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WEEKEND
EDITION

OLYMPICS
American men to play for basketball gold Saturday
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'Tougher than boot camp' at Olympics

First Coast Guardsman to compete in Games addresses mental stress

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

ENOSHIMA, Japan — The first U.S. Coast Guardsman to compete in the Olympics said athletes in Tokyo face a tougher mental challenge than recruits in boot camp.

Lt. j.g. Nikki Barnes, 27, became the first Coast Guardsman to represent the United States at the Olympics in any sport when she and crewmate Lara Dallman-Weiss, 32, of Shoreview, Minn., began sailing in the Women's 470 class last week.



Barnes

Reflecting on the Olympic experience after missing out on a medal, the native of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands said she'll apply the lessons she learned in Japan in her Coast Guard career.

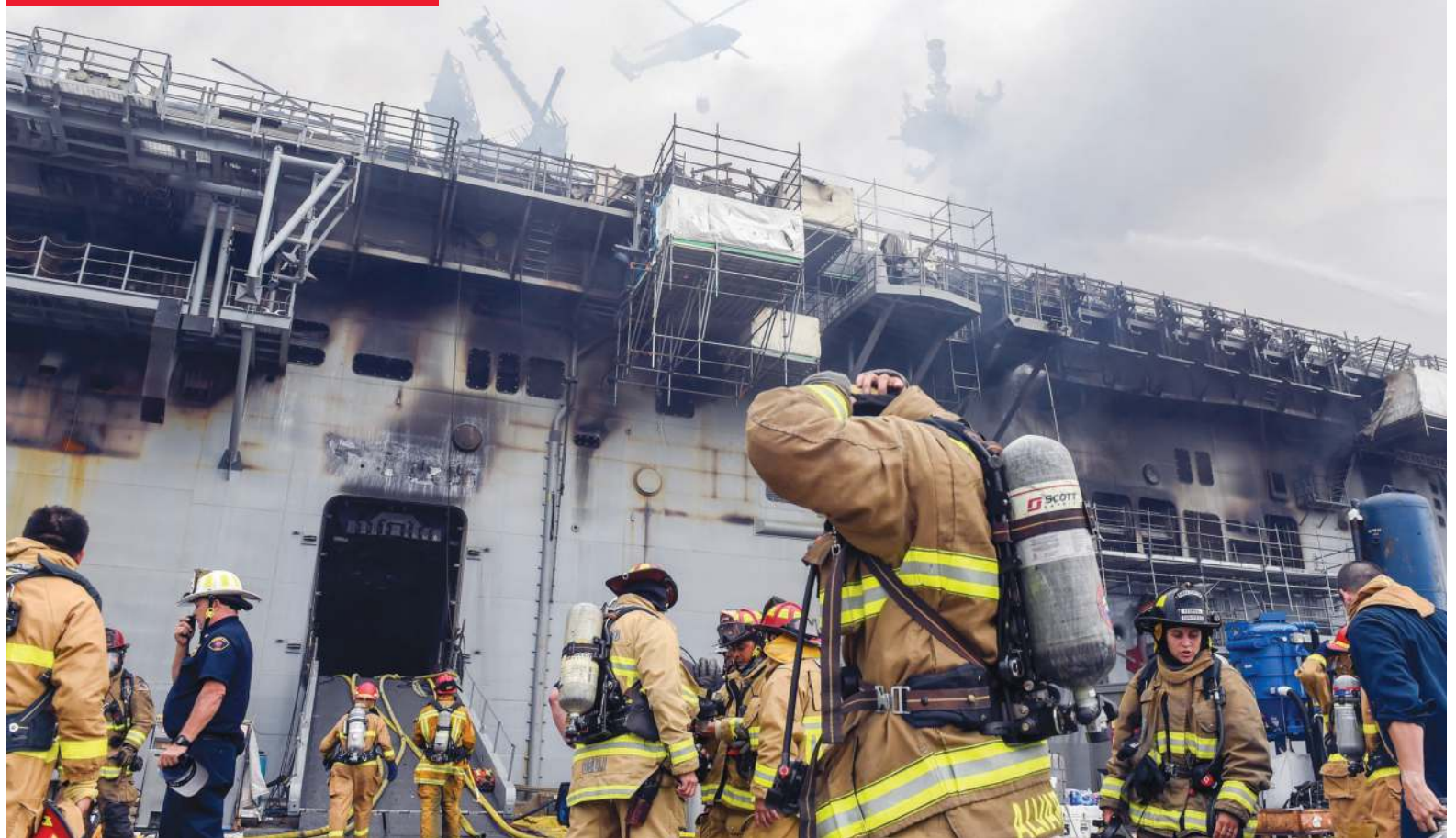
"It's my first Games," she said, shortly before the men's 470 race Wednesday. "People tell you there are so many distractions, but I didn't believe them until I came here."

The stress faced by Olympic athletes was highlighted last week when U.S. gymnast Simone Biles withdrew from several events, later attributing the decision to a mental health issue.

The biggest challenge for Barnes was the mental fatigue from filtering others' thoughts and comments to concentrate on rac-

SEE MENTAL ON PAGE 7

BONHOMME RICHARD FIRE



OMAR POWELL/U.S. Navy

Sailors and federal firefighters respond to the blaze aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego on July 13, 2020. The ship, which burned for four days, was so extensively damaged that it had to be scrapped.

Navy accuses SEAL school dropout of starting blaze that destroyed ship

By **WYATT OLSON**
Stars and Stripes

The sailor charged with setting the fire and destroying the USS Bonhomme Richard last summer had previously dropped out of training to become a Navy SEAL after only five days and held a grudge against the service, according to an affidavit filed by an investigator seeking a search warrant in the case.

Seaman Apprentice Ryan Sawyer Mays, 20, became an arson suspect soon after the blaze was

extinguished four days after it began on July 12, 2020, while the amphibious assault ship was docked in San Diego, according to the 33-page affidavit filed in U.S. District Court in the Southern District of California on Sept. 3, 2020.

In the affidavit, which had remained sealed until Tuesday, investigators asked the court for access to Mays' social media accounts.

The Navy announced last week

SEE DROPOUT ON PAGE 7



Seaman Apprentice Ryan Sawyer Mays poses for a photo that accompanied a social media post he made on June 14, 2020, that read, "I love the smell of napalm in the morning."

Naval Criminal Investigative Service

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Europe gas prices were not available before press time

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

| Country | Super E10 | Super unleaded | Super plus | Diesel | South Korea | Guam | Japan | South Korea |
|-----------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Japan | .. | \$3.929 | .. | \$3.429 | \$3.239 | .. | \$3.939 | \$3.449 |
| Change in price | .. | +3.0 cents | .. | +2.0 cents | +2.0 cents | .. | +3.0 cents | +3.0 cents |
| Okinawa | \$3.229 | .. | .. | \$3.429 | \$3.239 | \$3.679 | \$3.939 | .. |
| Change in price | +3.0 cents | .. | .. | +2.0 cents | +3.0 cents | +2.0 cents | +3.0 cents | .. |

*DieselEFD **Midgrade
For the week of Aug. 6-12

EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates | | South Korea (Won) | 1142.86 |
|---------------------------|---------|---|---------|
| Euro costs (Aug. 6) | \$1.16 | Switzerland (Franc) | .9068 |
| Dollar buys (Aug. 6) | 0.8234 | Thailand (Baht) | 33.25 |
| British pound (Aug. 6) | \$1.36 | Turkey (NewLira) | 8.5381 |
| Japanese yen (Aug. 6) | 106.00 | | |
| South Korean won (Aug. 6) | 1114.00 | | |
| Commercial rates | | (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.) | |
| Bahrain(Dinar) | .3770 | | |
| Britain (Pound) | 1.3912 | | |
| Canada (Dollar) | 1.2499 | | |
| China(Yuan) | 6.4625 | | |
| Denmark (Krone) | 6.2818 | | |
| Egypt (Pound) | 15.7376 | | |
| Euro | .8447 | | |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | 7.7774 | | |
| Hungary (Forint) | 299.13 | | |
| Israel (Shekel) | 3.2116 | | |
| Japan (Yen) | 109.70 | | |
| Kuwait(Dinar) | .3005 | | |
| Norway (Krone) | 8.8129 | Prime rate | 3.25 |
| Philippines (Peso) | 50.46 | Interest Rates Discount rate | 0.75 |
| Poland (Zloty) | 3.84 | Federal funds market rate | 0.10 |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 3.7502 | 3-month bill | 0.05 |
| Singapore (Dollar) | 1.3512 | 30-year bond | 1.84 |

INTEREST RATES

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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MILITARY



U.S. Army

Service members at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, build an apparatus for dropping medical supplies to a critically injured soldier aboard a vessel at sea on July 25.

Services work together to get critically injured soldier off Army ship near Palau

BY ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

A joint effort by four service branches ended with a critically injured U.S. soldier successfully retrieved from an Army vessel in the Pacific on July 26, according to the Air Force.

The soldier was injured aboard the vessel off the coast of Angaur, Palau, during the Forager exercise. With severe weather conditions and significant distances involved, members of the Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Army organized an emergency medical evacuation for the soldier, according to an Air Force news release on Aug. 2.

The Air Force did not identify the soldier, the nature of the injuries or the vessel involved. An Army spokesperson did not respond to emails or phone calls from Stars and Stripes on Thursday.

Facing uncertain conditions, the rescue team made two plans. The first was to deploy a helicopter from Sea Combat Squadron 25 on Guam to land on the ship and evacuate the soldier.

If that proved unworkable, the next plan was to airdrop medical supplies to the ship, according to the Air Force.

"We had a critically injured Soldier being cared for by an Army Combat Medic," said Col. Joseph Hudak, command surgeon for I Corps, in the news release. "That highly capable medic could keep the Soldier alive while rescue efforts continued, but he needed additional supplies."

Hudak coordinated with Air Force Lt. Col. Steven Massie, commander of the 36th Airlift Squad-



U.S. Army

The team completes work on the apparatus to deliver supplies.

ron at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, to organize airdrops from a C-130J Super Hercules.

The Navy and Air Force teams worked with soldiers from the 1st Special Forces Group and 82nd Airborne Division, as well as sailors from the Navy Special Warfare Command, to organize the drops, according to the Air Force. Plans were in place and ready to go within 90 minutes.

"I've been in the Air Force for 17 years, and I don't know of anybody that has [made an airdrop] to a ship," Massie told Stars and Stripes by phone on Wednesday.

The airlift squadron is also responsible for Operation Christmas Drop, a long-standing training mission that doubles as a humanitarian airlift that delivers essential supplies to Micronesia.

"The tactics, techniques and

procedures that we use for Operation Christmas Drop are the same ones that we were going to perform to put that [medical supply] bundle where it needed to be," Massie said.

Just as two C-130s were prepared to take off, the Navy MH-60S Seahawk helicopter found a break in the weather and managed to land on the vessel.

The soldier was taken aboard and flown to Naval Hospital Guam, according to the news release.

"The first thing you walk away thinking is just 'Wow,'" Massie said. "It really shows our ability as a complete component of the Department of Defense to be able to uphold our vow that we will bring everybody home."

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Records: Pentagon slaying suspect had troubled past

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As officials seek clues about what prompted a Georgia man to fatally stab a Pentagon police officer, details of the suspect's troubled past emerged Wednesday through interviews and court records.

Austin William Lanz, 27, was arrested last April for a break-in at a neighbor's home and drew police attention months earlier for an ongoing harassment campaign involving sexually explicit photos and messages, according to interviews and records obtained by The Associated Press.

Investigators have not revealed a motive in the ambush-style killing of Pentagon police officer George Gonzalez. But Lanz's past brushes with the law, as well as neighbors' accounts of recent menacing behavior, appear to suggest the violence was more likely the act of a troubled, violence-prone individual than part of a broader conspiracy.

"I wish there was a better way to address those mental health issues that people have," said Phillip Brent, who shared a backyard fence with Lanz in Georgia and describes repeated harassment directed at himself and his then-fiancee. "It feels like it was just a clear failure of our system to help someone out who needed that help."

The FBI on Wednesday said the burst of violence at the Pentagon began at about 10:40 a.m. Tuesday when Lanz exited a bus at the Pentagon Transit Center and immediately stabbed Gonzalez without provocation. The two struggled and Lanz shot himself with Gonzalez's weapon. Other "officers engaged the subject, who ultimately died at the scene," the FBI said.

Investigators were examining Lanz's background, including his criminal history, jail records, financial information and any online accounts, in search of a motive, a law enforcement official said.

One episode of likely interest to investigators is an April arrest in Cobb County, Ga., in which Lanz was accused of breaking into Brent's home in the Atlanta suburb of Acworth in the middle of the night with a crowbar.

He was recorded on video by the security system roaming the house for 13 minutes, turning on all the lights and leaving what were described as "inappropriate photographs and notes." He left without taking anything, accord-

ing to arrest reports and court filings.

After the homeowner provided the video to law enforcement, Lanz was arrested and booked on charges of burglary and trespassing charges. When informed he was being charged, Lanz objected to the arresting officer, saying, "but I didn't take anything," according to the arrest report. He then went on to make statements to a police officer about how planes had been flying over the neighborhood and tracking his cellphone.

As he was being processed at the county jail, Lanz, who was listed as 6 feet, 3 inches tall and

roughly 190 pounds, is alleged to have attacked two sheriff's deputies in the intake area without provocation, including one who sustained a chipped bone and torn ligament in her knee. After he was restrained, Lanz reportedly accused the officers of being "gay" for teaming up on him and asked to be uncuffed so he could fight them one-on-one.

A judge reduced his bond in May to \$30,000 and released him, imposing some conditions, including that he not take illegal drugs and that he undergo a mental health evaluation. The charges against him are still listed as pending. A spokesperson for the Cobb County Sheriff's Office confirmed Lanz had been held at the agency's detention center but referred all other questions to the FBI.

An attorney who represented Lanz in the Georgia cases didn't immediately respond to a phone message and email seeking comment. Messages left with family members at Lanz's home in Acworth were not immediately returned.

Brent and his former fiancee, Eliza Wells, said they were frustrated with the criminal justice system, which they say failed to initially take the harassment claims with appropriate seriousness and then permitted him to be out on bond.

"It just causes me to wonder what could have been done differently to help Austin, mentally, and give him practical tools and resources if he needed, instead of just letting him out on bail and allowing him to travel out of state, and that sort of stuff," Wells said.



Lanz

MILITARY

Handler remembers her big-hearted working dog

BY KARIN ZEITVOGEL
Stars and Stripes

She worked hard, played hard and devoted her entire life to the U.S. military.

And Bora, a military working dog from Spangdahlem Air Base, “literally and figuratively had the biggest heart,” her former handler said days after the German shepherd died at age 12.

Bora’s heart was three to four times larger than a normal German shepherd’s, said Staff Sgt. Adrienne Dunham, who worked with Bora for 18 months starting in 2016 and adopted her when she was medically retired last year.

Veterinarians had discovered during a pre-deployment checkup that Bora had a heart defect, Dunham said.

“They noticed she had a heart murmur, and when they looked in-

to it, they saw her heart was enlarged, one of her valves was defective, a bunch of different stuff,” said Dunham, who was with the 52nd Security Forces Squadron when she worked with Bora. “They don’t know how they didn’t catch it before because she’s had it all her life.”

Not only was her heart physically large, but Bora was also “powered by love,” Dunham said.

“She did biting for a while as a patrol dog but never really enjoyed it, so they made her an explosives detection dog,” Dunham said.

“A lot of people, when they see a working dog, they see a big, scary dog that bites and think that’s all they do or care about,” she added. “But working dogs are cuddly, sweet and intelligent.”

Bora continued to thrive after

her diagnosis but was medically retired last year at age 11.

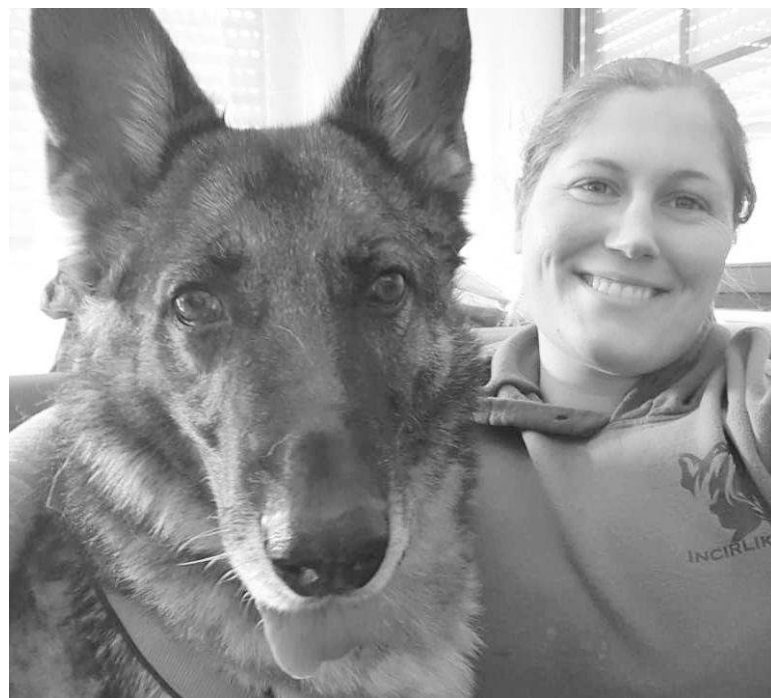
Her daily routine switched from working to sleeping on Dunham’s couch, playing with her favorite dog toy and going to the park.

When Dunham returned to the U.S. in September, Bora couldn’t go with her because of her heart condition, so she went to live with the Gerbers, an Air Force family stationed at Spangdahlem.

After months of canine retirement living, Bora’s condition worsened last month.

Her heart had grown since her last visit to the cardiologist a few months earlier. It spanned five of Bora’s ribs, Christine Gerber said.

Vets put her on the maximum dosage of medication, but she blacked out every few minutes, her heart unable to pump enough



Adrienne Dunham

Bora and one of her handlers at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, Staff Sgt. Adrienne Dunham.

blood around her body. She died at the end of July.

Dunham was devastated when she learned of Bora’s death, she said by phone from Albuquerque, N.M., where she is assigned to the 377th Security Forces Group.

“It crushes you when they go,” she said. “But I’d never do anything else. Working dogs are amazing creatures.”

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Va. man seeks military limericks for charity

BY JONATHAN SNYDER
Stars and Stripes

A self-described “Army brat” in Virginia is collecting military-themed limericks to raise money for a charity that helps veterans overcome post-traumatic stress disorder through music.

Gary Hunt, 71, a part-time handyman in Roanoke, Va., said his charitable effort was inspired by the work of doctors, nurses and volunteers creating handsewn masks during the coronavirus epidemic.

Furloughed from his maintenance job in March 2020, he set on the idea of creating a book of limericks — humorous five-line poems with a rhyme scheme — about life during the pandemic and selling copies to raise money for a cause.

He compiled two books and raised \$1,200 for Kids Soar, a program to lift kids in Roanoke out of poverty through literacy, and \$1,250 for 3rd Street Coffee House, a nonprofit, church-basement venue for live music in the city.

For his third act, Hunt is planning to publish the book of limericks, with proceeds going to Guitars For Vets, a Wisconsin-based organization with chapters across the country. Its volunteers teach veterans to play guitar as a form of therapy and gives them one to keep.

“The way it works, if you send me a limerick, whether if it’s good or bad, I’ll put it in the book,” Hunt told Stars and Stripes by phone

Wednesday. “Just about everyone who has a limerick with their name in the book will hopefully buy a copy or two.”

The limerick has to reflect somehow on life or experiences in the military, Hunt said. Deployments, life as a military family member, about military family members — the net is pretty wide, he said.

For example, Hunt has written a limerick about his father, Walter Hunt, a career Army sergeant who served at Omaha Beach on D-Day in World War II and also taught Elvis Presley to drive a tank at Fort Hood, Hunt said.

It goes like this:

“At Fort Hood, where Elvis got sent. My dad was his drill sergeant. No autograph for me. Sergeants don’t ask, you see. Then, Germany is where he went.”

Hunt needs at least 100 limericks before he can send the book to publication. Proceeds from sales, after deducting publishing costs, will go directly to the charity. The books sell for \$6, preordered, and \$10 afterward.

He can compile the book in about three months, provided he collects enough limericks.

His chosen charity, Guitars4Vets, for \$200 provides 10 weeks of music lessons and one guitar for the veterans in its program, according to its website.

Air Force Master Sgt. Robbie Arp, of Defense Media Activity at Fort Meade, Md., has volunteered



U.S. ARMY

A Virginia man is collecting military-themed limericks to raise money for Guitars4Vets, a charity that helps vets overcome PTSD through music.

as an instructor for the Washington, D.C., chapter for 2½ years, he told Stars and Stripes in a Facebook message on Tuesday.

“What I like most about working with Guitars for Vets is the ability to give back and see the guitar become such a positive, healing tool in my students’ lives,” he said. “Watching them overcome challenges and gain new skills is really powerful.”

Hunt said he’s already composed about a dozen limericks to get the book started.

“Writing limericks is no idle pastime,” he said. “Helps to keep your brain in its prime. It takes all your wits, to arrange all the bits. Lines one, two, and five have to rhyme.”

Those with military-themed limerick to contribute or who want to order the book can email Hunt at bookbagsanta@verizon.net.

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Senate committee OKs \$270 billion VA budget

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Senate appropriators voted Wednesday to advance the largest-ever budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs, backing President Joe Biden’s 10% increase for the agency.

The Senate Appropriations Committee voted 25-5 to advance the legislation — a move that signals widespread support in Congress for the spending increase.

Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., a member of the committee, said the bill provides “groundbreaking investment in VA health care and research.”

Several Republicans voted against the measure. Their objections were focused on the White House’s overall budget plan, rather than the proposed increase for the VA. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., criticized Biden for boosting nondefense spending while proposing only a small increase for the Defense Department.

Congress is scheduled to recess for the remainder of August but faces a Sept. 30 deadline to approve the fiscal 2022 budget. If lawmakers approve the budget, the VA is set to receive nearly \$270 billion.

The bill advanced Wednesday includes \$155.4 billion in mandatory spending, which goes toward entitlement programs for veterans and does not go through the congressional appropriations process. The remaining \$112.9 billion

are discretionary funds, with the majority going to medical care.

The legislation includes a \$7.5 billion increase in medical care from 2021, with more money going toward rural health care, the veteran caregiver program, women’s health, mental health and homelessness prevention.

It also allots more money for the VA to hire more processors to handle veterans’ claims for benefits. The agency has been tackling a large backlog of claims that accumulated during the coronavirus pandemic.

In addition to the VA, the bill provides \$11 billion for military construction and family housing — an increase of nearly \$3 billion from 2021. Lawmakers said the boost would fund 176 major construction projects and help address critical infrastructure problems.

The bill nearly triples the budget for Arlington National Cemetery, providing the cemetery \$228 million. Of that amount, \$141 million would go toward a project to expand the cemetery’s boundaries and add 80,000 burial spaces.

“This package will deliver critical resources where they’re most needed,” said Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., a member of the appropriations committee. “I’ll keep working with my colleagues across the aisle to get it to the finish line.”

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MILITARY

Russia, Belarus ready troops for exercise near NATO land

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Russia and Belarus are gearing up for large-scale military exercises near NATO's eastern flank, which a Belarusian military official on Thursday said will involve nearly 13,000 troops.

"About 12,800 troops will participate in the drills on the territory of the Republic of Belarus, including 2,500 Russian personnel and up to 50 Kazakh servicemen," Belarus Deputy Defense Minister Viktor Gulevich said, as quoted by Russia's Tass official news agency.

Every four years, Russia and Belarus hold the Zapad exercise, which has a history of unnerving U.S. and NATO military officials concerned that Moscow could use the drill as a means for moving larger than announced numbers of forces near allied borders.

After Zapad in 2017, NATO officials said Russia and Belarus far exceeded the number of troops allowed to take part in the exercise under rules in the Vienna Document, which regulates military exercises and requires notification and observational access for events that exceed 13,000 troops.



Russian defense ministry

Tanks roll in Russia during Zapad 2017, a Russia-Belarus exercise. The countries say they will have about 12,800 troops taking part in this year's event.

The drill, which begins in September, comes amid ongoing tensions in the region. Lithuania, which borders Belarus, has complained about the flow of migrants, coming from as far away as Iraq, across its border with the country.

While Belarus is the main host for Zapad, slated for Sept. 10-16, related drills also are held in Russia. Tass said Zapad-2021 will involve about 140 tanks, 110 artillery systems and multiple rocket launchers. More than 30 different aircraft also are part of the event.

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Corps strength: USMC to replace PFT crunches with planks by '23

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

The Marines are changing how they'll work the core.

Over the next two years, the Marine Corps physical fitness test will undergo two important changes related to abdominal strength tests, eventually replacing crunches with the plank, a new administrative message said.

The plank reduces the risk of injury and engages almost twice the abdominal muscles that the crunch does, making for a good test of mid-section endurance, the message said.

"With increased core strength, Marines are less likely to experience injury or fatigue during functional tasks like hiking, lifting and low crawling," the service said in a statement.

The Corps is announcing the changes now to allow Marines time to train.

"You will see updated infographics and the plank workout plan on Fitness.Marines.mil very shortly," said Capt. Sam Stephenson, a spokesman for Marine Corps Train-

ing and Education Command.

The isometric plank became an optional event in 2020, and will remain so in 2022, though the minimum and maximum times will change. In 2023, the exercise will become mandatory.

"Research has shown that sit-ups and crunches with the feet restrained require significant hip flexor activation," the statement said. "This has been linked to an increased risk of injury, including lower back pain."

The maximum time for the plank will decrease from 4 minutes, 20 seconds to 3 minutes, 45 seconds. The minimum time will increase by seven seconds to 1 minute, 10 seconds.

Earlier this month, the Air Force also announced that the plank would be an option in its annual fitness assessment test starting next year.

The Navy replaced curl-ups in its physical readiness test with a forearm plank in March after determining the "repeated spinal flexion movement of the curl-up is not operationally relevant," that it might aggravate back injuries and wasn't

challenging enough.

The functional exercise is required in 85% of shipboard pushing, pulling, lifting or carrying tasks, the Navy said in a November administrative message.

The Army announced in March that it was adding a plank event as a fully graded alternative to the leg tuck in the latest proposed version of the new Army Combat Fitness Test, which began assessment that month.

Army officials expected an uptick in scores, the service said, but the leg tuck would remain the primary test of core strength because it better correlated between fitness requirements and the real world.

"Every Soldier should strive to lift themselves, but the plank allows Soldiers the time they need to train on this skill," the Army said.

The Marine Corps is expected to change the scoring tables for the PFT in changes made to its standing fitness test order before the end of this year.

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MILITARY

Patch Elementary teacher arrested on sex charges

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany— A Patch Elementary School teacher is facing charges stemming from child sexual abuse allegations spanning four years, according to Georgia court records.

Stefan Eberhard Zappey has been employed at Patch since 2001 as a teacher of German language courses, according to a newly released complaint in U.S. district court in Georgia.

Zappey, who was arrested this week while on vacation in the U.S., is being held at a federal detention center in Lovejoy, Ga., The Associated Press reported.

The case against Zappey was initiated in March after a former student of his told a Patch teacher about the abuse she said she experienced between 2007 and 2008.

Investigators with the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division interviewed the victim, who was in third grade when she says that Zappey called her to his desk during class and repeatedly fondled her, court records stated. She was 8 years old at the time.

Army investigators then interviewed numerous other students and teachers, who said they had witnessed Zappey being inappropriate with students.

Two faculty members witnessed “multiple occasions where Zappey hugged students at ‘crotch level,’” court records said.

Another faculty member said that he had known Zappey for eight years and that Zappey “would train students to become ‘really touchy feely,’” court records showed.

The court documents do not indicate whether any faculty members had raised concerns to school officials about Zappey’s alleged misconduct.

Department of Defense Education Activity-Europe did not immediately respond to a request for comment late Thursday.

“I have witnessed on several occasions what I deem as inappropriate touching of students by Mr. Zappey,” one faculty member is quoted in court documents as saying. “Examples of this touching is running his fingers through girls [sic] hair, sitting students on his lap, hugging students based on the placement of their faces as they are hugged, picking up students when they run up to him and letting them wrap their legs around him, and just being over touchy feely with students.”

Another former student told investigators that between 2008 and 2010, Zappey would call her up to his desk, “put her on his lap, put his hand inside her pants, and touch her genitals with his finger on multiple occasions.”

The student was 7 years old when the alleged abuse began. She said she began reporting to the school nurse in third grade that she had stomachaches to avoid Zappey’s class, court records stated.

Zappey was arrested after investigators tracked him down in Georgia, where his daughter resides, court records stated.

Zappey became a citizen of the United States through naturalization in 2000, according to court documents.

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IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Monica Salazar, left, a soldier with the 41st Field Artillery Brigade, poses with her two children, Rafael and Jasmine at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, on Thursday.

Field artillery brigade puts on rocket show for its families

By IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Army training became a family affair Thursday with the return of a favorite event from a two-year hiatus.

The 41st Field Artillery Brigade held its first family day since 2019 at Grafenwoehr Training Area, the largest U.S. range in Europe.

Roughly 80 family members of soldiers who attended were eager for the show, which featured M270 Multiple Launch Rocket Systems and tactical vehicles, both on display and in action. The brigade’s 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment did the shooting.

“I think this is a good opportunity for my kids so they can see what mommy does during the week,” said Sgt. Monica Salazar, of the 41st FAB.

Her 7-year-old son, Rafael, has always wanted to ride a tank, and he smiled when he heard that rockets were going to be fired.

Maj. Joe Bush, the unit spokesman, said family day is now called Molly Pitcher Day, in honor of an American Revolution artilleryman’s wife who brought water to thirsty soldiers.

“When her husband collapsed due to fatigue, she picked up his position and kept the gun firing,” Bush said. “In many ways, our wives, husbands and families who

help shoulder the burdens of military life are like that.”

Gasps and cheers went up from the delighted crowd as the rockets soared into the air.

Col. Daniel Miller, the brigade commander, brought his 8-year-old daughter. She was a first-timer at the event.

“I have been doing MLRS operations for the vast majority of my career, but my family has not been able to see it,” Miller said. “When you see it, it also has that emotional impact. Who doesn’t get excited watching a rocket go boom?”

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‘Inspirational’ airman dies in noncombat incident in Kuwait

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

A mother of two with nearly 30 years of Air Force service died in Kuwait in a noncombat incident, military officials said Thursday.

Chief Master Sgt. Tresse Z. King, 54, of Raeford, N.C., died Tuesday at Ali Al Salem Air Base, the Pentagon said in a brief statement.

King was deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, the U.S.-led mission battling the Islamic State group in the Middle East. She was the superintendent of the 96th Force Support Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

King’s children include professional basketball player George McZavier King Jr., who played for the University of Colorado at Boulder and was drafted by the Phoenix Suns in the second round of the 2018 NBA draft. He signed with the Niners Chemnitz in Germany’s Basketball Bundesliga in July 2020.



King

Her daughter, Jescia Anderson, played basketball for Wingate University and recently ran for

public office in Hoke County, N.C.

King’s son and daughter were at her promotion to chief master sergeant, which took place on Veterans Day 2016 on the basketball court at Boulder’s Coors Events Center. A university statement at the time said it was the first of her many promotion ceremonies where both of her children were present.

Since joining the service in late 1991, King had deployed seven times, most often to the Middle East, the university said.

The squadron King was most recently deployed with is part of the 96th Test Wing. Ilka Cole, a

wing spokeswoman, provided information about King’s service history via email on Thursday, which showed that after an initial 1992 assignment to Pope Field, near Fayetteville, N.C., she went on to serve in South Korea, Texas, Virginia and Japan.

When she departed Japan’s Yokota Air Base for her assignment to Eglin in 2019, the Facebook page for the Fightin’ Fifth Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeant touted King as “one of the most inspirational” chiefs.

“She helped many Airmen ‘Get Their Head Right’, and reminded all that ‘Not Everyone is Able but

Everyone is Capable with the right Focus!’” the page said in a post that showed pictures of King, dubbed “TK,” posing with fellow airmen and receiving various send-off gifts.

Her decorations indicate she also served in Kosovo, where she earned a campaign medal. Among her many other awards include four Meritorious Service Medals, one Joint Service Medal, five Air Force Achievement Medals and four Air Force Commendation Medals.

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MILITARY

Dropout: Arson suspect showed 'disdain' toward Navy, authority

FROM PAGE 1

that a sailor had been charged with setting the fire, but did not identify him.

The contents of the affidavit were first reported by the Daily Beast and San Diego Union-Tribune.

The Bonhomme Richard was undergoing maintenance at Naval Base San Diego when the blaze seared through 11 of the ship's 14 decks, destroyed its forward mast and damaged the superstructure before being put out. The Navy said in December that the ship would be scrapped.

Investigators with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives determined soon after the blaze was extinguished that it had originated below deck in a section called Lower V, where they found a container that had held a petroleum distillate believed to have been used to start the fire.

Agents with the Naval Criminal



CHRISTINA ROSS/U.S. Navy

Sailors and federal firefighters combat a fire onboard USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego on July 12, 2020.

Investigative Service began questioning sailors associated with Lower V, and those interviews led quickly to suspicion of Mays.

They found a social media message posted publicly by Mays about a month before the fire that said, "I love the smell of napalm in

the morning" — a quote from the 1979 film "Apocalypse Now."

Seaman Kenji Velasco told agents he had seen a masked sail-

or carrying a bucket down to Lower V, and that he saw no other person go down there before the fire started. Velasco later told them he believed that sailor was Mays.

Command Master Chief Jose Hernandez told NCIS agents that Mays was "a person who showed disdain toward authority and the U.S. Navy," the affidavit said.

Mays joined the Navy in 2019 with an eye toward the advanced electronics computer fields, the affidavit said. He changed his mind on that career choice at some point and began Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training in October 2019.

He dropped out after five days and was reassigned to the Bonhomme Richard as an "undesignated Seaman," the affidavit said.

"According to Navy leadership, the morale and behavior of sailors

who had aspired to become a SEAL, and then find themselves serving in a more traditional role on a Navy ship, are frequently very challenging," the affidavit said.

NCIS agents interviewed Mays over a 10-hour period on Aug. 20.

"He maintained his innocence as to being the cause of the fire throughout the entire interview," the affidavit said. "At one point, after being told that he had been identified as having descended the ramp to the Lower V, before the fire started, Mays stated that he was being set up."

Agents arrested him at the end of the interview and brought him to the brig at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, the affidavit said.

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Mental: Olympics prep work along with stresses of sailing combines for a taxing event

FROM PAGE 1

ing, she said.

Sailing at the games involved myriad tasks, from preparing the boat to logistics and funding. It's costing the donor-funded team almost \$18,000 to ship the vessel back to the U.S., she said.

Out on the water, crews had to deal with choppy conditions and could see sharks surfing on waves, she said.

"This is one of the hardest things I've done in my life," Barnes said. "I was thinking about boot camp, which I thought was the hardest before, but this was tougher than boot camp."

After their final race Wednesday, the American women were ranked 12th out of 21 crews who sailed multiple races over a course near Enoshima Island, Kanagawa pre-

fecture. Hannah Mills and Eilidh McIntyre claimed gold for Great Britain.

That afternoon, Barnes joined a crowd of flag-waving athletes, officials and support staff on the island's breakwater to watch the men race. Australian duo Matthew Belcher and Will Ryan won the gold medal.

The dinghies, with sails featuring the flags of competing nations, provided a spectacle that played out in front of a Japan Coast Guard patrol vessel providing security for the event.

"Just seeing [the Japanese ship] was really cool," said Barnes, who planned to drop in on a U.S. Coast Guard detachment at Yokota Air Base in Tokyo on Thursday.

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AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

After their final race Wednesday, the American women were ranked 12th out of 21 crews who sailed multiple races over a course near Enoshima, Japan.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Unvaccinated patient now supports shots

BY STACEY PLAISANCE
Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — Cedric Daniels and Joshua Bradstreet Contreras didn't think they really needed the coronavirus vaccine. After all, the uncle and nephew are both young — 37 and 22, respectively — and Contreras was “as healthy as a horse,” Daniels said.

But just days after Daniels went to visit Contreras in New Orleans — a long-awaited reunion that came after not seeing each other for months because of the pandemic — the nephew was rushed away in an ambulance. He couldn't breathe, even when sitting completely still. He is now in a hospital in a New Orleans suburb, on a ventilator and in a medically induced coma.

At about the same time, Daniels

started feeling weak, had blurred vision and was so short of breath he could barely make it from his couch in the living room to the bathroom. He tested positive for the virus, then went to a hospital in Baton Rouge already overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients, where he stayed for a week on oxygen as he recovered from pneumonia.

Contreras and Daniels are among a flood of patients filling up overloaded hospitals across the U.S. amid a surge of COVID-19 cases driven by the virus's highly contagious delta variant. Health officials say the most serious cases have been among the unvaccinated.

“It is frustrating, because it's preventable ... but more than that, it's really sad,” said James Ford, a



TED JACKSON/AP

A nurse medicates COVID-19 patient Cedric Daniels, 37, of Gonzales, La., at Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center in Baton Rouge, on Monday.

critical care doctor in the ICU at Our Lady of the Lake Medical Center in Baton Rouge, where Daniels was treated.

To help with the influx, the hospital brought in a disaster medical assistance team of nearly three dozen health care workers on Monday. That same day, hospital leaders at a news conference where Gov. John Bel Edwards announced a reinstated statewide mask mandate that described grim conditions across Louisiana:

facilities filled with COVID-19 patients, including children, and hospital hallways lined with stretchers because there aren't enough beds.

