republican Attorney General.

But state legislators had previously enacted a law in 2021 allowing district attorneys to amend sentences, even in cases without clear legal error, through post-conviction plea agreements with approval from judges.

Since 2021, Williams' office reports as of late May having voided more than 140 convictions and reduced sentences in at least 180 cases, often re-sentencing them to lesser charges.

Conservative lawmakers have expressed concern that Williams' office has been acting without transparency.

Attorney General Liz Murrill said she is taking a "close look" at these cases and warned that convictions should not be changed "simply because the district attorney has a difference of opinion" from the courts and Legislature.

Country's largest publishers sue Florida over school book bans

By Maham Javaid
The Washington Post

A group of major publishers, authors and parents have sued Florida education officials over a law that allows parents and local residents to limit what books are available in school libraries if they depict or describe "sexual conduct."

The lawsuit filed by Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins and others alleges that the state law, enacted last year, brought about hundreds of book removals and is violating First Amendment rights to free speech.

According to the lawsuit, some of the books that Florida has required be removed from school libraries under House Bill 1069 include: Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," Ernest Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls," Alice Walker's "The Color Purple," Leo Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina" and Kurt Vonnegut's "Slaughter-House Five."

The lawsuit challenges a section of the bill that requires school districts to remove a book that "depicts or describes sexual content" or is "pornographic." One process to remove books from school libraries under the law allows parents to read out loud the controversial passages during a school board meeting, and if the board halts the reading due to explicit content, the school must "discontinue use of the material."

Florida officials have described this week's lawsuit as a "stunt."

"There are no books banned in Florida," said Nathalia Medina, a spokeswoman for the state's Department of Education. "Sexually explicit material and instruction are not suitable for schools."

Book bans have long been part of the country's culture wars as school officials, parents and lawmakers tussle over how race, history and sexuality can be taught in school. Florida is at the forefront of the clash, as it leads the national surge in school book challenges, according to a report released in April by Pen America, a nonprofit advocating free speech.

Thursday's lawsuit, filed in federal court in Orlando, argues that publishers and authors have the right to have their books read while students have the right, under the First Amendment, to "read constitutionally protected books, free from unconstitutional content-based restrictions mandated by the State of Florida."

The suit alleges that House Bill 1069 does not consider the book as a whole before removing it for having "sexual content" and that it does not specify what level of detail mandates that a book be removed for describing sexual content. Another concern, the suit alleges, is that the law's use of the term "pornographic" is vague and often books that are described as such "are not remotely obscene," including Toni Morrison's "The Bluest Eye."

NATION

Candidates' contrast sharp on climate, energy

By Matthew Daly
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As the Earth sizzled through a summer with four of the hottest days ever measured, Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump have starkly different visions on how to address a changing climate while ensuring a reliable energy supply. But neither has provided many details on how they would get there.

During her acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention, Harris briefly mentioned climate change as she outlined "fundamental freedoms" at stake in the election, including "the freedom to breathe clean air and drink clean water and live free from the pollution that fuels the climate crisis."

As vice president, Harris cast the tiebreaking vote on the Inflation Reduction Act, President Joe Biden's landmark climate law that was approved with only Democratic support. As a senator from California, she was an early sponsor of the Green New Deal, a sweeping series of proposals meant to swiftly move the United States to fully green energy that is championed by the party's most progressive wing.

Trump, meanwhile, led chants of "drill, baby, drill" and pledged to dismantle the Biden administration's "green new scam" in his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention. He has vowed to boost production of fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas and coal and repeal key parts of the 2022 climate law.

Charlie Riedel/AP

Smokestacks at the Jeffrey Energy Center coal-fired power plant are silhouetted against the sky at sunset in September 2020, near Emmett, Kan. Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump have starkly different visions on how to address a changing climate while ensuring a reliable energy supply.

"We have more liquid gold under our feet than any other country by far," Trump said at the convention. "We are a nation that has the opportunity to make an absolute fortune with its energy."

Environmental groups, which largely back Harris, call her a "proven climate champion" who will take on Big Oil and build on Biden's climate legacy, including policies that boost electric vehicles and limit planet-warming pollution from coal-fired power plants.

"We won't go back to a climate denier in the Oval Office," said Lena Moffitt, executive director of Evergreen Action.

Republicans counter that Biden and Harris have spent four years adopting "punishing regulations" that target American energy while lavishing generous tax credits for electric vehicles and other green priorities that cost taxpayers billions of dollars.

"This onslaught of overreaching and outrageous climate rules will shut down power plants and increase energy costs for families across the country," said Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo. "Republicans will work to stop them and fight for solutions that protect our air and water and allow our economy to grow."

A look at where the two candidates stand on key climate and energy issues:

■ **Fracking and offshore drilling**

Harris said during her short-lived 2020 presidential campaign that she opposed offshore drilling for oil and hydraulic fracturing, an oil and gas extraction process better known as fracking.

But her campaign has clarified that she no longer supports a ban on fracking, a common drilling practice crucial to the economy in Pennsylvania, a key swing state and the nation's second-largest producer of natural gas.

Trump, who pushed to roll back scores of environmental laws as president, says his goal is for the U.S. to have the cheapest energy and electricity in the world. He'd increase oil drilling on public lands, offer tax breaks to oil, gas and coal producers and speed approval of natural gas pipelines.

■ **Electric vehicles**

Trump has frequently criticized tough new vehicle emissions rules imposed by Biden, incorrectly labeling them an electric vehicle "mandate." Environmental Protection Agency rules issued this spring target tailpipe emissions from cars and trucks and encourage but do not require sales of new EVs to meet the new standards.

Trump has said EV manufacturing will destroy jobs in the auto industry. In recent months, however, he has softened his rhetoric, saying he's for "a very small slice" of cars being electric.

Harris has not announced an EV plan but has strongly supported EVs as vice president. At a 2022 event in Seattle, she celebrated roughly $1 billion in federal grants to purchase about 2,500 "clean" school buses.

■ **Climate law, jobs**

Under Biden and Harris, U.S. manufacturers created more than 250,000 energy jobs last year, the Energy Department said, with clean energy accounting for more than half of those jobs.

Trump and his running mate, Ohio Sen. JD Vance, deride climate spending as a "money grab" for environmental groups and say it will ship Americans' jobs to China and other countries while increasing energy prices at home.

"Kamala Harris cares more about climate change than about inflation," Vance wrote in an op-ed in The Wall Street Journal.

Trump issues statement from Gold Star families defending his visit to cemetery

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Donald Trump's campaign issued a statement Sunday from the Gold Star military families who invited him to Arlington National Cemetery as they defended the Republican presidential nominee and insisted that Vice President Kamala Harris is the candidate politicizing fallen U.S. service members.

It's the latest volley in an extended back and forth as Trump tries to saddle Harris with the Biden administration's handling of the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, including a suicide bombing that killed 13 U.S. service members.

Harris on Saturday accused Trump of staging a "political stunt" that "disrespected sacred ground" where many Afghanistan war dead are buried. Trump and the families of some of those killed in the bombing blame Harris, as they did President Joe Biden before he ended his reelection bid, for their loved ones' deaths. The families say the former president was honoring their loved ones when he came to Arlington.

His campaign later distributed images of the visit despite the cemetery's prohibition on partisan activity on the grounds.

"President Trump was invited by us, the Gold Star families, to attend the solemn ceremonies commemorating the three-year anniversary of our children's deaths," said the relatives' joint statement. "He was there to honor their sacrifice, yet Vice President Harris has disgracefully twisted this sacred moment into a political ploy."

Gold Star families have lost a loved one in military service.

Trump laid wreaths last Monday in honor of Sgt. Nicole Gee, Staff Sgt. Darin Hoover and Staff Sgt. Ryan Knauss. They were among 13 U.S. service members and more than 100 Afghans who died in an Aug. 26, 2021, bombing at Hamid Karzai International Airport as U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan.

Trump thanked the family members for their statement via social media. "Thank you for saying you wanted me to stand with you ... and take pictures, that it was your request, not mine," he wrote.

Throughout the weekend, Trump has used his social media accounts to distribute video testimonials from some relatives who signed the statement.

Christy Shamblin, Gee's mother-in-law, said in a 90-second message that Trump and his aides were "respectful" and "a comfort" to the families who gathered at Arlington. Then she directly addressed her remarks to Harris.

"Why won't you return a call and explain how you call my daughter-in-law's death a success?" Shamblin said. "Why would you take a day where we celebrated the deaths of our loved ones and use it to disparage not only them, but us."

Biden and first lady Jill Biden went to Dover Air Force Base in 2021 for the ceremony returning the service members' remains to U.S. soil. The Bidens met privately with family members at Dover.

Trump's appearance ballooned into controversy after defense officials said his campaign was warned about not taking photographs and that there was an altercation between Trump aides and a cemetery employee. Officials have said since that an employee whom two Trump campaign staff members allegedly "verbally abused and pushed" aside has declined to press charges.

The Trump campaign has since lashed out at Pentagon officials. Trump campaign officials say the campaign had permission to bring someone to take video.

Harris, Biden to campaign together in Pennsylvania

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Vice President Kamala Harris and President Joe Biden were co-headlining a campaign event Monday in the marquee battleground state of Pennsylvania as Harris balances presenting herself as "a new way forward" while remaining intensely loyal to Biden and the policies he has pushed.

The pair were to attend Pittsburgh's Labor Day parade and offer some remarks, the first time the two have shared a speaking slot on the political stage together since the surprising election shakeup that provided a fresh jolt of Democratic enthusiasm to the 2024 election.

Harris' campaign has said Pennsylvania voters are newly energized since Harris moved to the top of the ticket six weeks ago, with tens of thousands of new volunteers signed up to canvass for her and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, the Democratic vice presidential nominee. Harris' and Biden's appearance at the parade, one of the largest such gatherings in the country, is part of a battleground state blitz with just over two months until Election Day. Harris was in Detroit on Monday for a campaign event before meeting Biden in Pennsylvania.

Harris, 59, has sought to appeal to voters by positioning herself as a break from poisonous politics, rejecting the acerbic rhetoric of her Republican opponent, former President Donald Trump, while looking to move beyond the Biden era as well. Yet while her delivery may be very different from Biden's, Harris' agenda is chock-full of the issues he has championed: capping the cost of prescription drugs, the Affordable Care Act, the economy and helping families afford child care.

"We fight for a future where we build what I call an opportunity economy, so that every American has the opportunity to own a home, start a business and to build wealth and intergenerational wealth. And a future where we lower the cost of living for America," she said at a recent rally, echoing Biden's calls to grow the economy "from the bottom out and the middle up."

Harris briefly appeared on stage with Biden after the president delivered his remarks on the opening night of last month's Democratic National Convention, but the two haven't shared a microphone at a political event since Biden himself was running for office.

NATION

Major hotel strike spreads across US cities

BY LAUREN KAORI GURLEY AND JULIAN MARK
The Washington Post

Thousands of hotel workers in major cities across the country walked off the job Sunday morning in a strike wave expected to quickly reach other U.S. cities.

The initial strikes, which involve mostly Hilton, Marriott and Hyatt properties, will last three days. More than 10,000 workers walked out at hotels in San Francisco, San Jose, San Diego, Honolulu, Kauai, Boston, Seattle and Greenwich, Conn., early in the day. The strikes could spread later to other communities, including New Haven, Conn.; Baltimore; and Oakland, Calif.

The work stoppage threatened to cause disruptions on a busy holiday weekend. The Transportation Security Administration has said it expects this year to have the busiest Labor Day travel period on record.

As of Sunday morning, the strikes had affected 24 properties with more than 23,000 rooms, according to Unite Here, a national hospitality union with over 275,000 members, the majority of them women and people of color.

The union, which suffered major losses in membership during the height of the pandemic, says its workers are striking for higher pay, increased staffing and reduced workloads. It has accused hotels of using COVID-era lockdowns as a pretext to permanently cut costs by axing employees and suspending guest services. As a result, the union says, members lost income and work, and those who remain endure "painful" working conditions.

RODRIQUE NGOWI/AP

Hotel workers on strike chant and beat drums while picketing outside the Fairmont Copley Plaza hotel on Sunday in Boston.

"I'm on strike because I need higher wages," Daniela Campusano, a housekeeper at Hilton's Hampton Inn & Homewood Suites in Boston's Seaport district, said in a statement Sunday. "I currently have two jobs, and I work about 65 hours a week. One job should be enough."

Unite Here is asking guests with reservations at hotels with striking workers to "cancel your stay immediately" and "demand a refund without a cancellation fee."

Hotel companies say they're trying to cooperate with union members.

Michael D'Angelo, a Hyatt spokesperson, said in a statement that the company "has a long history of cooperation with the unions that represent our employees" and is "disappointed that UNITE HERE has chosen to strike while Hyatt remains willing to negotiate."

The hotels have plans in place to "minimize impact on hotel operations" related to the strikes, D'Angelo said.

Hilton said it "makes every effort to maintain a cooperative and productive relationship" with the union, adding that the chain is "committed to negotiating in good faith to reach fair and reasonable agreements."

Marriott did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Some 15,000 union members in 12 cities voted in August to authorize strikes, which could trigger the largest hotel strike in U.S. history if workers in more cities join. Union contracts covering housekeepers, front desk attendants, bellhops, restaurant waitstaff, cooks, bartenders and other workers in each of the cities expired in the weeks leading up to the strike, and the companies and union remained at an impasse early Sunday in contract negotiations.

"We're on strike because the hotel industry has gotten off track," Gwen Mills, Unite Here's president, said in a statement Sunday morning.

The union hopes to build on gains won in strikes and strike threats in 2023. Last summer, thousands of hotel workers in Los Angeles and the surrounding area participated in rolling strikes, winning higher wages and more equitable workload guarantees.

Former Alabama Guard soldier pleads guilty to human smuggling

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — A former Alabama National Guard soldier pleaded guilty in federal court Thursday to driving migrants from the Mexican border into Texas while he was deployed to assist Customs and Border Protection.

Derrick Terelle Sankey drove migrants who had entered the U.S. illegally in Starr and Hidalgo counties along the Rio Grande further north to locations near Jim Wells County between March 21, 2021, and Sept. 13, 2021, according to court documents filed in the Southern District of Texas.

The charge carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Sankey was recruited by smugglers because his military service alongside Border Patrol agents gave him knowledge of immigration enforcement activities in the Rio Grande Valley, according to court documents.

He primarily served as a scout to advise other drivers of law enforcement who might stop the loads of migrants being driven north.

Sankey's pay in the scheme was based on the number of migrants being transported in each event, the documents said.

As part of the plea agreement, a second drug-related charge against Sankey was dropped, according to court documents.

The former soldier was first arrested and charged in September 2021 with moving and distributing cocaine after he was caught delivering drugs to an undercover agent from Homeland Security Investigations while wearing his National Guard uniform and driving a Border Patrol vehicle.

He pleaded not guilty and had been waiting nearly three years for his jury trial when a federal grand jury indicted him last month on a second charge of human smuggling.