“A lot of them are debilitated and need around-the-clock care,” said Ford, who has been working on his days off to help ease his hospital's burden. “It's very labor intensive.”

Some of those patients, like Daniels, now wish they had taken the shot.

“They're talking about putting tubes down your throat possibly if your oxygen doesn't go up within the next hour, and that is frightening,” he told The Associated Press on Monday as he lay in a bed with an oxygen tube in his nose. He was released shortly afterward but still must use oxygen at home.

“I am now a huge advocate for doctor's orders,” Daniels added. “They think we ought to get vaccinated, I think we ought to get vaccinated.”

Delta variant tests China's lockdown

Associated Press

BEIJING — The delta variant is challenging China's costly strategy of isolating cities, prompting warnings that Chinese leaders who were confident they could keep the coronavirus out of the country need a less disruptive approach.

As the highly contagious variant pushes leaders in the United States, Australia and elsewhere to renew restrictions, President Xi Jinping's government is fighting the most serious outbreak since last year's peak in Wuhan. The ruling Communist Party is reviving tactics that shut down China: Access to a city of 1.5 million people has been cut off, flights canceled and mass testing ordered in some areas.

That “zero tolerance” strategy of quarantining every case and trying to block new infections from abroad helped to contain last year's outbreak and has kept China largely virus-free. But its impact on work and life for millions of people is prompting warnings that China needs to learn to control the virus without repeatedly shutting down the economy and society.

Zhang Wenhong, a Shanghai doctor who became prominent during the Wuhan outbreak said in a social media post that the latest outbreak suggests China's strategy may change since the virus isn't going away.

“The world needs to learn how to coexist with this virus,” wrote Zhang, who has 3



CHINATOPIX/AP

Residents line up to be tested for COVID-19 in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province Tuesday.

million followers on the widely used Weibo platform.

China's controls will be tested when thousands of athletes, reporters and others arrive for the Winter Olympics in Beijing in February. And the ruling party faces a politically sensitive change of leadership in late 2022, for which leaders want upbeat economic conditions.

Last year, China shut down much of the world's second-biggest economy and cut off almost all access to cities with a total of 60 million people — tactics imitated on a smaller scale by governments from Asia to the Americas. That caused China's most painful economic contraction in five decades, but Beijing was able to allow business and domestic travel to resume in March 2020.

The new infections, many in people who have already been vaccinated, have jolted global financial markets, which worry Beij-

ing's response might disrupt manufacturing and supply chains. The main stock indexes in Shanghai, Tokyo and Hong Kong sank Tuesday but were rising again Thursday.

China needs to shift to creating barriers to infection within communities by stepping up vaccinations and quickly treating infected people while allowing business and travel to go ahead, said Xi Chen, a health economist at the Yale School of Public Health.

“I don't think ‘zero tolerance’ can be sustained,” said Chen. “Even if you can lock down all the regions in China, people might still die, and more might die due to hunger or loss of jobs.”

China needs to learn how to “allow the virus to exist” in areas with high vaccination rates and stronger health care, said Chen, the economist. He noted some areas have vaccinated at least 80% of adults.

US to require foreign visitors be vaccinated

BY ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is taking the first steps toward requiring nearly all foreign visitors to the U.S. to be vaccinated for the coronavirus, a White House official said.

The requirement would come as part of the administration's phased approach to easing travel restrictions for foreign citizens to the country. No timeline has yet been determined, as interagency working groups study how and when to safely move toward resuming normal travel. Eventually all foreign citizens entering the country, with some limited exceptions, are expected to need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to enter the U.S.

The official spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The Biden administration has kept in place travel restrictions that have severely curtailed international trips to the U.S., citing the spread of the delta variant of the virus. Under the rules, non-U.S. residents who have been to China, the European Schengen area, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil, South Africa and India in the prior 14 days are prohibited from entering the U.S.

All travelers to the U.S., regardless of vaccination status, are required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within three days of travel to the country.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Tokyo surges above 5,000 daily cases

By JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan's capital city, focus of global attention as host of the delayed 2020 Olympics, reported another pandemic record Thursday and exceeded 5,000 new cases on one day.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government announced 5,042 people had tested positive, the highest ever in the city since the pandemic began, according to public broadcaster NHK and metro government data. There were 4,166 cases on Wednesday, also a record.

The number of coronavirus cases generated by the pandemic's fifth wave in Tokyo towers above highs reached in January during the previous wave. The record then was 2,520 on Jan. 7.

Tokyo and the surrounding prefectures of Saitama, Chiba and Kanagawa are under a state of emer-

gency until Aug. 31, along with Osaka and Okinawa.

Meanwhile, one U.S. base in Japan reported six newly infected individuals Wednesday evening.

Naval Air Facility Atsugi, 26 miles southwest of central Tokyo, identified six people who tested positive after close contact with a previously infected person, according to a news release.

U.S. Army Japan, headquartered at Camp Zama, 28 miles from central Tokyo, on Thursday reimposed a mask order for everyone on its installations, regardless of their vaccination status. Everyone must wear masks indoors with exceptions for military readiness, personal offices, eating and drinking, physical fitness, official public speaking, musicians and private vehicles and spaces, according to the order signed by Brig. Gen. Joel Vowell, commander of U.S. Army Japan.

In Tokyo, about 3,400 people are hospitalized with the virus, 115 of them in serious condition, according to the metro government. The seven-day moving average, an ongoing measure of new infections per day, was 3,478.7 on Wednesday. Two months ago, it was 317.

The Olympic Games continued Thursday, one day closer to their conclusion Sunday.

Another 31 people associated with the Games tested positive, according to the Tokyo 2020 daily update Thursday. They include 16 contractors, seven people associated with the organizing committees, three media members, two Games employees, two volunteers and one athlete.

Since July 1, when reporting began, 353 people associated with the Tokyo Olympics have tested positive, including 29 athletes.

Thus far during the pandemic,

Japan has reported nearly 972,000 coronavirus cases and 15,246 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center. It reported a one-day high Wednesday of 14,114 newly infected people, according to the center.

Japan has, so far, vaccinated 34.2% of its population.

20 new cases for USFK

In South Korea, the U.S. command reported 20 newly infected people between July 18 and Monday, all of them new arrivals to the peninsula, according to a news release.

One service member arrived July 20 at Osan Air Base from the United States on the Patriot Express, a government-chartered air service, according to U.S. Forces Korea. Eleven service members, three family members and a retiree arrived at Incheon International Air-

port on commercial flights on July 18, 19, 23 through 29, Sunday and Monday.

Twelve individuals tested positive upon arrival, four while in quarantine and four on the test required before exiting quarantine, according to USFK. They were all isolated at Osan or Camp Humphreys.

South Korea reported 1,776 new cases on Wednesday, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency. Seoul accounted for 461 and Gyeonggi province, home to Camp Humphreys, the largest U.S. overseas military base, reported 475.

KDCA reported 14.4% of the population is fully vaccinated and 39.6% has had at least one dose of a two-shot regimen.

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.
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Sturgis bike rally revs back bigger, despite virus variant

Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Crowds of bikers are rumbling their way toward South Dakota's Black Hills this week, raising fears that COVID-19 infections will be unleashed among the 700,000 people expected to show up at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

The rally, which starts Friday, has become a haven for those eager to escape coronavirus precautions. Last year, the rally hardly slowed down, with roughly 460,000 people attending. Masks were mostly ditched as bikers crowded into bars, tattoo parlors and rock shows, offering a lesson in how massive gatherings could spread waves of the virus across the country.

This year — the 81st iteration of the rally — is expected to be even bigger, drawing people from around the U.S. and beyond, despite concerns about the virus' highly contagious delta variant.

"It's great to see a party of hundreds of thousands of people," said Zoltán Vári, a rallygoer who was settling into his campsite Tuesday after making the trek from Hun-



Women walk during the 80th annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in Sturgis, S.D., on Aug. 7, 2020. This year's rally kicks off Friday.

gary.

He was eager to return to riding a Harley-Davidson through the Black Hills after missing last year. Vári evaded U.S. tourism travel restrictions on Europe by spending two weeks in Costa Rica before making his way to South Dakota. He hopes 1 million people will show up. Typical attendance is around a half a million.

The city of Sturgis, usually a sleepy community of under 7,000,

tried to tamp things down last year, canceling most city-sponsored events and promotion, but hordes of bikers showed up anyway.

The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally's defenders argue open air is plentiful on the meandering highways and in the campgrounds where many bikers stay, but contact tracers last year reported 649 virus cases from every corner of the country linked to the rally, including one death.

Nursing home to workers: Get vaccine or lose job

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The U.S. nursing home industry's resistance to forcing workers to get vaccinated against COVID-19 for fear that too many of them might quit began to crack this week when its biggest player announced its employees must get the shot to keep their jobs.

The new requirement at Genesis Healthcare, which has 70,000 employees at nearly 400 nursing homes and senior communities, is the clearest sign yet that owners may be willing to risk an exodus at already dangerously understaffed facilities to quickly vaccinate the 40% of workers still resisting shots and fend off the surging delta variant.

Some experts are calling for mandatory vaccinations at nursing homes, warning that unprotected staff members are endangering residents. Even residents who have been inoculated are vulnerable because many are elderly and frail, with weak immune systems.

More than 1,250 nursing home residents across the U.S. were infected with COVID-19 in the week ending July 25, double the number from the week earlier, and 202 died, according to federal data.

"It's so easy now to say, 'Well, Genesis is doing it. Now we'll do it,'" said Brian Lee, who leads Families for Better Care, an advocacy group for long-term care residents. "This is a big domino to fall."

Lawrence Gostin, a professor of health law at Georgetown University, said he likewise foresees a "snowball effect." He said resisting vaccination mandates at this point is "unconscionable."

Some local governments are taking the decision out of the industry's hands, with Massachusetts and Denver announcing mandatory vaccinations at nursing homes this week.

Despite the terrible toll taken by the disease at nursing homes, many of the nation's 15,000 such institutions have rejected mandatory vaccinations for fear large numbers of workers will leave in protest. Nearly a quarter of nursing homes are already short of nurses or nurse's aides. But Associated Press interviews this past week with managers at 10 mostly smaller nursing home operations across the nation that are requiring vaccines found that the threat of workers quitting en masse over the shots may be overblown.

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NATION

Lawmakers give Cuomo deadline

By MARINA VILLENEUVE
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — State lawmakers told Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Thursday that their ongoing impeachment investigation is almost done and gave him a deadline of Aug. 13 to provide additional evidence.

Since March, the Assembly's judiciary committee has been investigating whether there are grounds to impeach the Democratic governor over sexual harassment allegations, misleading the public about COVID-19 outbreaks at nursing homes and using state resources and staff for his \$5 million book deal.

In a letter sent Thursday, the law firm leading the investigation, Davis Polk & Wardwell, reminded Cuomo's legal team that it has subpoenaed certain documents and expects "full compliance from the governor," but that his time to respond was almost up.

"We write to inform you that the Committee's investigation is nearing completion and the Assembly will soon consider potential articles of impeachment against your client," they wrote. "Accordingly, we invite you to provide any additional evidence or written submissions that you would like the Committee to consider before its work concludes."

The letter was released publicly by Assembly Judiciary Committee Chair Charles Lavine, a Long Island Democrat.

The committee has scheduled its next meeting on the matter for Monday.

Findings from an independent investigation overseen by state Attorney General Letitia James released earlier this week said Cu-



BRITAINY NEWMAN/AP

Protesters hold up signs outside the office of New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo demanding that Cuomo resign, Wednesday, in New York. In a taped statement responding to investigative findings that he sexually harassed 11 women, Cuomo denied ever touching anyone inappropriately but apologized to two accusers.

mo sexually harassed at least 11 women, and that his administration retaliated against at least one of them for going public with her allegations.

Cuomo has denied making any inappropriate sexual advances and insists the findings don't reflect the facts.

He's resisted numerous calls for his resignation from most of New York's top Democrats and from national figures like President Joe Biden.

District attorneys in Manhattan, suburban Westchester, Oswego, and Nassau counties and the state capital of Albany said they asked for investigative materials

from the inquiry to see if any of the allegations could result in criminal charges.

Oswego County District Attorney Greg Oakes told WSYR-TV that he will begin investigating an incident involving a woman who testified that Cuomo ran two fingers across her chest and grazed the area between her shoulder and breasts at an upstate conservation event in May 2017.

One of Cuomo's accusers said he groped her breast. Others have said he gave them unwanted kisses or touched parts of their bodies in ways that made them uncomfortable.

Nearly 60% — at least 89 — of

the Assembly's 150 members said they would impeach Cuomo if he doesn't resign, according to a tally by The Associated Press based on interviews and public statements.

That's more than the simple majority needed for an impeachment vote.

Assemblymember Sarah Clark, a Democrat from Rochester, said colleagues who were once hesitant to call for Cuomo to leave office are now all calling for his resignation or impeachment.

"There are not that many more questions in anyone's mind that he has truly broken state laws, and the state sexual harassment laws he signed into law," Clark said.

Jobless claims total falls to 385K

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell last week by 14,000 to 385,000, more evidence that the economy and the job market are rebounding briskly from the coronavirus recession.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that unemployment claims—a proxy for layoffs—dropped last week from a revised 399,000 the week before. The applications have more or less fallen steadily since topping 900,000 in early January. Still, they remain high by historic levels: Before the pandemic slammed the United States in March 2020, they were coming in at around 220,000 a week.

Since cratering in the spring of 2020, the U.S. economy has bounced back as the rollout of vaccines encourages businesses to reopen or return to normal operating hours and consumers to return to shops, restaurants and bars. The United States has been adding more than 540,000 jobs a month this year, and the Labor Department's July jobs report out Friday is expected to show it tacked on nearly 863,000 more last month, according to a survey of economists by the data firm FactSet.

The U.S. economy is still 6.8 million jobs short of where it stood in February 2020.

Companies are posting job openings—a record 9.2 million in May—faster than applicants are showing up to fill them. Many states have responded to business complaints of a labor shortage by ending expanded federal unemployment benefits meant to ease financial strains from the health crisis, including an extra \$300 a week on top of traditional state benefits. The federal benefits are scheduled to expire nationwide Sept. 6.

Altogether, 13 million Americans were receiving some type of unemployment aid the week of July 17, down from 13.2 million the previous week and 32 million a year earlier.

The health crisis isn't over. COVID-19 cases are rising as the highly contagious delta variant spreads, largely among the unvaccinated. The United States is reporting an average of more than 70,000 new cases a day, up from fewer than 12,000 a day in late June.

So far, the uptick in cases hasn't had noticeable economic consequences. "The surge in Covid cases related to the delta variant is unlikely to cause a renewed spike in joblessness as there have been few shutdowns so far," Contingent Macro Advisors said in a research note.

Biden seeks to boost fuel economy to thwart rollback

By TOM KRISHER
Associated Press

DETROIT — The Biden administration wants automakers to raise gas mileage and cut tailpipe pollution between now and model year 2026, and it has won a voluntary commitment Thursday from the industry that electric vehicles will comprise up to half of U.S. sales by the end of the decade.

The moves are big steps toward President Joe Biden's pledge to cut emissions and battle climate change as he pushes a history-making shift in the U.S. from internal combustion engines to battery-powered vehicles. They also reflect a delicate balance to gain both industry and union support for the environmental effort, with the future promise of new jobs and billions in new federal investments in electric vehicles.

The administration on Thursday

announced there would be new mileage and anti-pollution standards from the Environmental Protection Agency and Transportation Department, part of Biden's goal to cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030. It said the auto industry had agreed to a target that 40% to 50% of new vehicle sales be electric by 2030.

Both the regulatory standards and the voluntary target will be included in an executive order that Biden plans to sign.

The standards, which have to go through the regulatory process including public comments, would reverse fuel economy and anti-pollution rollbacks done under President Donald Trump. At that time, the increases were reduced to 1.5% annually through model year 2026.

Still, it remained to be seen how quickly consumers would be willing to embrace higher mileage, lower-

emission vehicles over less fuel-efficient SUVs, currently the industry's top seller. The 2030 EV targets ultimately are nonbinding, and the industry stressed that billions of dollars in electric-vehicle investments in legislation pending in Congress will be vital to meeting those goals.

Only 2.2% of new vehicle sales were fully electric vehicles through June, according to Edmunds.com estimates. That's up from 1.4% at the same time last year.

The White House didn't release information on the proposed annual mileage increases late Wednesday, but Dan Becker, director of the safe climate campaign for the Center for Biological Diversity, said an EPA official gave the numbers during a presentation on the plan.

The official said the standards would be 10% more stringent than the Trump rules for model year 2023, followed by 5% increases in

each model year through 2026, according to Becker. That's about a 25% increase over the four years.

Last week, The Associated Press and other news organizations reported that the Biden administration was discussing weaker mileage requirements with automakers, but they apparently have been strengthened. The change came after environmental groups complained publicly that they were too weak to address a serious problem.

Transportation is the single biggest U.S. contributor to climate change. Autos in the U.S. spewed 824 million tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide in 2019, about 14% of total U.S. emissions, according to the EPA.

The voluntary deal with automakers defines an electric vehicle as plug-in hybrids, fully electric vehicles and those powered by hydrogen fuel cells.

NATION

Wildfire destroys much of Calif. Gold Rush town

BY NOAH BERGER

Associated Press

GREENVILLE — A wind-driven wildfire tore through a Northern California mountain town, leaving much of the downtown in ashes as crews braced for another explosive run of flames in the midst of dangerous weather.

The Dixie Fire, swollen by bone-dry vegetation and 40 mph gusts, raged through the northern Sierra Nevada town of Greenville on Wednesday evening. A gas station, hotel and bar were among many structures gutted in the town, which dates to California's Gold Rush era and has some buildings more than a century old.

"We did everything we could," fire spokesman Mitch Matlow said. "Sometimes it's just not enough."

As the fire's north and eastern sides exploded, the Plumas County Sheriff's Office issued a Facebook posting warning the town's approximately 800 residents: "You are in imminent danger and you MUST leave now!"

The 3-week-old blaze was the state's largest wildfire and had blackened well over 435 square miles, burning dozens of homes before making its new run.

Early in the week, some 5,000 firefighters had made progress on the blaze, saving some threatened homes, bulldozing pockets of unburned vegetation and managing to surround a third of the perimeter.

More fire engines and bulldozers were being ordered to bolster the fight, Matlow said. On Wednesday, the fire grew by



NOAH BERGER/AP

A street sign stands in central Greenville as the Dixie Fire tears through Plumas County, Calif., on Wednesday.

thousands of acres and an additional 4,000 people were ordered to evacuate, bringing nearly 26,500 people in several counties under evacuation orders, he said.

Red flag weather conditions of high heat, low humidity and gusty afternoon and evening winds erupted Wednesday and were expected to remain a continued threat through Thursday

evening.

The trees, grass and brush were so dry that "if an ember lands, you're virtually guaranteed to start a new fire," Matlow said.

The blaze was running parallel to a canyon area that served as a chimney, making it so hot that it created enormous pyrocumulus columns of smoke. These clouds bring chaotic winds, making a

fire "critically erratic" so it's hard to predict the direction of growth, he added.

Dawn Garofalo fled with a dog and two horses from a friend's property near Greenville, and watched the soaring cloud grow from the west side of Lake Almanor.

"There's only one way in and one way out," she said. "I didn't want to be stuck up there if the

fire came through."

From her campsite on the dry lake bed, she watched the fire glowing on the horizon before dawn.

To the south, Cal Fire said between 35 and 40 homes and other structures burned in the fast-moving River Fire that broke out Wednesday near Colfax and swelled to more than 2 square miles within hours. There was no containment and thousands of people are under evacuation orders in Placer and Nevada counties.

And about 150 miles to the west of the Dixie Fire, the lightning-sparked McFarland Fire threatened remote homes along the Trinity River in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The fire was only 5% contained after burning through nearly 25 square miles of drought-stricken vegetation.

Similar risky weather was expected across Southern California, where heat advisories and warnings were issued for interior valleys, mountains and deserts for much of the week.

Heat waves and historic drought tied to climate change have made wildfires harder to fight in America's West. Scientists say climate change has made the region much warmer and drier in the past 30 years and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive.

More than 20,000 firefighters and support personnel were battling 97 large, active wildfires covering 2,919 square miles in 13 U.S. states, the National Interagency Fire Center said.

Population at immigrant detention centers doubles since February

Associated Press

WINNFIELD, La. — Alexander Martinez says he fled from homophobia, government persecution and the notorious MS-13 gang in El Salvador only to run into abuse and harassment in America's immigration detention system.

Since crossing the border illegally in April, the 28-year-old has bounced between six different facilities in three states. He said he faced racist taunts and abuse from guards, contracted COVID-19 and was harassed by fellow detainees for being gay.

"I find myself emotionally unstable because I have suffered a lot in detention," Martinez said last week at Winn Correctional Center in Louisiana. "I never imagined or expected to receive this inhumane treatment."

He's among a growing number of people in immigration deten-

tion centers nationwide, many of whom, like Martinez, have cleared their initial screening to seek asylum in the United States.

The number of detainees has more than doubled since the end of February, to nearly 27,000 as of July 22, according to the most recent data from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. That's above the roughly 22,000 detained last July under then-President Donald Trump, though it's nowhere close to the record in August 2019, when the number of detainees exceeded 55,000, ICE data shows.

The rising detentions is a sore point for President Joe Biden's pro-immigration allies, who hoped he would reverse his predecessor's hardline approach. Biden campaigned on ending "prolonged" detention and use of private prisons for immigration de-




tention, which house the majority of those in ICE custody.

"We're at this really strange moment with him," said Silky Shah, executive director of Detention Watch Network, which advocates for ending immigration detention outright. "There's still time to turn things around, but his policies so far haven't matched his campaign rhetoric."


In May, the Biden administration terminated contracts with two controversial ICE detention centers — one in Georgia and another in Massachusetts — getting praise from advocates who hoped it would be the start of a broader rollback.

But no other facilities have lost their ICE contracts, and Biden has proposed funding for 32,500 immigrant detention beds in his budget, a modest decrease from 34,000 funded by Trump.

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WORLD

Israel defense minister threatens Iran with military action

Associated Press

TEL AVIV — Israel's defense minister warned Thursday that his country is prepared to strike Iran, issuing the threat against the Islamic Republic after a fatal drone strike on an oil tanker at sea that his nation blamed on Tehran.

The comments by Benny Gantz come as Israel meanwhile lobbies countries for action at the United Nations over last week's attack on the oil tanker Mercer Street that killed two people. The tanker,

struck off Oman in the Arabian Sea, is managed by a firm owned by an Israeli billionaire.

The United States and the United Kingdom similarly blamed Iran for the attack, but no country has offered evidence or intelligence to support their claims. Iran, which has launched similar drone attacks along with its regional militia allies, has denied being involved.

Speaking to the news website Ynet, Gantz responded to whether Israel was prepared to attack Iran

with a blunt "yes."

"We are at a point where we need to take military action against Iran," Gantz said. "The world needs to take action against Iran now."

Iran did not immediately respond to Gantz's comments. In a letter Wednesday to the U.N. Security Council, however, its chargé d'affaires in New York described Israel as "the main source of instability and insecurity in the Middle East and beyond for more than seven decades."

"This regime has a long dark record in attacking commercial navigation and civilian ships," Zahra Ershadi wrote. "In less than two years, this regime has attacked over 10 commercial vessels carrying oil and humanitarian goods destined to Syria."

Ershadi's comments refer to an ongoing shadow war being waged on Mideast waterways since 2019 that has seen both Iranian and Western-linked ships attacked.

Last week's attack killed the ves-

sel's Romanian captain as well as a British crew member who worked for Ambrey, a maritime security firm. In a statement Thursday, Ambrey identified the victim as Adrian Underwood, a former British Army soldier who started at the firm as a maritime security officer in 2020 before becoming a team leader.

"We continue to be in contact with Adrian's family to offer support at this sad and difficult time," said John Thompson, Ambrey's management director.

Australia to spend \$813M to address Indigenous disadvantage

Associated Press

CANBERRA — Australia's government on Thursday pledged \$813 million to address Indigenous disadvantage, including compensation to thousands of mixed-race children who were taken from their families over decades.

The \$279.7 million to be used to compensate the so-called Stolen Generations by 2026 is the most expensive component of the package aimed at boosting Indigenous living standards in Australia.

The compensation of up to \$55,400 in a lump sum plus up to \$5,200 for expenses such as psychological counseling will only be available to mixed-race children who had been under direct federal government control in the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory and Jervis Bay Territory.

Most members of the Stolen Generations had been under state government control when they were separated from their Indige-

nous mothers under decades of assimilation policies that ended as recently as the 1970s.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the compensation was a recognition of the harm caused by forced removal of children from families.

"This is a long-called-for step recognizing the bond between healing, dignity, and the health and well-being of members of the Stolen Generations, their families and their communities," Morrison told Parliament.

"To say formally not just that we're deeply sorry for what happened, but that we will take responsibility for it," Morrison added.

Pat Turner, the Northern Territory-based Indigenous chief executive officer of the National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation, welcomed the compensation, which was recommended in 1997 by a government inquiry into the Stolen Generations.

"Many of our people have passed, including my mother, so it's a sad day for those who have passed, but it's a good day for those who have survived," Turner said. Turner's mother Emma Turner had been taken from her own mother in the 1920s and they didn't reunite until the 1970s.

"It will never replace growing up with family, you can never replace that," she added. "I hope this will give some relief to the survivors of the Stolen Generations."

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WEEKEND



Streets of Rage 4 gets even better
Video games, Page 18



Goodbye, girlhood

How Billie Eilish learned to stop worrying and love the blond

Page 28; 'Happier Than Ever' review, Page 29

DARKROOM, INTERSCOPE RECORDS/AP

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

The oldest, simplest computer fix there is — turning a device off then back on again — can thwart hackers.

Protect your 'digital soul'

Turn off, turn on: Simple step can thwart top phone hackers

By ALAN SUDERMAN
Associated Press

As a member of the secretive Senate Intelligence Committee, Sen. Angus King has reason to worry about hackers. At a briefing by security staff this year, he said he got some advice on how to help keep his cellphone secure.

Step One: Turn off phone.

Step Two: Turn it back on.

That's it. At a time of widespread digital insecurity, it turns out that the oldest and simplest computer fix there is — turning a device off then back on again — can thwart hackers from stealing information from smartphones.

Regularly rebooting phones won't stop the army of cybercriminals or spy-for-hire firms that have sowed chaos and doubt about the ability to keep any information safe and private in our digital lives. But it can make even the most sophisticated hackers work harder to maintain access and steal data from a phone.

"This is all about imposing cost on these malicious actors," said Neal Ziring, technical director of the National Security Agency's cybersecurity directorate.

The NSA issued a "best practices" guide for mobile device security last year in which it recommends rebooting a phone every week as a way to stop hacking.

King, an independent from Maine, says rebooting his phone is now part of his routine.

"I'd say probably once a week, whenever I think of it," he said.

Almost always in arm's reach, rarely turned off and holding huge stores of personal and sensitive data, cellphones have become top targets for hackers looking to steal text messages, contacts and photos, as well as track users' locations and even secretly turn on their video and microphones.

"I always think of phones as like our digital soul," said Patrick Wardle, a security expert and former NSA researcher.

The number of people whose phones are hacked each year is unknowable, but evidence suggests it's significant. A recent investigation into phone hacking by a global media consortium has caused political uproars in France, India, Hungary and elsewhere after researchers found scores of journalists, human rights activists and politicians on a leaked list of what were believed to be potential targets of an Israeli hacker-for-hire company.

The advice to periodically reboot a phone reflects, in part, a change in how top hackers are gaining access to mobile devices and the rise of so-called "zero-click" exploits that work without any user interaction instead of trying to get users to open something that's secretly infected.

"There's been this evolution away from having a target click on a dodgy link," said Bill Marczak, a senior researcher at Citizen Lab, an internet civil rights watchdog at the University of Toronto.

Typically, once hackers gain access, they look for ways to persist in the system by installing malicious software to a computer's root file system. But that's become more difficult as phone manufacturers such as Apple and Google manage to block malware from core operating systems, Ziring said.

"It's very difficult for an attacker to burrow into that layer in order to gain persistence," he said.

That encourages hackers to opt for "in-memory payloads" that are harder to detect and trace back to whomever sent them. Such hacks can't survive a reboot, but often don't need to since many people rarely turn their phones off.

"Adversaries came to the realization they don't need to persist," Wardle said. "If they could do a one-time pull and exfiltrate all your chat messages and your contact and your passwords, it's almost game over anyways, right?"

The NSA's guide also acknowledges that rebooting a phone works only sometimes. The agency's guide for mobile devices has an even simpler piece of advice to really make sure hackers aren't secretly turning on your phone's camera or microphone to record you: don't carry it with you.

GADGETS

Lenovo ThinkPad X1 Nano laptop speedy, easy to use

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

I'm an Apple/Mac guy, always have been and probably always will be. But the Lenovo ThinkPad X1 Nano laptop more than caught my attention.

The ThinkPad X1 Nano was pitched to me for testing by a Lenovo representative as a featherweight powerhouse that delivers the most complete ultralight laptop package today. They added that it has high performance, a brilliant display, incredible audio and future-proof connectivity, and that it is the ideal laptop for the work-from-anywhere professional.

My thoughts on that statement after using the ThinkPad X1 Nano: It is, and it does. And it's great. It's built for just about any user, including business/office/meeting users or everyday users in households moving it from room to room.

While at work the other day I was bragging to a co-worker (who is also one of those Apple people) about this laptop, and the first question was, "why?"

Well, I'll tell you why. After plugging it in with a USB-C powered connection — full disclosure, I used my MacBook Pro USB-C power adapter — it powered on instantly, let me connect to my Wi-Fi, and I started browsing in just seconds.

Obviously a small task like that shouldn't be hard for a new computer, but the ease and speed were a great first impression. In general, browsing, watching videos and email was smooth sailing. With a YouTube concert video playing in the background, the ThinkPad X1 didn't slow down a bit while multitasking.

There are a lot of critical features you need to consider when buying a laptop, with the physical size being at the top of most lists. My nice and portable test unit has a 13-inch non-touchscreen 16:10 display with a classic black case (11.53-by-8.18-by-0.66 inches) and weighs about 2 pounds.

The display is 2K (2160 x 1350-pixel) IPS with anti-glare and Dolby Vision, and plays videos crystal clear. They also sound pretty good from the

internal Dolby Atmos quad speaker-system. Or since the laptop has Bluetooth 5.2, it's easy to pair to your speakers.

Running the show inside is an 11th Gen Intel Core i5-1130G7 processor, a 256 GB SSD hard drive, 16 GB of RAM and Windows 10 Pro 64 as the operating system. The power button was on the right side and two Thunderbolt ports are on the left, along with a 3.5 mm headphone connection.

The keyboard is a standard layout for laptops with a red rubber pointing stick in the center. Below the keyboard is a 3.9-by-2.3-inch trackpad, left and right clicks, fingerprint reader, and sound comes from the speaker openings right above the keyboard. Any key you want to use is well-positioned and flows smoothly.

For two-way communication, the ThinkPad X1 Nano has four 360-degree microphones and a hybrid infrared 720 HD web camera, and both worked well on a video conference. Just to the right of the camera is a feature I love, a built-in security webcam privacy cover. The battery life is listed as 13 hours.

Added security features include a match-on-chip fingerprint reader, human-presence detection and zero-touch login. Lenovo ThinkPads are tested for 12 military-grade requirements, which says to the user that they will have a well-built computer, enabling it to withstand extreme conditions.

You can't take it for a swim, but it should be protected if you get caught in a quick shower. It should also be able to cope with standard bumps and bangs.

Other upgrade models are available with processors, display, memory and other features.

I'm still an Apple/Mac guy, but the ThinkPad X1 did get me thinking.

Online: lenovo.com (starting at \$1,133.55)



Lenovo
ThinkPad
X1 Nano
LENOVO/TNS

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Warner Bros. Pictures photos

Director James Gunn has gathered a perfectly ragtag bunch of supervillains to save the world in Warner Bros. Pictures' superhero action adventure "The Suicide Squad."

The more unlikely, the better

Director James Gunn assembles a motley 'Suicide Squad' crew

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Could a scoundrel DC Comics character like Peacemaker ever be on the same level as Superman? How about Polka-Dot Man? Or Ratcatcher?

The man who made Rocket Raccoon, Groot and Star-Lord household names thinks so. James Gunn can't help it: He loves an outsider. It's the reason why when offered the chance to make a movie with any DC character he wanted, he chose not Superman but the misfits of "The Suicide Squad."

Never mind that there was a terribly reviewed "Suicide Squad" movie released just five years ago. Gunn, a life-long fan of the good-for-nothing supervillains, had his own vision: It would be a mash-up of genres and pay homage to 1960s war capers. He'd dust off some obscure, deep-cut DC supervillains that no casual moviegoer would ever be expected to know and get a giant alien starfish villain named Starro in the mix.

Warner Bros. said yes. And it wouldn't have to be PG-13, either.

Though bold, it's not entirely surprising: Not only had Gunn turned the "Guardians of the Galaxy" into A-list Avengers, he was also at the time (suddenly and briefly) a free agent. While David Ayer's 2016 "Suicide Squad" might have been a critical disaster, it was still a financial hit. In other words, a second movie, regardless of whether it was a sequel, a reboot, a re-do, or none of those things (which this is) was not out of the question.

Yes, it features some of the same actors playing the same characters, like Margot Robbie's Harley Quinn, Joel



Idris Elba and writer/director James Gunn confer on the set of "The Suicide Squad." Gunn had a vision for what he wanted the movie to look like and from start to finish was able to see that vision fulfilled.

SEE SQUAD ON PAGE 16

WEEKEND: MOVIES

A delightful do-over

There's life after 'Suicide Squad' for Gunn's unruly, murderous band in 'The Suicide Squad'

By JUSTIN CHANG
Los Angeles Times

There's a lesson to be learned from "The Suicide Squad," a movie otherwise blissfully devoid of lessons. Emerging from this scuzzy cinematic joy-bomb from the DC Extended Universe, I found myself marveling — ahem, wondering — at how you can take one of the worst movies of its kind, jettison most of the key players, jack up the violence to R-rated levels, add a definite article to the title, throw in a giant extraterrestrial starfish and wind up with something that, if not a masterpiece, certainly feels like one by comparison. After 2016's ugly, bludgeoning "Suicide Squad," I couldn't imagine liking — and could barely stomach the idea of seeing — another movie called "Suicide Squad." I'm delighted to be proven wrong.

Less a sequel than a do-over, "The Suicide Squad" is the latest film written and directed by James Gunn, crossing over to the DC side of the superhero cosmos after having churned out two "Guardians of the Galaxy" movies for Marvel. Those pictures, with their trippy colors, surreal misadventures and goofy intergalactic misfits, turned out to be a useful warm-up

for a story about a much more unruly and murderous band of outsiders. Or perhaps I should say insiders, since most of them — like the ironically named Peacemaker (John Cena), the less ironically named Bloodsport (Idris Elba) and the cheerfully deranged Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie) — are behind bars when they're coerced into joining a top-secret U.S. government operation so dangerous that only the worst of humanity need apply.

That fight-evil-with-evil strategy is a holdover from the earlier movie, though the final makeup of this movie's Task Force X is a bit of a mystery at first. Without divulging too much, I'll just note that Gunn's use of misdirection is the kind of sly joke that cuts to the heart of this movie's flippant, borderline-obnoxious charm. In a film about a bunch of ultra-violent super-baddies, it's only right that some of them should be treated as genuinely expendable.

And speaking of expendable: Yes, those are Sylvester Stallone's grunts emanating from the jaws of King Shark (played by Steve Agee), an enormous human-selachimorph hybrid who proves a crucial addition to the task force. The likelihood that he'll chomp down on his comrades is



WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AP

From left: Margot Robbie, Daniela Melchior, Idris Elba and David Dastmalchian are supervillains tasked with defeating evil in a scene from "The Suicide Squad."

one of those pesky logistical hurdles the movie breezily kicks aside as it rounds up its dirty not-quite dozen, starting with a (relatively) level-headed leader, Col. Rick Flag (Joel Kinnaman, making more of an impression than in the first "Squad"). There's also a soulful rodent whisperer named Ratcatcher II (a luminous Daniela Melchior) and a walking Twister board named Polka-Dot Man (David Dastmalchian), who kills people by pelting them with tiny, bright-colored explosives.

The team's destination is the South American island nation of Corto Maltese, where they must take down a modern-day Mengele figure (Peter Capaldi) who's carrying out some hideous, potentially world-threatening human experiments. They'll also have to join forces with a brave rebel insurgency (led by Alice Bra-

ga) in order to take down the island's staunchly anti-American government.

Mostly, they'll have to grapple with their own team dynamics, which — thanks to a terrific ensemble and a deft balance of brains, heart and other viscera — turn out to be rather more involving than expected.

Psychotic, battle-weary and devoid of compassion as they may be, these merry professional killers aren't entirely dead inside. By the same token, Gunn's in-souciant swagger isn't entirely devoid of warmth or sentimentality, and the bonds of kinship that emerge between comrades — warm little cracks in the movie's nihilistic facade — can't help but sneak their way into your own affections.

"The Suicide Squad" is rated R for strong violence and gore, language throughout, some sexual references, drug use and brief graphic nudity. Running time: 132 minutes. Now playing in select theaters and streaming on HBO Max.