Chief Judge Randy Crane in McAllen accepted Sankey's guilty plea Thursday and allowed him to remain free on bond until his sentencing hearing Nov. 12.

The Alabama National Guard confirmed Sankey was serving on federal orders at the southwest border in 2021 when he was arrested. He left the Guard as a specialist in July 2023 after nearly four years of service, the state said.

Former President Donald Trump in April 2018 ordered National Guard troops to serve at the southwest border and President Joe Biden has continued that mission.

The Guard members work alongside Border Patrol agents in a variety of support roles that allow those federal agents to conduct direct border security.

It is separate from a state-sponsored mission in Texas ordered by Gov. Greg Abbott. Those troops work for the state of Texas and patrol the border alongside state police. However, other states have contributed troops to Texas since the mission known as Operation Lone Star launched in 2021.

Sankey is not the only service member to get caught up in criminal activity while deployed to the border. At least three other soldiers from the Texas and Louisiana National Guards and the active Army have been arrested for charges of smuggling migrants while deployed to the border.

Titanic expedition yields lost bronze statue, more

Associated Press

A bronze statue from the Titanic — not seen in decades and feared to be lost for good — is among the discoveries made by the company with salvage rights to the wreck site on its first expedition there in many years.

RMS Titanic Inc., a Georgia-based company that holds the legal rights to the 112-year-old wreck, has completed its first trip since 2010 and released images from the expedition on Monday. The pictures show a site that continues to change more than a century later.

The trip to the remote corner of the North Atlantic Ocean where the Titanic sank happened as the U.S. Coast Guard investigates the June 2023 implosion of the Titan, an experimental submersible owned by a different company. The Titan submersible disaster killed all five people on board, including Paul-Henri Nargeolet, who was director of underwater research for RMS Titanic.

The findings from this summer's trip "showcase a bittersweet mix of preservation and loss," RMS Titanic said in a statement. A highlight was the rediscovery of the statue "Diana of Versaille," last seen in 1986, and the statue now has a clear and updated image, the company said.

On a sadder note, a significant section of the railing that surrounds the ship bow's forecastle deck has fallen, RMS Titanic said. The railing still stood as recently as 2022, the company said.

"The discovery of the statue of Diana was an exciting moment. But we are saddened by the loss of the iconic Bow railing and other evidence of decay which has only strengthened our commitment to preserving Titanic's legacy," said Tomasina Ray, director of collections for RMS Titanic.

The crew spent 20 days at the site and returned to Providence, R.I., on Aug. 9. They captured more than 2 million of the highest resolution pictures of the site ever to exist, the company said.

The team also fully mapped the wreck and its debris field with equipment that should improve understanding of the site, RMS Titanic said. The next step is to process the data so it can be shared with the scientific community, and so "historically significant and at-risk artifacts can be identified for safe recovery in future expeditions," the company said in a statement.

NATION

Companies craft new ways to grow cocoa

By Amy Taxin and Terry Chea
Associated Press

WEST SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Climate change is stressing rainforests where the highly sensitive cocoa bean grows, but chocolate lovers need not despair, say companies that are researching other ways to grow cocoa or develop cocoa substitutes.

Scientists and entrepreneurs are working on ways to make more cocoa that stretch well beyond the tropics, from Northern California to Israel.

California Cultured, a plant cell culture company, is growing cocoa from cell cultures at a facility in West Sacramento, Calif., with plans to start selling its products next year. It puts cocoa bean cells in a vat with sugar water so they reproduce quickly and reach maturity in a week rather than the six to eight months a traditional harvest takes, said Alan Perlstein, the company's chief executive. The process also no longer requires as much water or arduous labor.

"We see just the demand of chocolate monstrously outstripping what is going to be available," Perlstein said. "There's really no other way that we see that the world could significantly increase the supply of cocoa or still keep it at affordable levels without extensive either environmental degradation or some significant other cost."

Cocoa trees grow about 20 degrees north and south of the equator in regions with warm weather and abundant rain, including West Africa and South America. Climate change is expected to dry out the land under the additional heat. So scientists, entrepreneurs and chocolate-lovers are coming up with ways to grow cocoa and make the crop more resilient and more resistant to pests — as well as craft chocolatey-tasting cocoa alternatives to meet demand.

The market for chocolate is massive with sales in the United States surpassing $25 billion in 2023, according to the National Confectioners Association. Many entrepreneurs are betting on demand growing faster than the supply of cocoa. Companies are looking at either bolstering the supply with cell-based cocoa or offering alternatives made from products ranging from oats to carob that are roasted and flavored to produce a chocolatey taste for chips or filling.

> **"We see just the demand of chocolate monstrously outstripping what is going to be available."**
>
> **Alan Perlstein**
> California Cultured chief executive

The price of cocoa soared earlier this year because of demand and troubles with the crop in West Africa due to plant disease and changes in weather. The region produces the bulk of the world's cocoa.

"All of this contributes to a potential instability in supply, so it is attractive to these lab-grown or cocoa substitute companies to think of ways to replace that ingredient that we know of as chocolatey-flavored," said Carla D. Martin, executive director of the Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute and a lecturer in African and African American Studies at Harvard University.

The innovation is largely driven by demand for chocolate in the U.S. and Europe, Martin said. While three-quarters of the world's cocoa is grown in West and Central Africa, only 4% is consumed there, she said.

Photos by Jeff Chiu/AP

California Cultured lab technician Aubrey McKeand works on cell cultures in the company's lab in West Sacramento, Calif., on Aug. 28.

McKeand works on cell cultures in the company's lab.

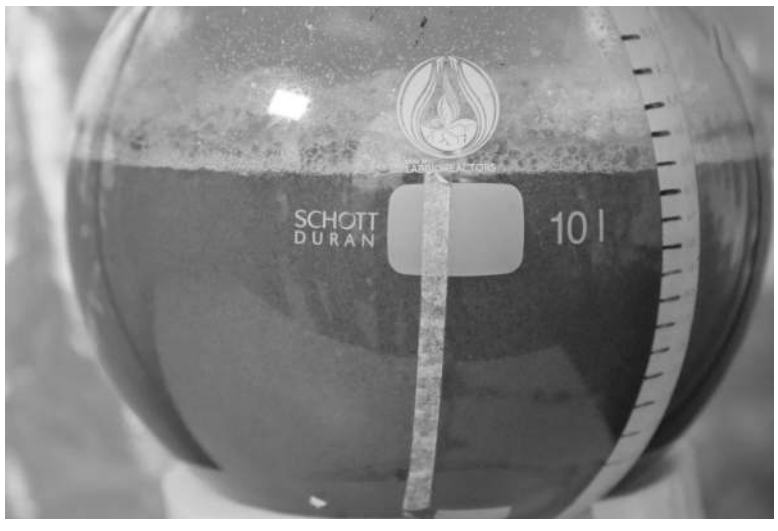
The push to produce cocoa indoors in the U.S. comes after other products, such as chicken meat, have already been grown in labs. It also comes as supermarket shelves fill with evolving snack options — something that developers of cocoa alternatives say shows people are ready to try what looks and tastes like a chocolate chip cookie even if the chip contains a cocoa substitute.

They said they also are hoping to tap into rising consciousness among consumers about where their food comes from and what it takes to grow it, particularly the use of child labor in the cocoa industry.

Planet A Foods in Planegg, Germany, contends the taste of mass market chocolate is derived largely from the fermentation and roasting in making it, not the cocoa bean itself. The company's founders tested out ingredients ranging from olives to seaweed and settled on a mix of oats and sunflower seeds as the best tasting chocolate alternative, said Jessica Karch, a company spokesperson. They called it "ChoViva" and it can be subbed into baked goods, she said.

"The idea is not to replace the high quality, 80% dark chocolate, but really to have a lot of different products in the mass market," Karch said.

Yet while some are seeking to create alternative cocoa sources and substitutes, others are trying to bolster the supply of cocoa where it naturally grows. Mars, which makes M&Ms and Snickers, has a research facility at University of California, Davis aimed at making cocoa plants more resilient, said Joanna Hwu, the company's senior director of cocoa plant science. The facility hosts a living collection of cocoa trees so scientists can study what makes them disease-resistant to help farmers in producing countries and ensure a stable supply of beans.



Cocoa cells are shown growing inside a container at the California Cultured lab.

"We see it as an opportunity, and our responsibility," Hwu said.

In Israel, efforts to expand the supply of cocoa are also under way. Celleste Bio is taking cocoa bean cells and growing them indoors to produce cocoa powder and cocoa butter, said co-founder Hanne Volpin. In a few years, the company expects to be able to produce cocoa regardless of the impact of climate change and disease — an effort that has drawn interest from Mondelez, the maker of Cadbury chocolate.

"We only have a small field, but eventually, we will have a farm of bioreactors," Volpin said.

That's similar to the effort under way at California Cultured, which plans to seek permission from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to call its product chocolate, because, according to Perlstein, that's what it is.

It might wind up being called brewery chocolate, or local chocolate, but chocolate no less, he said, because it's genetically identical though not harvested from a tree.

"We basically see that we're growing cocoa — just in a different way," Perlstein said.

WORLD

German leaders feel pressure from far-right vote wins

Associated Press

BERLIN — The Alternative for Germany party's success in two state elections piled new pressure on Chancellor Olaf Scholz's fractious government and left the country's conservative opposition facing political contortions on Monday to find a way to govern a pair of eastern regions without involving the far-right party.

Alternative for Germany, or AfD, became the first far-right party to win a state election in post-World War II Germany in Thuringia on Sunday under one of its hardest-right figures, Björn Höcke. In neighboring Saxony, it finished only just behind the mainstream center-right Christian Democratic Union, which leads the national opposition. Voters punished the three parties in Scholz's governing coalition, which took well under 15% of the vote between them.

Deep discontent with a national government notorious for infighting, inflation and a weak economy, anti-immigration sentiment and skepticism toward German military aid for Ukraine are among the factors that contributed to support for populist parties in the formerly communist east, which is less prosperous than western Germany. A new party founded by a prominent leftist was the second big winner on Sunday — and will probably be needed to form state governments since no one is prepared to govern with AfD.

The debacle for the governing parties added to awful performances in the European Parliament election in June for Scholz's coalition, and it's not obvious that they have any recipe to rebound with Germany's next national election due in a bit over a year. Another state election on Sept. 22 in Brandenburg — which unlike the two that voted Sunday is currently led by Scholz's center-left Social Democrats — could add to their embarrassment.

Voters "want to send a signal to the (coalition) that the chancellor no longer has their confidence. Olaf Scholz is the face of failure in Thuringia and Saxony too," Jens Spahn, a senior CDU lawmaker, told ZDF television.

Scholz wrote on Instagram that Sunday's results are "bitter" and that "our country cannot and must not get used" to such AfD victories.

MICHAEL KAPPELER, DPA/AP

From left, Friedrich Merz, CDU federal chairman and CDU/CSU parliamentary group leader in the Bundestag; Michael Kretschmer (CDU), Minister President of Saxony; and Mario Voigt, CDU state chairman in Thuringia, pose for a picture Monday in Berlin.

Weather conditions led to helicopter crash that killed Iran's leader

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — An official investigation into the helicopter crash in May that killed Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi and seven other people found it was caused by challenging climatic and atmospheric conditions, Iranian state TV reported Sunday.

The final report of the Supreme Board of the General Staff of the Armed Forces said the main cause of the helicopter crash was the complex climatic conditions of the region in spring, state TV said.

The report cited the sudden appearance of a thick mass of dense fog rising upwards as the helicopter collided with the mountain.

According to the report, there were no signs of sabotage.

Raisi died alongside seven others including his foreign minister Hossein Amirabdollahian in the crash in northwestern Iran.

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WORLD

Pope to clock more than 20K miles on longest trip to Asia

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — If any evidence were needed to underscore that Pope Francis' upcoming trip to Asia and Oceania is the longest, farthest and most challenging of his pontificate, it's that he's bringing along his secretaries to help him navigate the four-country program while keeping up with work back home.

Francis will clock 20,390 miles by air during his Sept. 2-13 visit to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore, far surpassing any of his previous 44 foreign trips and notching one of the longest papal trips ever, both in terms of days on the road and distances traveled.

That's no small feat for a pope who turns 88 in December, uses a wheelchair, lost part of a lung to a respiratory infection as a young man and had to cancel his last foreign trip at the last minute (to Dubai in November to participate in the U.N. climate conference) on doctors' orders.

But Francis is pushing ahead with this trip, originally planned for 2020 but postponed because of COVID-19. He's bringing along his medical team of a doctor and two nurses and taking the usual health precautions on the ground. But in a novelty, he's adding his personal secretaries into the traditional Vatican delegation of cardinals, bishops and security.

The long trip recalls the globe-trotting travels of St. John Paul II, who visited all four destinations during his quarter-century pontificate, though East Timor was an occupied part of Indonesia at the time of his landmark 1989 trip.

Francis loves gestures of interfaith fraternity and harmony, and there could be no better symbol of religious tolerance at the start of his trip than the underground "Tunnel of Friendship" linking Indonesia's main Istiqlal mosque to the country's Catholic cathedral.

ANDREW MEDICHINI/AP

Pope Francis waves as he leaves after his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at The Vatican on Wednesday.

Francis will visit the underpass in central Jakarta with the grand imam, Nasaruddin Umar, before both partake in an interfaith gathering and sign a joint declaration.

Francis was elected pope in 2013 largely on the strength of an extemporaneous speech he delivered to his fellow cardinals in which he said the Catholic Church needed to go to the "peripheries" to reach those who need God's comfort the most.

When Francis travels deep into the jungles of Papua New Guinea, he will be fulfilling one of the marching orders he set out for the future pope on the eve of his own election.

Few places are as remote, peripheral and poverty-wracked as Vanimo, a northern coastal town on the main island of New Guinea. There Francis will meet with missionaries from his native Argentina who are working to bring Christianity to a largely tribal people who still practice pagan traditions alongside the Catholic faith.

Storm sets off floods in Philippines

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — A storm set off landslides and unleashed pounding rains that flooded many northern Philippine areas overnight into Monday, leaving at least 9 people dead and prompting authorities to suspend classes and government work in the densely populated capital region.

Tropical Storm Yagi was blowing 71 miles northeast of Infanta town in Quezon province, southeast of Manila, by midday on Monday with sustained winds of up to 47 miles per hour and gusts of up to 56 mph, according to the weather bureau.

The storm, locally called Enteng, was moving northwestward at 9 mph near the eastern coast of the main northern region of Luzon, where the weather bureau warned of possible flash floods and landslides in mountainous provinces.

A landslide hit two small shanties on a hillside in Antipolo city on Monday in Rizal province just to the west of the capital, killing at least three people.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Insane Clown Posse hat helped track man in Jan. 6

MI DETROIT — Prosecutors Thursday unsealed a criminal complaint accusing an Upper Peninsula man of breaking into the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6, 2021, attack while wearing a distinctive hat linked with the rap duo Insane Clown Posse that helped FBI agents track his movements.

On Jan. 12, 2021, six days after the attack, FBI agents received a tip that Laurium resident Adam Mancuso, 45, had posted images on Facebook showing him inside and outside of the U.S. Capitol during the attack. The photos showed Mancuso wearing the black hat with a red "Hatchetman" logo.

Investigators next started surveilling Mancuso at his home and spotted him outside what appears to be a home in Royal Oak. They concluded he is the same person shown inside the U.S. Capitol during the attack.

Conviction stays in case detailed on 'Serial'

MD ANNAPOLIS — A 2022 court hearing that freed Adnan Syed from prison violated the legal rights of the victim's family and must be redone, Maryland's Supreme Court ruled Friday, marking the latest development in the ongoing legal saga that gained global attention years ago through the hit podcast "Serial."

The 4-3 ruling means Syed's murder conviction remains reinstated for the foreseeable future. It comes about 11 months after the court heard arguments last October in a case that has been fraught with legal twists and divided court rulings since Syed was convicted in 2000 of killing his high school ex-girlfriend Hae Min Lee.

Syed has been free since October 2022, and while the Supreme Court's ruling reinstates his convictions, the justices did not order any changes to his release.

The court concluded that in an effort to remedy what was perceived to be an injustice to Syed, prosecutors and a lower court "worked an injustice" against Lee's brother, Young Lee. The court ruled that Lee was not treated with "dignity, respect, and sensitivity," because he was not given reasonable notice of the hearing that resulted in Syed being freed.

Chris Christie to teach campaign course at Yale

CT NEW HAVEN — Former New Jersey Gov. and unsuccessful Republican presidential candidate Chris Christie will teach a course on running for office at Yale University this semester.

The weekly seminar taught by Christie is titled "How to Run a Political Campaign" and is open to undergraduates as well as graduate students at Yale's Jackson School of Global Affairs.

The course description said it will examine issues such as communications, fundraising "and the most important question of all: If I do win, what do I want to accomplish and what kind of leader do I want to be?"

Christie, 61, served as governor of New Jersey from 2010 to 2018 and was the U.S. attorney for New Jersey from 2002 to 2008.

He sought the Republican presidential nomination in 2016 but dropped out of the race and endorsed Donald Trump.

JOE BURBANK, ORLANDO (FLA.) SENTINEL/AP

Lord of leaping

Irish dancer Caleb Grignon, from Cleveland, performs at the 12th annual Great Irish Hooley music festival at Raglan Road Irish Pub & Restaurant in Disney Springs at Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., on Friday.

Student sues sorority, landlord over window fall

MA BOSTON — A Northeastern University student and her parents are suing a sorority, its chapter president and a landlord after the student fell from a window and suffered critical injuries at a party.

Sarah Cox, then a junior at the university and a member of Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority, fell from the window at a party in March 2023, according to court filings.

Cox's injuries are "catastrophic" and she will require "one to one care 24 hours per day and seven days per week on a permanent basis," the lawsuit states. Cox and her parents are seeking $10.2 million in their lawsuit, The Boston Globe reported.

The lawsuit said the defendants were negligent by not taking steps to prevent the fall and injuries. The landlord failed to stop tenants from granting access to too many people at one time, and the sorority chapter president should have known that alcohol was being consumed at the party and that could create unsafe conditions, court papers stated.

Sheriff's office dispels shooter rumor at Disney

FL ORLANDO — A fight at Disney World's Magic Kingdom Park and a "popping" sound caused a disruption among visitors and rumors of an active shooter that were quickly put to rest by the county sheriff's office.

The Orange County Sheriff's Office confirmed that there was no active shooter at the park on Thursday night.

The sheriff's office posted the following on social media: "There is NO active shooter at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom. A fight occurred, and a "popping" sound was heard that we believe was a balloon. Guests began running and that's how the active shooter rumor started. There is no active shooter."

No one was arrested, a spokesperson for the office said.

3 dead after small plane crashes into townhouses

OR PORTLAND — Three people were dead after a small plane crashed into a row of townhouses Saturday morning in a neighborhood east of Portland, setting the homes ablaze, authorities told KATU-TV.

Officials had said the plane was carrying two people and that at least one resident is unaccounted for.

Photos and videos published by KGW-TV in Portland showed one of the townhomes engulfed in flames while black smoke poured out of the adjoining houses. Gresham Fire Chief Scott Lewis said the fire had spread to at least four of the homes, displacing up to six families. He said two people were treated at the scene, but he didn't describe the injuries.

As the plane went down, it knocked over a pole and power lines, causing a separate brush fire in a nearby field, according to the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office. The plane was split into multiple parts as it crashed in the residential area in the city of Fairview, which is home to about 10,000 people.

State annuls 67-year-old ban on switchblades

MA BOSTON — Residents of Massachusetts are now free to arm themselves with switchblades after a 67-year-old restriction was struck down following the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 landmark decision on gun rights and the Second Amendment.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision applied new guidance from the Bruen decision, which declared that citizens have a right to carry firearms in public for self-defense. The Supreme Judicial Court concluded that switchblades aren't deserving of special restrictions under the Second Amendment.

The case stemmed from a 2020 domestic disturbance in which police seized an orange firearm-shaped knife with a spring-assisted blade. The defendant was charged with carrying a dangerous weapon.

Children's book button to blame for fire inside car

NC BURKE COUNTY — North Carolina officials determined the cause of a fire inside a car in Burke County was a children's book.

A child's car seat was set ablaze when a "button battery" in a children's book caught fire after being left in the vehicle on Sunday, according to the George Hildebran Fire & Rescue Department. The family had left the car before the fire started, officials said.

A neighbor eventually put the fire out with a garden hose, WSOC reported.

One of the books near the scorched car seat was suspected of having a lithium battery, which are susceptible to catching fire if they overheat, according to the Burke County Fire Marshal's Office.

From The Associated Press

FACES

‘Wolfs’ makes splash

Pitt, Clooney again take center stage as new film gets its premiere in Venice

Associated Press

George Clooney and Brad Pitt returned to the Venice Film Festival on Sunday for the world premiere of “Wolfs.”

The film is an old-school action thriller directed by Jon Watts, in which Clooney and Pitt play lone wolf fixers unhappy to have been hired for the same job to cover up a bloody mess involving a district attorney (played by Amy Ryan).

Though both regulars at the picturesque festival on their own, with Clooney’s premieres including “Gravity” and “Good Night and Good Luck,” and “Ad Astra” and “The Assassination of Jesse James…” among Pitt’s, only once have they walked the carpet together. No, it wasn’t for an “Ocean’s” film. It was in 2008, for the premiere of “Burn After Reading,” the madcap Coen brothers’ farce.

“In ‘Burn After Reading,’ I got the extreme pleasure of shooting him in the face and I thought maybe we’d try it again 15 years later,” Clooney said with a laugh.

The two teased one another about each other’s age and relevance, with Clooney joking that Pitt is 74 and lucky to be working at his age. (Clooney, for the record, is 63. Pitt is 60.)

Pitt was waiting for a good idea to reunite with Clooney on screen and thought the idea of two cleaners who think they’re the best sounded fun. Their years of working together made their banter, and overlapping dialogue, natural to do.

“As I get older, just working with the people that I just really enjoy spending time with has become really important to me,” Pitt said.

When they got the script, they said Watts hadn’t specified who was playing which part so Pitt and Clooney got on the phone and figured it out for themselves.

The film’s director, who catapulted from indies to the Tom Holland “Spider-Man” films, said in a director’s statement that this film is him trying to get back to street level after “seven years of swinging from skyscrapers and jumping through multiverse portals.” He was unable to speak in person after testing positive for COVID-19.

“He flew all the way here and then he got COVID,” Clooney said. “So now we’re all going to get it.”

The film will have a limited theatrical release, starting Sept. 20, before hitting Apple TV+ on Sept. 27. Apple TV+ acquired “Wolfs” in a competitive bidding war, beating out both traditional studios and rival streaming services.

JOEL C RYAN, INVISION/AP

George Clooney, left, and Brad Pitt arrive Sunday in Venice, Italy, for the premiere of “Wolfs.”

Almodóvar returns to Venice with ‘The Room Next Door’

Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar returned to the Venice Film Festival with stars Tilda Swinton and Julianne Moore on Monday. “The Room Next Door” was to have its world premiere Monday evening.

Though a new Almodóvar film is always an event for cinephiles, this one has special significance: It’s his English-language debut.

“My insecurity disappeared after the first table read with the actresses, with the exchange of the first indications,” he wrote in his director’s statement.

Moore and Swinton play disconnected friends who met in their youths at a magazine job and whose lives took different paths. Ingrid (Moore) wrote novels. Martha (Swinton) became a war reporter. And now after years apart, they meet again, in New York, when Ingrid finds out Martha has cancer and is in a nearby hospital.

Over the next weeks and months, they reconnect, learning about one another’s lives and Martha’s estranged daughter through a series of revealing conversations.

Before the film’s premiere, Swinton said that it would never have occurred to her that Almodóvar might eventually find a space for her in one of his films. She said she has “worshipped in his high church” ever since seeing “Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown” in the late 1980s in London. In Almodóvar, she had found a kindred artistic spirit, she thought.

But she was English and he worked solely in Spanish. The idea of collaborating seemed like a fantasy only. Then one day, she said, she got up the nerve to say something to him.

“I said, ‘Listen I’ll learn Spanish for you, you can make me mute,’” Swinton said. “Characteristically, he laughed.”

Moore added: “I don’t know how I managed to walk into this world, but I felt lucky that he chose me.”

Almodóvar’s last Venice appearance was in 2021, where he presented the film “Parallel Mothers,” for which Penelope Cruz won its best actress prize. In 2019, Venice also gave him a lifetime achievement award.

Both Swinton and Moore were excited to be in a film that spotlighted a female friendship between two women at their ages.

“We very, very rarely see a story of female friendship and especially a story about female friends who are older,” Moore said. “The importance that he shows us is so unusual and was so moving to me that he portrayed this relationship as so profound, because it is.”

Trump film ‘The Apprentice’ will open before the election

After struggling to drum up interest following its Cannes Film Festival premiere, “The Apprentice,” starring Sebastian Stan as a young Donald Trump, has found a distributor that plans to release the film shortly before the election in November.

Briarcliff Entertainment will release “The Apprentice” on Oct. 11 in U.S. and Canadian theaters, just weeks before Americans cast their ballots on Nov. 5.

Director Ali Abbasi, the Danish Iranian filmmaker, had prioritized getting “The Apprentice” into theaters before voters head to the polls. After larger studios and film distributors opted not to bid on the film, Abbasi complained in early June on X that “for some reason certain power people in your country don’t want you to see it!!!”

Steven Cheung, communications director for the Trump campaign, on Aug. 30 called the film’s release “election interference by Hollywood elites right before November.”

Part of what dampened interest in “The Apprentice” was the potential threat of legal action. After its Cannes premiere in May, Cheung called the movie “pure fiction” and said the Trump team would file a lawsuit “to address the blatantly false assertions from these pretend filmmakers.”

“The Apprentice” chronicles Trump’s rise to power in New York real estate under the tutelage of defense attorney Roy Cohn (played by Jeremy Strong). Late in the movie, Trump is depicted raping his wife, Ivana Trump (played by Maria Bakalova). In Ivana Trump’s 1990 divorce deposition, she stated that Trump raped her. Trump denied the allegation and Ivana Trump later said she didn’t mean it literally, but rather that she had felt violated.

Online woes frustrate fans scrambling for Oasis tickets

Associated Press

Some Oasis fans celebrated like a champagne supernova, while others looked back in anger on Aug. 31 as online ticket sites strained under demand for the band’s first shows for 15 years.

The Britpop-era behemoth led by brothers Noel and Liam Gallagher is scheduled to play 17 gigs in Cardiff, Manchester, London, Edinburgh and Dublin starting July 4.

More than 1 million tickets went on sale Saturday morning, with prices starting at about 74 pounds (just under $100) and rising to a 506-pound ($666) package that includes a pre-show party and merchandise.

The band’s representatives said later in the day that all the tickets were sold, but hinted more shows may be announced, saying “anticipation for details of the tour’s international dates is now rapidly mounting.”

Many fans were frustrated in their attempts to secure tickets. Some people attempting to get onto the handful of authorized sales sites, including Ticketmaster and Gigs and Tours, received error messages, while many others were informed they were in a lengthy queue.

Within hours, tickets began to be offered on resale websites for as much as 6,000 pounds ($7,800). Oasis issued a warning, saying tickets could only be resold at face value through authorized sites.

Formed in Manchester in 1991, Oasis was one of the dominant British acts of the 1990s, producing hits including “Wonderwall”, “Champagne Supernova” and “Don’t Look Back in Anger.”

Other news

■ The Swiss city of Basel will host next year’s **Eurovision Song Contest** from May 13-17, organizers announced Aug. 30. The mostly German-speaking city on the Rhine River bordering both France and Germany was selected over Geneva. The Alpine country won the right to host the annual glitzy song-and-dance extravaganza, which draws hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide, after Swiss singer Nemo won the contest’s 68th edition in May.

■ **Fatman Scoop,** the hip-hop artist who topped charts in Europe with “Be Faithful” in the early 2000s and later lent his distinctive voice and ebullient vibe to hits by artists including Missy Elliott and Ciara, died after collapsing on stage at a show in Connecticut, according to officials and his family. He was 53. The cause of his death wasn’t immediately clear.

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OPINION

Working six days a week is no myth in Greece

By Lionel Laurent
Bloomberg Opinion

Anyone who's seen swaths of sunburned German tourists harrying Greek workers for a beach towel this summer will know how wrong economic cliches can be. Greeks, depicted as "lazy" during the euro crisis, actually work more hours than anyone else in Europe, and supposedly workaholic Germans work among the least. Sipping wine in Santorini or lounging in a villa is a lifestyle not all that accessible to actual Greeks.

Now the gap is getting starker with a divisive new law allowing some Greek firms to enforce a six-day work week — a first in Europe and one that runs counter to the trend of experimenting with shorter work weeks to attract talent. Although this is technically an exceptional measure for some 24/7 manufacturing firms and not a blanket move, it may end up busting bigger cliches about Europe's ability to sustain its leisurely ways.

If Greece is zigging while others zag, it's not because of the productive effects of overwork. If I work six days rather than five, I will likely end up producing more given I'm working more hours — but on a per-hour basis I may turn out to be less productive if fatigue sets in. One study of call-center workers between 2008-10 found that an increase of working hours by 1% led to an increase in output by 0.9% in terms of number of calls answered. Calling this a "worker-friendly" law, even if the idea is to better enshrine overtime pay, rings a little hollow.