Squad: Gunn brings his superhero vision to life

FROM PAGE 15

Kinnaman's Rick Flag, Viola Davis' Amanda Waller and Jai Courtney's Boomerang. But as Robbie said, Gunn's "The Suicide Squad," now in theaters and streaming on HBO Max, is "just a different thing," even if it does essentially bear the same name.

Otherwise, the similarities are few. Gunn's vision is irreverent, sincere, bombastic, vibrant, unexpectedly emotional and very R-rated.

"This movie is not a family film," Gunn said. "My dad would take me to see this movie if I was 12 or 13, and I don't think it would be a big deal. But if you get younger than that, it's kind of weird."

And already it has one big advantage over Ayer's: The reviews are stellar.

"The Suicide Squad" is something no one's ready for, but everybody needs," said John Cena. "Everyone will leave the theater satisfied."

The WWE star plays Peacemaker, a deranged Captain America type who will proudly "kill any man, woman or child" to maintain the peace.

Part of that might have to do with the fact that Gunn, who wrote and directed, had free reign to do whatever he wanted, which included killing off any character he wanted.

"James really knew what he wanted to make, and from the pitch to the script to the pre-production, it never deviated," said producer Charles Roven.

That involved assembling both characters and actors that didn't make immediate sense together.

"It does have this postmodern vibe," Gunn said. "Each of these superheroes came from a different genre. Bloodsport is sort of a grim, dark thing and Polka-Dot Man is from some goofy old cartoon and Peacemaker's from a dumb '70s TV show and Ratcatcher is from almost like a 'Saw' type of movie or something. And they're all coming together. The actors were like that, too. They all have their own styles and different ways of going about it. And it really is my job as a director to make them all on the same page."

He called on some of his mainstays, like Nathan Fillion, with whom he's been friends since Gunn's debut "Slither," and Michael Rooker, with whom he clicked on "Guardians." Even Sylvester Stallone (also in "Guardians") agreed to voice the dim-witted, flesh-eating King Shark. But Gunn didn't just go with safe choices. He also cast an unknown Portuguese actor in her first American film, Daniela Melchior, as an unknown villain: Ratcatcher II. And already she's

being singled out as making a breakthrough.

For Bloodsport, a sharpshooter character that would require not just action know-how but comedic acumen, he enlisted Idris Elba. And it was a welcome departure for the actor.

"I was a fan of his and he was a fan of my potential. He wanted me to play a character that he hadn't seen me play," Elba said. "I've been trying to do some comedy for years and never get a shot. I don't know what it is about me. I'm really goofy. I dad-joke everyone to death."

Cena came aboard as Peacemaker, who spars frequently with Bloodsport. Their banter, Cena said, "came naturally."

"He's extremely witty," Cena said. "He has that kind of a UK flavor, and I'm so much more over the top that it really does go together well."

Everyone got along famously. It's part of Gunn's process to ensure he's enlisting a group of decent humans. He even called his ex-wife, Jenna Fischer, who'd worked with Elba briefly on "The Office" to make sure the actor wasn't a jerk. (Fischer had only lovely things to say about Elba).

"It's an interesting thing when you have a big group of often big personalities put together to see how that balances out," Robbie said. She described their dynam-



Warner Bros. Pictures

From left: David Dastmalchian, John Cena, Idris Elba and Daniela Melchior are part of the overstuffed cast of "The Suicide Squad," now in theaters and streaming on HBO Max.

ic as "a lot of laughing, joking."

"I think that's why a lot of those scenes feel so real and fun. It was also like that in between takes and when we weren't shooting. It was a really, really good group," she said.

"The Suicide Squad" was an epic production, too, boasting the biggest sets in Warner Bros. history. (This from the studio behind modern epics like "Harry Potter" and "The Dark Knight.")

They even finished on time and under budget. And, over the pandemic, Gunn squeezed in a Peacemaker spin-off miniseries for HBO Max.

It's why Gunn has gotten so much freedom from some of the biggest shops in the movie busi-

ness. He was even rehired on "Guardians 3" (which he's been working on nonstop on the weekends). He doesn't mind if there's some extra pressure now because of the successes.

"I love taking actors that people don't know — people like Daniela Melchior or even Chris Pratt back when that was happening, or Pom Klementieff — and putting them on the worldwide stage, getting people to see how great they are. I love taking songs by people ... like K. Flay and Grandson ... and putting it on a grand stage," Gunn said. "I love the idea that everybody has purpose and everybody has meaning, no matter how insignificant you feel."

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

60 years old and still kicking derriere

Van Damme more at ease, confident in new film, action comedy 'The Last Mercenary'

BY MICHAEL ORDONA
Los Angeles Times

Ever since the jaw-dropping paradigm shift of 2009's "JCVD," viewers have been forced to re-evaluate Jean-Claude Van Damme, aka the "Muscles from Brussels." That 2009 film riffed off Van Damme's real-life tribulations (including drug addiction, divorce and career valleys) to craft an unexpectedly effective drama. Not to say he's going to be playing Willy Loman anytime soon (though why not? "Death by a Salesman"?), but it's possible those life experiences have deepened his work. And not to read too much into the new, often-silly action comedy "The Last Mercenary," but the now-60-year-old has become a pleasure to watch.

In the French production, he plays Richard Brumere, a former top black ops guy who is now essentially a superhero for hire. The savvy, sometimes meta comedy introduces Richard in a classic Van Damme pose to get the fans cheering (later, Richard walks into a room with a "Bloodsport" poster on the wall and comments that its star — one Jean-Claude Van Damme — is a "real man"). In a fair example of how the movie balances action with straight-up comedy, while Richard



NETFLIX/TNS

Jean-Claude Van Damme plays an ex black ops guy for hire in "The Last Mercenary."

fights bad guys in the foreground in that first scene, there's some pretty funny physical comedy stumbling about in the background.

By the way, the trailer and one-sheet don't seem to be aware "Last Mercenary" is a comedy, but c'est la guerre.

Meanwhile, there's a "Scarface"-obsessed bad guy (Nassim Si Ahmed) getting

away with crimes in broad daylight because he's identified as "Archibald Al Mahmoud," who apparently has some very special legal immunity. The real Archie (Samir Decazza) turns out to be Richard's estranged son, an unassuming slacker with none of the physical prowess of the father he never knew and no awareness of Richard's legendary feats of der-

ring-do. When Richard learns that his son's immunity has been canceled, he has to return to France from abroad to protect him as a larger, arms-dealing plot unfolds. Some hilarity does ensue.

The plot chugs along with no surprises, but that's beside the point. While it's not exactly a laugh riot, the film's humor tends to land. The supporting cast amuses, especially Assa Sylla as no-nonsense friend Dalila and Alban Ivanov as bumbling, earnest bureaucrat Alexandre. Focused, fierce and funny Sylla, one of the stars of Celine Sciamma's acclaimed "Girlhood," looks like one to watch. Venerable stars such as Miou-Miou and Valerie Kaprisky also appear in small but important roles.

The action, at its best, touches the lower rung of the Jackie Chan ladder of elaborate set-piece wackiness. It's enjoyable to see Van Damme still kicking derriere (though it may be a stunt double doing much of that kicking these days).

There's an ease, a confidence in Van Damme's screen presence now that lends itself beautifully to a Zohan-like, seemingly infallible warrior who gets into absurd situations in easily penetrable disguises. The veteran performer looks like he's having a whale of a time going from this mustache to that wig or this dress, which makes the gags all the more amusing.

All in all, it's a hit for those looking for light, silly action fun.

"The Last Mercenary" is unrated. Running time: 110 minutes. Now streaming on Netflix.

'Nine Days' a philosophical look at meaning of life

BY KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

In his feature film debut "Nine Days," writer/director Edson Oda takes on nothing less than life itself. Of course, all films are about life itself, but in this spiritually and philosophically complex piece, Oda situates the story at the nexus of existence, in a story that poses the question: Who gets born and why?

In a dusty, remote, desert location, where it always seems to be twilight, a serious man goes about his work. Will (Winston Duke) studies a bank of televisions, dutifully recording video tapes and taking notes. He's watching the lives of others through their own eyes, as they are born, grow up, become the people who they are. These are souls he's selected for life, and he watches, silently, without intervention. One day, moments before she's due to perform a violin concerto, a young woman named Amanda (Lisa Starrett) drives her car into a wall and dies. And now, Will must get to his real work, selecting a new candidate for life.

Over the course of nine days, Will interviews a group of souls who are hoping to be granted a



SONY PICTURES CLASSICS/TNS

Zazie Beetz appears in a scene from "Nine Days" as Emma, one of the souls Will (Winston Duke) interviews for a chance at life on earth. Unlike the other candidates, however, she turns the tables back on Will, asking him questions of her own.

life on earth, including Alexander (Tony Hale), Kane (Bill Skarsgard), Mike (David Rysdahl), Maria (Arianna Ortiz) and Anne (Perry Smith). He poses

ethical questions and has them watch footage of the lives he's shepherding and notate their observations. It's unclear what criterion he's using to determine

who should be able to live, a question that bedevils the candidates as he cuts them loose one by one. They plead with him for a second chance, or even just an answer, which he withholds, frustratingly.

But it becomes clear, as well, that Will is going through his own reckoning with life himself. He's grieving Amanda, searching for answers in the footage, which troubles his assistant of sorts, Kyo (Benedict Wong). And the presence of one of the candidates, Emma (Zazie Beetz), disrupts his procedures. Emma is not content to merely answer Will's questions; she wants to ask them, too, and when posed with "why?" Will finds himself, if not at a loss, paralyzed with doubt.

Oda, too, does not offer up any easy answers, and "Nine Days" presents almost as many questions as Emma does. They are questions about the nature of being, about what makes life worth living, about the risks and rewards of feeling deeply. It's not often you see a film that's so nakedly philosophical about what it means to live and how to do it best, and eventually, ethical scenarios are swept away by emotional outpourings.

"Nine Days" is also an exploration of our own relationship to cinema, the flickering images from the projector, or through the fuzz of TV static, that can capture, express or otherwise communicate something about life to a viewer. At its best, cinema can impart some wisdom about existence, a process that we witness the candidates go through during their selection, taking in small moments from each life and learning, or feeling, something new.

In this many-layered metaphorical exploration of existence, Oda announces himself as a filmmaker with a unique vision and voice, and allows his star (and producer), Duke, to demonstrate his chops beyond the genre pleasures of "Black Panther" and "Us." By withholding easy resolutions or platitudes, Oda allows "Nine Days" to be a vessel through which viewers can fundamentally wrestle with themselves about what it means to live life, and what it means to witness life on screen, and in the moment. These are, indeed, pressing questions, now more than ever.

"Nine Days" is rated R for language. Running time: 124 minutes. Now playing in select theaters.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



Photos by Lizardcube

Mr. X Nightmare downloadable content upgrade for Streets of Rage 4 allows players to earn special power-up items that give their characters enhanced special skills and introduces three new fighters for players to choose from. The DLC can be added for an additional \$8.

Improving on perfection

New Streets of Rage 4 update turns fighters into gods, making a great game even better

By GENE PARK
The Washington Post

While playing the new content for Streets of Rage 4, my fighter, Cherry Hunter, picked up a new power-up item during a break between matches. Sadly, it was obscured by the scattered weapons, so I didn't see what power I received. No matter, I thought, I would just see what the next round entails.

Turns out, it infused Cherry's punches with lightning. My favorite fighter in last year's exceptional beat-'em-up game had been gaining god-like powers for a few rounds now. Her electric guitar now also shot flames, her heavy punches could poison people, and now every last punch or kick of hers was going to be super-charged with lightning.

Cherry and I jammed our way through 22 rounds of ever-escalating goon mobs and environmental challenges before we were finally beaten down by the inevitable overwhelming swarm of other similarly supercharged enemies. But it wasn't for naught. Besides having a total blast, Cherry also gained enough experience to unlock a new version of her dash attack, letting her slide across the floor on her knees like a rock star paying homage to The Who.

The new mode in the Mr. X Nightmare DLC, released last month, seems a bit thin in concept. It's just an endless horde mode. But LizardCube, Dotemu and GuardCrush Games have created an insidious gameplay loop that will be familiar to any fans of Hades or recent hits in the rogue-like genre.

As your chosen fighter progresses through each wave, you're given the option to pick one of either two or three pow-



The Mr. X Nightmare update makes the beat-'em-up gameplay of Streets of Rage 4 even more playable with power-ups that can turn a player's fighters into virtual gods.

er-up items. These are almost uniformly a net positive for you, like the aforementioned lightning kicks and poison punches. There's a small sense of risk and reward. Some of these powers will increase your damage output by 100 percent, but you also take damage by that same amount. However, it's all but guaranteed that by the end of your run, your street fighter is going to feel as powerful as the Doom Slayer.

Even if you fail, and you inevitably will in an infinitely replayable mode, it's not a waste of time. All 15 characters get new special moves, unlockable by using the characters in this new Survival mode. Even if you lose quickly, it'll add to each character's small experience meter. The base game's initial cast of four, as well as the three new additions, each get a whopping six new moves, while the Streets of Rage 1, 2 and 3 Sega Genesis versions get between one or three new moves each.

This adds a new reward feedback loop for what would otherwise be a side content distraction, all of which feeds into the main gameplay experience. Beyond this motivation to unlock more permanent abilities, these moves somewhat address a smaller complaint about the otherwise excellent 2020 brawler. Because of its adherence and reverence to old-school beat-'em-up gameplay, many of the characters didn't have more "modern" abilities like rolling, dodging or running. My favorite fighter, Cherry, was the only character from the main game who could run.

But now with these unlockable moves, the bearlike brute Axel can do a forward roll that sets the ground aflame. It's not only a debilitating attack that combos easily with his base move set, but it gives him more maneuverability around each stage. And all of these moves can be used to improve your Survival run, too.

All of this adds a surprising new layer of

customization, depth and strategy to a game that already felt complete when it released last year. Streets of Rage 4 was not only one of the greatest games of 2020, but it's perhaps the finest example in the genre to date. That's no small feat considering the franchise history and the genre pedigree. Now these indie studios have improved upon what was already a near-perfect product. There are also new music tracks and Survival-only levels that evoke the past games to a remarkable degree, often bringing back long-lost enemy characters from the original Genesis trilogy.

It's to this new content's credit that I am only now talking about its stars, the three new fighters: Estel, the noble and powerful police captain; Max Thunder, the classic wrestler; and Shiva, the martial artist with long reach but who can't use weapons. Each fighter comes with a base set of new moves, along with the unlockable ones from Survival. All three characters have been requested by fans since the game released, particularly Estel, who debuted in the fourth installment as an antagonist.

The beautiful thing about beat-'em-up games is that the genre's appeal is immediate: Walk right, punch everyone along the way and feel great about it. The beauty of Mr. X Nightmare for Streets of Rage 4 is less apparent, because the original game was already packed with value. But at \$8, this trio of indie studios somehow made a far more robust and replayable package. There's little else to say besides the fact that Streets of Rage 4, as a now-complete package, has my highest possible recommendation.

Platforms: PC, Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, Xbox One

Online: streets4rage.com

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Fish fillet and a romantic breeze in Rome

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

A statue of Giordano Bruno marks the center of Campo de' Fiori — my favorite square in Rome. Five centuries ago, Bruno challenged the Roman Church and was burned at the stake right here. With each visit, I make a quiet little pilgrimage, staring into the eyes of brooding Bruno, pondering the courage of those early heretics.

When in Rome, I use Bruno as a meeting point. (I like to say, "I'll be sitting under Bruno.") Tonight, I'm waiting for my Roman friends Stefano and Paola. With each visit, they take me on a quest for restaurants to recommend in my guidebook. They've promised to take me to a little restaurant they deem perfect. When they arrive, I say *ciao* to Bruno and we walk down a narrow cobbled lane to a classic, crumpled little piazza filled with scooters. On the far side, a single eatery is all lit up. The sign above the door says "Filetti di Baccalà."

"Stefano, you're right. This is perfect." I walk ahead, navigating the gridlock of abandoned scooters to get into the restau-

rant. A long line of tables, covered with white-paper tablecloths and crowded with locals, stretches to a neon-lit kitchen in the back. And there, two grease-splattered cooks are busy cranking out *filetti di baccalà* ...

Rome's answer to fish sticks.

There's one table open near the back, past an old man in a black suit playing the violin. We limbo back and grab it. Above our table a weathered sign

reads *Specialità Filetti di Baccalà 60 lire*. The price has been revised over the years in response to the whims of the economy, peaking at 4,000 lire. Today, it's five euros. The harried waiter drops off a simple menu, listing a humble selection of appetizers and salads, but only one main course (*filetti di baccalà*) and asks, "Da bere?" ("To drink?").

Our fillet of cod is about what you'd expect at a top-notch London fish-and-chips joint. We enjoy it along with some breaded and fried zucchini, a salad of greens and a carafe of white wine. Some people might think the meal is nothing special. But buried deep in the medieval



Rick Steves



CAMERON HEWITT/Rick Steves' Europe

A statue of heretic Giordano Bruno makes an excellent meeting place, at the spot where he was burned.

center of the city, in a tarnished and varnished eatery without a tourist in sight, the ambiance is intoxicating.

The violinist plays Sinatra's "My Way" to an appreciative crowd. Eventually he makes his way to our table, standing just beyond Paola's radiant face. It's a classic Roman moment. Her dark eyes, framed by little black glasses, are locked on Stefano's.

As if only for Paola, the musician plays a Roman anthem to the night. Paola whispers to me, "This is 'Pontino' ... a special

wind, a sweet ..." brushing her hand gently along her cheek in search of the word, "... caressing Roman wind."

Then she and Stefano face the music, and with the entire room, sing the song:

Rome, don't be foolish tonight. Give me the sweet wind to let her say yes.

Turn on all the stars that you have... the brightest ones.

Give me a small flash of the moon, only for us.

Let her feel that springtime is arriving.

Give me your very best crickets to sing to her.

Give me the ponentino.

Be a partner with me.

Paola translates for me.

With the room still singing, the elegant older couple at the next table look over at us. Seeming pleased that the three of us are enjoying this traditional Roman moment, the woman says, "Bella."

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

Edible treasures add spice to souvenir shopping

For many travelers, souvenir shopping is half the fun of any trip, and even those who don't particularly enjoy it know it can sometimes be inadvisable to return empty-handed. While most are familiar with Europe's priciest must-have gifts from Norwegian wool sweaters to Italian leather handbags, a constellation of scents, spices and trinkets make the process of picking up useful and unique items for friends and family back home a joyful pursuit.

Austria: The country's southeastern region of Styria is known for its pumpkin seed oil, which is consumed and used as a beauty product. A substance known for centuries, commercial production only took off in the 1950s, when a hybrid pumpkin with a softer shell and hull-less seeds simplified production. The cold-pressed oil has a nutty taste that makes it a winner in salad dressings, desserts, and as the final refining touch to soups and other dishes. High in antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, some studies suggest the oil can help improve an enlarged prostate or overactive bladder. When touring the state of Styria, sample local specialties such as scrambled eggs with pumpkin seeds and oil or Käferbohnen, beans tossed with an apple cider vinegar and pumpkin seed oil vinaigrette. For outing ideas, see tinyurl.com/bpuuwzy8

Bulgaria: The world's largest producer of organic rose and lavender oils is the place to pick up these highly prized fragrances. Across a 90-mile strip of land in the Balkan Mountains known as Rose Valley, pink-petaled Damask roses that yield an oil likened to liquid gold bloom between May and June. Some 60,000 roses are needed to produce a single ounce of rose oil. On the first weekend of June, the town of Kazanlak holds a rose festival with traditional rose-picking, folk dancing and stalls selling rose soaps, cakes, wine and rakia, a fruit brandy.



Karen Bradbury



iStock

Pink-petaled Damask roses that grow in Bulgaria's Balkan Mountains are harvested and made into rose oil.

Denmark: It's not just Danish children who enjoy a tasty chocolate sandwich. Here, one is likely to be made of not your usual chocolate hazelnut spread but Pålægsschokolade, ultra-thin chocolate plates meant to be placed atop lightly buttered bread. Both dark rye and white bread make great underpinnings to this sweet treat Danes have been enjoying since the 1960s. Light and dark chocolate versions are available, with the former the more common of the two. Other variations on the theme include the Netherlands' Vlokken, a wavy chocolate flake, or hagelslag, known in the U.S. as jimmies or sprinkles.

France: If it's not market day, make way to an epicerie, a shop specializing in spices. Opt for fleur de sel, a type of sea salt appreciated for a crisp texture thanks to the shape of its crystals; fines herbes, a mix of tarragon, chives, chervil and parsley; herbes de Provence, a mix of marjoram, rosemary, thyme, oregano and lavender; or

bouquets garni, bundles of sage, parsley, thyme and bay leaf tied together with string. A pain d'épices spice blend of cinnamon, ginger, anise, cardamom, cloves, mace, nutmeg, coriander, anise seeds and white pepper helps to faithfully re-create French gingerbread cake and bread recipes.

Sicily: The Mediterranean island produces the world's most-prized variety of the pistachio, the pistachio verde di Bronte. The green nut thrives on the slopes of Mt. Etna. Pistachio trees produce crops every other year, and in Sicily, the harvest takes place in odd-numbered years. In addition to a flavor of gelato or the main ingredient in countless sweet treats from the bakery, pistachios can be enjoyed in the form of savory pesto sauces. To truly understand the nut's versatility, make way to Bronte's annual "Sagra del pistacchio di Bronte," held over two long weekends in late September and early October.

Spain: The essential ingredient in any good paella is saffron, and the country's biggest producer of the prized spice is the La Mancha region. Saffron comes from a purple crocus that blooms in autumn. Each flower yields only three threads that must be plucked and dried by hand, a labor-intensive process that explains the product's hefty price tag. The small town of Consuegra, about an hour's drive from Madrid, is the center of saffron production. Its annual Rose of Saffron festival, held on the last weekend of October, is enlivened by dancing, parades and competitions to see who can harvest the fastest.

Turkey: Black cumin oil, also known as black seed oil or kalonji, has a long history of culinary and medicinal use in Egypt, Tunisia and other parts of the world. It has recently gained a following as a health supplement in Europe and the USA, as it is believed to help reduce high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels. Pick some up at Istanbul's Spice Bazaar, where fragrant and colorful stalls burst with spices both familiar and exotic.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



The St. Felix monastery in Neustadt an der Waldnaab, Germany, is named after St. Felix, who was born in 1515.



The Neue Schloss, or New Castle, in Neustadt an der Waldnaab was built between 1668 and 1720.

On the QT

Address: For the city center, go to Stadtplatz 2, Neustadt ad Waldnaab 92660

Food: Available throughout the town.

Cost: Free to see the garden and use the bike trails.

Information: Online: neustadt-waldnaab.de/veranstaltungen.htm; email: tourismus@neustadt.de; Phone +49 9602/791070

Immanuel Johnson



One of the bike trails in Neustadt an der Waldnaab. The trails are also available to walkers and skaters.

A haven of bike trails and history

Take a day off just to wander Neustadt an der Waldnaab

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

One of the things I enjoy most about living in Germany are its small towns, and how the compact town centers quickly give way to nature and scenery.

Neustadt an der Waldnaab is a great example, with its historic castles and buildings not far from some of the best bike paths in this part of Bavaria. It recently celebrated its 800th anniversary and is only about 20 minutes from the Grafenwoehr Training Area, making it an easy day trip for service members.

The city is small but has enough space to park your car on a normally quiet weekend. You can start on the outskirts and explore the monastery church of St. Felix, which was long a popular pilgrimage site and today is operated by the Franciscan Minorites.

The church is dedicated to an Italian saint born in 1515, who spent his youth as a herder before turning to a religious path when he was almost 30.

Near the center of Neustadt is a free baroque garden, which centuries ago was an orchard. Today, the garden has both flowers and fruit trees.

Other historic buildings in the town include the Old Castle and the New Castle, both of which were built by the Lobkowitzers, who held sway for more than 200 years.

Close to the Church of St. George is the town museum, whose collection is highlighted by an array of glass artwork. The pieces on display testify to the skill and creativity of Neustadt artisans in the areas of glassmaking and glass cutting. The museum is normally open from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, though times may change with any coronavirus restrictions.

For an outdoors experience, the Bockl Trail stretches for 30 miles between Neustadt and Eslarn. It goes along a former railway and is open to cyclists, hikers, inline skaters, skiers and wheelchair users.

A refreshing way to top off a trip to Neustadt is with a glass of Zoigl, a local beer steeped in tradition. For rough-



PHOTOS BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

The entrance to Neustadt an der Waldnaab, Germany. Neustadt is known for its popular cycling trails.

ly six centuries, Zoigl was created in communal breweries, and northern Bavaria used to have 75 communities producing the beer.

Nowadays that number is down to five: Eslarn, Falkenberg, Mitterteich, Neuhaus and Windischeschenbach.

Neustadt an der Waldnaab is also one of 27 German municipalities with the name Neustadt, so program your GPS carefully.

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WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Big taste, small price

Sirmione's Hotel Catullo restaurant dishes delight, and so does the final bill

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

I've been vacationing in Sirmione on Lake Garda for years, enjoying the swimming, the lounging and the dining out. But this summer, I found out I'd been doing the last part wrong.

Lake Garda has loads of good restaurants, which all serve pretty much the same things: fresh fish and shellfish, various pastas, grilled meat, pizza and, for the Germans, schnitzel. I'd always liked picking one and taking a walk to get there, and I was almost always satisfied with my dinner.

But this year I noticed that I was spending more than 30 euros (\$35) for a modest meal consisting of a main dish, a salad and two tiny glasses of wine, along with the obligatory bottled water and cover charge.

This time I checked into eating at my hotel, where previously I was only getting the included breakfast. I'd heard from friends that Hotel Catullo had a terrific kitchen. The setting, on an arbor-covered patio a few feet from the lake, with glorious sunset views, was lovelier than most other restaurants on the island. But what clinched it was the price: 25 euros.

Now I was getting an appetizer, a first course, a second course, a salad and a dessert. There were always two or three choices for the first and second courses, which varied daily.

One night, the appetizer was veal slices in tuna sauce followed by pasta with either cheese sauce or with monkfish and pumpkin cream. After that came either grouper with tomato sauce, pork with red wine sauce or a salami and cheese platter. Dessert was peach mousse.

As the evenings passed, I had grilled octopus, osso bucco, pastas, fish from the lake, fried zucchini flowers, eclairs and other delights. I was getting a better, more diverse dining experience than I'd had at the other restaurants. Plus the water was free, and the wine, although not, was poured with owner Fabio's more generous hand.



Scallops and prawns Catalan style is from Hotel Catullo's a la carte menu and costs 17 euros.



PHOTOS BY NANCY MONTGOMERY/Stars and Stripes

A second course of grilled fish and shellfish at Hotel Catullo in Sirmione, Italy, where diners can order a la carte or, if they're hotel guests, can choose the more economical and equally delicious set menu.



Hotel Catullo in Sirmione, Italy, serves diners on a covered patio close to Lake Garda, where the sun still shines bright at 7 p.m. in the summer.

I also ordered off Catullo's a la carte menu, once each for lunch and dinner, and was similarly pleased with the high-quality dishes: pasta with black truffle, shrimp and avocado salad, grilled scallops and prawns. Those meals were a lot more expensive, but they were worth it as well.

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One of the features of dining at the restaurant in Hotel Catullo in Sirmione, Italy, is the view, with fabulous sunsets almost every evening.

Ristorante Catullo

Address: Piazza Flaminia, 7, 25019 Sirmione BS
Hours: Noon to 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily
Price: Appetizers and first courses are 13 to 18 euros; second courses are 16 to 24 euros. For hotel guests, 25 euros for four courses.
English menu: Yes
Information: Online: hotelcatullo.it/; info@hotelcatullo.it; Phone (+39) 030 990 5811.

Nancy Montgomery



Choosing to eat dinner from the restaurant's set menu means that dessert, such as this eclair, is included.



Pasta with cherry tomatoes is among the many dishes available at the restaurant at Hotel Catullo in Sirmione.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY JEN ROSE SMITH/For The Washington Post

Uninhabited since the 1950s, the Hornstrandir Nature Reserve, a northern peninsula of Iceland's Westfjords region, is accessible only by boat. Iceland's sole native land mammal, the Arctic fox, is protected on the reserve.

A road less traveled

Iceland's new driving route takes visitors north to uncrowded, remote Westfjords

BY JEN ROSE SMITH
Special to The Washington Post

After the van's GPS flickered out, my mom kicked in: Together, we were piloting a weather-beaten camper north from Reykjavik, Iceland, toward the Westfjords, a shattered peninsula that pokes out from the country's northwest corner.

I was driving. My 71-year-old mother, who had wisely packed a giant paper map, rode shotgun in reading glasses.

"Right there!" She'd spotted the sign for Reykholar, a seaside village where we'd spend the first night of a two-week road trip.

It was also our first stop along the Vestfjardaleidin, a new 590-mile driving route through Iceland's least-visited region. The name translates to "the Westfjords way," and it leads travelers to a spectacular lineup of deep fjords, empty beaches and a roadless wilderness that is home to Arctic foxes.

We chose the Westfjords, in part, as a kind of COVID compromise. Fully vaccinated, we were good with the international flight. But after months of distancing, contending with crowds didn't appeal to us. And the Westfjords is a destination for just 10 percent of international travelers to Iceland, said Birna Jonasdottir, product manager at Visit Westfjords, which launched the Vestfjardaleidin last fall.

SEE WESTFJORDS ON PAGE 23

Know & Go

WHERE TO STAY:

Reykholar Campground
Reykjabraut, Reykholar
Phone: 011-354-892-3830
Grassy, open camping overlooks a marsh steaming with geothermal activity. The on-site swimming pool has outdoor hot tubs; on clear days, views stretch to the snowy mountains of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula. Camping about \$12 per person per night, with access to heated toilets and a small kitchen.

Holt Inn

Holt, 426 Flateyri
Phone: 011-354-456-7611
Online: holtinn.is

The soaring rock walls of Onundarfjordur are a spectacular backdrop for the homey and family-run Holt Inn, built in a converted schoolhouse. Nearby, farmers tend sheep, gather down from eider ducks and hang filleted fish to dry in the sun. Standard double room in high season (May to September) about \$183 per night.

WHERE TO EAT:

Flak

Eyrargata, Patreksfjordur
Phone: 011-354-456-0145
Online: flakflak.is

Steaming bowls of spiced fish soup are the draw at Flak, a community hub for the fishing village of Patreksfjordur. A vegan version is available as well, and a dry-hopped "New England IPA." Mains from about \$16.

WHAT TO DO:

Hornstrandir Nature Reserve

Online: westfjords.is

Hike through the verdant, glacier-capped wilderness, home to the Arctic fox. The reserve is only accessible by boat, with daily departures from Isafjordur during the summer months. Boats and tours are operated by West Tours and Borea Adventures; in the winter, Borea Adventures offers backcountry ski tours of Hornstrandir by sailboat. For more information, call Visit Westfjords at 011-354-450-8060. Free entry. West Tours offers Hornstrandir boat service from \$86 one way, with day trips from \$120; three-day hiking tour of Hornstrandir from \$1,124 per person. Borea Adventures offers Hornstrandir boat service from \$103 per person, with day trips from \$360; Borea Adventures six-day winter backcountry skiing tour of Hornstrandir by sailboat from \$2,114 per person.

Jen Rose Smith



Painted a striking black, Saurbaer Church overlooks the red-sand Raudasandur beach.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Westfjords: Slow down and enjoy Iceland's northwest corner**FROM PAGE 22**

Why are the Westfjords so quiet? Maybe because time is every traveler's most precious resource, nearly always in short supply. Roads through the region, many unpaved, can be impassable in winter. Even in Iceland's brief summer, it's best not to rush the fjord- and mountain-hugging curves. To reach the Westfjords, we'd have to slow down a bit.

"Everything is at a slower pace," Jonasdottir said. Slowness, she added, is also key to Westfjords culture. "We're so used to being cut off from the rest of Iceland, we have our own dynamic. The locals are quite laid-back — not stressing about things, take it as it comes."

It has fewer roads, fewer towns and fewer people. The number of Westfjords residents — 7,000-odd — is dwarfed by the number of sheep living there.

When we pulled into the campground at Reykholar, I spotted a few craggy-looking sheep grazing the meadow above the village. Geothermal pools simmered and fumed near our campsite, and birdsong lasted all through the sunlit night. It was nesting season in the far north: When I walked a one-lane road to a nearby salt factory, oyster-catchers with tangerine-colored beaks squawked stay-back warnings from the grass.

If you followed Iceland's pre-pandemic tourism boom, it might seem an unexpected place to dodge other travelers. In the 2010s, tourism expanded rapidly there, bringing Instagramming crowds to beautiful — and often fragile — places with limited infrastructure to accommodate them.

Visitor numbers were so high that the travel industry website Skift coined the term "overtourism" in 2016 to describe what was happening in Iceland. The numbers kept climbing: Two years after that, the Icelandic tourism board counted 2,343,773 international arrivals in a country of 348,450 people.

"Most of Iceland, or at least the Reykjavik area, was at a stage of overtourism" before the pandemic, said Patrick Maher, dean of teaching at Nipissing University and visiting scholar at the University Center of the Westfjords, where he teaches a course on coastal tourism.

Then came the pandemic, which Maher called "a reset button" for Icelandic tourism. And while the Westfjords' tourism board developed the Vestfjardaleid in hopes of attracting travelers to its region, it is determined to learn from southern Iceland's pre-pandemic excesses.

"Making sure nature is good — and isn't harmed in any way — is a high priority for everyone working on this," Jonasdottir said. "We haven't been focusing on mass tourism. ... We don't want to be hit with a flood of people and not be ready to welcome them."

At least at the red-sand Raudasandur beach — a starring attraction along the Vestfjardaleid — basking gray seals outnumbered visitors by a sizable margin. A few vans were circled at the beachside campground, where a shop sold basic supplies and hand-knit sweaters made with wool from nearby farms.

Projects to shunt tourists from logjammed sites to peripheries predate the pandemic. In 2019, Iceland introduced the 559-mile Arctic Coast Way, a drive that wiggles along the country's northern edge. Several industry watchers compared Iceland's new road trip projects to Scotland's North Coast 500, a 516-mile driving route launched in 2015.

Such efforts speak to tourism's double-edged effect. In pre-pandemic Reykjavik, short-term rentals such as Airbnbs had made the housing market impossible for locals. But tourism can also bring income to places with few employment options; some in the Westfjords say tourism development could help with the region's basic infrastructure needs.



JEN ROSE SMITH/For The Washington Post

Holtasoley, or mountain avens, is Iceland's national flower and grows wild across the Westfjords.

"We're actually hoping that more tourists will mean more paved roads," said tour guide Julia Kyek, who works for Westfjords Adventures in the fishing village of Patreksfjordur. We'd left the van parked for a day, joining her for a day of birding.

Easing a truck through hairpin turns, Kyek described storms when snow-blind plow drivers use GPS to uncover buried roadways. Until last October, when the 3.5-mile Dyrafjardargong tunnel was completed, the main road that links the northern and southern parts of the Westfjords was closed for much of the winter.

Wind gusts shook the truck as Kyek drove us along the bumpy, rutted road to the Latrabjarg cliffs, an almost nine-mile band of layered basalt cliffs that are a globally important nesting place for sea birds. There, puffins jutted their bright orange beaks above the grassy edge. Using beaks and feet like garden tools, they dig honeycomb burrows into the cliffs themselves, returning each spring for nesting season.

As we walked along the cliff, gray and white kittiwakes clamored below us, darting up above the lip on powerful updrafts. A photographer in a camouflage poncho hunkered over a lens trained on the nesting birds. Just a handful of cars were parked in the gravel lot.

Kyek said her outing with us was one of just two guiding gigs she had that week. Far below, waves hammered against the rocks. On a clear day, Kyek said, some insist you can see the Greenland coast from here. Other locals are equally sure that's impossible.

While we were camping fjord-side in the village of Bildudalur that night, our van shook in the buffeting wind. It howled even harder the following day, as we continued through the Vestfjardaleid's most rugged segment, driving up and over the unpaved mountain pass Dynjandisheidi. Gusts swept down surrounding peaks and across the road.

"Everything is at a slower pace. We're so used to being cut off from the rest of Iceland, we have our own dynamic. The locals are quite laid-back — not stressing about things, take it as it comes."

Birna Jonasdottir
Visit Westfjords

Those hoping tourists mean road money may get their wish. More tunnels are rumored to be in the works, bypassing mountain roads such as this one. Jonasdottir told me that the region hopes to pave all main routes by the end of 2022.

But strict regulations mean some parts of the Westfjords will be protected from development.

Roadless and uninhabited since the 1950s, the Hornstrandir Nature Reserve is one such place. It's a haven for pointy-eared Arctic foxes, Iceland's sole native land mammal, which are fair game for hunters and farmers elsewhere in the country. Hornstrandir, on a peninsula, can only be reached by boat. We hopped the ferry from Isafjordur, which turned out to be a speedboat sheathed in weatherproof plastic.

After landing on a small beach at the mouth of a snow-fed river, we spent the day wandering meadows surrounding an abandoned sheep farm that's now an off-the-grid lodge. We walked to the edge of a snowfield and wandered between the weather-stunted trees. Keyed up on our hopes of fox-spotting, we jumped at every shadow.

No foxes appeared. Later that day, I learned a whale-watching trip we'd planned was called off because of high winds.

I was, perhaps, a little pleased by all this. I like remote and wild places, and I don't wish to see their edges buffed away. Between theatrical weather and shy foxes, the Westfjords did not disappoint.

The next day found us windblown but happy, steering back south, tracing fjord after fjord on the final leg of the Vestfjardaleid. Our van's GPS navigation was still a spinning, useless wheel; our windows were caked with grime. I gripped our map, now folded and creased.