Nor is this some kind of emergency measure comparable to the dark days of the euro crisis, when the idea of a six-day work week was floated as part of bailout talks. Greece's economy is today one of the fastest-growing in Europe, has regained investment-grade status and brought its debt-to-GDP ratio down to its lowest in over a decade (though at 160% it's still almost double the European average). The recovery hasn't been pain-free: Real wages have declined since 2015, and fatter corporate profit margins have outraged ordinary Greeks. But today it's France that's seeing credit-rating downgrades and Germany that's struggling with recession and a "sick man" image.

What this law is really about is tackling a labor shortage after Greece's exodus of more than 1 million working-age people between 2010 and 2022. This is driven partly by the euro crisis-related brain drain but also by a ticking "time bomb" of demographic decline as life expectancy rises and birth rates fall. There are few easy answers: It's hard to automate a tourism-led country eyeing construction projects (including Europe's largest smart city) and a self-described "tough but fair" immigration policy has yet to deliver the workers Greece needs. Europe's ultimate resort economy has therefore turned to a "last resort," as economist Pinelopi Goldberg writes: More hours from existing workers.

This is where Greece's experiment becomes relevant to Europe, and why it should be watched closely. Europe has become synonymous with plowing the gains of decades of technological improvement and rising living standards into more free time. But the Continent is struggling with labor shortages, demographic decline and flatlining productivity growth compared with U.S. productivity improvements of above 1% between 2007-19. Trialing four-day work weeks is all well and good, but that's not, on its own, going to change worrying long-term trends. The number of people aged 20-64 in the European Union relative to the number of over-65s fell to 2.7 last year from 3.8 in 2003; it may hit 1.5 by 2100.

To avoid longer hours, levers will need to be pulled — on immigration, automation and participation. France is trying to lift the participation rate by getting more people into work who would otherwise retire; Italy is signing deals for more migrant labor; Germany's boosting of funding for kindergartens and primary schools could help more women return to work, as my colleague Chris Bryant has written. All countries are gazing at the Mount Olympus of artificial intelligence and hoping automation will bring a productivity boom.

The optimistic view is that this will be enough. Research co-authored by NEOMA Business School's Gilbert Cette suggests that if future productivity gains match those observed in the U.S. from 1900 to 1975, working hours could average about 25 hours per week by the end of this century. That wouldn't be far off John Maynard Keynes' prediction of a 15-hour week by 2030, and would make talk of a six-day week ultimately look like a blip.

But the world isn't ideal. Combating climate change — as seen in wildfires flaring up this summer — an aging population and public debt will eat up some of those productivity gains. The need to spend more on defense has already pushed Denmark to cancel a public holiday. And there's always the risk that a lot of AI's promise simply disappoints. Charles Goodhart and Manoj Pradhan's book, "The Great Demographic Reversal," warns that staffing needs to care for the elderly alone could offset automation's gains, with the U.S. potentially facing a shortage of 120,000 physicians by 2032.

If Europe can't find a way to overhaul its museum-like economy, Greece's experiment with longer hours may end up being a vision of the future for all of us — Germans included.

Lionel Laurent is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist writing about the future of money and the future of Europe. Previously, he was a reporter for Reuters and Forbes. This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Bureaucrats need to stop gatekeeping new teachers

By Erika Donalds
The Heritage Foundation

This year, the Florida Legislature passed legislation allowing classical schools to hire teachers without having to jump through the usual hoops to confirm their state education certificates.

As the founder of an organization dedicated to expanding access to classical education, I'm grateful.

Existing teacher certification rules aren't a logical fit for classical schools, which are rooted in the Greek and Roman traditions of academic excellence and character development.

The new law will allow a teacher who specializes in Latin to teach students about the rhetoric of Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius without having to jump through more hoops to obtain a credential in English Language Arts.

But this change reminds me, a former certified public accountant, of the loopholes and deductions that get written into the tax code. Well-connected companies and special interests engineer ways to lower their tax bills while ordinary taxpayers get stuck with higher rates.

Classical schools will benefit from this new carve-out in state laws. But political leaders should be looking for ways to lower barriers to entry for all aspiring educators.

Leaders of classical schools know what to look for when they hire new teachers: instructors with strong character who are well read in the great books of Western civilization.

Other schools might have different priorities. A school focused on science and technology might want to attract career switchers with engineering backgrounds. A career academy will prioritize industry certifications and practical job skills. A performing arts school will look for teachers who have taken the stage professionally.

Different schools prioritize different skills and values. Their specific qualifications have one thing in common: They have little to do with whether a prospective teacher earned a degree from a traditional teacher preparation program or passed state-mandated exams.

But those are the requirements state laws prioritize for all prospective teachers.

Research has consistently shown that the requirements to get a state teaching certificate are, at best, loosely connected to a teacher's effectiveness in helping students learn.

Classical education teachers in Florida will soon be able to bypass the most onerous certification requirements.

They will still have to have a bachelor's degree, pass a background check, and be of good moral character. But other decisions about who qualifies to teach in a classical education environment will be back where they belong: with principals.

The current teacher licensure system assumes they need colleges of education and state bureaucrats to screen effective candidates for them.

It forces teachers to take on debt to get traditional education degrees that don't make economic sense for them, and doesn't even guarantee they will be effective on the job. Teachers who come to the profession from any path other than a traditional education college often have to get a temporary teaching certificate — and by the time they're done jumping through the remaining hoops, many give up and take another job.

Effective principals know how to recruit, hire and retain effective teachers for their schools.

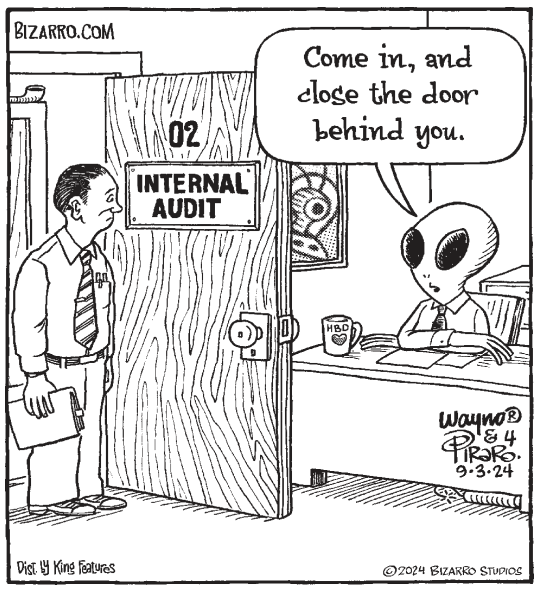
School principals are some of the most trusted authority figures in American society. A recent survey by the Pew Research Center found their standing took a hit when schools closed during the pandemic, but they still have two and half times as much public trust as politicians.

So why do we allow politicians and state bureaucrats to serve as gatekeepers to the teaching profession?

It's time to shift power back where it belongs — to the principals.

Erika Donalds is CEO of OptimaEd and a Visiting Fellow in the Center for Education Policy at The Heritage Foundation.

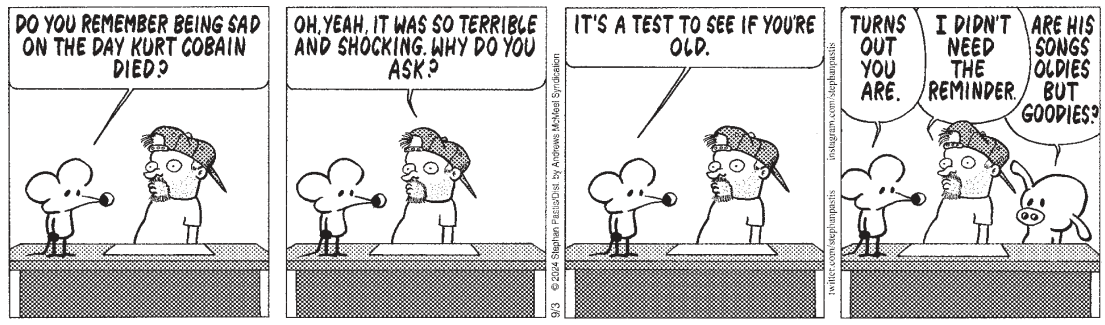
Bizarro



Loose Parts

Frazz

Pearls Before Swine



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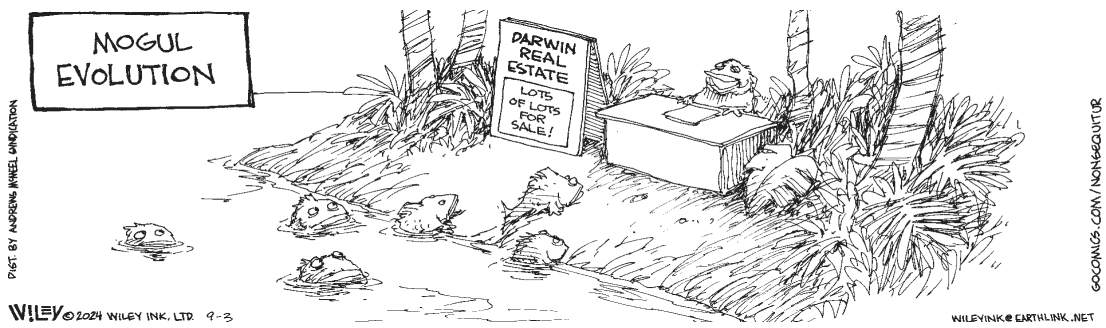
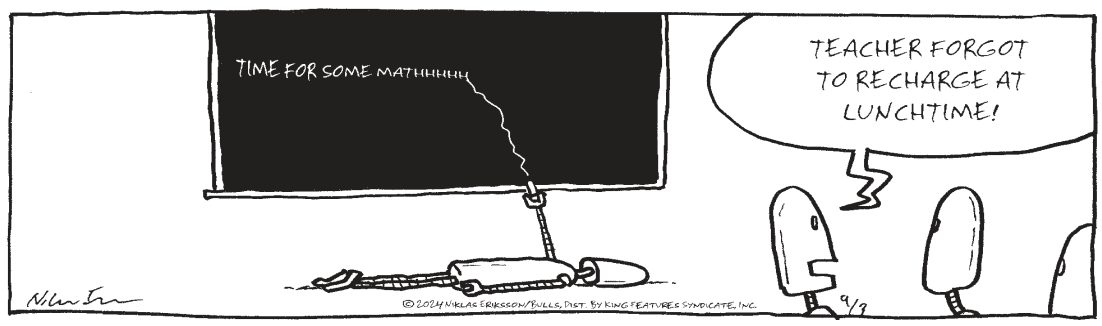
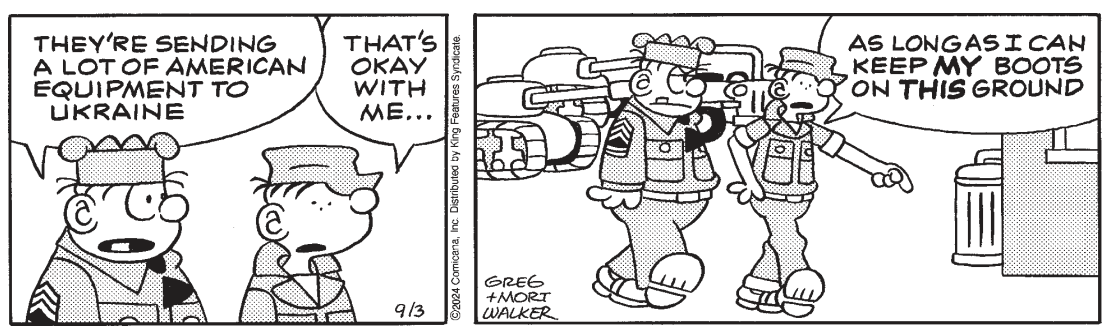


Candorville

Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			17				
18				19			■	20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26				27	28	29
30			■	■	31			■	■	32		
33			34	35			■	36	37			
■	■	■	38			■	39			■	■	■
40	41	42			■	43				44	45	46
47					48			■	49			
50				■	51			■	52			
53				■	54			■	55			

ACROSS

1 Shirt protectors
5 Turkish title
8 Colony denizens
12 Leer at
13 Collar
14 Be furious
15 Yuletide tune
16 Macabre
18 In a brusque way
20 As good as new, healthwise
21 Rage
22 "It's c-c-cold!"
23 "The Climb" singer Cyrus
26 Resentments
30 Omega preceder
31 Soup legume
32 Previously
33 Swiss cheese
36 Greek sandwiches
38 Egg (Pref.)
39 Hydrocarbon suffix
40 Potato pancake
43 Complain
47 Arduous
49 Sportscaster Andrews
50 Jessica of "Hitchcock"
51 Greek cross
52 Shade of blue
53 Russian news agency
54 Lamb's dam
55 Creative spark

DOWN

1 Head shop purchase
2 Composer Stravinsky
3 — cheese dressing
4 Arm's-length portrait
5 Point of view
6 Indiana city
7 Dhabi preceder
8 Ridiculous
9 Former queen of Jordan
10 Runner's stat
11 Santa's ride
17 Beige
19 Saute
22 Bikini half
23 Fuel stat
24 Leb. neighbor
25 Lucy of "Kill Bill"
26 "Gosh!"
27 Needlefish
28 Conceit
29 "Help!"
31 Expert
34 Bumpkins
35 Daring Knievel
36 Bearded antelope
37 Saudi neighbor
39 Quarrel
40 Pride parade initialism
41 La Scala melody
42 Mon. follower
43 Squirrels do it
44 Pitt of "Troy"
45 Not prerecorded
46 "May It Be" singer
48 Mineral suffix

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	D	A	M	■	M	A	V	■	S	M	U	T
L	A	R	A	■	U	N	E	■	H	I	T	E
E	L	A	L	■	N	O	N	T	O	X	I	C
C	Y	B	O	R	G	■	T	O	W	E	L	S
■	■	■	N	O	B	S	■	M	M	D	■	■
H	O	M	E	T	E	A	M	■	E	B	A	Y
A	V	A	■	C	A	M	A	Y	■	A	M	T
D	A	M	S	■	N	O	R	S	E	G	O	D
■	■	A	T	M	■	A	S	E	C	■	■	■
H	A	B	E	A	S	■	B	R	A	N	D	S
G	R	E	E	N	T	E	A	■	R	O	U	E
T	E	A	L	■	O	U	R	■	D	R	E	W
V	A	R	Y	■	P	R	S	■	S	A	S	S

9-3 CRYPTOQUIP

CPLQ OVFZU BJZL BPLRA FLJUPLX XVKU VIB OVA CJFZU, DVI YRKPB UJD BPLD'AL UBARQKRQK BPLY JFVQK.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF AN ECCENTRIC MAN TOOK LONG NAPS IN HIS FIREPLACE, I THINK HE MIGHT SLEEP LIKE A LOG.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals Y

SCOREBOARD/GOLF

DEALS

Sunday's transactions

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
American League

BALTIMORE ORIOLES — Reinstated RHP Zach Eflin from the 15-day IL. Designated 2B Forrest Wall for assignment. Selected the contract of C David Banuelos from Norfolk (IL). Recalled 2B Coby Mayo from Norfolk. Placed INF Ramon Urias on the 10-day Il. Sent RHP Jacob Webb to Norfolk on a rehab assignment. Sent LHP Nick Vespi outright to Norfolk.

BOSTON RED SOX — Sent SS Trevor Story to Worcester (IL) on a rehab assignment. Recalled RHP Chase Shugart and 2B Enmanuel Valdez from Worcester.

CHICAGO WHITE SOX — Recalled OF Zach DeLoach from Charlotte (IL). Recalled RHP Jairo Iriarte from Birmingham (EL).

CLEVELAND GUARDIANS — Reinstated RHP Alex Cobb from the 15-day IL. Recalled 1B Kyle Manzardo from Columbus (IL).

DETROIT TIGERS — Recalled 3B Justyn-Henry Malloyand RHP Ricky Vanasco from Toledo (IL).

HOUSTON ASTROS — Recalled RHP Forrest Whitley and C Cesar Salazar from Sugar Land (PCL).

KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Activated LF Robbie Grossman. Designated LHP Anthony Veneziano for assignment. Activated CF Tommy Pham. Optioned SS Nick Loftin and OF Tyler Gentry to Omaha (PCL). Recalled RHP Alec Marsh from Omaha. Selected the contract of 1B Yuli Gurriel.

LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Recalled SS Charles Leblanc and LHP Reid Detmers from Salt Lake (PCL).

MINNESOTA TWINS — Transferred RHP Chris Paddack from the 15-day IL to the 60-day Il. Reinstated SS Brooks Lee from the 10-day IL. Designated RHP Caleb Boushley for assignment. Placed CF Manuel Margot on the 10-day IL. Selected the contracts of RHP Diego Castillo and 2B Michael Helman from St. Paul (IL).

NEW YORK YANKEES — Sent RHP Luis Gil to Somerset (EL) on a rehab assignment. Designated LHP Josh Maciejewski for assignment. Reinstated 1B Anthony Rizzo from the 60-day IL. Recalled RHPs Scott Effross, Ron Marinaccio and OF Duke Ellis from Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL). Optioned RHP Will Warren and C Ben Rice to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Activated RHP Janson Junk. Recalled SS Tristan Gray from Las Vegas (PCL.

SEATTLE MARINERS — Recalled RHP Eduard Bazardo and LHP Jhonathan Diaz from Tacoma (PCL).

TAMPA BAY RAYS — Reinstated RHP Zack Littell from the 15-day IL. Selected the contract of C Logan Driscoll from Durham (IL).

TEXAS RANGERS — Recalled SS Jonathan Ornelas and RHP Owen White from Round Rock (PCL)

TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Designated RHP Paolo Espino for assignment. Recalled SS Luis De Los Santos and LHP Brandon Eisert from Buffalo (IL). Claimed RHP Dillon Tate off waivers from Baltimore and optioned him to Buffalo.

National League

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS — Recalled OF Jorge Barrosa and RHP Slade Cecconi from Reno (PCL).

ATLANTA BRAVES — Designated LHP Zach Logue for assignment. Recalled SS Eli White from Gwinnett (IL). Selected the contract of RHP John Brebbia from Gwinnett.

CHICAGO CUBS — Reinstated LHP Jordan Wicks from the 60-day IL. Placed 2B Nick Madrigal on the 60-day IL. Recalled 2B Miles Mastrobuoni and from Iowa (IL).

CINCINNATI REDS — Designated RHP David Buchanan for assignment. Reinstated LHP Brent Suter from the 15-day IL. Reinstated LHP Brandon Williamson from the 60-day IL Reinstated CF Jake Fraley from the 10-day IL.

COLORADO ROCKIES — Recalled LHP Evan Justice and C Hunter Goodman from Albuquerque (PCL). Sent RHP Noah Davis outright to Albuquerque. Selected the contract of LHP Ty Blach from Albuquerque. Placed RHP Cal Quantrill on the 15-day Il, retroactive to Aug. 29.

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Recalled RHP Michael Grove, LHP Justin Wrobleski and OF Andy Pages from Oklahoma City (PCL). Optioned RHP Ben Casparius to Oklahoma City.

MIAMI MARLINS — Recalled C Jhonny Pereda and RHP Darren McCaughan from Jacksonville (IL).

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Recalled OF Brewer Hicklen and LHP DL Hall from Nashville (IL).

NEW YORK METS — Recalled LHP Alex Young from Syracuse (IL). Selected the contract of 3B Pablo Reyes from Syracuse.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Reinstated LHP Jose Alvarado from the restricted list. Recalled 2B Kody Clemens and RHP Tyler Phillips from Lehigh Valley (IL).

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Reinstated RHP Colin Holderman from the 15-day IL. Reinstated LHP Ryan Borucki from the 60-day IL.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Reinstated OF Michael Siani from the 10-day IL. Reinstated LHP Steven Matz from the 60-day IL. Sent RHP Lance Lynn to Memphis (IL) on a rehab assignment.

SAN DIEGO PADRES — Transferred RHP Stephen Kolek from the 15-day IL to the 60-day IL. Reinstated LHP Wandy Peralta from the 15-day IL. Designated RHP Lake Bachar for assignment. Selected the contracts of C Elias Diaz and OF Brandon Lockridge from El Paso (PCL). Optioned RHP Randy Vasquez and OF Brandon Lockridge to El Paso. Recalled LHP Tom Cosgrove from El Paso.

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Reinstated RHP Tristan Beck from the 60-day IL. Recalled C Blake Sabol from Sacramento (PCL).

WASHINGTON NATIONALS — Recalled RHP Zach Brzykcy from Rochester (IL). Selected the contract of 2B Darren Baker from Rochester. Transferred RHP Trevor Williams to the 60-day IL.

AUTO RACING

Southern 500

NASCAR Cup Series
Sunday
At Darlington, S.C.
(Start position in parentheses)

1. (3) Chase Briscoe, Ford, 367 laps, 57 points.
2. (17) Kyle Busch, Chevrolet, 367, 35.
3. (9) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 367, 46.
4. (4) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 367, 53.
5. (22) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 367, 32.
6. (10) Chris Buescher, Ford, 367, 32.
7. (14) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 367, 43.
8. (23) Joey Logano, Ford, 367, 29.
9. (19) Corey LaJoie, Chevrolet, 367, 28.
10. (6) Tyler Reddick, Toyota, 367, 37.
11. (20) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 367, 26.
12. (30) Ryan Preece, Ford, 367, 25.
13. (11) Austin Cindric, Ford, 367, 24.
14. (12) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 367, 24.
15. (16) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 367, 22.
16. (1) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, 367, 32.
17. (33) Todd Gilliland, Ford, 367, 20.
18. (32) Daniel Suárez, Chevrolet, 366, 19.
19. (27) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 366, 18.
20. (13) Ty Gibbs, Toyota, 366, 26.
21. (24) Harrison Burton, Ford, 365, 16.
22. (36) Ricky Stenhouse Jr, Chevrolet, 365, 15.
23. (26) Zane Smith, Chevrolet, 364, 14.
24. (28) Erik Jones, Toyota, 364, 13.
25. (18) John H. Nemechek, Toyota, 364, 12.
26. (34) Shane Van Gisbergen, Chevrolet, 364, 0.
27. (21) Justin Haley, Ford, 363, 10.
28. (31) Michael McDowell, Ford, 363, 9.
29. (25) Daniel Hemric, Chevrolet, 362, 8.
30. (8) William Byron, Chevrolet, accident, 344, 17.
31. (15) Josh Berry, Ford, accident, 343, 12.
32. (29) Noah Gragson, Ford, accident, 343, 5.
33. (2) Carson Hocevar, Chevrolet, accident, 335, 4.
34. (35) Kaz Grala, Ford, 332, 3.
35. (37) Timmy Hill, Ford, garage, 278, 0.
36. (5) Martin Truex Jr, Toyota, accident, 2, 1.
37. (7) Ryan Blaney, Ford, accident, 2, 1.

Race statistics

Average speed of race winner: 127.869 mph.
Time of race: 3 hours, 55 minutes, 14 seconds.
Margin of victory: .361 seconds.
Caution flags: 7 for 39 laps.
Lead changes: 26 among 11 drivers.
Lap leaders: B.Wallace 0-34; T.Reddick 35; W.Byron 36-37; D.Hamlin 38-41; S.Van Gisbergen 42-45; K.Larson 46-70; T.Gibbs 71; D.Hamlin 72-77; K.Larson 78-117; B.Wallace 118; K.Larson 119-152; J.Berry 153-156; K.Larson 157-185; C.Bell 186; D.Hamlin 187-191; J.Berry 192; K.Larson 193-232; C.Briscoe 233; K.Larson 234-272; D.Hamlin 273-278; B.Wallace 279-280; K.Larson 281-315; C.Briscoe 316; K.Larson 317-337; C.Briscoe 338; R.Chastain 339-341; C.Briscoe 342-367
Leaders summary (driver, times led, laps led): K.Larson, 8 times for 263 laps; B.Wallace, 3 times for 37 laps; C.Briscoe, 4 times for 29 laps; D.Hamlin, 4 times for 21 laps; J.Berry, 2 times for 5 laps; S.Van Gisbergen, 1 time for 4 laps; R.Chastain, 1 time for 3 laps; W.Byron, 1 time for 2 laps; C.Bell, 1 time for 1 lap; T.Reddick, 1 time for 1 lap; T.Gibbs, 1 time for 1 lap.
Wins: K.Larson, 4; C.Bell, 3; W.Byron, 3; D.Hamlin, 3; T.Reddick, 2; R.Blaney, 2; J.Logano, 1; A.Cindric, 1; C.Elliott, 1; D.Suárez, 1; B.Keselowski, 1; A.Bowman, 1; C.Briscoe, 1; H.Burton, 1; A.Dillon, 1.
Top 16 in points: 1. K.Larson, 2045; 2. C.Bell, 2035; 3. W.Byron, 2024; 4. T.Reddick, 2022; 5. R.Blaney, 2013; 6. D.Hamlin, 2011; 7. J.Logano, 2007; 8. A.Cindric, 2007; 9. C.Elliott, 2006; 10. D.Suárez, 2006; 11. B.Keselowski, 2005; 12. A.Bowman, 2005; 13. C.Briscoe, 2005; 14. H.Burton, 2005; 15. M.Truex, 2003; 16. T.Gibbs, 2002.

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-New York	27	6	.818	—
x-Connecticut	24	8	.750	2½
Indiana	17	16	.515	10
Atlanta	11	21	.344	15½
Chicago	11	21	.344	15½
Washington	9	23	.281	17½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Minnesota	24	9	.727	—
x-Las Vegas	20	12	.625	3½
x-Seattle	19	13	.594	4½
Phoenix	16	17	.485	8
Dallas	9	23	.281	14½
Los Angeles	7	25	.219	16½

x-clinched playoff spot

Saturday's game

Connecticut 96, Washington 85

Sunday's games

Connecticut 93, Seattle 86
Minnesota 79, Chicago 74
Las Vegas 97, Phoenix 79
Indiana 100, Dallas 93
Atlanta 80, Los Angeles 62

Monday's games

No games scheduled

Tuesday's games

Seattle at Connecticut
Washington at Dallas
Atlanta at Phoenix
Chicago at Las Vegas

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Inter Miami CF	18	4	5	59	62	40
Cincinnati	16	8	3	51	48	36
Columbus	14	4	7	49	52	24
New York	10	5	12	42	43	34
NYCFC	11	10	6	39	40	36
Charlotte FC	10	9	8	38	31	29
Orlando City	10	10	7	37	42	41
Toronto FC	10	15	3	33	36	50
Atlanta	8	12	7	31	36	38
Philadelphia	7	11	9	30	47	43
D.C. United	7	12	8	29	41	55
CF Montréal	6	12	9	27	35	58
New England	8	15	2	26	28	49
Chicago	6	13	8	26	33	48
Nashville	6	13	8	26	26	44

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LA Galaxy	15	6	7	52	53	38
LAFC	14	6	5	47	48	32
Real Salt Lake	13	6	8	47	53	36
Colorado	13	9	5	44	53	45
Vancouver	12	8	5	41	44	35
Portland	11	9	7	40	55	46
Houston	11	8	7	40	37	31
Seattle	11	9	7	40	37	32
Minnesota	10	11	6	36	44	45
Austin FC	9	11	7	34	30	38
FC Dallas	9	12	6	33	44	45
Sporting KC	7	14	6	27	44	52
St Louis City	5	10	12	27	38	51
San Jose	5	20	2	17	34	63

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Sunday's game

St Louis City 2, LA Galaxy 1

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Orlando	12	0	5	41	33	12
Washington	12	4	1	37	36	19
Kansas City	10	2	5	35	41	26
Gotham FC	10	3	4	34	21	13
Portland	8	7	3	27	28	25
North Carolina	8	8	1	25	20	18
Chicago	7	8	2	23	24	25
Bay FC	7	11	0	21	23	31
Louisville	4	7	7	19	26	26
Angel City	5	9	3	18	18	27
Seattle	4	9	5	17	20	30
San Diego	3	8	6	15	13	19
Utah Royals FC	4	11	3	15	13	30
Houston	3	10	5	14	12	27

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Saturday's games

Seattle 3, Louisville 2
Utah Royals FC 3, Houston 1

Sunday's games

Kansas City at North Carolina
Chicago at Angel City
Gotham FC at Orlando
Washington at San Diego

GOLF

Tour Championship

PGA Tour
Sunday
At East Lake GC
Atlanta
Yardage: 7,490; Par: 71
Starting strokes in parenthesis
Final Round

Scottie Scheffler (-10)	65-66-66-67—264	-30
Collin Morikawa (-4)	66-63-67-66—262	-26
Sahith Theegala (-3)	67-66-66-64—263	-24
Russell Henley (-2)	67-71-67-62—267	-19
Adam Scott (-3)	66-67-68-67—268	-19
Xander Schauffele (-8)	70-64-71-68—273	-19
Sungjae Im (-3)	69-68-68-64—269	-18
Wyndham Clark (-4)	67-67-68-69—271	-17
Rory McIlroy (-4)	69-69-68-66—272	-16
Hideki Matsuyama (-7)	70-70-68-67—275	-16
Shane Lowry (-3)	69-69-65-68—271	-16
Viktor Hovland (-2)	69-71-65-66—271	-15
Sam Burns (-4)	67-68-68-70—273	-15
Justin Thomas (E)	66-69-70-65—270	-14
Taylor Pendrith (-1)	66-69-70-66—271	-14
Ludvig Aberg (-5)	71-68-68-70—277	-12

FM Championship

LPGA Tour
Sunday
At TPC Boston
Norton, Mass.
Purse: $3.5 million
Final Round
(x-won on first playoff hole)

x-Hae-Ran Ryu, $570,000	69-62-78-64—273	-15
Jin Young Ko, $346,821	71-67-67-68—273	-15
Ruixin Liu, $251,594	73-73-64-64—274	-14
Allisen Corpuz, $175,641	69-72-67-67—275	-13
Jeeno Thitikul, $175,641	69-70-69-67—275	-13

MIKE STEWART/AP

Scottie Scheffler lifts his son Bennett Ezra Scheffler on the 18th green after Scheffler won the Tour Championship on Sunday.