"Whales!" I yelled, startling my mom onto the road's shoulder. We walked onto a bluff padded in low-growing crowberry and Arctic thyme. Below us, the surface of the fjord, Skotufjordur, was erupting in joyful, foaming spouts.

Sprawled across the plants, we trained binoculars on a pod of humpback whales that had entered the fjord, counting the flukes of three, four, more. We lay there until the whales left us behind, swimming once again toward the mouth of the Greenland Sea.

The scent of crushed thyme rose up from the ground. When we pulled back onto the road, there was no one in sight.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Refreshing life retreat

Escape the heat and urban jungle on a Tanzawa mountain day hike

BY JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

The summers are hot and sticky on Japan's Kanto Plain, but relief is just a few hours' drive, and an uphill slog, away.

Mount Hinokiboramaru, part of the Nishi Tanzawa, or western Tanzawa mountain range in Kanagawa prefecture, is a handy hiker's escape from the asphalt expanse of urban life.

Just out of restricted movement after a bit of stateside leave, I was anxious to stretch my legs again on Japan's steep ridges. The Hikes in Japan website offered up Hinokiboramaru, a 2½-hour drive from home over surface streets to one of the highest peaks, at 5,200 feet, in Tanzawa Oyama National Park. I set out with snacks, rain gear, two liters of water and the usual sunscreen and first-aid kit in my daypack.

At day's end, I had logged an eight-mile out-and-back hike with a 3,610-foot elevation gain in just under five hours.

Getting underway, and cheapskate that I am, I eschewed the expressway but arrived right when Google Maps said I would at the turn off Route 246 onto Route 76, two twisting, turning lanes that quickly remove drivers from the metroplex and plunge them suddenly into a mountain world. The road periodically narrows to one lane, so keep eyes peeled on those highway mirrors or on the road ahead. I stopped once to permit the regular bus to make its downhill pass through one such chokepoint.

Incidentally, the park and its alluring mountains are much closer to the U.S. bases at Atsugi, Sagami-hara and Camp Zama than to Yokota Air Base or Yokosuka Naval Base. I met a group of young sailors on their way back from a morning trip to the local waterfall about halfway along the trail.

Parking is available in a lot just short of Nishitanzawa Visitor Center, a small structure with information in Japanese about flora, fauna and mountaineering in the region. It also has a restroom, shady outdoor seating and a vending machine. There is ample parking, but come early; at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, I found the very last spot.

Adjacent to the nature center is Well Camp Nishitanzawa, a mecca by the look of it for suburban families fleeing the city heat and crowds to camp by the hundreds in broad, flat areas along the river. This is a private campground with paid parking, a small café and a convenience store with a minimal selection of cold drinks and snacks. A battery of vending machines stands outside.

To reach the Tsutsuji Shindo trailhead, walk 10 minutes up the road from the nature center past the Well Camp to the trailhead sign at a ravine on the right. The trail takes up along a creek flowing through the ravine. About 100 yards or so in, it departs the ravine and strikes up the bank on the left, starting a series of long-legged switch-



JOSEPH DITZLER/Stars and Stripes

Views of neighboring peaks in the Tanzawa range are part of the trek up Mount Hinokiboramaru in Kanagawa prefecture, Japan. A day hike to the peak is a refreshing retreat from the heat.

On the QT

Directions: The nearest train station, Shin-Matsuda on the Odakyu Line, is an hour by Fujikyu Shonan bus from the trailhead. By auto from Atsugi, take Route 246 west and turn right onto Route 76 at the Shimizu Post Office. It's about an hour drive from there to the nature center.

From Yokota Air Base, expect a three-hour drive, less by expressway.

Times: Open any time, though weekend parking is at a premium and an abundance of fellow hikers will share the trail. Be aware of weather conditions and sunset times.

Costs: No admission fees; free parking in the nature center lot. **Food:** The Well Camp has a limited café menu and a supply of cold drinks.

Information: Nishitanzawa Nature Center: Online: kanagawa-park.or.jp/tanzawavc/shisetsu2.html

Joseph Ditzler

backs that bring you to a ridgetop.

The first turn is marked by a warning in Japanese that bears prowl these woods, an auspicious start to your trek.

The trail's first three miles or so are a pleasant foray through a forest with an open understory and an easy gain in elevation as the miles pass easily underfoot. A handful of short, narrow footbridges cross spots where the steeply sided ridge permits no footpath or where runoff has worn the trail away.

The trail comes to the junction of a creek spilling off the mountains with the main branch at Gora-sawa deai, a small dam whose spill creates a cooling waterfall and a small pool at its foot.

The trail crosses the river and enters the forest at a



A waterfall over a dam on the river along the Tsutsuji Shindo Trail to Mount Hinokiboramaru is a summer destination of its own in Kanagawa prefecture, Japan.

cement stairway at the nose of a ridge. Here you will soon regret not making barbell squats part of your fitness routine. The next 2½ miles are a steep, pitiless blend of rock, root and loose footing that demand patience, persistence and concentration.

Truth be told, small children passed me on their way down. However, one otherwise fit and trim adult male, well accoutred, appeared to have turned his ankle and faced a long, painful trip to the parking area.

The trail, however, is punctuated by a series of wooden

SEE TANZAWA ON PAGE 25

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WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Tanzawa: A cooling retreat from urban life

FROM PAGE 24

ladders, cedar staircases, steel chains and one ladder of rebar and steel plate to assist the traveler. The last three-quarters of a mile are a charming walk through a cool mountain glade atop a plank walkway, set with holdout summer flowers and accompanied by the whistle of Japanese songbirds and the click of cicadas.

As I entered this area, I clambered up one of those rough ladders, raised my head to see what lay ahead and bounced my forehead off a stout branch. A young Japanese man, waiting just ahead where the trail turned to the left, looked seriously at me and uttered a warning, comprehensible even in a language I barely understand.

"Now you tell me," I said.

We erupted in laughter. Then I noticed his foam trucker's cap, the crown of which bore the name and logo of Mount Bachelor, the ski area outside Bend, Ore., where I learned to ski 10 years ago. My rudimentary Japanese kicked in. His rough English likewise found a gear, and an actual summit meeting got underway. I did my best to explain having lived beneath the Cascades, and he expounded on life in Japan. I think.

We agreed that neither spoke the other's language very well, laughed a hearty laugh, shook hands and parted as friends.

From there, the top was just an easy stroll away. At 5,000-plus feet in elevation, the temperature was nearly 20 degrees cooler, with a refreshing breeze, than down below.

The panorama at the top was impressive, though the distant summer haze and overcast clouds vetoed the promised view of Mount Fuji. Reveling in having summited the peak was its own reward.

The trek downhill was shorter but still a monster, and more than once I fell backward as my heel slipped on the loose rock and soil beneath. At least, I told myself, they weren't faceplants.

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PHOTOS BY DAVID CHOI/Stars and Stripes

The spicy fish cake udon from Yeokjeon Udong 0410 near Camp Humphreys costs less than \$5, a steal compared to similar options back in the United States.

Yeokjeon Udong 0410

Location: 41 Pyeongtaek-ro, 39 beon-gil, Pyeongtaek-si, Gyeonggi-do

Directions: Across the street from Pyeongtaek Station and AK Plaza

Hours: Open daily, 6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Prices: About 5,000 won for udon bowls and 2,000 won for side dishes. Cash and credit cards are accepted only at the automated machine in front of the store.

Dress: Casual

Information: Online: udon0410.com/udon_history/#tab1

David Choi



Yeokjeon Udong 0410, which translates to "udon in front of the station," is a nod to South Korean celebrity chef Baek Jong-won's experience eating udon in Japan.

A budget-conscious bowlful

The udon at Yeokjeon Udong 0410 near Camp Humphreys won't drain your wallet

BY DAVID CHOI

Stars and Stripes

A junior enlisted soldier with a weekend pass should be intimately familiar with how precious time and money are.

Thankfully, there's a restaurant a stone's throw away from Pyeongtaek Station near Camp Humphreys that caters to the budget-conscious troop on a tight schedule.

Yeokjeon Udong 0410 specializes in recreating the "memory of a warm bowl of udon that we've come to know," according to a description from the franchise CEO and South Korean celebrity chef Baek Jong-won.

The restaurant's menu centers on udon, a thick Japanese-style noodle in a soy-sauce broth, but also includes rice bowls and side dishes that represent the uniqueness of Korean cuisine.

There are several varieties of udon bowls, from old-fashioned to Korean beef bulgogi, that will cater to many tastes.

The soy-sauce broth is much like those served in traditional Japanese restaurants: mild with no sharp notes. If you want to add a little kick to your bowl, you can also opt for the spicy fish cake udon, which includes sticks of fish cakes and a dash of hot pepper paste.

The noodles, arguably the most important



AFTER
HOURS

SOUTH KOREA

ingredient to a bowl of udon, are chewy but firm, accurately representing the consistency of the Japanese-style udon. Even after being placed in a steaming hot broth, this particular udon avoids becoming bloated or swollen quickly — the inevitable death sentence for most inferior noodles.

My spicy fish cake udon came at 5,500 won, or about \$4.77, which is an acceptable price in South Korea and a steal compared to similar restaurants back in the United States.

While Yeokjeon Udong 0410 offers several side dishes, the fried spicy chicken drumstick prompted this amateur food critic to question the legitimacy of the chicken-sandwich craze back home.

Unlike the fast-food chicken franchises typically found in the U.S., this chicken wasn't dripping with grease or consisting primarily of batter. It was juicy in all the right ways, and the batter was flaky enough so that it provided the perfect amount of contrast to the moistness of the meat. How-

ever, the price tag for a single drumstick is relatively steep at 2,500 won.

Despite being a franchise owned by a celebrity, Yeokjeon Udong 0410 personifies the "hole in the wall" vibe of a small-town eatery. Sandwiched between a convenience store and a hallway, the nondescript building is easily missed. Just one sign outside advertises its existence, and a coin-operated coffee machine blocks the view of the building.

But therein lies the true purpose of Yeokjeon Udong 0410, according to the franchise owner. The name, which translates to "udon in front of the station," is an homage to Baek's experience eating udon in Japan: a commuter meal meant to be eaten alone or with one other person.

The seating inside also reflects this mood. Patrons can dine in at small tables with two chairs, or at the front counter, where they can watch the cooks prepare their meals.

Orders are taken only at the automated ticketing machine, which has several language options, including English. However, the staff, who will yell out order numbers, speak limited English — so be prepared to take your ticket to the counter if you feel like you've been waiting too long.

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WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

BY ANGELA HAUPT

Special to *The Washington Post*

A lot of us who have been working from home have been experimenting with various ways to improve our productivity — or, at least, have been thinking about doing so. There are so many different systems that it can be overwhelming for the average nonproductive person who simply wants to be told which they should use.

But Garland Coulson — aka Captain Time — will tell you: It's not so simple. The time-management coach based in Alberta, Canada, has tested many productivity methods, such as the Pomodoro Technique and Eat That Frog, and he said that, although most are helpful, there's no universal "best." He recommends trying each one for a couple of weeks, then modifying them to suit your needs.

Anna Dearmon Kornick, a time-management coach who hosts the podcast "It's About Time," agrees. She prefers to blend her favorite aspects of various productivity systems into one personalized framework.

"Mixing and matching is really going to be your best bet most of the time," she said. "These strategies are fantastic and a great starting point, but there's not going to be a one-size-fits-all solution for everyone."

To get you started, here's a primer on five of the most widely used productivity systems, including experts' opinions on their pros and cons.

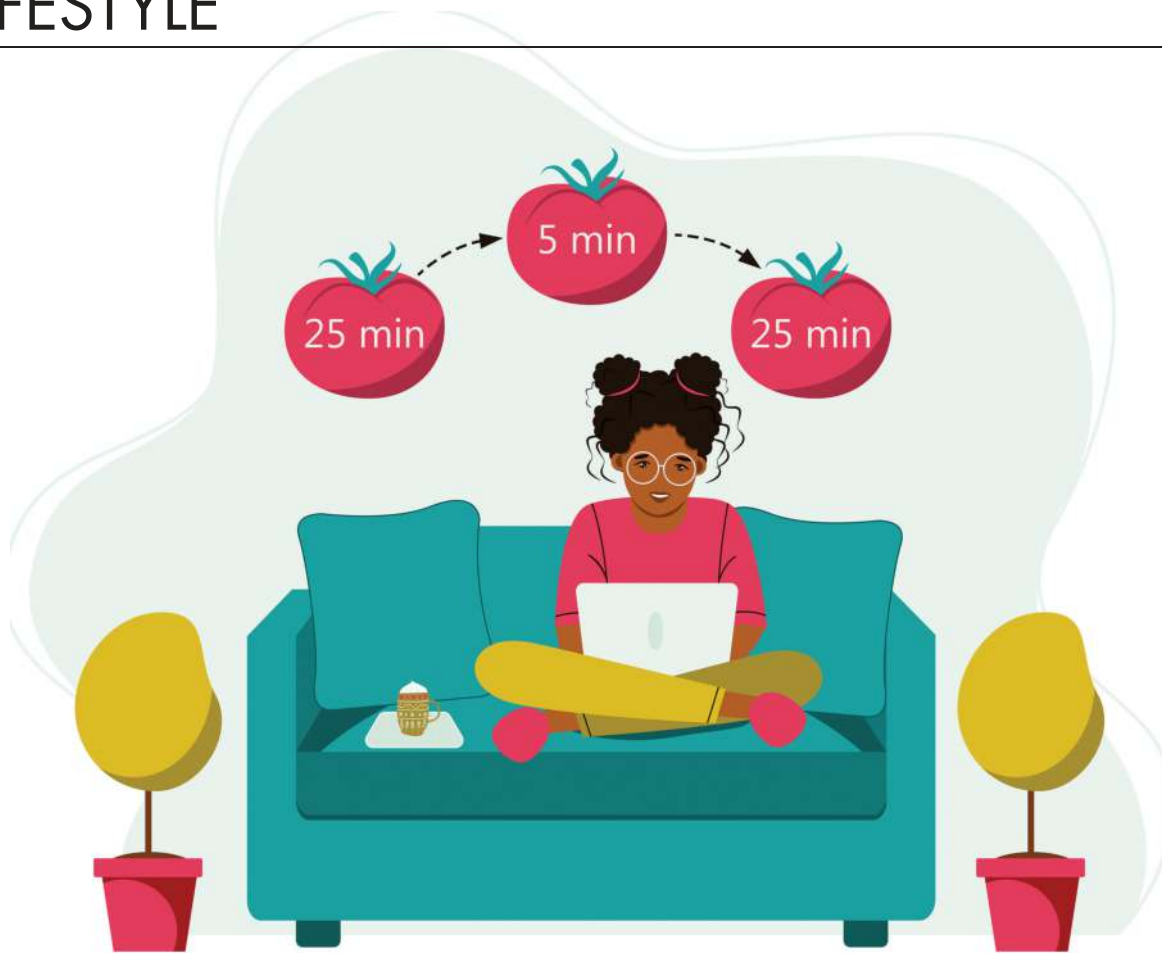
Pomodoro Technique

One of the most popular time-management methods employs a timer — "pomodoro" means tomato in Italian, and the original timer was shaped like a tomato — to break tasks up into short intervals.

The Pomodoro Technique, which was invented by Francesco Cirillo when he was a student in Rome in the late 1980s, is a great way to stay focused and stamp out distractions, Dearmon Kornick said. To get started, choose a task to work on, then set a timer for 25 minutes. There are many apps and websites that supply a timer, such as Pomodor and Marinara Timer, or you can use one on your phone or watch.

Work on your task — and only that task, no interruptions allowed — until your timer beeps, notifying you that your 25 minutes are complete. You cannot extend your session, and you have to take a five-minute break before starting again. In addition to the short break between each 25-minute block, you should take a longer break (about 20 to 30 minutes) after every four.

Frank Buck, a productivity expert and the author of "Get Organized! Time Management for School Leaders," appreciates that the Pomodoro Technique



The Pomodoro Technique is one of the most widely-used productivity systems.

iStock

How to better manage time

Experts offer their opinions on five different productivity systems, suggest modifying, blending them to meet one's needs, preferences

helps train your brain to focus on one task at a time, and that it can improve your estimation of how long tasks take. ("We're generally poor at estimating this," he notes.) But it "imposes artificial time pressure," he said, especially given that some tasks require more than 25 minutes. You can return to it after a break, of course, but is it really necessary to ruin your flow if you're in a good rhythm? Plus, it doesn't account for the interruptions many of us face, both at home and in the office. This technique is sometimes a better choice for those who work in isolation, he said.

Getting Things Done

Dearmon Kornick recalls spending an entire beach vacation absorbed in David Allen's "Getting Things Done," first published in 2001. The personal productivity system described in it "serves as a method for getting everything out of your head and held somewhere," she said, adding that Allen's belief is "that our minds are for having ideas, not storing them."

To cut back on overwhelm, Allen prescribes five steps: capture, clarify, organize, reflect and engage. "Capture" means to collect whatever has your attention; for example, this could mean writing down all of your appointments and ideas in one central notebook. Then, you'll "clarify," or process, each one. If

you wrote "plan birthday party," you'll now break that into actionable steps — make guest list, buy invitations, send invitations — and indicate which one you can delegate. Next, you'll "organize" those actionable items based on category and priority, with due dates and reminders. Allen suggests implementing regular "reviews" to decide which action items you should tackle, while also logging your progress. Finally, "engage" means to act on your tasks and, well, get them done. (This is a simplified description; each step has many components of its own, as Allen outlines in his book.)

This system is complicated, as Dearmon Kornick acknowledges; even Allen has said that he doesn't follow it precisely 100% of the time. But "it really helps you create a methodical system for capturing things, organizing them and then staying on top of them," Dearmon Kornick said.

Coulson, who is the author of "Stop Wasting Time: End Procrastination in 5 Weeks with Proven Productivity Techniques," likes the "all-encompassing" system, but he notes that it won't work for everyone, especially because implementing it requires a great deal of time and effort.

Eat That Frog

A popular saying — often attributed to Mark Twain — goes: "Eat a live frog first thing in the

morning, and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day."

That philosophy inspired Brian Tracy's 2001 book "Eat That Frog!," which stipulates that you should tackle your most challenging (read: unpleasant) task first every morning.

"A lot of times, the things that really move the needle in our life and our business are things that we want to put off because they're complicated or complex," Dearmon Kornick said. "We have a little bit of fear around them, whether it's fear of failure or fear of success, or perfectionism." Identifying which tasks are most crucial — and blocking out time to get them out of the way — is often helpful. Plus, she adds, many of us are at our sharpest first thing in the morning, with the most focus and energy we'll have all day.

As Buck puts it: "If you're a teacher and there's that phone call with a parent, and you know the parent is mad, go ahead and make the phone call. It probably won't be as bad as you thought it was going to be, and you'll feel so much better after it's over. You won't be dreading it for the rest of the day and procrastinate on everything."

However, he points out that, although the Eat That Frog technique provides a method for starting the day, it doesn't guide productivity beyond that; it's "not as well-developed as other sys-

tems." That's why it often makes the most sense to implement in addition to a broader approach.

Eisenhower Matrix

President Dwight D. Eisenhower is credited with creating this system, popularized in Stephen Covey's book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," which experts say is a helpful way to prioritize tasks by urgency and importance.

Those who use the method separate their tasks into four quadrants: urgent and important tasks that must be done immediately; important but not urgent tasks, which can be scheduled for later; urgent but not important tasks, which can be delegated; and tasks that are neither urgent nor important, and can therefore be eliminated. (You can draw these on a piece of paper or use an online template.)

For example, one might add changing air filters to the "important but not urgent" quadrant. "It's preventive maintenance kinds of things," Buck said. "All those things that are going to give us a payoff sometime in the future or cause a problem if we neglect them. But we really don't have to act on them today."

One of the benefits to the Eisenhower Matrix, Buck said, is that it promotes delegation and long-term planning. But rather than relying on it as your only productivity system, he suggests using it as a framework as you're adding tasks to your to-do list.

Ivy Lee Method

More than 100 years ago, Charles Schwab, the president of Bethlehem Steel, hired productivity expert Ivy Lee to improve his company's efficiency. The story commonly told is that Schwab was so impressed with the results, he paid Lee \$25,000, which would be worth more than \$400,000 today.

Under the Ivy Lee Method, as it's now known, you write down your six most urgent tasks to accomplish the next day, in order of importance. That day, you work through them in order, not starting a new task until you've completed the one before it.

Buck uses a similar method, which he calls "the fab five." He likes that this method emphasizes planning for the following day and prioritizes critical tasks.

Coulson agrees.

"It helps you define your visions, goals and objectives," he said, and focusing on one task at a time is a smart idea, because "multitasking is a myth." Our brains can only truly focus on one thing at a time, he said.

But there's one big drawback to the Ivy Lee Method, Coulson said: "What do you do with all those other tasks?" Most people need to work on more than six tasks a day, and this method doesn't account for or provide any direction on them.

WEEKEND: BOOKS

August's noteworthy thrillers, mysteries

Racial hysteria, COVID-19 romance, family mayhem and more coming this month

By RICHARD LIPEZ

Special to *The Washington Post*

If you don't want to think about the pandemic any more than you have to, rest assured COVID-19 is nowhere to be found in three of this month's most noteworthy mysteries and thrillers. The virus is a factor in a fourth, and in a fifth it's the foundation for a plot too ingenious to miss. Take your pick.

'Clark and Division'

by Naomi Hirahara

The Ito family, at the center of Hirahara's vibrant suspense novel set in World War II Los Angeles and Chicago, were four of the more than 120,000 Japanese Americans rounded up by a U.S. government gripped by racial hysteria and transported to grim internment camps. Late in the war, many of those people were relocated to cities with labor shortages.

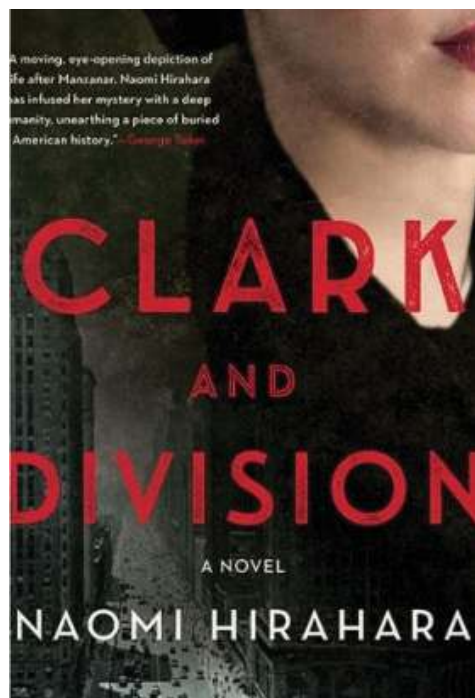
Months after smart, take-no-guff Rose Ito, 23, arrives in Chicago, she is run over by a subway train and dies. Younger sister Aki scoffs at the coroner's verdict of suicide and sets out to uncover the ugly truth.

Author of the Mas Arai and Ellie Rush mysteries, Hirahara has drawn a devastating picture of a family in crisis and a nation's monumental blunder. (Now available)

'False Witness'

by Karin Slaughter

Throwing a case may be the worst thing a defense attorney can do. But that's what otherwise ethical Leigh Collier plans with the case of accused rapist Andrew Tenant. Slaughter's (the Will Trent series, et al.) latest non-series thriller, set in Atlanta at the outset of the pandemic, is cunningly

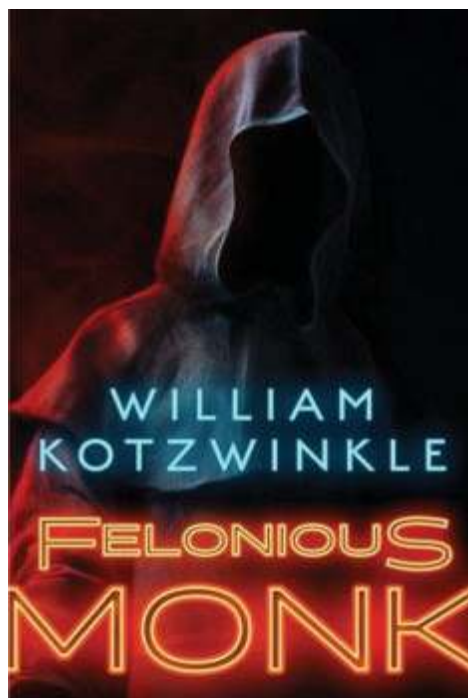


conceived and written — not to mention massive; don't drop it on an unshod foot. As teens, Leigh and her sister Callie babysat young Andrew, and he thinks — correctly — that they killed his violent pedophile dad and got away with it. Complicated? Very. But also deeply satisfying. (Now available)

'Felonious Monk'

by William Kotzwinkle

Kotzwinkle, author of the cult hippie novel "The Fan Man," as well as dozens of other novels, children's stories and screenplays, brings a similar engagingly outre vibe to this tale of a conscience-stricken mob scion who finds peace as a Benedictine monk. That is, until his Uncle Vittorio, a corrupt priest, leaves Brother Tommy a fortune; others think it belongs to them. The amiably satirical novel takes place in Paloma, Ariz. (read Sedona), a

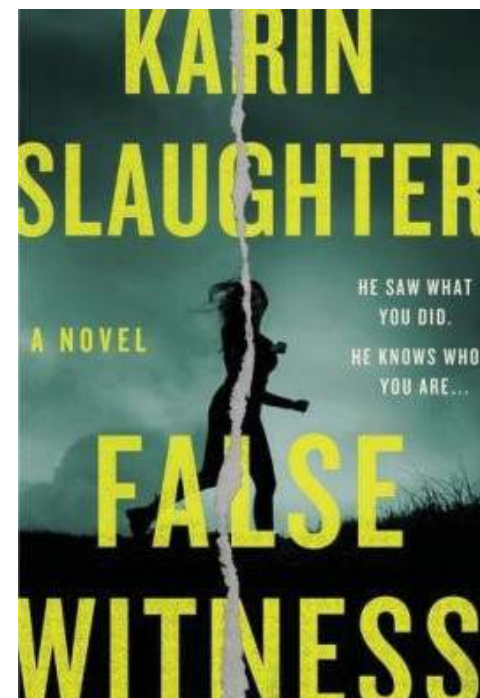


world gathering place for "cartoon spirituality" and New Age hustlers. It's where the previously celibate Tommy hooks up with Cheyenne, an alluring con artist who tries unsuccessfully to exorcise what — to the monk's bafflement — she refers to as his "slimy entities." (Available Aug. 30)

'56 Days'

by Catherine Ryan Howard

At or near the top of any list of superb Irish thriller writers these days is Howard, an Edgar nominee for "The Liar's Girl" in 2018. Her fifth stand-alone, the masterly "56 Days," is set mostly during a 2020 COVID lockdown in Dublin and brings two vulnerable and insecure 20-somethings together for an anxious, pandemic-limited, let's-see-how-it-goes romance. Each, however, harbors a doozy of a secret, one of them blood-curdling. Timely, surprising, emotionally alive, this



is about as good as suspense fiction gets. (Available Aug. 17)

'Not a Happy Family'

by Shari Lapena

Lapena's eighth stand-alone thriller — 2016's "The Couple Next Door" may be her best known — is such a quintessential "beach read," I half expected sand to fall out of it. This one brings lurid family mayhem to the Hudson Valley. When wealthy, psychologically sadistic Fred Merton and his fretful wife, Sheila, are massacred in their mansion, their three grown children — rage-filled Dan, materialistic dermatologist Catherine and purple-haired "outlier" Jenna — are all plausible suspects. With her cascading short chapters and teasers by the dozen, you stick with Lapena eagerly despite the flavorless scene-setting and generic cops. Bring sunscreen. (Now available)

Victorian, Edwardian eras collide in mystery 'M, King's Bodyguard'

By LOUIS BAYARD

Special to *The Washington Post*

He mentions it in his bio, so I suppose it's safe to say that Niall Leonard, the author of the awkwardly titled "M, King's Bodyguard," is the



longtime husband of E.L. James, last seen foisting "Fifty Shades" on a blameless world. If he were married to E.L. Smith, a

cynic might ask, would his maiden historical novel be getting quite the same U.S. rollout? That same cynic would have to conclude, grumpily, that Leonard's book is pretty darn decent — a well-paced, tightly plotted, deeply researched exercise that suggests the kind of family franchise one might actually want to keep reading.

The bowler hat on the cover is

the first clue. Leonard's chosen genre is the Victorian mystery, whose iconography — sulfurous fog, hansom cabs — had already been fixed in Conan Doyle's lifetime. Somehow, the narrow cobblestoned streets that urban planners couldn't wait to get rid of have lived on in fiction, accommodating many generations of authorial foot traffic.

For a newcomer, the only remaining mystery is how to find a route that hasn't been trod into the mud. Leonard's solution is to locate the exact historical point when Victorian bled into Edwardian — or, if you like, when the old girl died and passed on her throne to her corpulent wastrel son — and to cast his story with real people engaged in real intrigues. Chief among them is William Melville, a "big bullock of an Irishman" who has "risen from beat constable to Detective Chief Melville of Scotland Yard, champion of British justice — or

notorious thug, depending on which papers you read — and bodyguard to emperors, foreign and domestic."

In this latter capacity, he is alarmed to learn that a shadowy figure named Akushku (who might be Russian or Latvian, anarchist or Tsarist) is plotting to disrupt Victoria's funeral by assassinating Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II. Like me, you may have a hard time working up a lather over the Kaiser's fate, knowing he lived long enough to start one world war and witness another. Leonard intelligently grounds the plot in the geopolitical paranoia of turn-of-the-century Europe, where anarchists have already claimed the lives of Alexander II of Russia, the Austrian Empress and the prime minister of Spain, and where one tinder threatens to blow the whole chain of alliances sky high.

Leonard — a screenwriter and author of the young adult

"Crusher" crime thriller series — wisely gives Melville a real-life crime-solving buddy in Gustav Steinhauer, bodyguard to the Kaiser. Steinhauer may be something less than a buddy and more like a nemesis, but he's swept up as we are in the book's action, which spins from stately homes to bawdy houses and railway stations. There's an Italian beauty fallen on hard times. There's a lady's fan that, Oscar Wilde-style, escapes one particular lady. There's an abundance of corpses. In short, it's all great fun.

The research can sound awkward to the modern ear — "That damned Jew Dreyfus has done more damage to France than a whole army of Germans," says a French colonel — and Melville's Irish brogue can tilt to the vaudevillian: "Name of Jaysus, Sally." But, under the author's sure hand, Melville becomes a leader of men: "All leave for the next fortnight has already been can-

celed, but now you'll be working weekends too, and every hour God sent until these two men are caught. Forget about sick leave; I don't care if you're at death's door. I don't care if you're dead. We have seven days and I want an arrest in two."

Meanwhile, the dead city, in its gorgeous squalor, lives: "the black churning Thames dense with smoking barges ... a rabbit-warren of slums where tattered gray washing hung limply from lines across the street." As does the district of Whitechapel, minus its Ripper: "Here the shadows teemed with life; I caught the flare of a match lighting up a huddle of beggars sharing a clay pipe, and farther on two shapes in a dark doorway that resolved themselves as we passed — a young woman with her hair cropped short, lifting her skirts for a soldier." Old London, it turns out, still has plenty of shades of gray.

WEEKEND: MUSIC



FINDING HER FUTURE

Billie Eilish on surviving teen fame and trauma, and how she finally stopped reading the comments

BY AMY KAUFMAN
Los Angeles Times

Billie Eilish is crying on the cover of her new album. The lone teardrop isn't obvious at first, shiny enough that it could just be part of her glittery makeup. Her eyes are blue and empty, staring vacantly into the distance. "Happier Than Ever," read the words above her face.

Is this what fame has done to Eilish? Taken the air out of the lungs of the wunderkind from the Highland Park neighborhood in Los Angeles? Stripped her of her Rainbow Brite hair colors and oversize tees and turned her into a blond pin-up?

Not entirely. But it's complicated.

There was a moment not too long ago, admits the 19-year-old, when she was truly miserable.

After her debut single, "Ocean Eyes," became a viral hit on SoundCloud in 2015, she signed with Darkroom Records and landed a deal with Interscope. But she felt ill-equipped to deal with the sudden onslaught of attention. Which isn't surprising, because the music industry didn't see her coming either — a teenager with such a distinctive look and sound that mass appeal was in no way inevitable.

"I hated going outside. I hated going to events. I hated being recognized. I hated the internet having a bunch of eyes on me. I just wanted to be doing teenager s—," says Eilish, who was 16 when she toured her four-times platinum debut

album, "When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?" She grew depressed, and her body didn't react well to the stress; she was constantly coming down with laryngitis or developing fevers. And she was surrounded by adults. The only people her age were in the audience, which had become both physically and emotionally un-touchable.

So how did she end up at this industrial compound in the San Fernando Valley, readying for the July 30 release of her sophomore effort?

"Honestly, it took growing up a little bit. Liter-

SEE FUTURE ON PAGE 29

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Future: Eilish found inspiration in a singer from another era

FROM PAGE 28

ally, physically growing up — like, the actual chemicals in my brain shifting,” she says, sitting opposite a couch filled with vitamins and wellness supplements. Her brother, Finneas O’Connell — who has served as her sole musical collaborator since she began writing music — has a cold, and everyone on Eilish’s team is worried about her catching it. Her mother, Maggie Baird, hands her an immunity shot.

“Oh, I don’t need all that!” Eilish groans, downing it begrudgingly.

“Just in case,” urges mom. Baird and husband Patrick O’Connell — with whom Eilish lived in her northeast LA childhood home until roughly a year ago — then leave their daughter alone for the interview. But the singer’s publicist remains within earshot directly outside the room, and when Eilish asks if she can close the door, she’s denied.

Even though she’s technically an adult, Eilish is still figuring out who she wants to be as a grown-up. Between 17 and 19, she played Coachella, won seven Grammy Awards — in 2019, becoming the youngest person ever to sweep the prizes for best new artist and record, song and album of the year — wrote the theme song for a James Bond film and released an Apple TV+ documentary about her life. So when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, she finally had an opportunity to pause and “do the self-reflection I’ve never had the time for.” Under her own roof for the first time, she began to think about what she’d been through “and how it affected me — how I actually feel about it all instead of just doing it.”

Baird suggested to her two kids that they use the unexpected free time during the pandemic as an opportunity to create new music.

“My mom was, like, ‘What if you guys had a schedule where Billie came over and you worked three days a week?’” recalled Finneas, 23. “At first I was like, ‘I don’t think that’s needed.’ But she said: ‘Listen. Why don’t you just try it for one week? You don’t even have to make anything.’ And within the first week, we’d written and recorded ‘My Future.’”

That song — the first single from the album, released nearly a year ago — has Eilish dreamily fantasizing about the days ahead, wondering who she’ll become as she transitions away from girlhood. Lyrically, it’s lighter than a lot of the material on “Happier Than Ever,” a body of work that offers a picture of an artist grappling with her place in the spotlight. She sings about the unflattering paparazzi photos of her

REVIEW

Eilish remains brilliant on follow-up

By MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Billie Eilish seems to be in a good place on her sophomore album. “I’m happier than ever,” she sings on the first song. But there’s a tear running down her cheek on the cover. Before the collection is done, she returns to the phrase “I’m happier than ever” but qualifies it with “When I’m away from you.” So it’s complicated.

Few people do complicated like Eilish, and “Happier Than Ever” is a fascinating look at a messy, famous pop star’s life, as diaristic as Taylor Swift but more self-critical and emotionally candid. It’s a superb album, ambitious and mature — a young woman pulling the fire alarm while we all stare at the flames.

The 16-track album that clocks in at just under an hour kicks off with “Getting Older” and a 19-year-old prodigy’s cutting, clear-eyed observation that “Things I once enjoyed / Just keep me employed now.”

Using that as a launching pad, Eilish goes on to explore fame and its dark sides. On “NDA,” she acknowledges a real-life stalker (“Had to save my money for security”) and on “OverHeated,” an encounter with paparazzi leads to an examination of surgery and

published by tabloids, about making boys who come to her house sign NDAs and about her fantasies of disappearing on a Hawaiian island.

“Things I once enjoyed / Just keep me employed now,” she voices at the outset of the album’s opening track, “Getting Older.”

“That line isn’t really, like, ‘Oh, boohoo, I’m sad’ — it’s really just a f—ing fact,” Eilish says.

“Things that I enjoy can sometimes just turn into things that feel like a burden, and it’s really weird. Like, ‘Oh, this is something I used to love and now it feels like a job.’ It’s not, like, ‘Oh, I hate this now.’ It’s different. It’s changed.”

Eilish somehow manages to talk about her disdain for fame without sounding totally obnoxious. Probably because in person, it’s impossible to forget how young she is. She has her pink sneakers up on the couch and is wearing a T-shirt from her own merchandise line. She keeps flipping her iPhone in her hand, but ignores it when it lights up,



Billie Eilish

Happier Than Ever
(Darkroom/Interscope Records)

“plastic” bodies.

Eilish also reaches up to expose unequal power structures, often returning to the theme of innocence polluted. On the hypnotic “GOLDWING” she warns a novice: “You’re sacred and they’re starved / And their art is gettin’ dark / And there you are to tear apart.”

Those same evil forces are at play on the album’s triumph — the acoustic guitar-driven “Your Power,” pleading with a mentor abusing his power over someone in his thrall. “Will you only feel bad if it turns out / That they kill your contract?” she taunts.