Scheffler caps year with FedEx Cup title

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

ATLANTA — A Masters green jacket and an Olympic gold medal. A first-time father and his first time being arrested. A year Scottie Scheffler won't forget ended the best way possible Sunday when he won the FedEx Cup to cap off golf's best season in nearly two decades.

"If you can describe it in words, more power to you," Scheffler said after his four-shot victory in the Tour Championship for his eighth win of the year. "Because I don't think I can."

As always, his clubs spoke volumes.

Scheffler, who led by as many as seven shots at East Lake early in the final round, nearly hit a tee shot out-of-bounds on No. 7 for bogey. He followed that with a shank from the bunker on the reachable par-4 eighth that led to another bogey. His lead was down to two shots over Collin Morikawa.

Facing the par-3 ninth, a hole that had yielded only nine birdies all week, Scheffler hit 4-iron to 5 feet for the first of three straight birdies that sent him to a 4-under 67 and the FedEx Cup trophy with its $25 million prize, the richest in golf.

"All I'm trying to do is hit a good shot," he said. "This year, I've been able to do that a lot."

The victory pushed his season earnings, including bonuses, to just under $62.3 million.

It was the greatest year since Tiger Woods won eight times in 2006, including six in a row and two majors, all while dealing with the death of his father. Scheffler's eight wins included the Masters, The Players Championship, an Olympic gold medal and the Tour Championship that enabled him to finally claim the FedEx Cup.

His seven PGA Tour titles are the most since Woods in 2007.

"We'll look back on 2024 and it's obviously one of the best individual years that a player has had for a long time," Rory McIlroy said.

Adam Scott, who tied for fourth in the FedEx Cup, turned pro during the peak of Woods in 2000 and did not shy away from the comparisons Scheffler has created because of his consistent level of contending.

"I think it is on par with those great years of Tiger's," Scott said. "I think it's very hard today for anyone to separate themselves as much as Scottie has. I don't think we've seen that in a long time. I think it's harder to do it today."

Scheffler took the drama out of the final hour — four of his wins this year were by three shots or more — and finally let out a shout of celebration as he stepped inside to sign his card. He hoisted two big trophies, the silver FedEx Cup and his 4-month-old son, Bennett.

But it was hard work.

This was the third straight year Scheffler came to East Lake as the top seed, meaning he started the tournament at 10-under par with a two-shot lead. Two years ago, he lost a six-shot lead in the final round to McIlroy.

He has been the PGA Tour player of the year the last two seasons, leaving without the FedEx Cup trophy.

Scheffler was determined for that not to be the case, though it got dicey as storm clouds began to threaten. Most harrowing was the two-shot swing on No. 8, when Morikawa pumped his fist with a birdie as Scheffler's shank led to a bogey.

And then it was over.

After his birdie on the ninth, Scheffler hit wedge to 3 feet on No. 10 for birdie, and then swirled in a 15-foot birdie putt on the par-3 11th.

"He's not going to just starting making bogeys after that," Morikawa said. "He's going to do the opposite and he's going to start hitting golf shots. It almost brought his focus back in for a half second, and that's something you can't teach."

AUTO RACING

Briscoe holds off Busch to reach playoffs

By Pete Iacobelli
Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Chase Briscoe knew he carried the full weight of everyone at Stewart-Haas Racing into the final laps Sunday night at Darlington Raceway. And he couldn't have been happier.

"I feel like I run better under heavy pressure," Briscoe said. "I love the Game 7, pressure-heavy moment."

He made a dramatic, three-wide, late-race pass and held on to win the Southern 500 and qualify for the playoffs, giving Stewart-Haas Racing a final chance to add to its championship legacy before it shuts down after the season.

Briscoe and his team head to the postseason reveling in that pressure in the final days of the program that won NASCAR titles with Tony Stewart in 2011 and Kevin Harvick in 2014.

Briscoe got a call from Stewart, his owner, and drivers came up to congratulate him on the win.

Briscoe took the lead with the three-wide pass over Kyle Larson and Ross Chastain for the lead, then outran two-time series champion Kyle Busch at the end.

Briscoe pulled away on a final restart with 17 laps and held off Busch, who like Briscoe needed a victory to reach the postseason.

"We just won the Southern 500!" an emotional Briscoe said on the car radio.

Briscoe is prepared for more milestones with Stewart-Haas.

"Yeah, this group, the day we found out that the team wasn't going to exist anymore, we went over to the shop board, looked at each other and said, 'We're in this to the end,'" Briscoe said. "I was saying all week, 'We've got one bullet left in the chamber.' That bullet hit."

Matt Kelley/AP

Chase Briscoe celebrates after winning a NASCAR Cup Series race at Darlington Raceway on Sunday in Darlington, S.C. Briscoe's late victory allowed him to qualify for the playoffs.

Joe Gibbs Racing drivers Ty Gibbs and Martin Truex Jr. got the final two postseason spots on points, while Bubba Wallace and Chastain, both within 27 points of the cutoff line when the race began, came up short.

Briscoe's dramatic move spoiled another dominant Darlington run by Kyle Larson, who led 263 laps but was not the same after getting passed by the winner. Larson was trying to overtake Tyler Reddick for the regular-season points title — and the 15 bonus points the leader receives — but came up a point short.

Christopher Bell was third, followed by Larson, Chastain, Denny Hamlin, Joey Logano, Corey LaJoie and Reddick.

Truex, racing his last season before retirement, just needed a solid, problem-free run at the track "Too Tough To Tame" to advance. Instead, he left his fate in others' hands when he crashed out on Lap 3 as his car slid up and hit defending NASCAR champion Ryan Blaney.

But following Larson's victory in the second stage — he also won the first stage — NASCAR announced that Truex had wrapped up a spot in the 16-driver playoff field.

Bubba Wallace entered the weekend as the first man out of the playoffs and got a boost when he won his first Darlington pole Saturday. But with 23XI co-owner Michael Jordan in his pit box to watch, Wallace got caught up in a six-car wreck 24 laps from the finish.

Jordan, wearing a headset and watching intently, threw his hands up and bowed his head when he saw Wallace involved in the wreck.

"Wasn't good enough for 16th this year, hate that," Wallace said. "Stinks saying that, but wasn't for a lack of effort."

Busch came up short a second straight week, losing to a fellow winless driver this season. He was beaten by Harrison Burton last week at Daytona.

"Hate it for our guys," said Busch, who won titles in 2015 and 2019. "Something to build on and get better for. We just missed a lot early in the year, the middle part of the year to be in this spot, on the outside looking in."

Reddick's race

Reddick worked through a stomach illness as he held off Larson to win the regular season. He said his son was ill last week at Daytona and, as most parents know, that left Reddick susceptible to getting sick.

Reddick felt it coming on midday Friday and thought it had cleared up earlier Sunday. Then it came on in full force once the race began. Reddick thanked his crew, who kept him medicated and hydrated to make it through.

"At one point, I was just waiting to puke all over myself," he said. "Thankfully, they kept that from happening."

Playoff field

Reddick won the regular-season title, with Larson in second. The rest of the playoff field is: Chase Elliott, followed by Bell, William Byron, Blaney, Hamlin, Brad Keselowski, Logano, Austin Cindric, Daniel Suarez, Alex Bowman, Briscoe, Gibbs and Truex.

The first round starts in Atlanta, then goes to Watkins Glen and Bristol before the field is cut to 12.

Honoring Cale

Cale Yarborough, the Hall of Famer driver who died at age 84 on New Year's Eve, was remembered at his hometown track as Dale Jarrett drove the 1977 Oldsmobile Cutlass that Yarborough used to win his third straight Cup Series title in 1978 during pace laps. Yarborough won five of the Labor Day weekend crown jewel races, second to Jeff Gordon's six, at Darlington after growing up there a few miles away.

Palou survives early issue to take retain points lead

By Jenna Fryer
Associated Press

WEST ALLIS, Wis.— Alex Palou was helpless as he sat in the cockpit of his disabled car watching his hold on the IndyCar championship slip away.

The second of two races at the Milwaukee Mile was about to begin and the Spaniard's car suddenly lost power.

He was stuck. The car wouldn't start. And rival Will Power was going to take control of the title race.

At least that's how it seemed.

Chip Ganassi Racing changed a battery inside Palou's car and he rejoined the action 29 laps into the race Sunday. By that time, Power had taken the race lead and wiped out all of Palou's 43-point lead in the standings.

Attrition and Power's own mistake dramatically changed outcome.

Palou watched car after car retire from the race and finished 19th. Power, on a restart, inexplicably spun on his own. The Australian fell a lap off the pace, finished 10th and ultimately only cut Palou's lead to 33 points with the season finale remaining.

"Long shot now," Power conceded "God gave us a chance. That's a season, man, you can't make those mistakes."

What could have been a dead-heat headed into the Sept. 15 finale at Nashville Superspeedway is still Palou's championship to lose.

"Bit sad and disappointed today. It was out of my control and the team's control," Palou said. "It is a sport, it is what it is. We were getting happier and happier getting more points, one more point, one more point. On to Nashville."

Scott McLaughlin, Power's teammate at Team Penske, won for the third time this season. He beat Scott Dixon, Palou's teammate at Ganassi, in a 1-2 finish for New Zealanders.

For Dixon, who made his 400th career start Saturday, his 142nd podium passed Mario Andretti for most in series history.

But this race was primarily about the championship, and Palou somehow recovered from a nearly catastrophic issue.

Palou is the reigning IndyCar champion and is seeking a third title in four years. Power is a two-time champion and winner in 2022, sandwiched between Palou's two titles.

Colton Herta of Andretti Global was third. Santino Ferrucci finished fourth as he continues to put A.J. Foyt Racing solidly in the standings that will earn the organization a critical end-of-season bonus.

Darron Cummings/AP

Alex Palou, of Spain, recovered from a nearly catastrophic electrical issue to salvage his championship hopes in a chaotic race Sunday with IndyCar title implications at the Milwaukee Mile.

MLB

ROUNDUP

Phillies rally to walk off Braves in 11

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Nick Castellanos hit a game-winning single in the 11th and Philadelphia's bullpen pitched five scoreless innings in relief of Aaron Nola to lead the Phillies past the Atlanta Braves 3-2 on Sunday night in the final regular-season meeting between the top two teams in the NL East.

Castellanos provided all the offense for the Phillies, helping them take three of four in the series to extend their division lead to seven games. He tied it in the sixth with a two-run double off Braves starter Spencer Schwellenbach, then ended the game with a two-out RBI single off Grant Holmes.

It was his fourth walk-off hit of the season. Both of Castellanos' hits came in at bats that started with 0-2 counts.

"It makes me want to take (pitches) so I have two strikes more often," Castellanos said, jokingly. "I think the thing that has gotten me the most comfortable in those spots is all the work I do on the field early. I don't feel like I'm searching for a swing. I think that since we started doing that in May, it's just built success slowly."

Atlanta leads the New York Mets by one game for the last National League wild card.

Carlos Estévez (3-4) pitched the 10th and 11th and retired all six batters he faced, stranding the automatic runner afforded the Braves in both innings. Estévez pumped his fists with excitement and received a standing ovation from the sellout crowd, which was buzzing with a bit of a playoff-like atmosphere.

"It's really cool, man" said Estevez, who has only faced two batters in the postseason in his nine-year career, that included stints with Colorado and the Los Angeles Angels. "It's one thing when you see (the Philadelphia crowd) from the other side, but when you live it here, it's really amazing."

Mets 2, White Sox 0: Sean Manaea (11-5) pitched two-hit ball for seven innings, Francisco Lindor belted his 29th home run and visiting New York beat Chicago to hand the White Sox their franchise-record 107th loss.

Chicago (31-107) broke the club mark for losses set by the 1970 team. The White Sox also completed the first 0-10 homestand in franchise history, becoming the first team since the 1965 Mets to have three 10-game losing streaks in one season.

Reds 4, Brewers 3 (11): Santiago Espinal drove in Rece Hinds with an infield single in the 11th inning, and host Cincinnati stopped Milwaukee's five-game win streak with a victory over the Brewers.

Hinds began the inning on second as the designated runner. He advanced on Will Benson's groundout, and Reds manager David Bell sent Espinal up to hit for Noelvi Marte. Espinal hit a grounder back up the middle that went off reliever Bryse Wilson (5-4), and Hinds scored without a throw.

DERIK HAMILTON/AP

The Philadelphia Phillies' Nick Castellanos is doused by teammates Brandon Marsh and Bryson Stott after hitting a walk-off single against the Atlanta Braves' Grant Holmes in the 11th inning Sunday in Philadelphia.

Cubs 14, Nationals 1: Dansby Swanson had four hits, Jordan Wicks (2-2) pitched five solid innings and visiting Chicago beat Washington for its season-high sixth consecutive win.

Chicago closed out an 8-1 road trip that also included stops in Miami and Pittsburgh. The Cubs (71-66), who are looking to rally into an NL wild-card slot, improved to 20-8 since July 31.

Cardinals 14, Yankees 7: Jordan Walker went 5-for-5, Lars Nootbaar hit a bases-clearingdouble in the seventh and added a two-run homer in the ninth as visiting St. Louis beat New York.

Walker hit a long two-run homer in the fifth and drove in three runs. He had the first five-hit game by a Cardinal since Matt Carpenter in 2018 after going 1-for-8 in his first two games after his recall from Triple-A Memphis.

Tigers 4, Red Sox 1: Spencer Torkelson and Riley Greene each hit a two-run homer, and host Detroit beat Boston.

The Tigers (70-68) earned their second series win in the last 13 against Boston and won the season series for the first time since 2017. They trail the Red Sox (70-67) by a half-game for fourth in the AL wild-card race.

Guardians 6, Pirates 1: Kyle Manzardo hit his first two major league homers, Alex Cobb (2-1) did not allow a baserunner through the first six innings and AL Central-leading Cleveland beat visiting Pittsburgh.

José Ramírez and Andrés Giménez also went deep as the Guardians hit four solo homers and improved their AL-best home record to 43-25.

Padres 4, Rays 3: Xander Bogaerts hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the ninth inning, and visiting San Diego beat Tampa Bay.

Jackson Merrill had a two-run homer for the Padres, who are in a close race with Arizona for the first NL wild card spot. The rookie has 79 RBIs.

Astros 7, Royals 2: Yordan Alvarez homered twice and Jon Singleton added a two-run shot as host Houston completed a four-game sweep of Kansas City.

The Astros extended their lead in the AL West to six games over Seattle, while the Royals fell to 3½ games behind first-place Cleveland in the AL Central.

Twins 4, Blue Jays 3: Royce Lewis hit a go-ahead three-run home run in the eighth inning and host Minnesota rallied to beat Toronto.