So much for living happily ever after. Seven Grammy Awards haven’t changed her or her co-writer and producer, Finneas. If 2019’s “When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?” was sarcastic, quirky,

revealing a screensaver with an image of herself sleeping. She’s not overly self-conscious, but also wants to be liked. (“Make me sound good!” she kids at the end of the interview.)

Eilish acknowledges that she has trouble ignoring the public’s opinion of her. In July, she decided to stop reading the comments on her Instagram account, where she has 87.8 million followers. Her plan is to go on the app only to post, forcing herself to exit immediately after doing so.

“Because otherwise I will spiral out, and s—’s mean as f—,” she says. “There are some people, like my brother, who can get a text from someone he doesn’t like and delete it immediately. He won’t even read it. I can’t do that. If Satan himself texted me, I’d be, like, ‘What did he say?’”

Most of the negative comments, Eilish says, center on her body. From the moment she became famous, she wore clothing that purposefully hid her shape: long tunics, billowing pants, high-end sweatsuits. Her look was celebrated as anti-pop

internal and angsty, “Happier Than Ever” is fuller and grander, the songs stronger in their construction, crisper.

The brother and sister have an ability to take a spare noodle of a sound and build a sturdy song around it, with Eilish wrapping her expressive and whispery-lush vocals.

Her spoken word “Not My Responsibility” is important and powerful. “Would you like me to be quiet?” she asks and the answer is always no, no, no. She even targets mortality itself in “Everybody Dies.”

The new album isn’t all serious. There are terrific kiss-off songs (“I Didn’t Change My Number,” “Therefore I Am,” “Lost Cause” and the slow-building “Happier Than Ever”) and one where she’s hopelessly in love (“Halley’s Comet”). Eilish and Finneas even play with bossa nova in one terrific slinky tune.

But Eilish is best in the shadows, exploring our messiest impulses. “Oxytocin” starts off as a sexy come-on, appropriate for a song named after a hormone that controls reproduction. But it brilliantly shifts, turning lust into something darker: “Cause as long as you’re still breathing / Don’t you even think of leaving.”

Hey, it’s complicated.

star, anti-male gaze. Fans deemed Eilish a feminist hero because of her formless wardrobe; trolls became hyper-aware anytime she showcased her body.

Shortly after she turned 18, she posted a video of herself taking a shower with a bathing suit on. “And because you could see my shoulders, everyone was, like, ‘Oh, my God, she turned 18 and she’s a slut!’” she recalls, rolling her eyes. In May, she revealed her newly blond hair on the cover of British Vogue, posing for the photo shoot in retro corsets and form-fitting lingerie. She was taken aback by the reaction to the spread: “Oh, my God! The new Billie!” she gasps in faux exasperation. The images weren’t meant to showcase a make-over but rather give a preview of the feeling she was going for with “Happier Than Ever.”

Even after she settled on the blond hair, she didn’t know what overall look she was going for with her second album. With the music almost finished, she went home one night and lay on the

couch. It was raining outside, so she lit some candles and put on a fire. She started playing Julie London and was suddenly overcome by bliss.

“I thought: ‘This is what I think I want my album to feel like: Julie London,’” she remembers. “Not the songs, but the feeling — longing, kind of dreamy and curious.”

Best known for her recording of the torch song “Cry Me a River,” London was a stylish, sultry-voiced singer of jazz and pop ballads in the 1950s and ’60s. She often sported pin curls and chanelonette bras, a look that served as inspiration for a buxom pin-up character featured throughout Eilish’s new merch.

“It’s like me, if I was what I wish I was,” Eilish says, pointing to the drawing on a button she’s pinned to her shirt. “I want to be that girl. Are you kidding me? I would love to be a hot girl.”

Eilish talks about sex on “Happier Than Ever.” She references watching pornography and sending a racy image to a man’s phone. Some fans believe that “Your Power” — a single from the album about an older man exploiting an underage woman — is about her ex-boyfriend, Brandon QUINTON ADAMS. Adams — a rapper who goes by 7:AMP — was featured in the doc about Eilish that came out last year. In the film, he blows off her Coachella set and has to go to the emergency room after punching a wall.

Eilish has not revealed who “Your Power” is about — or who she is singing about on any of her new songs, for that matter. But the album contains specific allusions to those who have pushed past her boundaries.

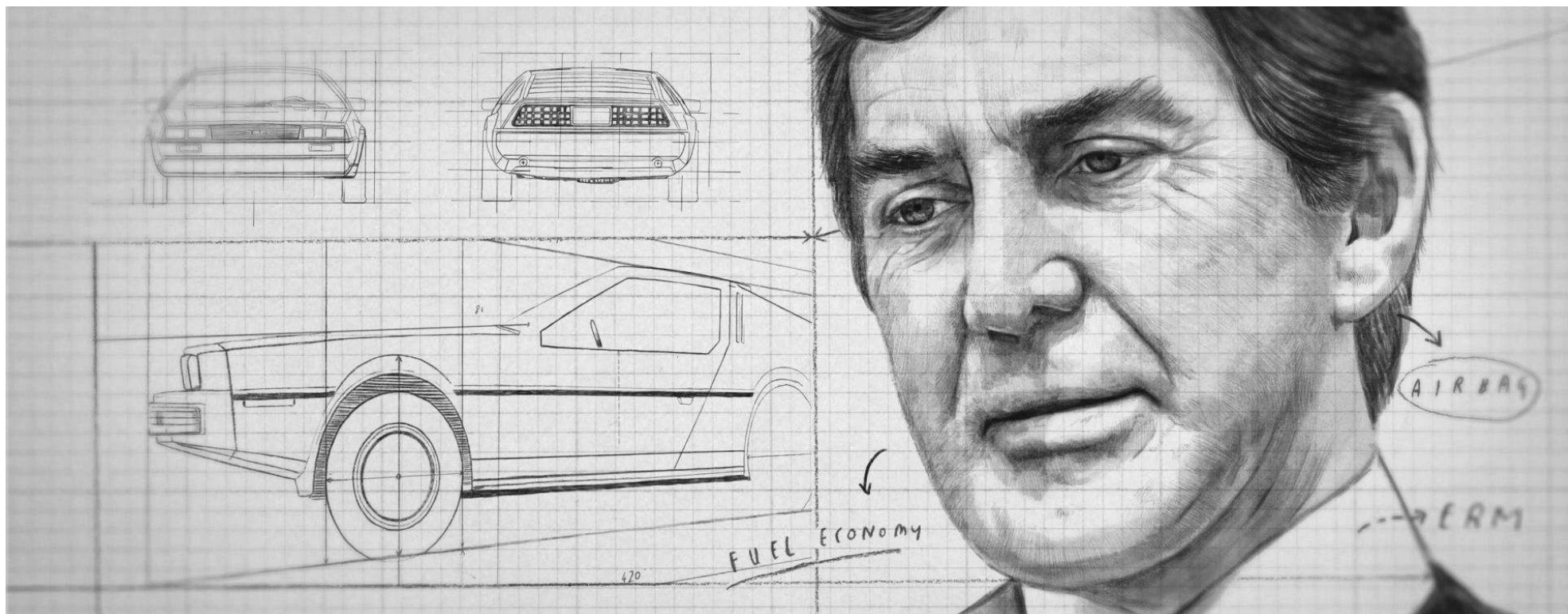
Finneas urged Eilish to lean into her vulnerability. He wanted to give her audience “something to empathize with and see themselves in” — something less theatrical, without a make-believe world.

“I wanted this to be Billie’s album about Billie,” he explains.

Eilish says she’s eager to get back in front of a crowd. On Sept. 3, she’ll showcase all 16 tracks from the album in a Disney+ concert special. She’ll embark on a 53-date tour next year. She hopes her fans will respect how much she’s been willing to share with them this time around — even if it leaves them with more questions than answers.

“Hopefully they’re grateful,” Eilish says. “I really want to be appreciated for it. Even though I come off as very open and bold, I don’t tell the internet s— about my actual life because I don’t think that anybody should, actually. That can make you go crazy when there’s 80-f—ing-8 million people watching you.”

WEEKEND: TELEVISION



Netflix

An illustration of John DeLorean and the car that bears his name are shown above. A new three-part Netflix docuseries delves into the disgraced automaker's story.

'Everything was always about him'

Netflix docuseries explores the psychological demons of automaker DeLorean, the costs of keeping his dream alive

BY JULIE HINDS
Detroit Free Press

A sympathetic devil posing next to a DeLorean? Even the man whose name is on the vehicle might have appreciated the metaphor of an Instagram photo recently shared by actor Tom Ellis, who plays the suave title character in "Lucifer."

In a sneak peek of the sixth and final season of the Fox-turned-Netflix TV series, a dapper Ellis is shown leaning against the iconic gull-winged car.

"Good things are coming," posted Ellis.

If only that had been true for the 1981 DeLorean DMC-12, which was hyped as an automotive game changer, but resulted in one huge scandal that left a wake of destruction in its path.

Forty years after the first one rolled off the assembly line, the automobile that bears John DeLorean's name is best known as the time-traveling vehicle of the "Back to the Future" movies.

DeLorean himself, who died in 2005, is still a complex riddle who continues to fascinate filmmakers. The latest effort to explore the psychological demons of the disgraced automaker is a three-part documentary series titled "Myth & Mogul: John DeLorean," now available on Netflix.

The bare bones of the story are familiar to those who were alive during the 1970s, the heyday of DeLorean's visions of grandeur, and the 1980s, when he was at the epicenter of what was dubbed the trial of the century.

After a meteoric career as a muscle car pioneer at General Motors in the 1960s, DeLorean launched a company to make one vehicle, the DeLorean DMC-12, billed at the time as a fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly, durable and impossibly hip ride.

It seemed too good to be true, and it was. Desperate for money to keep his dream afloat, DeLorean was arrested in

1982 after a government sting operation and charged with trafficking cocaine.

He was acquitted in that trial and a subsequent one on charges of skimming \$9 million from investors. Still, his reputation was shattered, and for DeLorean, his chroniclers agree, image was everything.

In 2019, two movies attempted to tell DeLorean's story in artistically creative ways. "Framing John DeLorean" was an intriguing hybrid that combined a traditional documentary with dramatizations of real-life events involving DeLorean, who was played by Alec Baldwin.

That same year, "Driven" offered a fictionalized version of DeLorean's rise and fall, with Jason Sudeikis starring as

car." But by episode two, Hedegus is revealing that she always felt DeLorean was hiding something and seemed "uncomfortable in his own skin."

The series offers a compelling portrait of DeLorean's transformation from a working-class Detroit kid who grew up with an alcoholic father and "some physical abuse going on in the household" (according to DeLorean's son Zach) into a Hollywood-glamorous household name — complete with plastic surgery to give him a strong, leading-man chin — who hung out with stars like Johnny Carson and spent money extravagantly.

As "Passages" author Gail Sheehy puts it in the first episode, DeLorean "had a

chronicles a deceptive ad-selling scheme that dates back to his Detroit college days at Lawrence Technological University. By episode three, the daughter of an inventor who trusted DeLorean to handle his patents is calling him a monster.

Even Zach DeLorean opens up about the pain he feels about his father's namesake car. Saying that it "represents a whole lot of turmoil in my life," he admits that he wishes he had "a (bleeping) grenade; just toss it in the thing."

Having left behind a fleet of only 9,000 cars that had some well-chronicled issues, why does DeLorean still have such a grip on the public imagination? Chalk much of it up to his genius for self-promotion.

One of the reporters interviewed for the docuseries, former Automotive News editor Ed Lapham, says DeLorean had a gift for making himself the center of the story.

"He always had an angle. He was always looking for an angle. Everything was always about him. Even when he was at General Motors, it was always about him," says Lapham.

In an era when corporate executives didn't court celebrity coverage, DeLorean helped forge the public — and highly publicized — role that is now embraced by magnates like Elon Musk, Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos.

"He was a character, and reporters, editors, TV reporters, TV editors and film producers like that sort of story," says Lapham of the constant attention DeLorean received.

Nowhere is that more evident than in the third episode, when Ferrare remembers a turning point in their marriage. When DeLorean made the cover of Time magazine, she brought him a copy while visiting him in jail: "He looked at it and he smiled ... He said, 'I have made millions and lost millions in my life, and half the fun is getting it all back.'"

"Myth & Mogul" is perhaps the most clear-eyed depiction yet of a man whom his ex-wife, Cristina Ferrare, describes in the docuseries as a "malignant narcissist."

the FBI informant who helped arrange the sting and Lee Pace as a sad, tormented DeLorean scrambling to keep his dream alive.

"Myth & Mogul" is perhaps the most clear-eyed depiction yet of a man whom his ex-wife, Cristina Ferrare, describes in the docuseries as a "malignant narcissist."

Using extensive interviews with those close to DeLorean and journalists who covered him, it boasts rare, unseen footage shot long ago by filmmaker D.A. Pennebaker, whose 1967 film about Bob Dylan, "Don't Look Back," essentially created the rock documentary.

In the first episode, Chris Hedegus, Pennebaker's wife and filmmaking partner, explains how, at first, Pennebaker saw DeLorean as "this Kennedyesque figure who was going to make this dream

massive midlife crisis" and discarded the former version of himself, much like a consumer trades an old car in for a new, improved model. In a sense, he was a flesh-and-blood Great Gatsby who embodied the American quest for personal reinvention.

But as Irish director Mike Connolly unsparingly shows here, DeLorean was too busy trampling on those who got in his way to become a doomed romantic figure. In his attempt to realize his ambitions, he hurt many people, including the workers at his DeLorean Motor Company plant in war-torn Belfast, who drew hope from what they thought was a long-term opportunity.

Empty promises and personal betrayals are depicted here as a feature, not a bug, of DeLorean's style. The second episode

WEEKEND: TELEVISION



Nina the dolphin goes on a first date with Dominic, disguised as a mantis, in Netflix's new reality-dating show, "Sexy Beasts."

Netflix

A dolphin and a mantis walk into a bar...

Netflix's new reality-dating show disguises participants as creatures, putting the focus on personality, not looks

By LISA BONOS
The Washington Post

A panda goes on a first date with a tin man, an alien and a bull. Who will be her perfect match? This is how superficial dating is: Television producers have resorted to dressing human singles as animals and otherworldly creatures in hopes that they'll see one another for their personalities first, looks second. In "Sexy Beasts," a new Netflix reality dating show, singles meet one another while disguised in colorful costumes — drinking beers and trying to kiss without their horns, snouts and nose rings getting in the way.

New dating shows are ubiquitous on Netflix or network television, the vast majority of them showcasing the same kinds of people we've seen many times before: young, beautiful, heterosexual and clueless about how to pick a partner. This latest attempt doesn't actually take looks out of the equation; it just delays the big reveal. Underneath those sweaty beast costumes, everyone is hot. It's a similar premise to Netflix's 2020 hit, "Love Is Blind," in which contestants bonded while separated by walls and could see one another only after they proposed marriage.

We spoke to Simon Weston, the "Sexy Beasts" executive producer, about how he decided who's a baboon and who is best personified as a dinosaur — and whether there's freedom in wearing a mask.

The Washington Post: How did you come up with the idea for this show?

Weston: When you're about to go on a first date with somebody, it's quite terrifying. What do you say to this person?

Seven years ago, I had this idea for a show called "Mrs. Datefire," where we'd use prosthetics to disguise people. This character was sort of like Mrs. Doubtfire (Robin Williams' character in the 1993 film comedy), where we'd use prosthetics to disguise a man as an elderly female TV presenter who was doing a show about love. She would interview a woman, and this woman would tell her what she looked for in a guy and what she didn't like. In the guise of Mrs. Datefire, this guy was learning all about the person he was going to date and therefore had some things to talk to her about later. Looking back on it, it sounds slightly creepy. So that didn't work.

But I did like the idea of using prosthetics to disguise people before they went on a date. Prosthetics are best for constructing creatures — wonderful animals and weird aliens and everything else. It makes the show visually cool as well. So that's how we arrived at "Sexy Beasts."

Often we're not showing someone who we really are on a first date. People are performing and are somewhat disguised, even if they're showing up with their real face. Is there freedom in wearing a mask?

In the first episode, Emma, the demon, found herself being much more confident in the mask than she normally would be. I think every one of us has something about our face or our looks that we're not happy with. We're taking that anxiety away before you go on a date. Hopefully it's quite freeing.

We're taking looks out of the equation, albeit in a different way from "Love Is Blind." That's quite important, because in

40 years, personality is all you're going to have. Certainly our looks will fade, unless we have a very good plastic surgeon.

It seems like all the show's daters are young, heterosexual, good-looking and have never been married. Did you think about casting other types of people?

We cast the people who applied to the show. Nobody was rooted out of the process on account of their looks. But I would argue very strongly that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. One person's highly attractive is another person's turnoff.

When we took the prosthetics off everybody ... it looks horrible, because their poor skin has been sweating away. Before a dater's true face is revealed, they have a couple of hours of being beautified by some of the best makeup artists out there. So everybody looks their very best.

If we get to do the series again, we'd really like to broaden it out — age, sexuality, also celebrities. It would be quite good fun to hide a celebrity in there and the three people that are dating them are fans of theirs but have no idea that they're actually dating.

How did you decide who would be a wolf or a bull or a mouse or a dinosaur?

There was two-stage casting going on, really. We were casting the visuals in the show — the animal and alien masks — as well as casting the people. So we would look at the masks and ask ourselves: What are good combinations here? Let's say we have the beaver, James. That's a brown furry mask, so we need something that's got a different skin color there, so we have Amber the pixie, which is blue and very colorful against his brown. And then we

have Tamiko, who's a zombie with a jaw hanging out and not very much hair, while Amber's got this beautiful wig. And then you've got Alexis the leopard, which has orange tones.

When we were casting the people, Sarah Clarke, the series producer, and I would watch everyone's videos. Once I pressed play, I would look away from the monitor and just listen to their voice and the things that they were saying, because that's really how it's going to be in the show. You're not going to see their face. You're going to hear their voice through a beaver mask.

There are a lot of dating reality shows on Netflix right now. What sort of niche does "Sexy Beasts" fill that's different from the other shows?

What we wanted was escapist fun. One of the shows that was an influence in my thinking was "Buffy the Vampire Slayer." I used to really love it when you get a couple of vampires and they suddenly break off from a fight and have quite a mundane chat.

One of the best chats in the series — and it didn't make it into the cut in the end — these two guys talking in a waiting room. They were chatting to each other and one guy said to the other: "Guys, when I was working in IT, I wasn't very confident. But when I became a fitness trainer, I really got a lot of self-confidence." The other guy's going: "That's really great." They're having this really lovely conversation, but it's a Sasquatch talking to a parrot.

Also, the voice-over is really key. We were thrilled to get comedian Rob Delaney to do the voice-over, who I just think is one of the funniest people.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

When traditional medicine isn't enough

COVID-19 renews interest in radiation, but doctors, environmental and health groups caution against pilgrimages to radon-filled mines

BY KATHERYN HOUGHTON
Kaiser Health News

Twice a year, Brian Tichenor makes the 1,200-mile drive each way from his home in Kansas to a defunct uranium mine in Montana, where he takes an elevator 85 feet below the surface to sit amid radioactive radon gas to ease the pain from his chronic eye condition.

"I found it like I think a lot of people do," said Tichenor, 67. "It's a point of desperation with conventional treatment."

While radon is commonly known as a hazardous gas removed from basements, people in pain travel to Montana and pay to breathe, drink and bathe in its radioactive particles. The travelers view the radon exposure as low-dose radiation therapy for a long list of health issues. But the Environmental Protection Agency and the World Health Organization, among others, blame the gas as the second-leading cause of lung cancer. Although cancer doctors use radiation as a front-line treatment to destroy dangerous cells, its role in the U.S. in low doses for other ailments is disputed. The pandemic has recharged that debate as clinical trials across the world test whether low doses of radiation can help treat COVID-19 patients.

But radon gas isn't the same radiation U.S. doctors use, radiation experts caution. Radon is just one of the radioactive chemical elements and, because it's a gas, it can be inhaled, making it particularly dangerous.

Sitting in a radon-filled room and targeted radiation treatment in a medical facility are as different as "chalk and cheese," said Brian Marples, a professor of radiation oncology at the University of Rochester.

"In clinical therapy, we know exactly what the dose is; we know exactly where it's going," he said.

Marples said much of the argument for radon's therapeutic use relies on historical reports, unlike evidence-based research on clinical radiation. Still, some radiation experts are split on what level of radon should be deemed dangerous and whether it could have positive health effects.

Another concern: The radon

treatment in the mines is largely unregulated. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services doesn't have the authority to permit or license the mines, though department spokesperson Jon Ebel said the adverse health risk from exposure is well known. The EPA also doesn't have the power to mandate limits on radon.

Nonetheless, each year travelers head to western Montana, where four inactive mines flush with radon are within 11 miles of one another near the rural communities of Basin and Boulder. Day passes range from \$7 to \$15. The gas naturally forms when radioactive elements in the mountains' bedrock decay.

"I'd rather take my chances with radon in terms of living with arthritis than with other Western medication."

Monique Mandali, 74
Helena, Mont.

Outside the Merry Widow Health Mine, a billboard-like banner announces "Fountain of Youth. FEEL YOUNG AGAIN!" Inside its tunnels, water seeps from the rock walls. Those who want full immersion can slip into a clawfoot tub filled with radon-tainted water. People can soak their feet and hands in the water or simply sit and work on a puzzle. On a bench sits a printout of a Forbes article on clinical trials that show low-dose radiation could be a treatment for COVID-19.

To owner Chang Kim, 69, his business is a mission, especially for those with chronic medical conditions such as arthritis or diabetes. Those who swear by radon therapy say that, in low doses, a little stress on the body triggers the immune system to readapt and reduces inflammation.

"The people coming to the mines, they're not stupid," Kim said. "People's lives are made better by them."

He learned about the mines 14 years ago when he and his wife, Veronica Kim, lived in Seattle and a connective tissue disease crumpled Veronica's hands and feet. Traditional medicine wasn't working. After two sessions a year in the mines ever since, Veronica smiles when she shows her hands.

"They're not deformed anymore," she said, adding she's been able to cut down on her use of meloxicam, a medication to reduce pain and swelling.

Tichenor said he's been going to a mine with radon for over six years and it has been one of the few things to calm his scleritis, a disorder that causes pain he describes as ice picks stabbing his eyes. As for its potential danger, he said radon treatment is just like any medication: Too much can cause harm.

He and other radon users point to European countries such as Germany, where the therapy may be controversial but doctors still can prescribe radon treatments for various conditions that insurance may even cover.

In the U.S., the EPA maintains that no level of radon exposure is risk-free even though everyone encounters the element in their lives. The agency notes radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year. It recommends that homeowners with radon levels of 4 picocuries per liter or more should add a radon-reduction system. By contrast, the owners of Montana's oldest radon therapy mine, Free Enterprise Radon Health Mine, said their mine averages around 1,700.

Monique Mandali said the federal guidelines are "a bunch of baloney." Mandali lives in Helena, about 40 minutes from the mines, and tries to fit in three sessions at Free Enterprise a year — 25 hours of exposure spread out over 10 days for arthritis in her back.

"People say, 'Well, you know, but you could get lung cancer.' And I respond, 'I'm 74. Who cares at this point?'" she said. "I'd rather take my chances with radon in terms of living with arthritis than with other Western medication."



PHOTOS BY KATHERYN HOUGHTON, KHN/TNS

Free Enterprise Radon Health Mine, just outside Boulder in western Montana, is the state's oldest mine that offers exposure to radioactive radon gas as a therapeutic treatment.



Inside the defunct Merry Widow Health Mine in Basin, Mont., water seeps from the rock walls. People who want full immersion in its radon-laced waters can slip into this clawfoot tub as part of unregulated radiation therapy touted by the mine's owners but deemed potentially dangerous by some radiation experts.



Hak (left) and Ung Shin spend time in a tunnel at the Merry Widow Health Mine in Basin, Mont., June 30 piecing together a puzzle. For more than 10 years, the California couple have visited to expose themselves to radioactive radon, which they say keeps them healthy.

WEEKEND: FAMILY



Truth about dishonesty in kids

Experts say the pandemic may have influenced kids' lying, offer tips to help

BY CONNIE CHANG

Special to *The Washington Post*

When my daughter's teacher asked to speak with me this past school year, I didn't bat an eye. I figured she wanted to discuss some aspect of my 10-year-old's distance learning. Instead, I was surprised to learn that my daughter had missed several quizzes. When I confronted her, she blithely claimed that her teacher must have been mistaken.

Over the next several days, I caught her in more lies, from the inconsequential ("I didn't take the last cookie") to the serious ("I kept my mask on the entire time I was out with friends"). Like all kids, my daughter has never been above telling a lie or two, but this latest output seemed particularly egregious.

We're not alone. These days, it seems as if kids are telling more lies, echoing a pandemic-driven behavior observed in adults. But experts say this isn't necessarily a cause for concern.

Although the pandemic may have influenced the types of lies kids are telling, it didn't increase their frequency, says Amie Bettencourt, a child psychologist at Johns Hopkins.

"It's developmentally normal to see this kind of stepwise increase in lying [among tweens and teens], and virtual learning just provides this new environment for it," she says. Kids become disengaged, fall behind on assignments and lie to cover it up. Soon, the situation snowballs.

Parental anxiety may also play a role.

"Parents are stressed right now, and there's so much more conflict that kids are trying to fly under the radar by glossing over things," says Carolyn Ievers-Landis, a clinical psychologist at University Hospitals in Ohio. Like everyone, they're trying to cope and survive, or avoid disappointing or worrying people.

How lying develops

Although dishonesty is understandably worrisome, scientists stress that lying is a necessary part of normal development. By preschool, most kids learn to lie as the parts of their brain that govern executive function, empathy and the ability to regard others as separate from themselves come online.

In research on 7- to 12-year-olds, Kang Lee, a developmental psychologist at the University of Toronto, found that lying disturbs the connections between different regions of the brain. He compares the cognitive demands of lying to the electrical system of a

house: "If you turn on the lights in the entire house and put a load of laundry in, then one of the areas will start to break down." As kids age, however, and their brains become better at handling cognitive tasks, this disruption decreases. An exception: "Kids who have poor executive function [such as those with ADHD] find it particularly difficult to tell good lies, because the lie itself disrupts the whole process in the brain," Lee says.

Two factors in early adolescence make it an especially fertile time for dishonesty, says Tori Cordiano, a clinical psychologist and director of research at Laurel School's Center for Research on Girls in Ohio. First, "it's a developmentally messy period. A lot of brain growth is happening," which affects kids' impulsivity and inhibition. At the same time, the natural desire for more independence among this age group "can also lead to situations where kids are not telling the truth," Cordiano says.

The good news? "Lying reaches its peak at around 10 or 11 years of age," Lee says. As kids mature, Lee suspects that they're increasingly aware of the morality of lying, even as they become more adept at it. "After 12 or 13 years of age, teenagers are more honest about their transgressions," he says.

What parents can do

Avoid cornering kids. Even parents who strive to be calm, intentional and warm may find it difficult to stay in that mindset when their child is lying to their face.

"It incites in many parents an understandable reflex to corner their kids into admitting they were lying," Cordiano says, but these power struggles are often counterproductive. Instead, "be really clear about expectations" and emphasize the natural consequences of dishonesty.

Get to the root of the problem. In kids, lying is often a symptom of an underlying problem, such as feeling overwhelmed, stressed or anxious. Rather than berating them, Ievers-Landis suggests helping them find ways to cope. A kid who's lying about attending remote class, for example, may be bored or finding it difficult to focus.

Don't use the l-word. Ievers-Landis also discourages parents from characterizing dishonesty as "lying," because the label is potentially damaging. When kids hear themselves described as "liars" by their parents or teachers, it becomes part of their self-talk and inner dialogue. Instead, try couching it as: "It's important to tell the truth. It's important for people to be able to believe that what you say is true."

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Marathon viewing session yields golden observations

Recently, I plopped onto my well-worn spot on the sofa with a can of Pringles to binge-watch a backlog of recordings of the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games. The prospect of old standbys like swimming, gymnastics and track and field had me mildly motivated to tune in. But frankly, I was really itching to check out sports making their Olympic debut: skateboarding, surfing, rock climbing and karate.

While fast-forwarding to find the new events, I got distracted. I learned that equestrian "dressage" is the proper term for that horse jumpy-skippy-dancing thing set to fancy music. But why doesn't the horse win the medals since it's the one with all the moves?

On first glance, sabre fencing appeared to be quite violent, with lots of shouting, lunging, flapping crotch straps and space-age helmets blinking colored lights for no apparent reason. One might expect brutality from an ancient combat sport with medieval roots; however, when I learned that the object of a fencing "attack" is to merely "touch" rather than stab one's opponent with the foil, I felt robbed.

Badminton, on the other hand, didn't disappoint. I sat, riveted, as men in a dog-eat-dog singles match tried to annihilate each other by "flicking" fly swatters — er, I mean three-ounce racquets — against shuttlecocks made of goose-feathers and cork. Talk about brutal! And with no protective gear? Not only was I entertained, I plan to employ the "hair-pin net shot" at my next church picnic.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn that Olympic trampoline equipment is located in indoor gyms — not beside the neighbor's above-ground pool. Furthermore, the event requires gymnasts to perform moves such as the "poliarush," the "quadriff," the "randolph" and the "barani." And no one ever does a cannonball off the porch roof. Who knew?

As a child of the '80s, I thought I'd be familiar with the new Olympic sport of karate, having seen "Kung Fu" and "The Karate Kid" multiple times. But I was disappointed to learn that no one actually says "Wax on, wax off" and the coaches aren't big, sleeveless meanies like those at Cobra Kai. Like Grasshopper, I'm learning.

As for Olympic rock climbing, I'm convinced that the athletes are cheating. They hang like bats from the underside of rocks during "bouldering" and scramble up sheer walls faster than the babysitter's boyfriend when the car pulls up in "speed climbing." Don't be fooled. They're either using hidden magnets, or they have very, very long toenails.

When commentators announced that Olympic surfing was being moved up to take advantage of tropical storm waves, I knew I was in for a treat. The surfers, who incidentally wore more clothing than the beach volleyball players, jumped right into the gargantuan, foaming surf as if someone had just called "last swim" at the community pool. It looked like insanity to me, but according to the commentators, surfboards were "chattering," and competitors were "vertical snapping," "kicking the tailpad," "downward slashing," "beating the lip" and "scrapping hard through white water." Gnarly, dude.

During the skateboarding competition, I should have hired a translator to help me decipher terminology, and tattoos. In the "street" event, a 13-year-old girl with braces executed a "clean roundhouse cutback followed by a serious layback hack," while a 35-year-old man with green hair did a "kick flip backside lipside down the handrail and a feeble grind down the twelve." I don't know about you, but all this talk of lips, cuts and handrails makes me wanting to stock up on Band-Aids and hand sanitizer.

Lazing around watching hours of the Olympic Games can sometimes feel like an exercise in futility. But on Sunday, when the last medal is awarded and the torch is snuffed out, I will surely have gained a plethora of new knowledge about sports ... along with 10 extra pounds.

Read more at themeatandpotatoesoflife.com, and in Lisa's book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

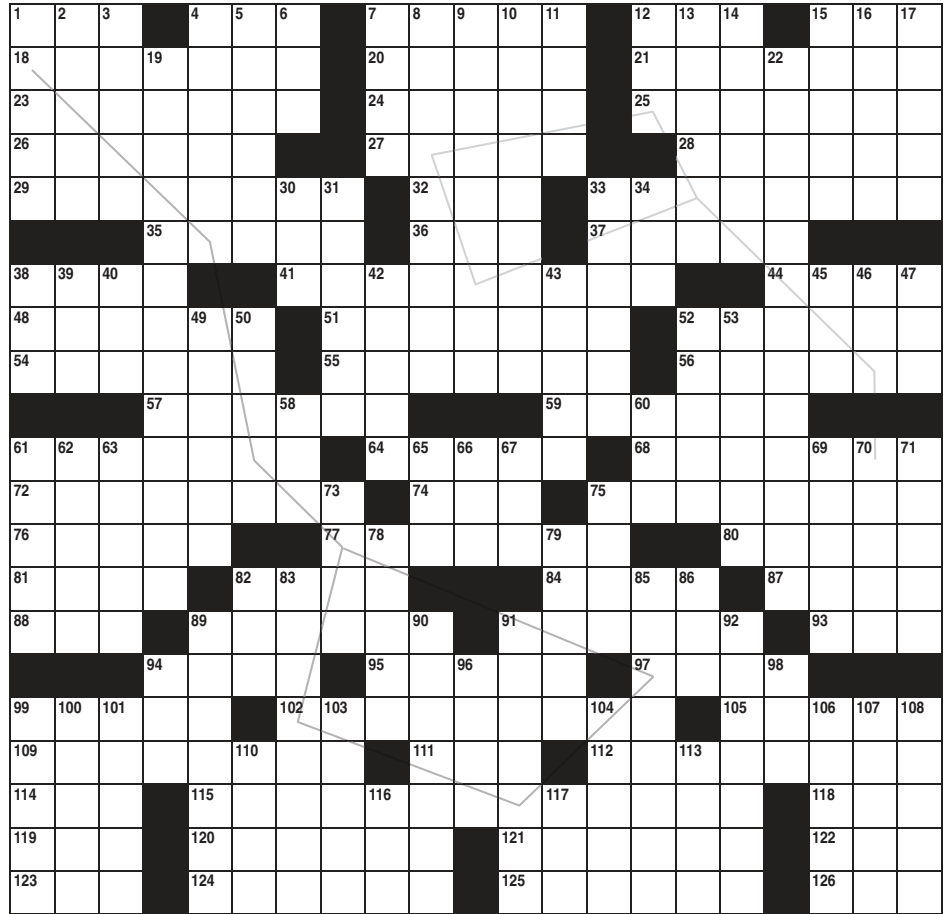
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

STAR SEARCH

BY CHANDI DEITMER / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Chandi Deitmer, of Somerville, Mass., is a social worker in the fields of psychiatry and geriatrics. She got hooked on crosswords in college via the AVCX puzzle in The Onion (which was only in print in those days). She started constructing a year or two ago, mainly for "indie" venues. This is her Times debut. The puzzle has a multilayered theme, whose subject is indicated by the designs in the grid. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Symbol of royalty in ancient Egypt
 - 4 Wouldn't stand for it?
 - 7 They have springs in the middle
 - 12 _____ Perez, former Democratic National Committee chairman
 - 15 Nutritional fig.
 - 18 Apple tablet option
 - 20 Popular analgesic
 - 21 Belgian city that hosted the 1920 Summer Olympics
 - 23 One of the rooms in Clue
 - 24 N.B.A. superstar Durant
 - 25 Voting "aye"
 - 26 Gilbert and _____ Islands (former colonial names of Kiribati and Tuvalu)
 - 27 Give way
 - 28 Levy of "Schitt's Creek"
 - 29 When the Lascaux caves were painted
 - 32 Furthermore
 - 33 Much of Goya's output
 - 35 Japanese beer brand
 - 36 San Francisco's _____ Valley
 - 37 In which "Stella" means "star"
 - 38 Seaweed used to wrap sushi
 - 41 Descriptor of almost a million and a half Californians
 - 44 Porridge, essentially
 - 48 Real surname for the authors Curren, Ellis and Acton Bell
 - 51 With a yawn, say
 - 52 Less certain
 - 54 Onetime material for tennis-racket strings
 - 55 "That much is clear"
 - 56 Symbol of Mexico
 - 57 Country with roughly 6,000 islands
 - 59 Where a pop-up leads
 - 61 Alpha and Beta Ursae _____ (pointers to 68-Across)
 - 64 Noodle soup
 - 68 Guiding light
 - 72 Gentile figure of a French folk song
 - 74 Lord's title
 - 75 Originally from
 - 76 Place to take a suit
 - 77 Executive producer of HBO's "A Black Lady Sketch Show"
 - 80 Risk
 - 81 "_____ Lang Syne"
 - 82 Pesky insect
 - 84 Something to notice in passing?
 - 87 It's between micro- and pico-
 - 88 Horace's "Hymn to Mercury," for one
 - 89 New York political family
 - 91 Fifth-century conqueror defeated in the Battle of the Catalaunian Plains
 - 93 Rap's Lil _____ X
 - 94 Reliable supporters
 - 95 Glazer of "Broad City"
 - 97 Online source for film facts, in brief
 - 99 Repugnance
 - 102 Disguised
 - 105 Author _____ Carol Oates
 - 109 Wine that may be made spumante or frizzante
 - 111 Little
 - 112 Bested
 - 114 Gritty, in a sense
 - 115 Ones committing a party foul . . . or the images depicted in this puzzle's grid?
 - 118 Camping-gear brand
 - 119 Letters before an alias
 - 120 Surprising wins
 - 121 Jeu d' _____ (witticism)
 - 122 Little one
 - 123 Female mallard
 - 124 Grommet
 - 125 Black-eyed _____ (flowers)
 - 126 Kind of protein in tempeh
 - 10 Unforgivable acts, say
 - 11 iPhone button with an up arrow on it
 - 12 Duty
 - 13 About to enter the stage, say
 - 14 Subject of Hokusai's "Thirty-Six Views"
 - 15 Delight (in)
 - 16 Go on and on
 - 17 Avant's opposite
 - 19 Celestial figure depicted in this puzzle's grid, in African American folklore
 - 22 Celestial figure depicted in this puzzle's grid, in Babylonian folklore
 - 30 Joe and co., e.g.
 - 31 Sharing maternal lines
 - 33 Excoriated
 - 34 Akira Kurosawa film
 - 38 Peacock streaming inits.
 - 39 Italian time unit
 - 40 Utter nonsense
 - 42 Like five-star hotels vis-à-vis three-star ones
 - 43 Gather
 - 45 Rose of rock
 - 46 Nickname on a ranch
 - 47 Spanish title: Abbr.
 - 49 Tower topper
 - 50 Digital writing
 - 52 Buffoon
 - 53 Brawler's memento
 - 58 Is at the Forum?
 - 60 Steamy place
 - 61 _____ Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
 - 62 For all to hear
 - 63 Unit in thermodynamics
 - 65 Chump
 - 66 Unaccounted for, briefly
 - 67 Fumble
 - 69 Went into syndication, e.g.
 - 70 Singer Aguilera's alter ego
 - 71 Star performances, maybe
 - 73 This is a test
 - 75 "Gee, that's swell!"
 - 78 Like Vulcans, typically
 - 79 Central Asia's _____ Mountains
 - 82 "Gloomy" guy
 - 83 "That's just unacceptable"
 - 85 1969-74, politically
 - 86 Tree that lends its name to a programming language
 - 89 Matured, in a way
 - 90 Like the three-toed sloth, among all animals
 - 91 New wings
 - 92 Tweaks
 - 94 Clear, as crystal
 - 96 Like Parmesan, but not mozzarella
 - 98 Bouncy jazz genre
 - 99 Noted book-club leader
 - 100 Male mallard
 - 101 Certain caucus voter
 - 103 1938 prize for Pearl S. Buck
 - 104 Big name in trading cards
 - 106 W.W. I Belgian battle locale
 - 107 Green with the 2010 hit "Forget You"
 - 108 Enlighten
 - 110 Roger's cousin?
 - 113 Ireland, poetically
 - 116 Smartphone network std.
 - 117 Home to the Nittany Lions, for short

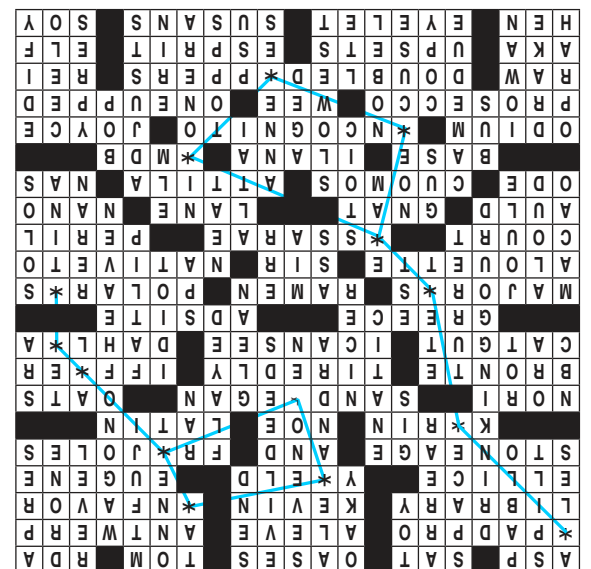


GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE

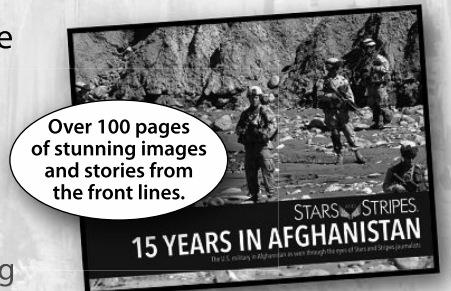


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FACES



George Harrison
Universal Music Group

Deep diving for an epic rerelease

Remix of George Harrison's 'All Things Must Pass' was a work of musical forensics

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

George Harrison's landmark album "All Things Must Pass" is celebrating its belated 50th anniversary, and the former Beatles' son thinks a new remixed collection might make the perfect post-pandemic soundtrack.