Bailey Ober started and pitched six solid innings, and Jhoan Duran earned his 20th save for Minnesota, which is 3½ games behind AL Central-leading Cleveland.

Rangers 6, Athletics 4 (10): Josh Jung hit a three-run homer off All-Star closer Mason Miller (1-2) in the 10th inning as host Texas beat Oakland.

The Rangers won in walk-off fashion for the second game in a row, and the fifth time in their six home wins since Aug. 5.

Orioles 6, Rockies 1: Zach Eflin (10-7) struck out nine in seven sparkling innings and James McCann homered, helping visiting Baltimore beat Colorado.

The Orioles (79-59) closed out a 3-3 trip and moved within a half-game of the AL East-leading New York Yankees, who lost 14-7 to St. Louis.

Marlins 7, Giants 5: Kyle Stowers hit a three-run homer, and visiting Miami beat San Francisco for its first series win in more than a month.

Nick Fortes had three hits and scored two runs for Miami, which won for the third time in four games.

Angels 3, Mariners 2: Los Angeles rookie Caden Dana became the youngest pitcher in team history to win his major league debut as the Angels rallied for a victory over visiting Seattle.

Dana (1-0) allowed two runs and two hits in six innings. At 20 years, 259 days old, the right-hander was the youngest Angels pitcher since reliever Francisco Rodríguez in 2002 and youngest starter since Frank Tanana in 1973.

Diamondbacks 14, Dodgers 3: Randal Grichuk hit a three-run homer in host Arizona's eight-run second inning, Brandon Pfaadt struck out 10 and the Diamondbacks routed Los Angeles.

Eugenio Suárez homered and had two RBIs, and Geraldo Perdomo hit a two-run double in Arizona's big inning. Pfaadt (9-7) was solid after being staked to the big early lead, helping Arizona move back within five games of the Dodgers in the NL West.

Scoreboard

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	79	58	.577	—
Baltimore	79	59	.572	½
Boston	70	67	.511	9
Tampa Bay	67	69	.493	11½
Toronto	67	72	.482	13

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	78	59	.569	—
Minnesota	74	62	.544	3½
Kansas City	75	63	.543	3½
Detroit	70	68	.507	8½
Chicago	31	107	.225	47½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	75	62	.547	—
Seattle	69	68	.504	6
Texas	65	72	.474	10
Oakland	59	78	.431	16
Los Angeles	57	80	.416	18

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	81	56	.591	—
Atlanta	74	63	.540	7
New York	73	64	.533	8
Washington	61	76	.445	20
Miami	51	86	.372	30

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	80	57	.584	—
Chicago	71	66	.518	9
St. Louis	69	68	.504	11
Cincinnati	65	73	.471	15½
Pittsburgh	63	73	.463	16½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	82	55	.599	—
Arizona	77	60	.562	5
San Diego	78	61	.561	5
San Francisco	68	70	.493	14½
Colorado	51	87	.370	31½

Sunday's games

Cleveland 6, Pittsburgh 1
Detroit 4, Boston 1
N.Y. Mets 2, Chicago White Sox 0
Houston 7, Kansas City 2
San Diego 4, Tampa Bay 3
Minnesota 4, Toronto 3
St. Louis 14, N.Y. Yankees 7
Baltimore 6, Colorado 1
Texas 6, Oakland 4, 10 innings
L.A. Angels 3, Seattle 2
Cincinnati 4, Milwaukee 3, 11 innings
Chicago Cubs 14, Washington 1
Miami 7, San Francisco 5
Arizona 14, L.A. Dodgers 3
Philadelphia 3, Atlanta 2, 11 innings

Monday's games

St. Louis at Milwaukee
Chicago White Sox at Baltimore
Cleveland at Kansas City
Houston at Cincinnati
L.A. Dodgers at Arizona
Detroit at San Diego
Minnesota at Tampa Bay
Seattle at Oakland
Boston at N.Y. Mets
Pittsburgh at Chicago Cubs
N.Y. Yankees at Texas

Tuesday's games

Chicago White Sox (Nastrini 0-6) at Baltimore (Povich 1-7)
Washington (Corbin 4-12) at Miami (Meyer 3-4)
Minnesota (Festa 2-4) at Tampa Bay (Springs 1-2)
Philadelphia (Phillips 4-1) at Toronto (Bassitt 9-13)
Boston (Crawford 8-12) at N.Y. Mets (Peterson 8-1)
Colorado (Freeland 4-6) at Atlanta (Sale 15-3)
Cleveland (Bibee 10-6) at Kansas City (Singer 9-9)
Pittsburgh (Skenes 8-2) at Chicago Cubs (Steele 5-5)
St. Louis (Gray 12-9) at Milwaukee (Civale 5-8)
N.Y. Yankees (Rodón 14-9) at Texas (Heaney 4-13)
L.A. Dodgers (Buehler 1-4) at L.A. Angels (Detmers 3-6)
Seattle (Castillo 11-12) at Oakland (Ginn 0-0)
Arizona (Nelson 9-6) at San Francisco (Harrison 7-6)

This day in baseball

Sept. 3

1928 — Future Hall of Fame outfielder Ty Cobb records his 4,189th and final career hit as a pinch hitter for the Philadelphia Athletics in 6-1 loss to the Washington Senators.

2007 — Pedro Martinez completes his comeback from major shoulder surgery, becoming the 15th pitcher to strike out 3,000 batters in his career. The Mets right-hander fans Aaron Harang for the milestone as New York posts a 10-4 win over Cincinnati.

Historic: No amount of big shakeups have helped White Sox win this season

FROM PAGE 24

0-7 from May 23-29.

"There's not really a perspective to put into it at this point," Crochet said. "It sucks to say that we've been here before and we've dug ourselves out of it with a win. We just continue to come to the field every day fighting and playing a good brand of baseball."

Crochet, one of Chicago's few bright spots, tied an American League record Sunday by striking out the first seven batters and whiffed eight in all over 3⅓ innings. The All-Star left-hander gave up one run and three hits without a walk. The White Sox are limiting Crochet's workload because he missed most of the past two seasons following Tommy John surgery and was a reliever before that.

Other than that, it's hard to find positives for this team.

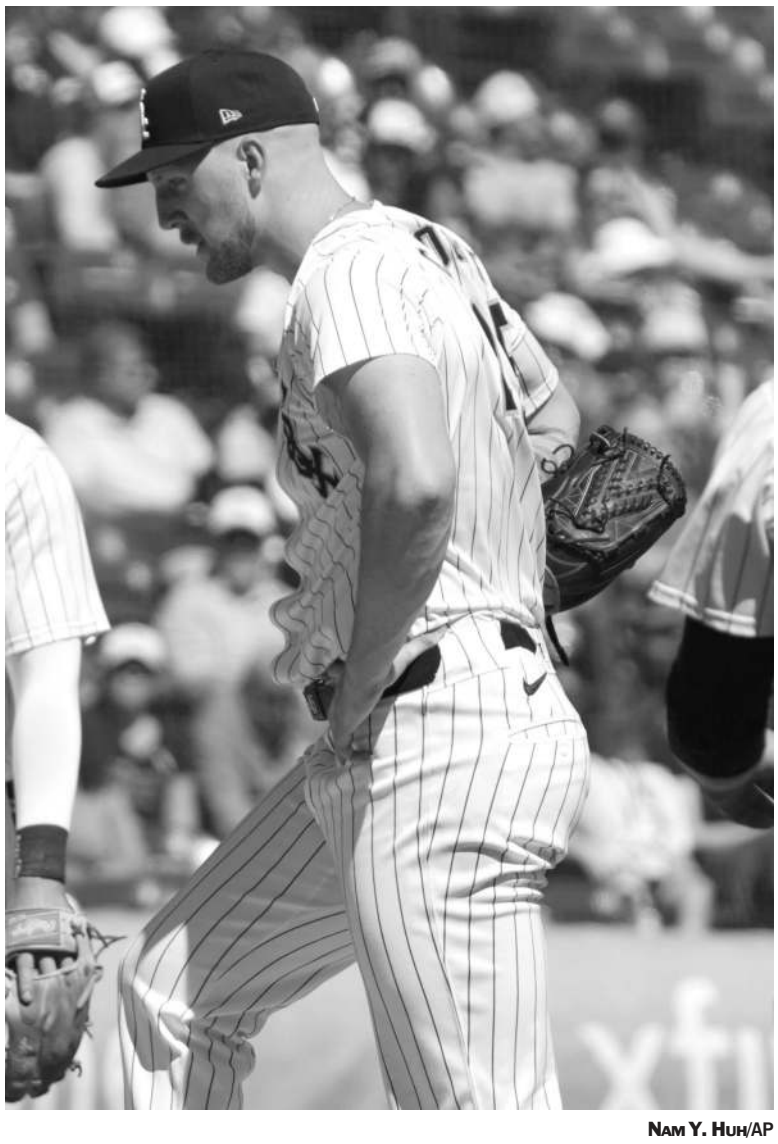
Chicago has been shut out 15 times and been on the wrong end of 22 series sweeps — by far the most in the majors — after the Mets took all three games. The White Sox are 4-36 since the All-Star break and 3-18 under Sizemore.

Chicago fired manager Pedro Grifol three weeks ago, just a few days after the team ended a 21-game losing streak that tied the American League record. Grifol was in the middle of his second season as a major league manager after a long career in the game, lugging an 89-190 record. The White Sox also had a 14-game losing streak from May 22 to June 6 that was a team record until that 21-game slide from July 10 to Aug. 5.

Things are so bad the White Sox announced last month they're cutting season-ticket prices for 2025 by an average of 10%. But it's not just this year. They have been in a sharp decline since making the playoffs in 2020 and 2021.

The White Sox went 61-101 last season for their worst finish since going 56-106 in 1970, firing top executives Ken Williams and Rick Hahn along the way and promoting Chris Getz to general manager.

"I think it's more just having the same mindset you have when you're on a winning streak," Crochet said. "You've got to just keep playing good baseball."



NAM Y. HUH/AP

One of the rare bright spots for the Chicago White Sox this season, All-Star starting pitcher Garrett Crochet's best efforts weren't enough to help the team avoid setting a franchise single-season loss record.

PAMELA SMITH/AP

Emma Navarro, center, of the United States, embraces Coco Gauff, also of the U.S., after defeating her in the fourth round of the U.S. Open on Sunday. Navarro also beat Gauff in the fourth round at Wimbledon.

No repeat champion again as Gauff loses to Navarro

2023 winner has 19 double-faults in 4th-round loss

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

NEW YORK — This is pretty much all anyone needs to know about defending champion Coco Gauff's 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 loss to Emma Navarro in the U.S. Open's fourth round on Sunday: Gauff wound up with more double-faults, 19, than winners, 14.

It was the latest in a series of early-for-her exits in recent weeks, including bowing out in the third round at the Paris Olympics, then going 1-2 at hard-court tuneup events before arriving in New York.

"I feel like there's 70 other players in the draw that would love to have the summer that I had, even though it's (the) least, probably, (I've) done well during this time of the year," said the No. 3-seeded Gauff, who went 18-1 during the North American swing on hard courts 12 months ago, including the run to her first Grand Slam title. "So many people want to be in the fourth round. So many people want to make the Olympics. So many people want to be flag bearer. It's perspective."

The 20-year-old from Florida did fight her way back into the match with a four-game run in which she claimed 14 of 17 points and grabbed the second set.

"Had a little bit of a lull there," said the 13th-seeded Navarro, an American who was 0-2 at the U.S. Open until this year, "but I was able to regroup."

After each of her past two contests in New York, Gauff headed back out onto the practice courts to work on her serve. That didn't help much Sunday, when she tied her career high for double-faults: She also had 19 in a loss at the 2020 French Open. Against Navarro, Gauff delivered a trio of double-faults in four different games. Eleven of the double-faults came in the final set alone.

Gauff attributed her problems to a mix of issues with her mechanics — "I go down on my left side a lot on my serve, and it's something I'm aware of, but it's tough in the moment to, I guess, try not to do it," she explained — and in her mind.

"It's sometimes more of an emotional, mental thing, because if I go out on the practice court right now, I would make, like, 30 serves in a row. I've done it before," Gauff said. "I think it's also just kind of a mental hurdle that I have to get over when it comes. ... But I definitely want to look at other things, because I don't want to lose matches like this anymore."

She finished with a total of 60 unforced errors — a whopping 29 on her forehand side.

The 23-year-old Navarro, who also eliminated Gauff in the fourth round at Wimbledon in July, was far steadier Sunday, although she still did have 35 unforced errors.

"It was a little bit of a battle of will there for a bit. But proud of just my effort today," said Navarro, a U.S. teammate of Gauff's at the Paris Games. "I was able to stick in there through some tough moments."

This result follows a third-round loss by defending men's champion Novak Djokovic on Friday, meaning the lengthy droughts without anyone winning consecutive titles in New York will continue. The last woman to win at least two in a row was Serena Williams with three from 2012-14; the last man to do so was Roger Federer with five from 2004-08.

Frances Tiafoe eliminated No. 28 seed Alexei Popyrin, the player who stunned Djokovic, with a 6-4, 7-6 (3), 2-6, 6-3 victory Sunday night. The No. 20 seed advanced to his third straight U.S. Open quarterfinal and will play No. 9 Grigor Dimitrov, who held off Andrey Rublev 6-3, 7-6 (3), 1-6, 3-6, 6-3 with 23-time Grand Slam champion Williams watching and offering a thumbs-up at match's end.

Also moving on Sunday was No. 12 Taylor Fritz, who beat three-time Grand Slam finalist Casper Ruud 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2. Fritz's quarterfinal opponent will be 2020 U.S. Open runner-up Alexander Zverev, who got past Brandon Nakashima 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, 6-2.

"I'm at the point now where I'm still happy to make quarterfinals, but I wouldn't be happy with it ending here," said Fritz, who has yet to reach a Grand Slam semifinal. "I definitely am at the point where I really want more than that."

NFL

JEFF DEAN/AP

Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow fist bumps before a preseason game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Aug. 10 in Cincinnati. Burrow is looking to rebound after a season-ending wrist injury last year.

QB health was crucial for Ravens winning AFC North

BY NOAH TRISTER
Associated Press

Football's top division wasn't even at full strength in 2023.

With better luck at the quarterback position, it could be quite a race for the AFC North title this season.

Lamar Jackson stayed healthy last year and won his second MVP, helping Baltimore to the best regular-season record in the league. Joe Burrow and Deshaun Watson were less fortunate, and Pittsburgh's passing situation was so unsatisfactory the Steelers made two significant additions at QB. Still, every team in the division finished above .500, and all have the potential to succeed in 2024 if they can keep their key players on the field.

The Baltimore Ravens were even better than their 13-4 record suggested in the 2023 regular season. They only faced three teams that finished with a losing record, and they never faced a double-digit deficit until the fourth quarter of a Week 18 game that was meaningless for them.