"I think that the message of this record is more ready to be received now than it was when it first came out," said Dhani Harrison. "The message is clearer and now it's sonically clearer. This is a really important bit of music."

The original collection was audacious for its time — the first triple studio album in rock history, a virtual flurry of vinyl. The anniversary editions out this week make that look quaint, containing eight LPs (or five CDs) plus a Blu-ray audio disc, with the remixed album, demos, outtakes and jams.

There are reprinted archival notes, track annotations, photos and memorabilia. The most expensive edition comes in its own wooden crate, complete with figurines of the famous garden gnomes featured on the album cover. But first is the music, which Rolling Stone lists among the 500 greatest albums of all time.

"We're not trying to make it sound modern," said triple Grammy Award-winning engineer Paul Hicks. "I'm not trying to put any sort of stamp on it. We are very respectful to the mixes that were there and follow them as much as possible."

The skeleton of "All Things Must Pass" was recorded over two days in late May 1970. On May 26, Harrison recorded 15 songs backed by Ringo Starr and his longtime friend, bassist Klaus Voormann. The next day, he played an additional 15 songs for co-producer Phil Spector on just an acoustic guitar.

The original 23-track album — complete with hits "Isn't It a Pity," "What Is Life" and "My Sweet Lord" — has been remixed for the anniversary editions from Capitol/UMe and

are now augmented with 47 demos and outtakes, 42 of them previously unreleased.

The 1970 session tapes produced 25 hours of music, including several songs that didn't make the album like "Cosmic Empire," "Going Down to Golders Green," "Dehra Dun," "Sour Milk Sea" and "Mother Divine."

Dhani Harrison and Hicks started work on the anniversary editions five years ago, re-digitizing and listening to every song and every take made during the sessions. It was an even deeper dive than the 30th and 40th anniversary reissues. Hicks calls the new work "forensic."

They emerged from the vault with some 110 different songs, and Harrison and his team had to decide how to present what he'd found. He recalled once listening to a Beach Boys box set that had 10 versions of every song, and didn't want to go that route.

Instead, he wanted to bring the listener into the recording process to hear how the songs had evolved. "What we were looking for was the ones that really stood out and that really screamed something new," said Harrison.

Listeners familiar with the album track "Let It Down" — a dynamic tune that got the Spector Wall of Sound treatment and resembles a James Bond theme — may be stunned to hear the stripped-down, heartfelt acoustic demo version Harrison recorded on Day 2.

There's a slowed-down version of "Isn't It a Pity" that's even sadder than the album version, and a sublime version of "Art of Dying" that's arguably better than the final. Some songs got sped up and some got slower during the process, potentially blowing the mind of anyone who thought the final versions were somehow the only way to play them.

"Once you hear it, you can't unhear it. It does change the way you hear the whole record forever. But it doesn't ruin the experience of knowing the record," said Harrison.

A very human George Harrison — who died at age 58 in 2001 — can also be heard in the mix.

He's captured asking for orange juice — while playing a very cool version of "Get Back." His "Going Down to Golders Green" is Harrison doing his very best Elvis impression, a real treat. There's also Harrison's recording of "It's Johnny's Birthday," a gift to mark John Lennon's 30th birthday.

The demos reveal the origin of a very rootsy "Woman Don't You Cry For Me," which would become the opening track of his 1976 album, "Thirty Three & 1/3." And during the 14th take of "Isn't It a Pity," a fed-up artist goes off-script to instead sing: "Isn't it a pain/Why we do so many takes?"

Harrison collected quite a roster of musicians to help him on "All Things Must Pass," including Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, Ringo Starr, Billy Preston, Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett, Pete Drake and even a young Phil Collins (whose bongo work never made the album).

"It was a pretty mean squad of people that he recruited, you know what I mean? Like, he wasn't messing around with this record," said Harrison.

The younger Harrison also investigated stories behind the songs, like the album opener, "I'd Have You Any Time." He learned that Clapton struggled at times to play Harrison's notes. "It was incredible to hear Eric say how hard it was because that's a guy that doesn't find playing guitar very hard."

The "All Things Must Pass" recording sessions began just six weeks after the April 1970 announcement of The Beatles' breakup, and the younger Harrison notes that his father was going through a lot during that time: In addition to the band's breakup, he lost his mother and he was also leaving a lover.

"It's a family time capsule, and there's so much love in it," said Dhani Harrison. "He was brave to do this when he did it. It's lightning in a bottle. I don't think that those conditions come around maybe once in a lifetime for an artist."

Mike Richards favorite for 'Jeopardy' host

"Jeopardy!" executive producer Mike Richards is the favorite to take over as the show's permanent host, according to a report.

Richards was reportedly running the search for Alex Trebek's replacement, but is now "in advanced negotiations with Sony Pictures Television" to take over himself, Variety reported.

Richards is the clear front-runner as Sony negotiates with multiple candidates.

Richards, 45, was one of the initial guest hosts, with his shows airing in February, three months after Trebek's death from pancreatic cancer.

Richards has produced numerous game shows, including "The Weakest Link," "Let's Make a Deal," "Wheel of Fortune" and "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." Though the Burbank, Calif., native said he got little notice before standing at the lectern, fans loved him.

Charlie Watts likely to miss Rolling Stones' tour

Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts will likely miss the band's upcoming U.S. tour to allow him to recover from an unspecified medical procedure.

A spokesperson for the musician said the procedure was "completely successful" but that Watts needs time to recuperate. The Stones are set to resume their No Filter tour with a stadium show on Sept. 26 in St. Louis.

"With rehearsals starting in a couple of weeks it's very disappointing to say the least, but it's also fair to say no one saw this coming," a spokesperson for Watts said in a statement.

Watts, 80, said in a statement he did not want his recovery to further delay the tour, which is set to visit several U.S. cities including Dallas, Atlanta, Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

Brooks memoir 'All About Me!' out this fall

At 95, Mel Brooks is more than ready to flaunt his many achievements.

Ballantine Books announced Wednesday that Brooks' memoir "All About Me! My Remarkable Life in Show Business" will come out Nov. 30.

Brooks is expected to share all the highlights — and a few setbacks — in a career that includes such classics as the films "Young Frankenstein" and "Blazing Saddles" and the film and Broadway play "The Producers."

From wire reports

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Bear cub rescued from wildfire escapes center

CA SOUTH LAKE TAHOE — A bear cub known for being rescued after his paws were burned in a Sierra wildfire escaped from the center where he was recovering.

Wildlife officials at Lake Tahoe asked for help finding the 6-month-old black bear — nicknamed “Tam-arack” after the fire that burned his paws. The bear escaped his enclosure and managed to tunnel under an electric fence at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care in South Lake Tahoe, the center said in a statement on Tuesday.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife and local law enforcement were assisting in the search. The center was urging people around South Tahoe to be on the lookout.

The 25-pound cub might have bandages on his front paws. He likely climbed a tree or hid in a small space.

Police: Driver charged after crash, trooper assault

DE MILTON — A man was arrested after his truck crashed into a tree and he assaulted two state troopers as emergency workers tried to take him for treatment, Delaware State Police said.

A truck driven by Dylan L. Martin, 23, of Felton, crashed early Sunday, and he was knocked unconscious, officials said in a news release on Monday. Emergency medical workers managed to awaken Martin inside the ambulance, but state police said he became disorderly in the ambulance and struck an EMS worker in the chest.

The ambulance crew left the vehicle and called state troopers for assistance, police said. One trooper who responded couldn't control Martin, and a second trooper was kicked in the chest and fell through the open back door of the ambulance, police said. The trooper sustained minor injuries.

Multiple officers then got Martin under control.

Man claiming to be Jesus stabs 3 in home

PA CARRICK — A man claiming to be Jesus stabbed three people at an apartment on Monday and then hid until he was taken into custody by Pittsburgh police.

The man is being charged with three counts of attempted homicide and aggravated assault, the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reported.

One of the injured victims told officers he offered the man a place to stay at the apartment in Carrick because he was homeless. He said they were talking in the early morning when the suspect said he was Jesus and began stabbing people.

One of the stabbing victims was in stable condition, another in critical condition and the third in serious condition.

Officers responding to a 911 call heard noises coming from the apartment basement and found the sus-



JOSE F. MORENO, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/AP

Sunflowers shine on

A woman shops for sunflowers in Philadelphia on Tuesday. The National Garden Bureau says sunflowers originated in the Americas and domestic seeds dating back to 2100 B.C. have been found in Mexico. Each year the National Garden Bureau selects one annual, one perennial, one bulb crop and one edible for “Year of the” crops, and has declared 2021 the Year of the Sunflower.

pect hiding in the rafters there, police reports said.

Man arrested after chase in stolen squad car

MN VIRGINIA — Authorities say a Minnesota man stole a squad car that was left parked with the engine running outside a courthouse in the city of Virginia and led police on a chase before he was caught.

The 21-year-old Hibbing man took off in the car about 10:30 p.m. outside the St. Louis County Courthouse. The sheriff's office located the stolen vehicle using GPS technology and tracked it through the city of Virginia, authorities said.

The suspect refused to stop for a Virginia officer and led police and sheriff's patrol on a chase. The man was taken into custody in Pike Township.

Monthslong drug bust nets up to \$2.5M in meth

SD RAPID CITY — Pennington County authorities said Tuesday that a monthslong investigation has turned up large quantities of drugs, including about 72 pounds of methamphetamine worth as much as \$2.5 million.

Narcotics task force officials said three search warrants also turned up approximately 10 pounds of cocaine, 6 pounds of heroin, 6,000 counterfeit fentanyl pills, \$150,000 in cash and 13

THE CENSUS

3 The number of weeks a desert hawk named Paige spent outside the nature nonprofit in Quechee, Vt., from which she escaped. The Harris's hawk, which was born in captivity and participated in flight demonstrations at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, flew away July 13. Paige was recovered Monday. She usually weighs about 2.2 pounds, but came back from her stint in the wild weighing 1.5 pounds. That means she lost almost a third of her weight. The trainers fed Paige a whole quail upon her return.

guns.

“This is a big bust — a big win for Pennington County,” said Sgt. Casey Kenrick of the Unified Narcotics Task Force.

Longtime sheriff convicted on theft, ethics charges

AL ATHENS — A longtime Alabama sheriff has been removed from office, the attorney general's office said, after jurors on Monday found him guilty of charges of theft and using his office for personal gain.

News outlets report that jurors convicted Limestone County Sheriff Mike Blakely of two counts but found him not guilty of eight others. After nearly 40 years in office, Blakely was escorted out of the courtroom by one of his own deputies and taken to the same jail that he oversaw as sheriff. He was not placed in handcuffs as he left the courtroom, news outlets reported.

Chief Deputy Attorney General Clay Crenshaw said Blakely will be immediately removed from office because of the felony convictions.

The two convictions relate to accusations that Blakely borrowed money from a jail safe used to hold inmates' money and that he deposited \$4,000 in campaign funds into his personal account.

Blakely, 70, took the stand during the trial to deny any wrongdoing.

Initially elected in 1982, Blakely told jurors he sometimes put campaign funds into his personal account because his campaign treasurer lived hours away and encouraged him to deposit the money as reimbursement for campaign expenses.

Town displays Civil War tablets after decades

MA AMHERST — Civil War tablets inscribed with the names of Black soldiers of the famed 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment and 5th Cavalry are on display in Amherst after 30 years in storage.

Debora Bridges, the daughter of late World War II veteran Dudley Bridges Sr., returned to Amherst a year ago and began advocating for the tablets' return. Bridges and her

daughter wrote to Town Hall and urged for the tablets to be displayed after they were removed from Town Hall during renovations decades ago, the Daily Hampshire Gazette reported.

Bridges' great-great-grandfather, Christopher Thompson, is one of the Black soldiers whose name is inscribed on the tablets. Also, Thompson and his brother Charles Thompson were among the soldiers that arrived in Texas in 1865, notifying people that the Civil War had ended — and with it, slavery.

City leaders approve \$120K to help zoo

MS JACKSON — The city council in Jackson has approved more than \$120,000 for the Jackson Zoo to help the facility maintain its license to operate.

The money will pay for ongoing expenses such as feeding and caring for the animals, Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba said.

Management company ZoOceanarium ended negotiations with the mayor's office earlier this year, WAPT-TV reported. The city's Parks and Recreation Department now manages the zoo.

The money will go to pay outstanding bills and other costs that have to be paid before the zoo undergoes a review by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Lumumba said.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES.

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The ban on evictions can't become permanent

By MICHAEL R. STRAIN

Bloomberg Opinion

President Joe Biden's decision to bypass Congress and extend the moratorium on evictions for two more months may be unconstitutional, but as a practical matter, keeping it in place through September is reasonable. It will give states and localities time to distribute unspent pandemic relief funds to renters.

Then it should expire on Oct. 3, as scheduled.

When COVID-19 struck in the spring of 2020 and governors started locking down their states, Congress took the unprecedented step of prohibiting properties receiving federal financial assistance or with government-backed financing from evicting tenants. In September 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention imposed an even more sweeping nationwide ban on evictions.

The reason given at the time for these extraordinary interventions was to slow the pandemic's spread by avoiding the increase in homelessness and overcrowded housing that would result.

This was a questionable use of federal power, given that state and local governments are responsible for laws regulating housing. And it was a controversial use of government power, period, effectively overriding binding contracts between landlords and tenants.

But given the once-in-a-century pandemic and the fog-of-war atmosphere it created, the action was appropriate. How contagious was COVID-19? How did it spread? How many lives would be put at risk if the homeless pop-

ulation swelled, or if millions of people moved in with extended family? These questions had uncertain answers, and society erred on the side of caution.

Today, because the U.S. has been successful at vaccinating individuals facing the highest risk from COVID-19, the fatality rate is roughly the same as the seasonal flu. Given that vaccines are widely available and that the virus is much less harmful to children than to adults, the U.S. needs to start treating it more like the flu. Policymakers would never impose an eviction moratorium due to the flu.

There are reasons to remain concerned about the plight of low-income renters. According to data from the Census Bureau, between June 23 and July 5 more than 7 million households had fallen behind on rent, including nearly 4 million with children in the home and 2.7 million with income below \$25,000 a year.

While a little over 25 million renters reported having confidence they could make their next month's payment, 12.7 million had no or slight confidence. Roughly the same number of households responded that they were very or somewhat likely to be evicted in the next two months (3.6 million) as not likely (3.7 million).

Ending the eviction moratorium will cause hardship for many households. But that is going to come sooner or later. It is to a large degree a consequence of the moratorium itself: The only way to avoid a substantial number of evictions is if households have saved up to pay their back rent, or are in a position to negotiate a compromise with their landlords. It was al-

ways likely that a sizable number of households would have failed to do this.

Keeping the moratorium for a couple of months will only delay the day of reckoning, not avoid it. The new extension should be the last one.

If it holds up legally, state and local governments need to distribute aid from the Emergency Rental Assistance program. Congress has provided \$46.6 billion of funding for the program, of which only \$3 billion has been spent on rent, utilities and arrears.

That is a huge amount of money, and the Biden administration should make every effort to see that the aid goes to eligible renters over the next two months. Not every needy household is going to be fully bailed out, and many will be hurt when the moratorium expires — there's no way to avoid this.

Landlords have rights, too, and the longer the situation continues, the less fair it becomes. Moreover, policymakers aren't doing renters any favors by getting them accustomed to free rent over such a long period of time.

The economy is booming, despite the spread of the delta variant. The lethality of the virus has been greatly reduced. Vaccines are widely available to all adults who want them. If the extraordinary measures made sense for extraordinary circumstances, they no longer do. The extraordinary is becoming ordinary.

Michael R. Strain is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is director of economic policy studies and Arthur F. Burns Scholar in Political Economy at the American Enterprise Institute. He is the author of "The American Dream Is Not Dead: (But Populism Could Kill It)."

Cuomo also assaulted the idealism of public service

By KAREN TUMULTY

The Washington Post

“And the sad part of this whole thing, I actually like my job. I was proud to work, especially during this pandemic. ... That was an opportunity of a lifetime for me.”

That statement in the 165-page catalog of horrors compiled by the New York Attorney General's office was made by a young woman identified only as “Executive Assistant #1.” It speaks to one of the more insidious and cynical aspects of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's alleged predatory behavior.

This accuser, described by a co-worker as diligent and well regarded within the governor's office, made what investigators say were credible claims that the governor groped her breast under her blouse and rubbed her backside while posing for a selfie, in addition to regularly engaging her in sexual banter and giving her unwanted hugs and kisses.

Cuomo denies all of it — unconvincingly, the report concluded. Cuomo's own versions of events “were devoid of detail, and were inconsistent with many witnesses' observations of his behavior toward Executive Assistant #1 and other women in the Executive Chamber.”

Cuomo even tried to put the blame on his executive assistant as the “initiator” of close hugs and unprofessional personal conversations. In his telling, he would “go along” with her tight embraces because he did not “want to make any one feel awkward about anything.” Oh, please.

The behavior that Executive Assistant #1 described is clearly sexual assault, but it al-

so suggests a crime of opportunity, one made possible not only by the toxic culture Cuomo fostered in his office, but also by the idealism and sense of larger purpose that has always drawn young people of all genders to public service.

“I remember being a young girl standing at the bus stop with my grandmother and looking at the Capitol and saying one day, Grandma, I'm going to work in there. That she would be proud of me,” Executive Assistant #1 recalled. The grotesque reality of what it was like to achieve that goal was something she planned to take “to the grave,” she said, until she heard Cuomo say at a March 3 news conference that he had never “touched anyone inappropriately.” She confided in colleagues, who in turn reported her allegations to senior members of the governor's staff.

“My time in public service ended because he was bored and lonely,” she said. “It still breaks my heart.”

Versions of her disillusionment echo throughout the report. There was a female state trooper made uncomfortable when the governor asked why she didn't wear dresses. The obvious answer: Because her job required carrying a gun. She also claimed he touched her back and stomach.

“Trooper #1 described the Governor's behavior toward her after she joined [his protective detail] as generally ‘flirtatious’ and ‘creepy,’” the investigators noted. “She did not observe the Governor acting in a similar way with State Troopers who were men.”

There was also Ana Liss, who said she applied for a fellowship to work in the Executive Chamber “out of an interest in government service, specifically economic devel-

opment.” She hoped it would put her on a career path to become a deputy secretary in a future gubernatorial administration, and was excited for an opportunity “to play a role in this larger effort to make things better.” Instead, the investigators wrote, “the Governor subjected her to unwelcome and non-consensual kissing, touching, and comments.”

And there was “State Entity Employee #1,” who was shocked when the governor grabbed her butt during a September 2019 work event that she had helped organize.

“I felt deflated and I felt disrespected and I felt much like smaller and almost younger than I actually am because kind of the funny part of it all is I was making this project happen. So we were there because, you know, the work that I had been doing and have continued to do,” she said, of what she described as a moment of “disempowerment.”

Cuomo would have us believe that all of these women misread his intentions, imagining motives for words and actions that were simply innocent expressions of his own exuberant personality and the Italian American culture in which he was raised.

To hear him tell it, he is the one who should be regarded as the victim. There is a word for what he is doing: gaslighting.

That these women were able to summon the strength to tell their stories, however, suggests that the idealism that drew them toward public service has not been crushed entirely. Because of their determination to make a difference, things may actually be better for those who follow in their footsteps.

Karen Tumulty is a Washington Post columnist covering national politics.

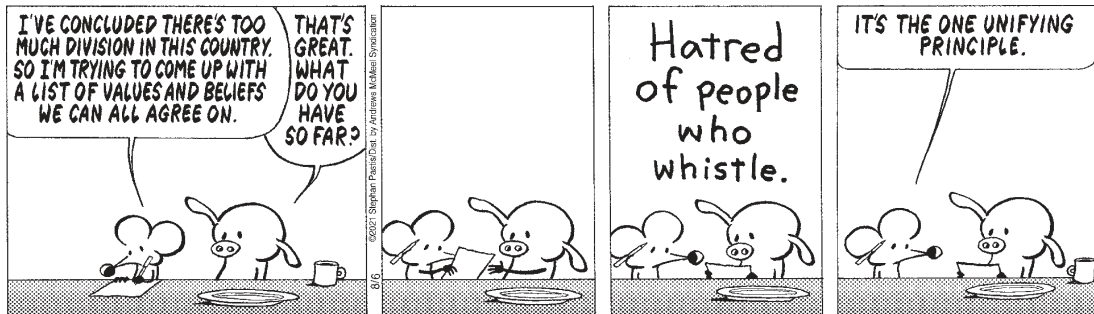
Frazz



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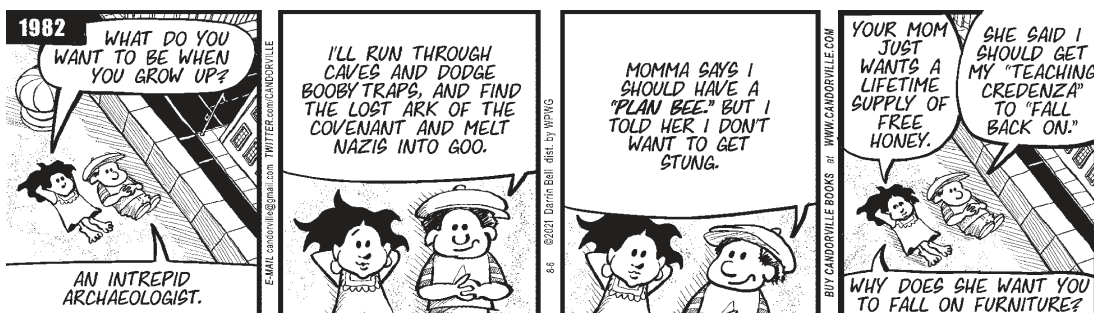
Pearls Before Swine



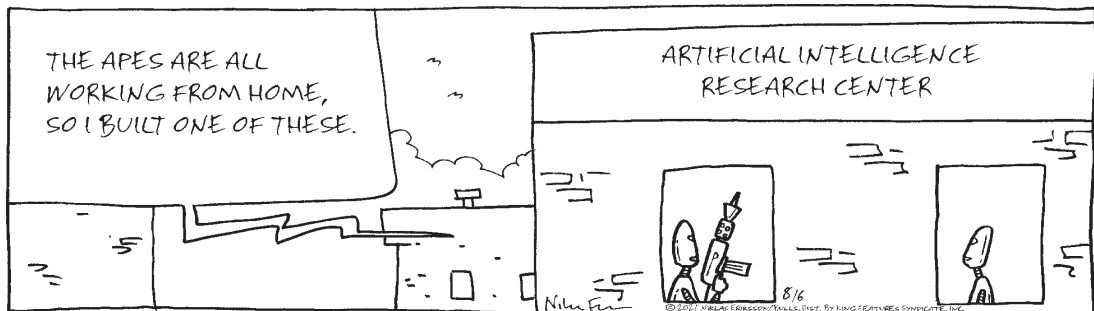
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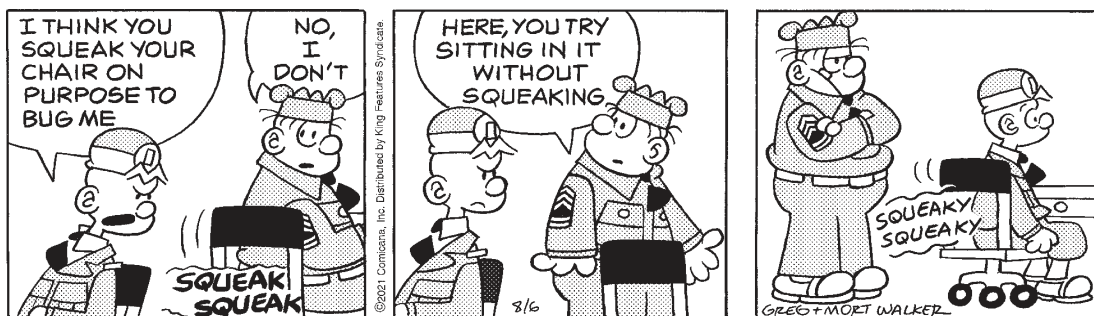
Candorville



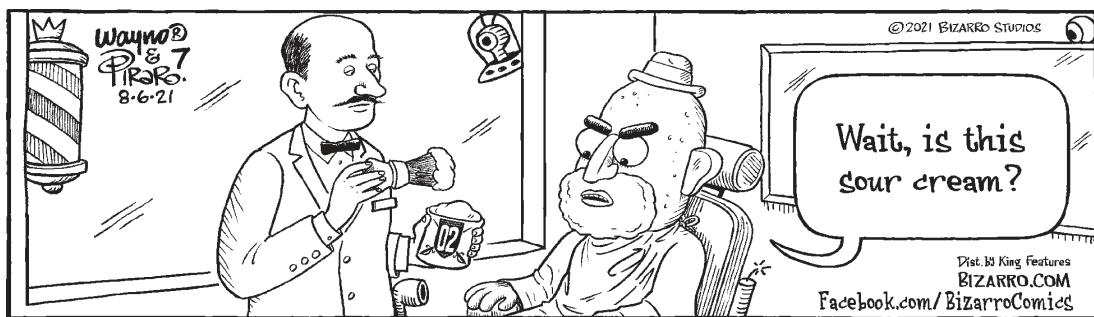
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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| 45 | 46 | 47 | | | | 48 | 49 | | | | | |
| 50 | | | | | | 51 | | | | 52 | | |
| 53 | | | | | | 54 | | | | 55 | | |

ACROSS

- 1 Catch red-handed
- 4 Buckle
- 8 Rara —
- 12 Blackbird
- 13 Pot starter
- 14 Sleuth Wolfe
- 15 Holden Caulfield's creator
- 17 Fired
- 18 Reps
- 19 Ref
- 21 Bit of butter
- 22 Weakened
- 26 Sun block?
- 29 "Mangia!"
- 30 Lucy of "Kill Bill"
- 31 Politico Trent
- 32 Cardinal cap letters
- 33 Swiss river
- 34 Spanish gold
- 35 Misbehaving
- 36 Eyelid woes
- 37 Truck fuel
- 39 "Caught ya!"
- 40 Formerly called
- 41 Early release
- 45 Blue hue
- 48 "Eye for an eye" act
- 50 "— Fiction"
- 51 Cleopatra's river
- 52 Vinyl records
- 53 London gallery

DOWN

- 54 Small bills
- 55 Praise in verse
- 26 LummoX
- 27 Petty of "Tank Girl"
- 28 Oklahoma tribe
- 29 Timetable abbr.
- 32 Port near Naples
- 33 Arcade pioneer
- 35 Spell-off
- 36 Stock units
- 38 Hogwarts professor
- 39 Pie fruit
- 42 Capital on a fjord
- 43 "Dragnet" org.
- 44 Otherwise
- 45 Likely
- 46 Sine — non
- 47 Last (Abbr.)
- 49 Aachen article

Answer to Previous Puzzle

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | A | C | O | | G | L | A | D | | C | A | B | | |
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8-6

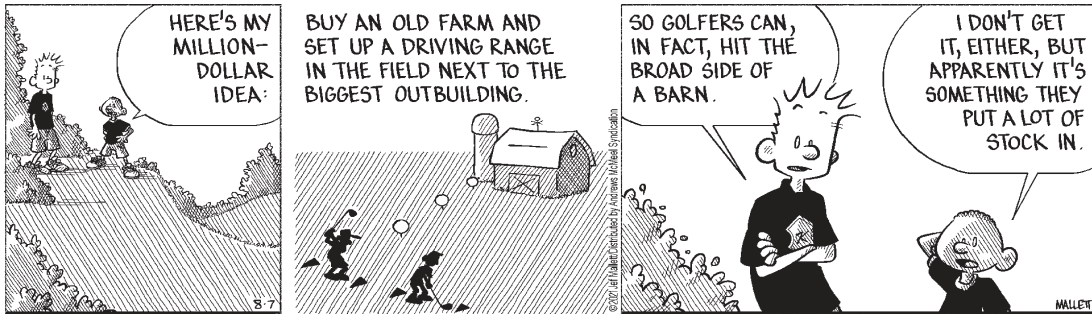
CRYPTOQUIP

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 NABEI UPKS KSJ HUPLB: UPL
 OLKUPLBTKSEI.

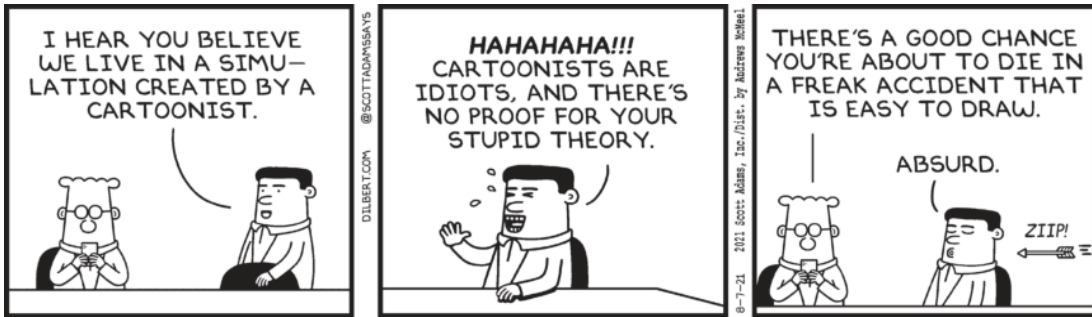
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU KNOW PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING POSSIBLE ABOUT PLAYING CARDS, I'D SAY YOU ARE DECK-SAVVY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals U

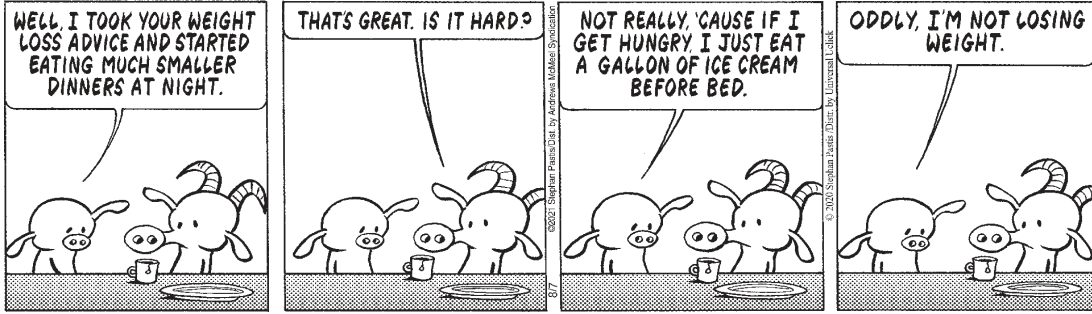
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



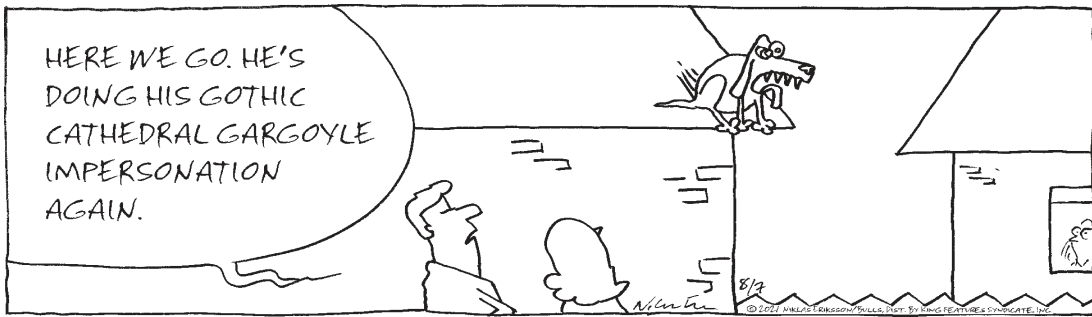
Non Sequitur



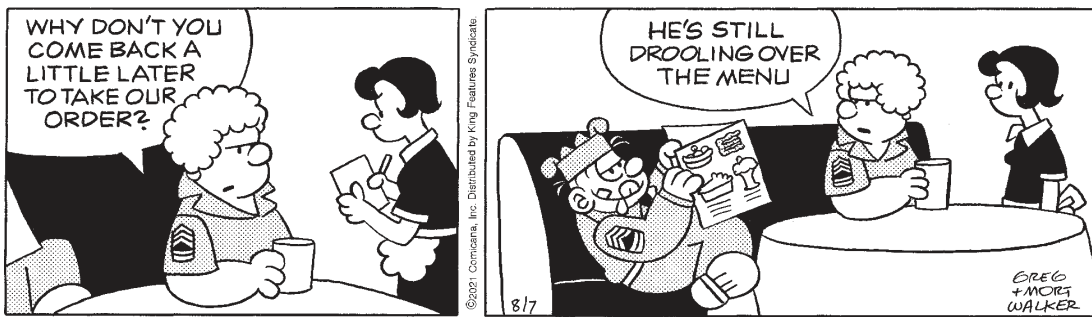
Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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| 42 | 43 | | | 44 | 45 | | | | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 |
| 50 | | | 51 | | | | | 52 | 53 | | | |
| 54 | | | | | | | | 55 | | | | |
| 56 | | | | | | | | 57 | | | | |

ACROSS

- 1 — Gras
- 6 Andre of tennis
- 12 Baseball's Cabrera
- 13 Cook gently
- 14 Nail polish
- 15 Concert bonus
- 16 Basil or thyme
- 17 Infamous tsar
- 19 W. Hemisphere gp.
- 20 Skin breakout
- 22 Still
- 24 Schlep
- 27 "Downton Abbey" countess
- 29 Counterfeit
- 32 Maverick
- 35 Gusto
- 36 Pre-college exams
- 37 Heart chart (Abbr.)
- 38 "— -haw!" (oater cry)
- 40 Yuletide tune
- 42 "Ben-Hur" studio
- 44 Campus mil. group
- 46 Slightly
- 50 Egg-whisking utensil
- 52 Ages, as cheese
- 54 Capers
- 55 Green light

- 56 Handles
- 57 "— Foolish Things"

DOWN

- 1 Ore source
- 2 Petri dish gel
- 3 Ballroom dance
- 4 Ruby or Sandra
- 5 Prairie State
- 6 Cruising
- 7 Harry Potter's love
- 8 "Mad Men" network
- 9 Blended beverage
- 10 Antitoxins
- 11 Angry states
- 12 "I'm not impressed"
- 18 Green
- 21 Roman 205
- 23 Immigrant's subj.
- 24 Actress Taylor
- 25 French article
- 26 Casual greeting in Sydney
- 28 Dictator
- 30 Request
- 31 PTA session
- 33 — -de-France
- 34 Enzyme ending
- 39 Upright
- 41 Expire
- 42 New corp. hires
- 43 Actor Hackman
- 45 Roughly
- 47 Golf props
- 48 Diarist Frank
- 49 "Spring ahead" hrs.
- 51 McCourt memoir
- 53 "Kinda" suffix

Answer to Previous Puzzle

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | A | B | | W | A | R | P | | | A | V | I | S | | | | |
| A | N | I | | A | N | T | E | | | N | E | R | O | | | | |
| S | A | L | I | N | G | E | R | | | A | X | E | D | | | | |
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| D | I | E | S | E | L | | | | A | H | A | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | N | E | E | | P | A | R | O | L | E | | |
| A | A | Q | U | A | | | | | R | E | P | R | I | S | A | L | |
| P | U | L | P | | | | | | N | I | L | E | | | L | P | S |
| T | A | T | E | | | | | | O | N | E | S | | | O | D | E |

8-7

CRYPTOQUIP

N J R I N H E K X B H L D P H X C
 S R K K Y H H X I J R I R S Z D X Q I H Z
 J H K X B R S K R Q L H V Y Z H L R
 X D P I H Z ? K Q D V S E Q B Q V D.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: EUROPEAN COUNTRY BOASTING A HIGHER POPULATION OF BIRDS THAN ANY OTHER: THE FEATHERLANDS.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals L

SCOREBOARD/NFL

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|----------------|----|---|----|-----|----|----|
| New England | 11 | 3 | 4 | 37 | 33 | 21 |
| Orlando City | 8 | 4 | 5 | 29 | 27 | 22 |
| Philadelphia | 7 | 4 | 7 | 28 | 24 | 17 |
| Nashville | 6 | 1 | 10 | 28 | 25 | 15 |
| NYCFC | 8 | 5 | 3 | 27 | 30 | 16 |
| D.C. United | 7 | 7 | 3 | 24 | 25 | 20 |
| Columbus | 6 | 5 | 6 | 24 | 19 | 20 |
| CF Montréal | 6 | 6 | 5 | 23 | 23 | 22 |
| New York | 5 | 7 | 4 | 19 | 20 | 20 |
| Cincinnati | 3 | 7 | 6 | 15 | 17 | 29 |
| Atlanta | 2 | 6 | 9 | 15 | 18 | 23 |
| Chicago | 3 | 9 | 5 | 14 | 18 | 28 |
| Toronto FC | 3 | 9 | 5 | 14 | 21 | 36 |
| Inter Miami CF | 3 | 8 | 4 | 13 | 13 | 25 |

WESTERN CONFERENCE

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|----------------|----|---|---|-----|----|----|
| Sporting KC | 10 | 4 | 3 | 33 | 33 | 20 |
| Seattle | 9 | 3 | 6 | 33 | 26 | 14 |
| LA Galaxy | 10 | 6 | 1 | 31 | 28 | 27 |
| Colorado | 8 | 4 | 3 | 27 | 22 | 16 |
| LAFc | 6 | 6 | 5 | 23 | 23 | 23 |
| Minnesota | 6 | 5 | 5 | 23 | 19 | 21 |
| Real Salt Lake | 5 | 5 | 6 | 21 | 24 | 17 |
| Portland | 6 | 8 | 2 | 20 | 20 | 27 |
| FC Dallas | 4 | 7 | 6 | 18 | 21 | 25 |
| San Jose | 4 | 7 | 6 | 18 | 19 | 26 |
| Houston | 3 | 5 | 9 | 18 | 19 | 23 |
| Austin FC | 4 | 8 | 4 | 16 | 13 | 18 |
| Vancouver | 3 | 7 | 6 | 15 | 18 | 27 |

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

Wednesday's games

Nashville 0, New England 0, tie
 Atlanta 2, CF Montréal 2, tie
 D.C. United 4, Columbus 2
 Philadelphia 3, Toronto FC 0
 Miami 1, Orlando City 1, tie
 New York City FC 0, Chicago 0, tie
 Cincinnati 0, New York 0, tie
 Austin FC 3, Houston 2
 FC Dallas 1, Seattle 1, tie
 Sporting Kansas City 4, Los Angeles FC 1
 LA Galaxy 1, Real Salt Lake 0
 San Jose 1, Portland 1, tie

Saturday's games

Atlanta at Columbus
 Orlando City at Cincinnati
 Houston at Minnesota
 New York City FC at Toronto FC
 Austin FC at FC Dallas
 Sporting Kansas City at Colorado
 Real Salt Lake at Portland

Sunday's games

New York at Chicago
 Philadelphia at New England
 Nashville at Miami
 Los Angeles FC at San Jose
 CF Montréal at D.C. United
 Vancouver at LA Galaxy

NWSL

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|----------------|---|---|---|-----|----|----|
| Portland | 8 | 3 | 1 | 25 | 19 | 7 |
| Gotham FC | 5 | 1 | 5 | 20 | 13 | 7 |
| Chicago | 6 | 5 | 2 | 20 | 15 | 18 |
| Washington | 5 | 4 | 3 | 18 | 15 | 14 |
| North Carolina | 5 | 4 | 3 | 18 | 16 | 9 |
| Houston | 5 | 5 | 2 | 17 | 14 | 13 |
| Orlando | 4 | 4 | 5 | 17 | 15 | 16 |
| Reign FC | 5 | 6 | 1 | 16 | 12 | 13 |
| Louisville | 3 | 6 | 2 | 11 | 7 | 17 |
| Kansas City | 0 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 17 |

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

Saturday's games

North Carolina at Gotham FC
 Portland at Washington
 Houston at Reign FC

Sunday's games

Kansas City at Louisville
 Orlando at Chicago

Winners Open

Thursday
At Arenele BNR
Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Purse: \$235,238
Surface: Red clay
Women's Singles
Round of 16
 Mayar Sherif, Egypt, def. Alexandra Eala, Philippines, 6-2, 6-2.
 Kristyna Pliskova, Czech Republic, def. Katarzyna Kawa, Poland, 6-4, 6-4.

Mubadala Silicon Valley Classic

Wednesday
At San Jose State University
San Jose, Calif.
Purse: \$565,530
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Women's Singles
Round of 16
 Magda Linette, Poland, def. Petra Martić (6), Croatia, 7-5, 7-6 (5).
 Daria Kasatkina (4), Russia, def. Caroline Garcia, France, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Wednesday's transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball American League

BALTIMORE ORIOLES — Optioned LHP Alexander Wells to Norfolk (Triple-A East). Selected the contracts of RHPs Marcus Diplan and Dusten Knight from Norfolk (Triple-A East) and agreed to terms on major league contracts. Designated RHP Shaun Anderson and INF Domingo Leyba for assignment.
BOSTON RED SOX — Reinstated RHP Matt Barnes from the COVID-19 list. Optioned INF Jonathan Arauz to Worcester (Triple-A East).
LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Placed 3B Anthony Rendon on the 60-day IL, retroactive to July 5. Selected the contract of LHP Packy Naughton from Salt Lake (Triple-A West) and agreed to terms on a major league contract. Optioned RHP Chris Rodriguez to Salt Lake.
HOUSTON ASTROS — Reinstated RHP Ryan Pressly from the paternity list. Optioned RHP Bryan Abreau to Sugar Land (Triple-A West).
KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Reinstated 3B Emmanuel Rivera from the 10-day IL. Placed RHP Kyle Zimmer on the 10-day IL.
LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Selected the contract of LHP Packy Naughton. Optioned RHP Chris Rodriguez to Salt Lake (Triple-A West).
MINNESOTA TWINS — Claimed RHP Ralph Garza Jr. off waivers from Houston and optioned him to St. Paul (Triple-A East).
OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Agreed to terms with OF Khris Davis on a minor league contract.
NEW YORK YANKEES — Optioned RHP Luis Gil to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (Triple-A East). Recalled OF Jonathan Davis from Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Returned OF Greg Allen to Scanton/Wilkes-Barre.
TAMPA BAY RAYS — Agreed to terms with free agent RHP Evan Phillips on a minor league contract.
TEXAS RANGERS — Placed RHP Dane Dunning on the 10-day IL, retroactive to August 3. Recalled RHP Demarcus Evans from Round Rock (Triple-A West). Placed OF David Dahl on unconditional release waivers.
TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Placed RHP Joaquin Soria on the 10-day IL, retroactive to August 3. Recalled LHP Taylor Saucedo from Buffalo (Triple-A East).

National League

CINCINNATI REDS — Sent RHP Michael Feliz to Louisville (Triple-A East) on a rehab assignment.
COLORADO ROCKIES — Reinstated RHP Robert Stephenson from the 10-day IL. Optioned RHP Antonio Santos to Albuquerque (Triple-A West).
LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Agreed to terms with LHP Cole Hamels on a major league contract. Designated RHP Yefry Ramirez for assignment. Placed RHP Jimmy Nelson on the 10-day IL. Recalled LHP Darien Nunez from Oklahama City (Triple-A West). Optioned LHP Cole Hamels to ACL Dodgers (Arizona Complex League).
MIAMI MARLINS — Optioned RHP Nick Neidert to Jacksonville (Triple-A East). Designated INF Deven Marrero for assignment. Reinstated RHP Paul Campbell from the restricted list. Reinstated INF Jazz Chisholm Jr. from the IL. Sent RHP Preston Guilmet outright to Jacksonville.
MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Recalled RHP Sal Romano from Nashville (Triple-A East). Placed LHP Eric Lauer on the 10-day IL.
NEW YORK METS — Placed RHP Edwin Diaz on the paternity list. Recalled RHP Jake Reed from Syracuse (Triple-A East).
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Recalled LHP Damon Jones from Lehigh Valley (Triple-A East). Optioned C Rafael Marchan to Lehigh Valley.
PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Transferred RHP Chase De Jong from the 10-day IL to the 60-day IL. Optioned RHP Max Kranick to Indianapolis (Triple-A East). Reinstated LHP Steven Brault from the 60-day IL. Optioned RHP Shea Spitzbarth to Indianapolis. Activated LHP Anthony Banda.
SAN DIEGO PADRES — Sent RHP Dinelson Lamet to Lake Elsinore (Low-A West) on a rehab assignment.
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Reinstated INF Tommy La Stella from the 60-day IL. Placed RHP Anthony DeSclafani on the 10-day IL, retroactive to Aug. 3. Designated LHP Conner Menez for assignment.

TENNIS

Ana Konjuh, Croatia, def. Alison Riske (9), United States, 6-1, 6-4.
 Zhang Shuai, China, def. Madison Keys (3), United States, 7-5, 7-6 (5).

Citi Open

Wednesday
At William H.G. FitzGerald Tennis Center
Washington
Purse: \$1,895,290
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Men's Singles
Round of 32
 Denis Kudla, United States, def. Taylor Fritz (10), United States, 6-4, 6-2.
 Brandon Nakashima, United States, def. Daniel Evans (6), Britain, 7-6 (1), 6-0.
 John Millman (11), Australia, def. Elias Ymer, Sweden, 6-2, 7-6 (8).
 Steve Johnson, United States, def. Alex de Minaur (3), Australia, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-2.
 Reilly Opelka (8), United States, def. Daniel Elahi Galan, Colombia, 7-6 (1), 6-3.
 Lloyd Harris (14), South Africa, def. Tenny Sandgren, United States, 6-4, 1-0, ret.
 Jannik Sinner (5), Italy, def. Emil Ruusuvuori, Finland, 6-2, 6-4.

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association

ATLANTA HAWKS — Signed F Jalen Johnson to a Rookie Scale Contract. Signed G Sharife Cooper to a two-way contract.
DENVER NUGGETS — Signed G Nah'Shon Hyland.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS — Waived F Alen Smailagic.
HOUSTON ROCKETS — Signed G Jalen Green.
INDIANA PACERS — Signed F Chris Duarte to a rookie scale contract.
LOS ANGELES LAKERS — Waived F Alfonso McKinnie.
MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES — Signed F Nathan Knight to a two-way contract.
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS — Signed G Jaden Springer and C Andre Drummond.
PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS — Signed F Cody Zeller.
TORONTO RAPTORS — Waived C Aron Baynes.
WASHINGTON WIZARDS — Signed F Corey Kispert.

FOOTBALL

National Football League

ARIZONA CARDINALS — Signed OL Ryan Pope.
ATLANTA FALCONS — Placed P Sterling Hofrichter on IR.
BALTIMORE RAVENS — Signed WR Michael Dereus. Waived OLB Chauncey Rivers. Activated CB Iman Marshall.
BUFFALO BILLS — Signed OL Caleb Benech.
CAROLINA PANTHERS — Signed S Doug Middleton. Waived FB Mason Stokke.
CHICAGO BEARS — Signed LB Alec Ogletree. Placed LB Christian Jones, LS Pat Scales, DT Eddie Goldman and OL Elijah Wilkinson on the COVID-19 list.
DETROIT LIONS — Released OLB Reggie Gilbert.
DENVER BRONCOS — Waived OT Cody Conway with an injury designation. Signed CB Salvion Smith.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed DL Josh Avery. Activated LB Ryan Wilborn from the COVID_19 list. Activated TE Josiah Deguara from the physically unable to perform (PUP) list.
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — Placed DL Taven Bryan on the COVID-19 list.
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Activated RB Darwin Thompson from the COVID-19 list.
LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Signed OT Jeremiah Poutasi and DT Gerald McCoy.
LOS ANGELES RAMS — Activated WR Tutu Atwell from the COVID_19 list. Waived G Jamil Demby. Signed G Jeremiah Kolone.
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — Signed CB Adonis Alexander and LB Kwon Alexander. Placed CB Keith Washington on IR. Activated K Will Lutz from the non-football injury list.
NEW YORK GIANTS — Signed TE Tommy Stevens. Placed RB Mike Weber on IR. Signed WR Andy Jones.
NEW YORK JETS — Signed QB Josh Johnson. Waived LB Brendon White.
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES — Activated S Andrew Adams from the COVID-19 list. Waived DB Nate Meadors with an injury designation.
PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Waived DB Demarkus Acy and OT Anthony Cole with injury designations.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Signed CB B.W. Webb and TE Joshua Perkins. Waived CB Tim Harris and TE Josh Pederson.

National Hockey League

NASHVILLE PREDATORS — Signed F Rem Pitlick to a one-year, two-way contract.
NEW JERSEY DEVILS — Re-signed F Marian Studenic to a one-year, two-way contract.
OTTAWA SENATORS — Signed D Victor Mete to a one-year contract.
ST. LOUIS BLUES — Signed F Jordan Kyrou to a two-year contract. Signed F Zach Sanford to a one-year contract.

SOCCER

Major League Soccer

MLS INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL — Denied Chicago Fire FC's appeal of the red card issued to D Wyatt Omsberg in the 34th minute of a Aug. 1 match against Philadelphia Union.
D.C. UNITED — Recalled D Jacob Greene from Loudoun United (USL).
LOS ANGELES FC — Signed M Daniel Cristostomo to a one-year contract.

COLLEGE

VANDERBILT — Named Tyler Shewmaker men's basketball assistant coach.

Ilya Ivashka, Belarus, def. Grigor Dimitrov (4), Bulgaria, 6-2, 7-6 (4).
 Kei Nishikori, Japan, def. Alexander Bublik (9), Kazakhstan, 6-2, 7-5.
 Mackenzie McDonald, United States, def. Benoit Paire (13), France, 6-7 (6), 6-4, 6-4.
 Rafael Nadal (1), Spain, def. Jack Sock, United States, 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (1).

Concord 125

Wednesday
At The Thoreau Club
Concord, Mass.
Purse: \$115,000
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Women's Singles
Round of 16
 Madison Brengle (3), United States, def. Lulu Sun, Switzerland, 6-1, 6-7 (5), 6-2.
 Cristina Bucsa, Spain, def. Usue Maitane Arconada, United States, 6-3, 6-3.
 Mariam Bolkvadze, Georgia, def. Greet Minnen (7), Belgium, 6-4, 6-4.
 Hsieh Su-wei (2), Taiwan, def. Beatriz Haddad Maia, Brazil, 6-3, 6-1.



KEITH SRAKOCIC / AP

Steelers running back Najee Harris is gang tackled by the defense after a run during practice Saturday in Pittsburgh.

Steelers' Harris likes challenge

Rookie drafted to improve ground game

By DAN SCIFO
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Pittsburgh Steelers running back Najee Harris enjoys a challenge.

In his rookie season, Harris, the team's 2021 first-round pick, will be tasked with playing behind a revamped offensive line, while also helping to improve a rushing attack that ranked last in the NFL last season.

"My job is to do everything I can to create better situations so we can be in better down and distances for the team," Harris said. "It's my job to create something when there's nothing there. It's my job to hit the holes when there's something there. My job is to do what I can every run to help out the team."

Harris will get his first opportunity during Thursday's Hall of Fame game against Dallas. Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said the rookie will play in all four preseason games.

"He needs the process of game preparation and then ultimately play," Tomlin said. "I'm excited about watching him do that for the first time. I think he's going to learn and grow from that, aside from actual play in the game."

The ground game was an off-season focal point for the Steelers.

Pittsburgh rushed for more than 100 yards in each of its first five games of 2020, but topped the century mark just once during its final 12 games. The Steelers rushed for fewer than 52 yards seven times during that span, as Pittsburgh stumbled down the stretch with losses in five of its final six games, including a 48-37 blowout against Cleveland in the first round of the playoffs.

Pittsburgh's inability to run the ball allowed defenses to figure out a predictable short passing attack. The Steelers selected Harris with the 24th overall pick in the 2021 draft to aid quarterback Ben Roethlisberger and a passing game that ranked seventh in the AFC and 15th in the NFL.

"He loves football," offensive coordinator Matt Canada said of Harris. "He's as advertised as far as his work ethic. Obviously, expectations are what they are, but the way he works, the way he prepares, he's going to do everything he can to be ready to play, and that's a huge compliment to him and the way he's going after it."

Tomlin has enjoyed the rookie's competitive nature, particularly during backs-on-backers, a one-on-one drill in which a running back attempts to block a blitzing linebacker. Harris clashed with Marcus Allen and starting linebacker Alex Highsmith. The rookie also shared a chest bump with Roethlisberger after a memorable repetition with linebacker Robert Spillane.

"Najee likes competition, and he doesn't run away from it, he runs to it," Tomlin said. "He has a long way to go from a growth standpoint in terms of techniques, but I like his appetite for competition."

Harris finished his college career No. 1 in Alabama history with 3,843 rushing yards and 57 total touchdowns. Harris, who caught 43 passes for 425 yards as a senior, has also lined up out wide during training camp practices in Pittsburgh.

"You best believe, if I'm out (wide), I'm out there running routes," Harris said. "I'm not a decoy. I'm live, for sure."

NFL



PHOTOS BY DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Above: Quarterback Drew Lock takes part in drills at the Denver Broncos' training camp Tuesday. Below: Teddy Bridgewater signals during camp. Neither QB has established themselves as the starter yet.

Broncos QB competition still tight after first week

By ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — The Denver Broncos insist there's been no separation one week into the quarterback clash between Teddy Bridgewater and Drew Lock.

Reinforcing that notion, both quarterbacks threw interceptions during 2-minute drives to end Wednesday's practice.

"Yeah, that was a little miscommunication," said Bridgewater, whose final pass was picked off by recently signed cornerback Rojesterman Farris when wide receiver Branden Mack failed to turn for the ball at the goal line. "We'll work on that. I'm glad we're making that mistake now and not in the game."

That blunder followed Lock's blunder on his final pass, which went right to safety Justin Simmons in the end zone on a throw that was designed to go to wide receiver Jerry Jeudy.

Lock, who threw a league-high 15 interceptions in 13 games last season, said he simply made a boneheaded decision.

"Halfway between running, halfway between throwing, just make a better decision," Lock said. "Jerry ran a good route. Either put it over the top of him or just chuck it in the dirt and go to the next play. Don't go half and half there."

Coach Vic Fangio, who usually relishes when his defense wins the day, was not pleased with the sloppiness that caused a bunch of false



starts. He also was miffed by the interceptions his quarterbacks threw during the final 11-on-11 drills that start with 2:10 remaining, two timeouts plus the 2-minute warning and the offense trailing by a touchdown.

"That's a doable situation," Fangio said. "We've got to do it."

Both QBs had their shining moments before finishing ugly.

Bridgewater hit tight end Noah Fant with a 50-yard touchdown throw and Lock whizzed a 20-yard strike to wide receiver Courtland Sutton, who had his best day yet in his return from a torn ACL that cost him most of the 2020 season.

A week into camp, though, the Broncos are no closer to declaring their starter as they approach a season in which they aim to end a five-year playoff drought after new general manager George Pa-

ton added speed, skill and depth across the roster.

On Tuesday, offensive coordinator Pat Shurmur said that while Lock is having a better camp than he did a year ago, Bridgewater, an eight-year veteran, has already caught up in learning the offense.

"I've seen both guys getting better," Shurmur said. "This is the best version of Drew that I've seen. I think he's done a good job."

He also likes this version of Bridgewater, whom he coached in Minnesota several years ago. He said Bridgewater has quickly adjusted to the Broncos' playbook vernacular.

"Teddy has experience in multiple offenses and so what we call apple, somebody else called orange. So, he said, 'Ah OK, it's orange.' So we roll," Shurmur said. "I think Teddy has done a good job."

Half the players who opted out no longer with teams

By ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — More than half of the 67 NFL players who opted out of the 2020 season amid the COVID-19 pandemic are no longer with the same team. Almost two dozen aren't on anyone's roster.

Thirty-three of the players who opted out have returned to open 2021 training camp with their same team. Twenty-nine were waived or released before camps opened, four retired and one was traded.

That represents a whopping 50.7% turnover rate for this subset of players, far outdistancing the average annual NFL roster turnover rate of 36.2%.

Hall of Fame running back Marshall Faulk isn't the least bit surprised that nearly three dozen of the opt outs never put on their same uniform again.

"Oh no, not at all. I mean, this game has no loyalty, let's be real," said Faulk, who carved out a 12-year playing career with the Colts and Rams that landed him in Canton a decade ago.

"The reality is if they can find a way to win without you, they will," Faulk said. "That's what they're supposed to do. That's the way it is. This game needs no one. The machine will continue to churn."

Among the players who are back with their teams is right guard Laurent Duvernay-Tardif, who put his doctorate in medicine to use treating COVID-19 patients in his native Canada.

Every team except the Falcons and Steelers had at least one player opt out last year. The Patriots had a league-high eight, including safety Patrick Chung and fullback Dan Vitale, both of whom retired this year along with two other opt outs: Cardinals O-lineman Marcus Gilbert and Panthers linebacker

29

The number of players who opted out last season and were waived or released before camps opened of the 67 total players who opted out. Four others retired or were traded. That represents a 50.7% turnover rate.

SOURCE: Associated Press

Jordan Mack.

Linebacker Dont'a Hightower is one of just three New England opt outs still with the Patriots, along with tight end Matt LaCrosse and running back Brandon Bolden.

The Patriots traded O-lineman Marcus Cannon to Houston and jettisoned O-lineman Najee Toran, who signed with Washington, and receiver Marqise Lee, who is among the 21 opt outs who remain free agents.

Among last year's opt outs who have landed with other teams are former Raiders cornerback D.J. Killings, who signed with Calgary in the Canadian Football League, and wide receiver Marquise Goodwin, who reverted back to the 49ers following his trade to the Eagles, was subsequently released by San Francisco and signed with the Bears.

The opt out whose status drew the most interest in 2021 was right tackle Ja'Wuan James, who signed with the Ravens after his unceremonious departure from Denver.

On the same day he joined the Ravens, James filed a \$15 million grievance against the Broncos, who released him in May after he ruptured an Achilles tendon during an off-site workout.

James, who played sparingly for the Broncos in 2019 after they made him the NFL's highest-paid right tackle, was injured while heeding his union's call to work out on his own.



STEVEN SENNE/AP

New England Patriots strong safety Patrick Chung, after opting out last season, retired this season.

MLB

Scherzer glad to team with Kershaw

Dodgers, who now have three Cy Young winners, also just added Hamels to a staff of big names

By JOE REEDY
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES
Max Scherzer and Clayton Kershaw were part of the same draft class. Now they are on the same team.

In his first comments since being acquired by the Los Angeles Dodgers from the Washington Nationals in a blockbuster trade last Friday, Scherzer said he's eager to team up with Kershaw and join a talented rotation as the defending World Series champions try to overtake the San Francisco Giants in the NL West.

"It's been great to compete against him. And you know, you push yourself to try to match what he can do. Now we get to be on the same team and actually compete for the same prize," Scherzer said before Tuesday night's game against Houston.

Wednesday, in his Dodgers debut, Scherzer had 10 strikeouts over seven innings in a 7-5 defeat of the Astros. After Scherzer struck out Chas McCormick to end the Houston seventh, the 52,724 fans at Dodger Stadium gave the right-hander a standing ovation. Scherzer tipped his cap as he went into the dugout but came back out after Kershaw told him to go salute the fans again.

Los Angeles provided Scherzer with plenty of offensive support with four home runs to get a split and cap a contentious two-game series.

"That was a cool moment and something I will never forget," Scherzer said. "The fans tonight were great. When it is going nuts you can feed off it."

Scherzer (9-4) tied a season high with 109 pitches, allowing two runs and five hits with a walk.

He was the 11th overall pick by the Arizona Diamondbacks in the 2006 amateur draft while Ker-



ALEX GALLARDO/AP

Los Angeles Dodgers starting pitcher Max Scherzer had 10 strikeouts over seven innings in his debut with the team on Wednesday, a 7-5 defeat of the Houston Astros.

shaw went seventh to the Dodgers. Both have been among the pre-eminent pitchers of their generation. Each has won three Cy Young Awards and made appearances in eight All-Star games.

"As this keeps going along we'll be able to share more tips and tricks of how we think and how we both have evolved over the years of how we see the game now and how we can pitch around things," said Scherzer, who has a 2.75 ERA and is third in the NL with 157 strikeouts.

They won't team up immediately, though. Kershaw remains on the injured list due to left elbow inflammation.

The team also added four-time All-Star and left-handed pitcher Cole Hamels on Wednesday to add depth to a staff that has been decimated by injuries.

Scherzer, whom the Dodgers acquired along with Trea Turner

"I'm glad I'm part of an organization that wants to win and has their sights on the ultimate prize."

Max Scherzer
On joining the Dodgers

for right-handers Josiah Gray and Gerardo Carrillo, catcher Keibert Ruiz and outfielder Donovan Casey, said he had two requests for Nationals GM Mike Rizzo — to remain in the National League and go to a warm-weather city.

There were a couple of hours where rumors had the San Diego Padres closing in on a deal for Scherzer, but he said he figured that was just speculation because he had not heard from Rizzo.

Scherzer said he got a call from Rizzo while on a bus heading back from Philadelphia after last Thursday's doubleheader that he was headed to Los Angeles, capping what was a stressful couple of weeks.

"The thing that gave me clarity was instead of trying to pick a team, it was where would I go to and just accept the trade to?" he said. "I had discussions with Mike about the direction of the team and his words were that the roster

needed to be retooled and he needed to give a facelift to the organization to provide, to provide resources and obviously stock up on the minor league system as well."

Scherzer, who is making \$35 million in the final season of a \$210 million, seven-year contract, said he would prefer to remain in the National League when he becomes a free agent after the World Series, but will wait to see how things play out.

He joins a Dodgers club that began Thursday 3½ games behind the Giants in the NL West and in possession of the first wild-card spot.

"I'm glad I'm part of an organization that wants to win and has their sights on the ultimate prize," he said. "I understand why we're here. We have a great team, but as a player guy you can only control what you can control. You can't worry about other people's expectations. All I can do is go out there and pitch my game."

Hamels signed a \$3.05 million, one-year contract Wednesday with the team. He will earn about \$1 million from the deal, signed with less than two months left in the season.

He would earn \$200,000 for each start and \$200,000 for each relief appearance of 3⅓ innings or more, up to a total of 15 each.

He agreed to accept an optional assignment to the minors, and the team agreed to recall him no later than Sept. 2.

Hamels held a showcase for teams last month.

Scoreboard

American League

| East Division | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|------|----|
| | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Tampa Bay | 65 | 44 | .596 | — |
| Boston | 64 | 45 | .587 | 1 |
| New York | 58 | 49 | .542 | 6 |
| Toronto | 56 | 49 | .533 | 7 |
| Baltimore | 38 | 69 | .355 | 26 |

| Central Division | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|------|----|
| | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Chicago | 63 | 45 | .583 | — |
| Cleveland | 52 | 53 | .495 | 9½ |
| Detroit | 52 | 58 | .473 | 12 |
| Kansas City | 46 | 60 | .434 | 16 |
| Minnesota | 45 | 63 | .417 | 18 |

| West Division | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|------|----|
| | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Houston | 65 | 43 | .602 | — |
| Oakland | 61 | 48 | .560 | 4½ |
| Seattle | 58 | 51 | .532 | 7½ |
| Los Angeles | 54 | 54 | .500 | 11 |
| Texas | 39 | 69 | .361 | 26 |

National League

| East Division | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|------|-----|
| | W | L | Pct | GB |
| New York | 56 | 51 | .523 | — |
| Philadelphia | 55 | 53 | .509 | 1½ |
| Atlanta | 54 | 54 | .500 | 2½ |
| Washington | 49 | 59 | .454 | 7½ |
| Miami | 46 | 62 | .426 | 10½ |

| Central Division | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|------|-----|
| | W | L | Pct | GB |
| Milwaukee | 65 | 44 | .596 | — |
| Cincinnati | 57 | 51 | .528 | 7½ |
| St. Louis | 53 | 54 | .495 | 11 |
| Chicago | 52 | 57 | .477 | 13 |
| Pittsburgh | 41 | 67 | .380 | 23½ |

| West Division | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|------|-----|
| | W | L | Pct | GB |
| San Francisco | 68 | 40 | .630 | — |
| Los Angeles | 65 | 44 | .596 | 3½ |
| San Diego | 62 | 48 | .564 | 7 |
| Colorado | 47 | 61 | .435 | 21 |
| Arizona | 34 | 75 | .312 | 34½ |

Wednesday's games

Tampa Bay 4, Seattle 3
Cincinnati 6, Minnesota 5
Oakland 5, San Diego 4, 10 innings
N.Y. Yankees 10, Baltimore 3
Toronto 8, Cleveland 6
Boston 4, Detroit 1
L.A. Angels 2, Texas 1
Kansas City 9, Chicago White Sox 1
L.A. Dodgers 7, Houston 5
Milwaukee 4, Pittsburgh 2
Philadelphia 9, Washington 5
N.Y. Mets 5, Miami 3
Atlanta 7, St. Louis 4
Chicago Cubs 3, Colorado 2
San Francisco 7, Arizona 1

Thursday's games

Boston at Detroit
L.A. Angels at Texas
Seattle at N.Y. Yankees
Cleveland at Toronto
Kansas City at Chicago White Sox
Minnesota at Houston
N.Y. Mets at Miami
Chicago Cubs at Colorado
San Francisco at Arizona
Philadelphia at Washington
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati
Atlanta at St. Louis

Friday's games

Chicago White Sox (Lynn 10-3) at Chicago Cubs (Hendricks 13-4)
Seattle (Gonzales 3-5) at N.Y. Yankees (TBD)
Tampa Bay (Yarbrough 6-4) at Baltimore (Means 5-3)
Boston (Eovaldi 9-6) at Toronto (Manoah 3-1)
Detroit (Manning 2-4) at Cleveland (Quantrill 2-2)
Minnesota (Ober 1-1) at Houston (Greinke 10-3)
Kansas City (Minor 8-9) at St. Louis (Kim 6-6)
Texas (Foltynewicz 2-10) at Oakland (Bassitt 11-3)
L.A. Angels (Sandoval 3-5) at L.A. Dodgers (Price 4-1)
N.Y. Mets (Stroman 7-10) at Philadelphia (Gibson 7-3)
Pittsburgh (Brubaker 4-10) at Cincinnati (Miley 8-4)
Washington (Fedde 4-7) at Atlanta (Muller 2-3)
San Francisco (Webb 5-3) at Milwaukee (Burnes 6-4)
Miami (Alcantara 6-9) at Colorado (Marquez 9-8)
Arizona (Smith 3-8) at San Diego (Weathers 4-3)



ALEX GALLARDO/AP

Scherzer, a two-time Cy Young winner, takes a curtain call during the seventh inning of the Dodgers' win Wednesday over the Astros.