Although the stars seemed to be aligning, the Ravens ultimately fell short of the Super Bowl, losing at home to Kansas City in the AFC championship game. Coach John Harbaugh began training camp this season by saying Jackson can become the greatest quarterback in NFL history.

"Yes, I believe that's motivation. I appreciate that. I'm still on my way," Jackson said.

Patrick Mahomes is the quarterback Jackson couldn't quite get past last season, and now he'll have to hold off Burrow, who took Cincinnati to a Super Bowl and two AFC title games before wrist problems derailed him last year. Meanwhile, the Browns have Watson back after they had to start five quarterbacks in 2023. Cleveland overcame that, making a late run to the playoffs behind Joe Flacco.

The Pittsburgh Steelers snuck in the playoffs as well — then blew up their quarterback room. Out went Mitch Trubisky, Mason Rudolph and Kenny Pickett. In their place came Russell Wilson and Justin Fields, and Arthur Smith was hired as offensive coordinator. All three of them are eyeing career resets after forgettable previous stops.

Ravens try to reload

Baltimore added running back Derrick Henry in the offseason, but the Ravens lost three starters on the offensive line, plus standout linebacker Patrick Queen and pass rusher Jadeveon Clowney.

They also have a new defensive coordinator after Mike Macdonald left to become the head coach of the Seattle Seahawks.

Baltimore led the league in sacks, scoring defense and takeaways a season ago.

A pivotal season

The Browns went all in when they traded for Watson, signing him to a fully guaranteed $230 million contract in 2022.

They're waiting for it to pay off, and time is running out.

In two seasons, Watson has only played in 12 games and the Browns made the playoffs last year without him as the 38-year-old Flacco rode in from New Jersey on his couch and went 4-1 with 1,616 yards passing in five games.

Watson's health holds the key to Cleveland's season. But the Browns have a stronger backup plan behind him after signing Jameis Winston (80 NFL starts).

Led by Myles Garrett, Cleveland's defense carried the Browns through the morass of injuries last season. Garrett was more dominant than ever, recording 14 sacks while winning AP Defensive Player of the Year honors.

Blue-collar Steelers

While the faces may be different, Pittsburgh's path to contention remains the same as it has been over the last half-decade: control the clock with the running game and hope the star-laden defense led by T.J. Watt and Minkah Fitzpatrick does the rest.

Watt and Fitzpatrick will be joined this season by Queen. The former Raven has embraced being on the other side of one of the NFL's biggest rivalries, and he may give Pittsburgh the playmaker it has lacked in the middle of the defense.

Plenty of help

Burrow will have two familiar targets in Ja'Marr Chase and Tee Higgins, who is playing with a franchise tag and probably won't be back with the Bengals next season. Zack Moss was picked up from the Indianapolis Colts to replace Joe Mixon at running back, and the Bengals got an upgrade at tight end when they signed Mike Gesicki, formerly of the Patriots.

The Cincinnati defense had a tendency to give up explosive plays in 2023. The Bengals are hoping Cam Taylor-Britt will lock in at cornerback after being moved from safety. The addition of former Ravens defensive back Geno Stone and the return of Vonn Bell is expected to stabilize the safety position.

Beyond AFC West, Chiefs seeking first Super Bowl 3-peat

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

The Kansas City Chiefs have ruled the AFC West since two-time MVP Patrick Mahomes was still slinging it at Texas Tech. They've won the division every year since 2016.

What the back-to-back Super Bowl champs are really out to accomplish this season, though, is something that's never been done before: a three-peat that has eluded the other seven repeat champs, including the Pittsburgh Steelers twice.

As tight end Travis Kelce celebrated the Chiefs' 25-22 win over San Francisco in Las Vegas at the last Super Bowl, his thoughts were already on the next one, in New Orleans on Feb. 9, 2025.

"How about that?" Kelce hollered. "We get a chance to do it three times in a row."

None of the other back-to-back champs even made it back to the Super Bowl. Joe Montana and the 49ers came closest, but lost to the New York Giants 15-13 on a 42-yard field goal as time expired in the NFC championship following the 1990 season.

The NFL is the only major sports league in North America that hasn't had a back-to-back-to-back champion.

In trying to break the Chiefs' stranglehold on the AFC West, the Denver Broncos and Las Vegas Raiders both brought in new quarterbacks and the Los Angeles Chargers hired a new head coach.

Rookie Bo Nix will be the 14th different starter at quarterback in Denver since Peyton Manning retired following a triumphant Super Bowl 50 — the last time the Broncos even reached the playoffs.

Journeyman Gardner Minshew won the Raiders' QB competition and Justin Herbert has coach Jim Harbaugh calling the shots in Los Angeles.

Rich get richer

The Chiefs got even better in the offseason, upgrading their wide receiver corps by signing free agents "Hollywood" Brown and Juju Smith-Schuster, and drafting Xavier Worthy in the first round.

Smith-Schuster helped Kansas City win the Super Bowl two years ago.

GM Brett Veach shored up the team's greatest remaining roster weakness by signing Broncos castoff running back Samaje Perine.

Poking the bear

If the Chiefs needed any fresh fire for their quest, they got it this summer from an unlikely source: Trey Taylor, the Jim Thorpe Award-winning safety and Raiders seventh-round pick.

ED ZURGA/AP

Kansas City quarterback Patrick Mahomes is 30-5 vs. the Chiefs' AFC West rivals in his career.

A Raiders fan attending the team's training camp brought a Kermit the Frog puppet complete with a Mahomes wig and jersey to practice. A viral video showed Taylor laughing while placing the puppet on his right hand and speaking in a voice that sounded like both the genial green amphibian and the three-time Super Bowl winning QB.

"It'll get handled when it gets handled," Mahomes said when asked about the mockery by the Raiders rookie.

Mahomes has manhandled the Raiders, winning 10 of 12 games. He's also 12-1 against Denver and 8-2 against the Raiders.

That's 30-5 against division opponents, the chief reason Kansas City has owned the AFC West for so long.

Nix is up next

Nix, the sixth quarterback selected in the top dozen picks in the NFL draft in April, beat out career backup Jarrett Stidham and 2021 second overall pick Zach Wilson to win the Broncos' starting job.

When the Broncos open at Seattle on Sept. 8, he'll become the first rookie quarterback to start a season for Denver since Hall of Famer John Elway in 1983.

Elway's debut was forgettable: He went 1-for-8 for 14 yards with an interception and four sacks.

Harbaugh and Herbert

Jim Harbaugh was quick to praise Justin Herbert for quickly picking up the new offense, but the Chargers' fifth-year quarterback's acclimation was dealt a setback with yet another injury this summer. This time, it was to the plantar fascia in his right foot that had him in a walking boot for two weeks.

Over the past two seasons, Herbert has had bruised ribs, a torn labrum to his non-throwing shoulder and two broken fingers, including one on his throwing hand that caused him to miss the final four games last season.

NFL/COLLEGE FOOTBALL

NICK WASS/AP

Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson, right, shakes hands with center Nick Samac during training camp in July. Baltimore has to replace three starters from the offensive line from last season.

Spending elsewhere forced Ravens to cut corners on OL

BY NOAH TRISTER
Associated Press

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — The Baltimore Ravens have built their roster around Lamar Jackson on offense and Roquan Smith on defense, and they've paid both players accordingly.

That means having to cut corners elsewhere.

"You can't have 10 players making $20 million a year. You just can't do it on a $258 million salary cap," general manager Eric DeCosta said. "Every team operates with a different strategy — how they pay players, what's important to them. We try to be balanced across the board, and we try to pay our best players as much as we can, understanding that sometimes we just can't keep every single player. If we could, the roster would be different. But it's not, and we understand that. It is challenging, sometimes, to let really good players leave, but that's the business we're in."

DeCosta took questions from reporters Thursday, a week before Baltimore's season opener at Kansas City. It was a tough offseason for the Ravens to navigate. They did manage to sign running back Derrick Henry and extend receiver Rashod Bateman. Baltimore also gave defensive lineman Justin Madubuike a new deal, but the team lost linebacker Patrick Queen and edge rusher Jadeveon Clowney. Three starters on the offensive line are also gone.

The Ravens are trying to replace those offensive linemen with internal options, with guards

Baltimore Ravens at Kansas City Chiefs
AFN-Sports
2:15 a.m. Friday CET
9:15 a.m. Friday JKT

Andrew Vorhees and Daniel Faalele potentially playing bigger roles. They also drafted tackle Roger Rosengarten in the second round.

"You just simply can't pay everybody, and we made the decision that we were going to go young on the offensive line as best as we could," DeCosta said. "We've had a lot of success developing offensive linemen in the past. I could give you a bunch of players that we took in the draft or even got off the streets, and those guys became good players for us."

DeCosta acknowledged there could be some "hiccups" but said a year from now, the offensive line could be in a great place.

The Ravens needed to retool a bit on the fly at a time when there's still pressure from fans for the team to reach a Super Bowl with Jackson at quarterback.

Baltimore was dominant in the regular season in 2023, posting the league's best record, but the Ravens lost at home to Kansas City in the AFC championship game.

DeCosta indicated if he were ranking the best Ravens teams, he'd put the famous 2000 championship team — with its incredible defense — in the mix, but he also mentioned teams from 2006, 2011, 2019 and 2023 that didn't make the Super Bowl.

As for the 2012 team that did win it all: "We got hot late," he said.

"My goal is to build a team that has talent at every position, that is flexible enough to withstand injuries, that we have depth to get us through a long season and to make the playoffs and to be sort of ascending at that point," DeCosta said. "It's really hard to project what's going to happen, and it's mentally challenging, too, for me."

It may be difficult for the 2024 Ravens to prove anything until the playoffs, but DeCosta doesn't really accept the notion that the Super Bowl is the sole arbiter of a good season.

"I think we've maybe had the best record twice in the last five years, and we didn't make it to the end. That's tough, but I am proud of our team, what we've accomplished," DeCosta said.

"We haven't accomplished our ultimate goal, but I don't really subscribe to the idea that your season is a failure if you don't win the Super Bowl. I know a lot of people do. If I did that, I'd probably be in a mental institution. So I don't feel that way. I measure success of a season in a lot of different things — Super Bowl being one of those things, but certainly not the only criteria that I would use to judge a season."

USC scores with 8 seconds left to knock off LSU

BY MARK ANDERSON
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Lincoln Riley had a flashback to three years ago when he coached Oklahoma.

The Sooners were driving against archrival Texas in a tie game when a 33-yard run into the end zone with 3 seconds left beat the Longhorns.

Knowing that a field goal was all No. 23 Southern California needed Sunday night, Riley thought back to that play. A run was called for Woody Marks, who rushed 13 yards up the middle to score with eight seconds left and beat No. 13 LSU 27-20.

"I told someone on the headset, 'It wouldn't surprise me if he creases this,'" Riley said. "And, of course, it happened."

Miller Moss passed for 378 yards and a touchdown and his 20-yard completion to Kyron Hudson and a subsequent targeting penalty on LSU with 18 seconds to go set up the winning score by Marks in the season opener for both teams. It was Marks' second TD run.

"We worked really hard throughout the offseason to build the identity of a tough team that really cares about each other," Moss said.

Moss outdueled LSU's Garrett Nussmeier, who completed 29 of 38 passes for 304 yards with two touchdowns and an interception on the final drive. Moss was similarly efficient in going 27-for-36 in a battle of QBs who waited their turns after sitting behind the two most recent Heisman Trophy winners, LSU's Jayden Daniels and USC's Caleb Williams.

USC, in its first season of Big Ten Conference play, sent a message with this victory in the teams' first meeting in 40 years that the Trojans could be a factor after going a disappointing 8-5 last year.

"That was some pretty good Big Ten football today," Riley said with a smile.

And it came against a Southeastern Conference opponent hoping to show it belongs in the College Football Playoff. LSU will still have its chances to make that case, but this is the Tigers' third consecutive season-opening loss under coach Brian Kelly and fifth straight overall. LSU also had its four-game winning streak going back to last season snapped.

"We didn't play complementary football," Kelly said. "But the thing that is most concerning for me are the personal fouls, the penalties that are selfish. They're undisciplined penalties. That falls back on me. We take pride in running a disciplined program, but we have clearly not done a good enough job there because it impacted the game."

The Tigers represented about 60% of the crowd, an Allegiant Stadium announced record gathering of 63,969 that sometimes felt like Baton Rouge West. There was some star power, too, with LSU greats Shaquille O'Neal and Daniels with his Heisman Trophy in tow. Former USC Heisman winners Marcus Allen and Matt Leinart were also on hand.

Two tremendous catches helped define the first half.

Hudson leapt high and back, reaching his right hand out to somehow bring the ball toward his other hand and into his body for a 24-yard completion to LSU's 19-yard line. The play stood after video review, and it set up a 2-yard touchdown run by Marks to put the Trojans in front 7-0 four minutes into the second quarter.

STEVE MARCUS/AP

USC running back Woody Marks runs through the tackle of LSU safety Dashawn Spears as he scores the winning touchdown Sunday.

SPORTS

Last-minute win

USC beats LSU with 8 seconds left in opener ›› College football, Page 23

CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

The Chicago White Sox's Corey Julks sits on the end of the bench after the team's 5-3 loss to the New York Mets on Saturday, which tied the franchise season record of 106 losses.

Adding to historic indignities

White Sox set franchise record with 107th loss, still on pace for modern mark

BY ANDREW SELIGMAN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — It appeared the Chicago White Sox might just get a break from all this losing the way Garrett Crochet was striking out one batter after another at the start.

Then again, these are the White Sox. And in a season full of indignities, they added another to the list — a franchise record for losses in one season.

The number hit 107 when the New York Mets beat them 2-0 on Sunday. And at the rate they're going, the White Sox remain on course to shatter baseball's modern-era mark.

"There's no sense in harping over the record right now," interim manager Grady Sizemore said before the game. "Our job right now is to try to get a win today. We're trying to just improve on every day and get better as each series goes on. My message has been the same since I got here. It's not about the record. It's not about wins. It's just about competing and playing together as a team."

Chicago (31-107) broke the club mark for losses set by the 1970 team. The White Sox also completed the first 0-10 homestand in franchise history, becoming the first team since the 1965 Mets to have three 10-game losing streaks in one season.

The White Sox need to go 12-12 the rest of the way to avoid matching the expansion 1962 Mets (40-120-1) for the most losses by a team since 1900. That seems like a stretch, with Chicago on pace to finish 36-126. On a more positive note, the 1899 Cleveland Spiders' overall record of 134 losses is safe.

The remaining schedule is a mixed bag for Chicago, starting with a tough three-game series at Baltimore before heading to Boston. It also includes three games at home against AL Central leader Cleveland from Sept. 9-11 and at San Diego from Sept. 20-22.

Getting out of town might not be a bad thing for the White Sox. They've lost 12 straight at Guaranteed Rate Field, matching a season high. Their worst homestand prior to the one they just completed was when they went

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Scheffler wins FedEx Cup to end huge year ›› Golf, Page 18

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