OLYMPICS

Scoreboard

Gold medals table

| Nation | Thursday | | | |
|----------------|----------|----|----|-----|
| | G | S | B | Tot |
| China | 34 | 24 | 16 | 74 |
| United States | 29 | 35 | 27 | 91 |
| Japan | 22 | 10 | 14 | 46 |
| Australia | 17 | 5 | 19 | 41 |
| ROC | 16 | 22 | 20 | 58 |
| Britain | 16 | 18 | 17 | 51 |
| Germany | 9 | 9 | 16 | 34 |
| Italy | 7 | 10 | 18 | 35 |
| France | 7 | 11 | 9 | 27 |
| Netherlands | 7 | 9 | 10 | 26 |
| New Zealand | 7 | 6 | 6 | 19 |
| South Korea | 6 | 4 | 9 | 19 |
| Canada | 5 | 5 | 8 | 18 |
| Hungary | 5 | 7 | 3 | 15 |
| Cuba | 5 | 3 | 4 | 12 |
| Brazil | 4 | 4 | 8 | 16 |
| Czech Republic | 4 | 3 | 2 | 9 |
| Spain | 3 | 4 | 5 | 12 |
| Switzerland | 3 | 4 | 5 | 12 |
| Poland | 3 | 3 | 4 | 10 |
| Croatia | 3 | 3 | 2 | 8 |
| Jamaica | 3 | 1 | 3 | 7 |
| Belgium | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Taiwan | 2 | 4 | 6 | 12 |
| Denmark | 2 | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| Sweden | 2 | 5 | 0 | 7 |
| Georgia | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 |
| Iran | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| Norway | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| Slovenia | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Ecuador | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Greece | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Uzbekistan | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Kosovo | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Qatar | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Ukraine | 1 | 3 | 9 | 13 |
| Austria | 1 | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| Turkey | 1 | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| Serbia | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| Hong Kong | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Kenya | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Indonesia | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Romania | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Venezuela | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Bulgaria | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Portugal | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Slovakia | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| South Africa | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Belarus | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Ethiopia | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Philippines | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Uganda | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Ireland | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Israel | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Tunisia | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Estonia | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Fiji | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Latvia | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Thailand | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Bahamas | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Bermuda | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Morocco | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Puerto Rico | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Thursday's medalists

| ATHLETICS | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Men's 110m Hurdles | | | | | |
| GOLD | Hansle Parchment, Jamaica | SILVER | Grant Holloway, United States | BRONZE | Ronald Levy, Jamaica |
| Men's 20km Race Walk | | | | | |
| GOLD | Massimo Stano, Italy | SILVER | Koki Ikeda, Japan | BRONZE | Toshikazu Yamanishi, Japan |
| Men's 400m | | | | | |
| GOLD | Steven Gardiner, Bahamas | SILVER | Anthony Jose Zambrano, Colombia | BRONZE | Kirani James, Grenada |
| Men's Shot Put | | | | | |
| GOLD | Ryan Crouser, United States | SILVER | Joe Kovacs, United States | BRONZE | Tomas Walsh, New Zealand |
| Men's Triple Jump | | | | | |
| GOLD | Pedro Pichardo, Portugal | SILVER | Yaming Zhu, China | BRONZE | Hugues Fabrice Zango, Burkina Faso |
| Women's Pole Vault | | | | | |
| GOLD | Katie Nageotte, United States | SILVER | Anzhelika Sidorova, ROC | BRONZE | Holly Bradshaw, Britain |
| BOXING | | | | | |
| Men's Feather (52-57kg) | | | | | |
| GOLD | Albert Batyrgaziev, ROC | SILVER | Duke Ragan, United States | BRONZE | Lazaro Alvarez, Cuba |
| SILVER | Lazaro Alvarez, Cuba | BRONZE | Samuel Takyi, Ghana | | |
| SPORT CLIMBING | | | | | |
| Men's Combined | | | | | |
| GOLD | Alberto Gines Lopez, Spain | SILVER | Nathaniel Coleman, United States | | |

BRONZE—Jakob Schubert, Austria

| CANOE SPRINT | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Men's Kayak Single 200m | | | | | |
| GOLD | Sandor Totka, Hungary | SILVER | Manfredi Rizza, Italy | BRONZE | Liam Heath, Britain |
| Men's Kayak Double 1000m | | | | | |
| GOLD | Australia (Jean van der Westhuyzen, Thomas Green) | SILVER | Germany (Max Hoff, Jacob Schopf) | BRONZE | Czech Republic (Josef Dostal, Radek Slouf) |
| Women's Canoe Single 200m | | | | | |
| GOLD | Nevin Harrison, United States | SILVER | Laurence Vincent-Lapointe, Canada | BRONZE | Liudmyla Luzan, Ukraine |
| Women's Kayak Single 500m | | | | | |
| GOLD | Lisa Carrington, New Zealand | SILVER | Tamara Csipes, Hungary | BRONZE | Emma Aastrand Jorgensen, Denmark |

CYCLING TRACK

| Men's Omnium | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| GOLD | Matthew Walls, Britain | SILVER | Campbell Stewart, New Zealand | BRONZE | Elia Viviani, Italy |
| Women's Keirin | | | | | |
| GOLD | Shanne Braspenninx, Netherlands | SILVER | Ellesse Andrews, New Zealand | BRONZE | Lauriane Genest, Canada |

DIVING

| Women's 10m Platform | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| GOLD | Hongchan Quan, China | SILVER | Yuxi Chen, China | BRONZE | Melissa Wu, Australia |

HOCKEY

| Men | | | | | |
|-------------|--|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| GOLD | Belgium (Arthur van Doren, John-Dominique M Dohmen, Florent van Aubel, Sebastien Dockier, Cedric Daniel Andre Charlier, Gauthier Boccard, Nicolas de Kerpel, Augustin Jean J Meurmans, Alexander Robby P Hendrickx, Thomas Briels, Felix Veronique B. Denayer, Vincent Vanasch, Simon Pierre F Gougard, Arthur Anne-Marie Thierry de Sloover, Antoine Sylvain T Kina, Loick Fanny A Luypaert, Victor Nicky B Wegnez, Tom Alain Boon) | SILVER | Australia (Lachlan Thomas Sharp, Thomas William Craig, Tom Joseph Wickham, Matthew Dawson, Joshua Beltz, Edward Clive Ockenden, Jacob Thomas Whetton, Blake Govers, Dylan Martin, Joshua Simmonds, Tim Howard, Aran Zalewski, Flynn Andrew Ogilvie, Daniel James Beale, Trent Grant Mitton, Tim Brand, Andrew Lewis Charter, Jeremy Thomas Hayward) | BRONZE | India (Dilpreet Singh, Rupinder Pal Singh, Surender Kumar, Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, Gurjant Singh, Simranjeet Singh, Mandeep Singh, Harmanpreet Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Sreejesh Parattu Raveendran, Sumit, Nilakanta Sharma, Shamsheer Singh, Varun Kumar, Birendra Lakra, Amit Rohidas, Vivek Sagar Prasad) |

KARATE

| Men's Kumite -67kg | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| GOLD | Steven da Costa, France | SILVER | Eray Samdan, Turkey | BRONZE | Darkhan Assadilov, Kazakhstan |
| BRONZE | Abdel Rahman Almasatfa, Jordan | | | | |

Women's Kumite -55kg

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| GOLD | Ivet Goranova, Bulgaria | SILVER | Anzhelika Terliuga, Ukraine | BRONZE | Bettina Plank, Austria |
| BRONZE | Tzuyun Wen, Taiwan | | | | |

Women's Kata

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| GOLD | Sandra Sanchez Jaime, Spain | SILVER | Kiyou Shimizu, Japan | BRONZE | Mo Sheung Grace Lau, Hong Kong |
| BRONZE | Viviana Bottaro, Italy | | | | |

MARATHON SWIMMING

| Men's 10km | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| GOLD | Florian Wellbrock, Germany | SILVER | Kristof Rasovszky, Hungary | BRONZE | Gregorio Paltrinieri, Italy |

SKATEBOARDING

| Men's Park | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| GOLD | Keegan Palmer, Australia | SILVER | Pedro Barros, Brazil | BRONZE | Cory Juneau, United States |

TABLE TENNIS

| Women's Team | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| GOLD | China (Meng Chen, Yingsha Sun, Manyu Wang) | SILVER | Japan (Mima Ito, Kasumi Ishikawa, Miu Hirano) | BRONZE | Hong Kong (Hoi Kem Doo, Wai Yam Minnie Soo, Ho Ching Lee) |

WRESTLING

| Men's Freestyle 57kg | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| GOLD | Zavur Uguev, ROC | SILVER | Kumar Ravi, India | BRONZE | Nurislam Sanayev, Kazakhstan |
| BRONZE | Thomas Patrick Gilman, United States | | | | |

Men's Freestyle 86kg

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| GOLD | David Morris Taylor Iii, United States | SILVER | Hassan Yazdanicharati, Iran | BRONZE | Artur Naifonov, ROC |
| BRONZE | Myles Nazem Amine, San Marino | | | | |

Women's Freestyle 57kg

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| GOLD | Risako Kawai, Japan | SILVER | Iryna Kurachkina, Belarus | BRONZE | Helen Louise Maroulis, United States |
| BRONZE | Evelina Georgieva Nikolova, Bulgaria | | | | |

Climbing

| Thursday Men Combined Final Speed | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Alberto Gines Lopez, Spain. | 2. | Tomoa Narasaki, Japan. | 3. | Mickael Mawem, France. |
| 4. | Adam Ondra, Czech Republic. | 5. | Colin Duffy, United States. | 6. | Nathaniel Coleman, United States. |
| 7. | Jakob Schubert, Austria. | | | | |

Bouldering

| | | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|--|--|
| 1. | Nathaniel Coleman, United States, (T1z1, T3z2, z1), 2T3z 4 4. | 2. | Mickael Mawem, France, (T1z1, z1, z1), 1T3z 1 3. | | |
| 3. | Tomoa Narasaki, Japan, (T1z1, z3, z1), 1T3z 1 5. | 4. | Colin Duffy, United States, (T1z1, z3, z1), 1T3z 1 5. | | |
| 5. | Jakob Schubert, Austria, (T1z1, z5, z1), 1T3z 1 7. | 6. | Adam Ondra, Czech Republic, (T2z1, -, z1), 1T2z 2 2. | | |
| 7. | Alberto Gines Lopez, Spain, (z1, z7, z1), 0T3z 0 9. | | | | |

Lead

| | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|----|--|----|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Jakob Schubert, Austria, Top. | 2. | Adam Ondra, Czech Republic, 42+. | 3. | Colin Duffy, United States, 40. |
| 4. | Alberto Gines Lopez, Spain, 38+. | 5. | Nathaniel Coleman, United States, 34+. | | |

Rankings

| | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Alberto Gines Lopez, Spain, 28. | 2. | Nathaniel Coleman, United States, 30. | 3. | Jakob Schubert, Austria, 35. |
| 4. | Tomoa Narasaki, Japan, 36. | 5. | Mickael Mawem, France, 42. | 6. | Adam Ondra, Czech Republic, 48. |
| 7. | Colin Duffy, United States, 60. | 8. | Alexander Megos, Germany, 684. | 9. | Chon Jongwon, South Korea, 800. |
| 10. | Rishat Khaibullin, Kazakhstan, 884. | | | | |

Boxing

| Thursday Men Fly (48-52kg) Semifinals | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Carlo Paalam, Philippines, def. Ryomei Tanaka, Japan, 5-0. | Galal Yafai, Britain, def. Saken Bibossinov, Kazakhstan, 3-2. | | | |

Middle (69-75kg) Semifinals

| | |
|---|---|
| Oleksandr Khyzhniak, Ukraine, def. Eumir Marcial, Philippines, 3-2. | Hebert Sousa, Brazil, def. Gleb Bakshi, ROC, 4-1. |
|---|---|

Women Light (57-60kg) Semifinals

| | |
|--|--|
| Kellie Anne Harrington, Ireland, def. Sudaporn Seesondee, Thailand, 3-2. | Beatriz Ferreira, Brazil, def. Mira Marjut Johanna Potkonen, Finland, 5-0. |
|--|--|

Wrestling

| Thursday Men Freestyle 57kg Repechage | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Georgi Valentinov Vangelov, Bulgaria, def. Oscar Eduardo Tigreros Urbano, Colombia, 6-0, 7-4, Pin. | Thomas Patrick Gilman, United States, def. Gulomjon Abdullaev, Uzbekistan, 11-1, Technical Superiority. | | | |

Bronze Medal Matches

| | |
|--|--|
| Nurislam Sanayev, Kazakhstan, def. Georgi Valentinov Vangelov, Bulgaria, 3-0, 2-1, Points. | Thomas Patrick Gilman, United States, def. Reza Atrinagharchi, Iran, 5-0, 4-1, Points. |
|--|--|

Final

| |
|---|
| Zavur Uguev, ROC, def. Kumar Ravi, India, 4-2, 3-2, Points. |
|---|

Freestyle 74kg Quarterfinals

| | |
|--|--|
| Frank Chamizo Marquez, Italy, def. Turan Bayramov, Azerbaijan, 1-0, 2-1, Points. | Mahamedkhabib Kadzimahamedau, Belarus, def. Kyle Douglas Duke, United States, 9-0, 2-0, Technical Superiority. |
| Zaurbek Sidakov, ROC, def. Bekzod Abdurakhmonov, Uzbekistan, 6-2, 7-4, Points. | Daniyar Kaisanov, Kazakhstan, def. Amr Reda Ramadan Hussien, Egypt, 2-3, 6-2, Points. |

Semifinals

| | |
|---|--|
| Mahamedkhabib Kadzimahamedau, Belarus, def. Frank Chamizo Marquez, Italy, 2-1, 7-6, Points. | Zaurbek Sidakov, ROC, def. Daniyar Kaisanov, Kazakhstan, 1-0, 10-0, Technical Superiority. |
|---|--|

Women Freestyle 53kg Quarterfinals

| | |
|--|--|
| Vanesa Kaladzinskaya, Belarus, def. Vinesh Vinesh, India, 5-2, 4-1, Pin. | Pang Qianyu, China, def. Jacarra Gwenisha Winchester, United States, 6-0, 0-2, Points. |
| Bolortuya Bat Ochir, Mongolia, def. Luisa Elizabeth Valverde Melendres, Ecuador, 15-5, 0-0, Technical Superiority. | Mayu Mukaida, Japan, def. Roksana Marta Zasina, Poland, 12-2, Technical Superiority. |

Semifinals

| | |
|---|--|
| Pang Qianyu, China, def. Vanesa Kaladzinskaya, Belarus, 0-2, 2-0, Points. | Mayu Mukaida, Japan, def. Bolortuya Bat Ochir, Mongolia, 2-0, 4-3, Points. |
|---|--|

Men's volleyball

| Group A | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|-----|--|
| Country | W | L | Pts | |
| Poland | 4 | 1 | 13 | |
| Italy | 4 | 1 | 11 | |
| Japan | 3 | 2 | 8 | |
| Canada | 2 | 3 | 7 | |
| Iran | 2 | 3 | 6 | |
| Venezuela | 0 | 5 | 0 | |

| Group B | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|-----|--|
| Country | W | L | Pts | |
| ROC | 4 | 1 | 12 | |
| Brazil | 4 | 1 | 10 | |
| Argentina | 3 | 2 | 8 | |
| France | 2 | 3 | 8 | |
| United States | 2 | 3 | 6 | |
| Tunisia | 0 | 5 | 1 | |

| Thursday Semifinals | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| ROC 3, Brazil 1 (18-25, 25-21, 26-24, 25-23) | France 3, Argentina 0 (25-22, 25-19, 25-22) | | | |

| Saturday Bronze Medal | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Argentina vs Brazil | | | | |

| Gold Medal | | | | |
|---------------|--|--|--|--|
| France vs ROC | | | | |

| Men's handball | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|-----|
| Group A | | | | |
| Country | W | L | T | Pts |
| France | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Spain | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Germany | 3 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| Norway | 3 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| Brazil | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Argentina | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

| Group B | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|-----|
| Country | W | L | T | Pts |
| Denmark | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Egypt | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Sweden | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Bahrain | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Japan | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Portugal | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 |

| Thursday Semifinals | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|--|--|
| France 27, Egypt 23 | Denmark 27, Spain 23 | | | |

| Saturday Bronze Medal | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Egypt vs Spain | | | | |

OLYMPICS

US women take soccer bronze

Lloyd, Rapinoe each score two goals

BY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

KASHIMA, Japan — Although the color of their medal wasn't what they wanted, the spirit of their mettle was just what they expected.

The United States salvaged a rocky tournament by winning bronze in women's soccer at the Tokyo Olympics on Thursday. Megan Rapinoe and Carli Lloyd scored two goals each in a 4-3 win over Australia after opening the Tokyo Games with an uncharacteristic 3-0 loss to Sweden.

"It's very satisfying. I think we all realized we didn't play the best this entire tournament," U.S. captain Becky Sauerbrunn said. "So to have the response that we did after a very disappointing semifinal, to show the USA mentality and the resiliency, to put the performance in that we wanted to be playing the entire time, and to finally find it in a game like that — very satisfying."

The loss spoiled the Australia-

lians' first trip to the medal round at the Olympics. No Australian soccer team, men or women, has ever won a medal.

The Matildas were the underdogs against the United States, the top-ranked team in the world and the defending World Cup champion which came to Japan vying for gold. But the Americans struggled at times, including in a 1-0 loss to Canada in the semifinals. The Canadians hadn't defeated their North American counterparts since 2001.

The U.S. team that came out against Australia looked completely different.

"That was the U.S. mentality," Lloyd said. "We played well, we strung some really good sequences together, scored some great goals. And I'm extremely proud of the way we persevered, the way we turned things around. We're going home with a medal, and there's no greater feeling than that."

Rapinoe scored directly from a



FERNANDO VERGARA/AP

The United States' Samantha Mewis, left, and Australia's Chloe Logarzo go for a header Thursday during the women's bronze medal soccer match at the Summer Olympics in Kashima, Japan.

corner kick in the eighth minute to give the Americans an early lead. It was the second time Rapinoe has scored an Olimpico, as goals from corners are known: She also had one in the semifinals of the 2012 Olympics against Canada.

Sam Kerr pulled the Australians even with a goal in the 17th minute that got past U.S. goalkeeper Adrianna Franch.

Franch got her first start in a major tournament in place of Alyssa Naehner, who injured her right knee in the U.S. team's semifinal loss to Canada.

Just 27, Kerr became the all-time leading scorer for the Australians with 48 goals. She led all scorers remaining in the tournament with six goals.

The United States has reached

the gold medal match at the Olympics five times. The Americans have four gold medals, more than any other team since women's soccer became an Olympic sport in 1996.

But it is the second Olympics they have failed to reach the gold medal match. They were beaten by Sweden in the quarterfinals five years ago in Brazil.

History made: Pro boxers nab pair of medals

BY GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

TOKYO — Albert Batyrgaziev became the first professional boxer to win an Olympic gold medal Thursday when the 23-year-old Russian conquered the featherweight division by beating Duke Ragan, a fellow pro.

And though Batyrgaziev knows he made history and both of these fighters greatly boosted their pro careers with Olympic success, he thinks the distinction between professional and Olympic boxing is weak — and getting weaker.

"I think that being here for any athlete means that it's a professional or a near-professional experience," Batyrgaziev said through an interpreter. "A professional boxer is not only someone who does it full-time (for money). It also means that here at these Games, any athlete can consider himself or herself a professional."

Batyrgaziev and Ragan became the first two professional boxers to meet in a Games final at the Kokugikan Arena. Batyrgaziev, who is 3-0 as a pro boxer, escaped with a 3:2 victory by employing a strategy that was much more Olympic than his American opponent's approach.

Batyrgaziev, a teenage kickboxing champion from Dagestan who picked up boxing just five years ago, pressured Ragan from the opening bell in the final. He largely dominated the first round with aggression and high punch volume — the two traditional keys to persuading amateur judges.

Meanwhile, Ragan needed nearly half of the three-



THEMBA HADEBE/AP

The United States' Duke Ragan, left, gets punched by the Russian Olympic Committee's Albert Batyrgaziev during their featherweight final Thursday at the Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

round fight to find his game. The 4-0 pro knows his approach is more typical to the professional game, where more rounds allow more counterpunching and more gradual buildups to action.

The 23-year-old from Cincinnati spoke throughout the tournament about his struggle to override his professional mentality in time to win these brief bouts.

"I feel like his conditioning won him the fight," Ragan said. "I started finding my rhythm later in the fight, but it was too late then. It's only three rounds."

Ragan learned he was headed to the Olympics only in early June when the Boxing Task Force overseeing the Tokyo tournament finalized its qualification processes. He became the 12th U.S. medalist in the featherweight division, and he wouldn't change his career path.

He also realizes he has greatly helped his promoters at Top Rank by giving himself a new title that will be attached permanently to his name for the rest of his boxing career: Olympic silver medalist Duke Ragan.

"I take that and run with it," Ragan said. "It was a blessing to be here."

Gold: US down 15 points before rallying in 2nd half

FROM PAGE 48

"Obviously, getting down 15 points, you know you've got to bring it up a notch and that's what we did," Booker said.

Jrue Holiday had 11 points, eight rebounds and eight assists for the U.S., which will play France for a fourth straight gold medal Saturday. The French beat the Americans 83-76 in their Olympic opener.

That was part of a 2-3 start to the summer for the U.S., which included a loss to the Australians in an exhibition game in Las Vegas.

The Americans don't look like that team anymore.

They look like the best team in the world, like those that used to win gold with ease.

It's clear the Americans still have their grip on gold and it's going to take more than a few bad minutes for anyone to take it away from them.

Patty Mills scored 15 points for Australia, which still needs a win for its first Olympic basketball medal.

The Australians have finished fourth four times at the Olympics, including in 2016, but believed this time they could bring home gold.

For 1½ quarters, it looked as if

they would get a chance.

They dropped the Americans into their second double-digit deficit in two games, outplaying the world's No. 1-ranked team and looking capable of forcing the U.S. to settle for anything other than Olympic gold for the first time since the Americans stumbled home with bronze in 2004.

But the U.S. recovered and romped after halftime, improving to 9-0 against Australia at the Olympics.

"In the locker room, it basically was, 'How bad do you want it?' And we came out with the same intent we had in the first half," Australia's Nic Kay said. "We didn't do it at the level we needed to. It's unfortunate."

The Australians opened an eight-point lead while the Americans managed only one basket over a span of more than four minutes. Australia took a 24-18 lead into the second quarter after Chris Goulding made a three-pointer in the closing seconds.

The U.S. kept misfiring from behind the arc and even had some shaky moments at the rim — Khris Middleton had an open dunk attempt but slammed the ball into the front of the rim.

OLYMPICS

American A team seeking beach gold vs. Aussies

Ross, Klineman reach final with defeat of Switzerland

By JIMMY GOLEN
Associated Press

TOKYO — When Stanford indoor volleyball star Alix Klineman moved over to the beach to team up with two-time Olympic medalist April Ross, she knew she was signing up for a lot of extra work.

And a lot of extra pressure.

“There’s been a big feeling of not wanting to let her down, because she took a huge risk on me,” Klineman said Thursday after the American “A-Team” beat Switzerland 21-12, 21-11 to advance to the beach volleyball gold medal match. “The fact that everything is falling into place just feels so magical.”

After winning a silver medal in London and bronze in Rio de Janeiro, Ross was hoping to upgrade to the top step of the podium in Tokyo. Her plan involved a 6-foot-5, four-time indoor volleyball All-American who had played in just a handful of domestic AVP tour events.

The decision would mean extra work for Ross, too.

Not just the usual effort to connect as teammates. Not just helping Klineman figure out the overlapping but still different skills to succeed on the beach. Picking a teammate with zero international points meant Ross, who also has a world championship gold and two silvers on her résumé, would essentially be a rookie herself and forced to play her way into many tournaments on the FIVB tour.

“I was committed. This was going to be my partner. However we started, that was just going to be how we started; we’re going to

work through it,” Ross said. “But we did win our first international tournament and I was just kind of like, ‘Well, duh.’”

They won five more tournaments on the tour to finish tied for first in the Olympic qualification points race. In Tokyo they have lost just one set in six matches.

And now, if they win their next match, they will be Olympic champions.

“Like, OK. We made the right choice,” Klineman said. “She believed in me. So that’s been a huge motivating factor — just to work my hardest every day and to not make her regret her decision.”

The victory assures the United States of a beach volleyball medal for the seventh straight Summer Games — every one since the sport was added to the program in Atlanta in 1996. With four Brazilian teams — two men’s, two women’s — failing to reach the semifinals, the U.S. is the only country that can make that claim.

The Americans never trailed in the first set against Joana Heidrich and Anouk Verge-Depre of Switzerland. Ross and Klineman lost the first point of the second before rolling off three in a row to take a lead they never relinquished.

They will face Australia in the gold medal match on Friday. Mariafe Artacho and Taliqua Clancy beat Latvia 23-21, 21-13 on Thursday to clinch their country’s first Olympic medal since Natalie Cook and Kerri Pottharst won gold on Bondi Beach in 2000.

Latvia’s Tina Graudina and Anastasija Kravcenoka will play for the bronze against Switzerland.



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

The United States’ Makenzie Fischer, second from left, and Rachel Fattal, right, defend against Ekaterina Prokofyeva, of the Russian Olympic Committee, during a semifinal win Thursday in Tokyo.

US women down ROC, face Spain for gold in water polo

By JAY COHEN
Associated Press

TOKYO — Maddie Musselman thinks about it all the time. Playing on the talented U.S. women’s water polo team, Musselman is constantly debating whether she should pass or shoot the ball.

She decided to shoot Thursday, and it worked out quite well for the Americans.

Musselman scored four of her five goals in the second half, rallying the U.S. to a 15-11 victory over the Russian team in the semifinals at the Tokyo Olympics.

“It’s a battle that I personally fight every day, in terms of is it your shot or is it the person next to

you,” Musselman said. “I think today it came down to my shot.”

Led by Musselman and clutch plays by Alys Williams and Melissa Seidemann, the U.S. stayed in the mix for a third consecutive gold medal. Next up is Spain, which advanced with an 8-6 victory over Hungary.

Captain Maggie Steffens had three goals as the U.S. improved to 133-4 since it won gold at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. It has won three in a row since it lost 10-9 to Hungary in group play for its first loss at the Olympics since the 2008 final against the Netherlands.

Spain is looking for its first gold medal. It lost to the U.S. 8-5 in the

2012 final, and then finished fifth at the Rio Olympics. It also lost to the U.S. in the final at the 2019 world championships.

“I’m pretty sure this year is one of the years where (it’s) more even between the teams, so it’s going to be a really cool final to play,” Spain player Roser Tarrago said.

Anni Espar, who played with U.S. attacker Kaleigh Gilchrist in college at Southern California, had three goals for Spain, and 16-year-old Elena Ruiz scored twice.

Spain posted the first three goals. Hungary finally got on the board when Dorottya Szilagyi scored with 4:39 left in the first half.

Alvarez a summer-winter medalist as US will play for gold in baseball

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

YOKOHAMA, Japan — Eddy Alvarez became only the third American to earn medals at both the Summer and Winter Olympics when the United States beat defending champion South Korea 7-2 Thursday night to gain a berth in this weekend’s gold medal game against host Japan.

The former U.S. speedskater-turned-infielder wept in the dugout after the final out as teammates patted him on the back and offered handshakes and hugs.

After earning a silver in 2014 at Sochi as part of the U.S. four-man short track team, he’ll get at least a silver in baseball.

The other Americans with summer and winter medals are Eddie Eagen (boxing in 1920, bobsled in 1932) and Lauryn Williams (track and field in 2004 and 2012, bobsled in 2014).

Jack López drove in his first two runs of the Olympics with RBI singles for his first two hits, Jamie Westbrook hit a solo homer, and Tyler Austin hit a two-run single as the U.S. built a 7-1 lead with a five-



SUE OGRICK/AP

The United States’ Eddy Alvarez, front, and Nick Allen embrace after their 7-2 semifinal defeat of South Korea on Thursday in Yokohama, Japan.

run sixth. Alvarez and Mark Kolozsvary also drove in runs.

The U.S. team of prospects and released veterans, seeking the Americans’ second baseball gold medal and first since 2000, improved to 4-1 and will play Japan (5-0) on Saturday night.



FELIPE DANA/AP

April Ross, left, of the United States, and teammate Alix Klineman celebrate winning their women’s beach volleyball semifinal against Switzerland on Thursday in Tokyo, Japan.

OLYMPICS

US teen Harrison overtakes Canadian for canoe 200 gold

By JIM VERTUNO
Associated Press

TOKYO — Nevin Harrison saved her tears for the finish line, where they came pouring out over a golden smile.

The American teenager made women's Olympic history on Thursday when she surged over the back half of the first canoe 200 sprint final to overtake Laurence Vincent Lapointe of Canada for the gold medal. The Olympics added the event at the Tokyo Games as part of a push for gender equity.

"It's exciting to be part of history, to see how awesome we all were," Harrison said. "I knew it was going to be the hardest race of my life. It's the Olympics, and that's what it all about."

The 19-year-old from Seattle who will soon start college at San Diego State is the first American woman to win a canoe sprint gold medal, and the first to win any kind of medal since 1964.

Harrison burst into tears after the finish and held her hand to her mouth before paddling to the dock. She fought back tears again during the medal ceremony, then cradled the gold next to her cheek.

She had been known to cry before races earlier in her career as part of a pressure release method. That didn't happen this time, and she had all the energy and composure needed to rally from Vincent Lapointe's early lead. Harrison not only won, she beat one of greatest canoe paddlers in

history.

Vincent Lapointe had been the standard-bearer in the event with six world championships since 2010, and she had lobbied hard to get the race into the Olympics. The Tokyo Games was the first time the two best paddlers in the world had met on the water.

They raced practically side-by-side. Vincent Lapointe was in Lane 2 and Harrison in Lane 4. Harrison paddles on the right side of her canoe. Vincent Lapointe favors the left.

And quickly in front, they could see each other the entire race.

"I grew up watching her and hoping to one day be at that level," Harrison said. "They say your idols eventually become your rivals."

Harrison won the 2019 world championship at age 17 when Vincent Lapointe was serving a provisional doping suspension that was later overturned. After the layoff from international competition, Lapointe surprisingly didn't qualify for the canoe 200 at the Olympic trials.

Canada put her on the team anyway and entered her in a kayak event she doesn't race. She then switched to her specialty race.

The Canadian's quick start suggested a strategy to break the young American early. Harrison stayed patient, and her sheer power and steady but furious stroke rallied her to the lead by the halfway point. Harrison



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/AP

Nevin Harrison, of the United States, reacts after winning the gold in the canoe single 200 on Thursday, rallying to beat Canadian Laurence Vincent Lapointe, background.

was too strong to catch and won by half a canoe length.

Liudmyla Luzan of Ukraine finished third for bronze.

"I'm so relieved. It hit me on the podium that I've done it," Lapointe said. "I might not have won a gold, but this silver tastes amazing."

Vincent Lapointe could still win a gold

medal. She is scheduled to race the canoe double 500, where she and teammate Katie Vincent are favorites to win.

Lisa Carrington of New Zealand took her third gold medal in three days, winning the women's kayak 500 with another dominant start-to-finish victory. Carrington won the 200 and double 500 earlier this week and is still scheduled to race the 500 fours.

US' Taylor scores late takedown to grab gold

Stevenson dominates his way to heavyweight final

By CLIFF BRUNT
Associated Press

CHIBA, Japan — David Taylor seized the most important moment of his wrestling life.

The American scored a double-leg takedown with 17 seconds remaining to beat Iran's Hassan Yazdani 4-3 on Thursday night and claim the gold medal in the freestyle 86-kilogram class.

"There was no way I wasn't going to find a way," he said. "It's the gold medal, man. I was going to rip my arms off if I had to."

Taylor expected a tough match from the man nicknamed "The Greatest." Yazdani, the No. 1 seed, won the 74-kilogram class at the 2016 Olympics.

"I like to win 10-0, but getting it done in the last seconds feels pretty good, too," Taylor said.

He took advantage of Yazdani's decision to be cautious.

"I think he only tried three



AARON FAVILA/AP

The United States' David Taylor and Iran's Hassan Yazdanicharati compete during the men's 86kg freestyle wrestling final on Thursday. Taylor secured a takedown with 17 second left to win the match.

times to score," Taylor said. "I always say that if you want to be the best in the world, you need to take people down twice. You need to get two takedowns. Tonight was a good example of that. I needed two

takedowns."

There might be more gold coming for the United States.

National champion Gable Stevenson reached the 125-kilogram final with a 5-0 semifinal win over

Lkhagvagerel Munkhtur of Mongolia.

Stevenson beat his first opponent, Aiaal Lazarev of Kyrgyzstan, 10-0 by technical superiority in just 2:04. He then blitzed 2016 Olympic champion Taha Akgul 8-0 in the quarterfinals.

On Friday's he'll face Georgia's Geno Petriashvili, the No. 1 seed and a three-time world champion.

"Another legend I'm stepping on the mat with," Stevenson said. "But the first legend I wrestled today (Akgul), I took care of business. Second one, I'm going to try and handle it the same. It's just another day at the job. I live for moments like this."

Japan's Risako Kawai won her second Olympic gold, beating Iryna Kurachkina of Belarus 5-0 in the women's 57-kilogram freestyle final. She won the 63-kilogram division in 2016.

American Helen Maroulis defeated Mongolia's Khongorzul Boldsaikhan 11-0 in a bronze medal match. Maroulis, who won the 53-kilogram division in 2016, be-

came the first U.S. female wrestler to win more than one Olympic medal.

In the men's 57-kilogram freestyle class, the Russian Zaur Uguev beat Ravi Kumar 7-4 to claim gold.

American Thomas Gilman, who lost his opener to Uguev 5-4 on a move in the final 10 seconds of the match, earned bronze with a 9-1 win over Reza Atrinagharchi of Iran.

"It goes back to something my grandfather told me growing up over and over: 'Don't think too much,'" Gilman said. "What are you going to do when someone punches you in the mouth and you fall down? You get back up and you keep fighting. That's all I did."

American Kyle Dake, one of the favorites in the men's 74-kilogram freestyle class, had an 11-0 quarterfinal loss to Mahamedkhabib Kadzimahamedau. But because Kadzimahamedau defeated Italy's Frank Chamizo in the semifinals, Dake qualified for repechage and has a shot at bronze.

OLYMPICS

Crouser honors grandpa with shot put gold

BY PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

TOKYO — Ryan Crouser wrote the note and brought it to the stadium just in case.

“Grandpa. We did it. 2020 Olympic champion!” it said.

The world’s best shot putter had a feeling he’d win. After he did just that on Thursday, he pulled out that piece of paper and showed it to the world. Crouser’s second straight Olympic gold medal was a tribute to his grandfather, Larry, who died shortly before Crouser left for Tokyo.

“To lose him the week before the Olympics was obviously sad,” Crouser said. “But I feel like he was able to be here in spirit.”

It was years ago in Larry Crouser’s backyard that Ryan attempted his first toss with the heavy metal ball that would shape his life. What a journey it produced.

Crouser has seen the world thanks to that shot put. Dominated it, too. He set the world record earlier this summer at the Olympic trials. On Thursday, he raised his own Olympic record as well, to 23.30 meters (76 feet, 5½ inches).

He earned the first track and field gold medal for the American men at the Tokyo Games, coming later than anyone expected — on Day 7 of the meet. It was too late for his grandpa to see it, though Crouser and his family have a feeling he knows.

“The same time that you’re cheering the most fantastic thing, there’s just that little bit of, ‘I wish grandpa was here,’” said Ryan’s mom, Lisa, while celebrating at a watch party back in Redmond, Ore. “You know he’s watching.”

On Crouser’s big day, U.S. teammate Joe Kovacs finished second and Tomas Walsh of New Zealand was third.

That was the exact same podium as five years ago at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. It marks the first time in any Olympic individual track and field event that there’s been a repeat podium in back-to-back Summer Games — the same three athletes in the exact same positions, according to Olympic historian Bill Mallon.



MATTHIAS HANGST/AP

Ryan Crouser, of the United States, holds a sign after winning the gold medal in the men’s shot put Thursday in Tokyo.



MARTIN MEISSNER/AP

Katie Nageotte, of the United States, cleared 4.90 meters (16 feet, 1 inch), to win the gold medal in the women’s pole vault Thursday in Tokyo.

Losses on track, wins on field: Another rocky day for USA

BY EDDIE PELLIS
Associated Press

TOKYO — A five-minute burst of action near the backstretch of the Olympic track served up the perfect snapshot of what is going right, and all that is going wrong, for the U.S. track and field team in Tokyo.

At one moment in the pole vault pit Thursday night, Katie Nageotte cleared 4.90 meters (16 feet, 1 inch) and went running up to the stands to celebrate a gold medal that had looked like a lost cause only an hour earlier.

At the next, just as the 400-meter sprinters approached the halfway point, America’s best chance in the race, Michael Norman, was steaming so far ahead of the competition, it became clear he could not sustain the pace.

He didn’t. Norman finished

fourth to cap Day 7 of the nine-day meet at the Olympic Stadium. The U.S. men’s sprinters left the stadium not having won a single final.

But Nageotte’s gold, won in a tense back-and-forth with Russian athlete Anzhelika Sidorova, was the third field victory for the U.S., two of which have been won by women.

The U.S. overall is doing well in field events.

It is struggling on the track.

There have been exceptions — namely Athing Mu and Sydney McLaughlin, who have the country’s only two golds from the track. And Ryan Crouser, who gutted out an emotion-drenched victory earlier in the day to defend his Olympic shot put title.

Very few would’ve figured Crouser’s win on Day 7 would be the first in any event for the men, who

make up about half of the deepest team in the world.

Norman’s fourth-place finish capped a dreary day of running for the red, white and blue — at least on the oval.

He was supposed to have a showdown with Steven Gardiner of the Bahamas, but Gardiner won this easily, in a time of 43.85 seconds, to add to his title from the world championships two years ago in Qatar.

Nageotte is 30, but fairly new to the major international stage. She’s now on a list with Jenn Suhr and Stacy Dragila as American Olympic champions in pole vault.

Nageotte, who went viral when she cleared a personal best (4.95) to win the Olympic trials earlier this summer, opened her evening with two straight misses at the first height, 4.5 meters.

US men’s team gone after another messy 4x100 relay

BY EDDIE PELLIS
Associated Press

TOKYO — The first time U.S. sprinter Ronnie Baker tried to grab the baton, he found himself holding a handful of Fred Kerley’s jersey. The second time, Baker whiffed. By the third try, Kerley was side-by-side with Baker, practically using both hands to shovel the stick into his teammate’s palm.

The names might change, but the results for the American Olympic 4x100-meter relay team remain every bit as brutal.

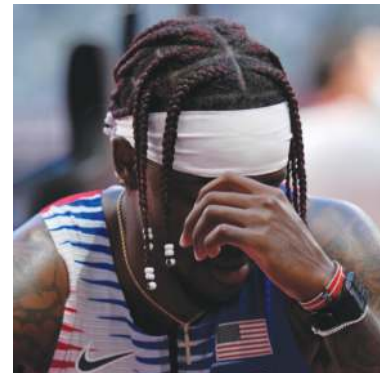
The exchange between Kerley and Baker wrecked the Americans in qualifying Thursday, leading to a sixth-place finish that left them out of the final and extended a quarter-century of misery for the country that brings the deepest track team to the Games.

“We just didn’t get the job done today. That’s all,” said Kerley, who ran the second leg.

Outrage spread quickly, as it always does when this happens.

“The USA team did everything wrong in the men’s relay,” sprinting great Carl Lewis wrote on Twitter. “The passing system is wrong, athletes running the wrong legs, and it was clear that there was no leadership. It was a total embarrassment, and completely unacceptable for a USA team to look worse than the AAU kids I saw.”

The U.S. men won’t win a medal they used to count on in what is turning out to be a rough Olympic track meet. But what used to be a conversation about the deepest track team in the world simply giving away a medal really can’t be viewed in that light anymore.



FRANCISCO SECO/AP

Cravon Gillespie, of the United States, reacts after the U.S. men finished sixth in the 4x100 relay Thursday in Tokyo.

The U.S. men haven’t won the 4x100 at the Olympics since 2000 and haven’t made it cleanly to the finish line in a final since taking a silver medal in 2012. But they gave that one back because of a doping ban against Tyson Gay.

This marked the first time the U.S. has failed to make the final since 2008, when Gay was involved in a bumbled exchange. The U.S. made the final in 2016, but got DQ’d for another bad pass in the medal race.

“Trying to time that up perfectly with a couple of practices is a little difficult, but it is what it is,” Baker said.

Indeed, the team has not practiced much, but that’s no different from any other country. All have had their training time restricted because of the coronavirus pandemic, both in Tokyo and in the year leading up to it.

This didn’t seem to impact China, Canada or Italy, who finished 1-2-3 in a qualifying heat that most teams use more as practice than a hard run.

SPORTS

**Debut with Dodgers**

Scherzer happy to be teaming with Kershaw » **MLB, Page 42**

OLYMPICS

In position for gold

Americans surge by Australia in second half, secure berth in final against France

BY BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

SAITAMA, Japan — The U.S. has owned gold for three straight Olympics, making the middle of the medals platform property of the Americans.

The Australians tried everything they could to shove them off.

“They hit us with a nice punch,” Kevin Durant said after their men’s Olympic semifinals matchup. “We knew that team was going to get us down early and see how we’d respond.”

The response was not what Australia had hoped.

Durant scored 23 points, Devin Booker had 20 and the U.S. blew past and eventually blew away the Aussies 97-78 on Thursday after falling into a 15-point hole.

With their gold-medal streak looking in jeopardy midway through the second quarter, the Americans overwhelmed the Australians with a 48-14 stretch that gave them a 74-55 lead after three periods.

The U.S. missed its first 10 three-point attempts and didn’t hit one until late in the second quarter. Then it felt as if the Americans hardly missed again, with Booker making three three-pointers.

SEE GOLD ON PAGE 44

The United States’ Jayson Tatum drives to the basket against Australia during their semifinal game Thursday at the Summer Olympics in Saitama, Japan.

ERIC GAY/AP

Harris adjusting to new role with Steelers » **NFL, Page 40**

