

**SPORTS:** COVID aftershocks are still being felt **Page 48**

**GAMES:** Mario takes an exciting turn **Page 18**

**BOOKS:** How the US lost the Pech Valley **Page 27**

EUROPE  
& PACIFIC

WEEKEND

EDITION

**MUSIC**

Dua Lipa, nominated for 6 Grammys, is an icon in the making **Page 16**

**AP predictions, Page 15**



# STARS AND STRIPES®

stripes.com

Volume 79 Edition 233 ©SS 2021

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2021

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

\$1.00

## VIRUS OUTBREAK

### Vaccinations are delayed for Army in Europe as cases rise

By JENNIFER H. SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The largest U.S. military hospital overseas might have to cancel coronavirus vaccinations as of next week, as supplies dwindle and new deliveries are delayed, it said.

Most appointments to get a follow-up shot at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center near Ramstein Air Base could be canceled starting Tuesday morning and patients will be “rescheduled as soon as we are resupplied,” LRMC said in a post on its Facebook page Wednesday.

New supplies of the vaccine might not arrive for several weeks, it said. Only second doses are available for now, LRMC said.

The delay contrasts with commands in the U.S., the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East, several of whom have recently received large vaccine shipments.

The Landstuhl holdup could put some patients who have already had the first dose of the Moderna vaccine outside the recommended four-week time frame for a second dose.

While military health leaders are “working hard to find a way” to avoid having to cancel second-dose appointments, anyone who does fall outside the window for

SEE EUROPE ON PAGE 7

## RELATED

DOD pushes more vaccines to CENTCOM after rise in virus cases **Page 7**



PAOLO BOVO/U.S. Army

**U.S. Army paratroopers participate in an Eagle Sokol 21 exercise at Pocek Range in Postonja, Slovenia, on Tuesday. The Ronald Reagan Institute’s “National Defense Survey” showed declining trust in the military in the past three years.**

By SARAH CAMMARATA  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans who have trust and confidence in the U.S. military has declined by 14% in the last three years, according to a new survey released this week by the Ronald Reagan Institute.

Yet, the armed forces still top the list of the most respected institutions in the nation, the survey found.

People who said they have a “great deal of trust and confidence” in the military dropped from 70% in 2018 to 56% in 2021.

“While declining trust and con-

### Trust in the military is declining, although its reputation remains high, according to new survey

fidence in the military is part of an overall downturn in attitudes among the American people, it’s particularly alarming as a leading indicator of a diminishing national spirit,” said Rachel Hoff, policy director at the Ronald Reagan Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting Ronald Reagan’s legacy.

## 56%

Percentage of Americans who said they had a “great deal of trust and confidence” in the military, according to a poll released by the Ronald Reagan Institute. The figure was 70% in 2018. The armed forces topped the list of most trusted institutions.

The institute started its “National Defense Survey” in 2018 to better understand how the public views defense, foreign policy and national security topics, according to the organization’s website. It’s designed to inform elected officials and policymakers.

The latest survey also found confidence in law enforcement similarly dropped from 50% in 2018 to 39% in 2021.

However, “the military remains the most trusted institution by a large margin,” the report’s authors wrote in a summary of the

SEE LUSTER ON PAGE 6

# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	Azores	..	..	\$3.585	..
Germany	\$3.046	\$3.425	\$3.685	\$3.418	..	..	..	..	..
Change in price	+6.0 cents	+6.6 cents	+6.6 cents	+7.1 cents	..	..	..	+6.6 cents	..
Netherlands	..	\$3.847	\$4.143	\$3.928	..	..	\$2.721	\$2.952	\$2.906
Change in price	..	+1.4 cents	+0.9 cents	-2.8 cents	..	..	No change	No change	No change
U.K.	..	\$3.324	\$3.584	\$3.317	..	..	..	\$3.470	\$3.871*
Change in price	..	+6.6 cents	+6.6 cents	+7.1 cents	..	..	..	+6.6 cents	+18.6 cents

## PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	\$2.849	..	\$3.489	\$3.219
Japan	..	\$3.479	..	\$3.209	..	..	..	..	..
Change in price	..	+7.0 cents	..	+7.0 cents	..	..	..	+7.0 cents	+7.0 cents
Okinawa	\$2.839	..	..	\$3.209	..	..	\$3.229	\$3.489	..
Change in price	+6.0 cents	..	..	+7.0 cents	..	..	+6.0 cents	+7.0 cents	+7.0 cents

\*DieselEFD \*\*Midgrade  
For the week of March 12-18

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		South Korea (Won)	1133.79
Euro costs (March 12)	\$1.17	Switzerland (Franc)	.9266
Dollar buys (March 12)	0.8149	Thailand (Baht)	30.63
British pound (March 12)	\$1.36	Turkey (NewLira)	7.5244
Japanese yen (March 12)	106.00		
South Korean won (March 12)	1111.00		
Commercial rates			
Bahrain(Dinar)	.3768		
Britain (Pound)	1.3952		
Canada (Dollar)	1.7921		
China(Yuan)	6.4937		
Denmark (Krone)	6.2301		
Egypt (Pound)	15.7050		
Euro	.8378		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7598		
Hungary (Forint)	305.58		
Israel (Shekel)	3.3066		
Japan (Yen)	108.62		
Kuwait(Dinar)	.3024		
Norway (Krone)	8.4581		
Philippines (Peso)	48.49		
Poland (Zloty)	3.84		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7506		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3421		

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

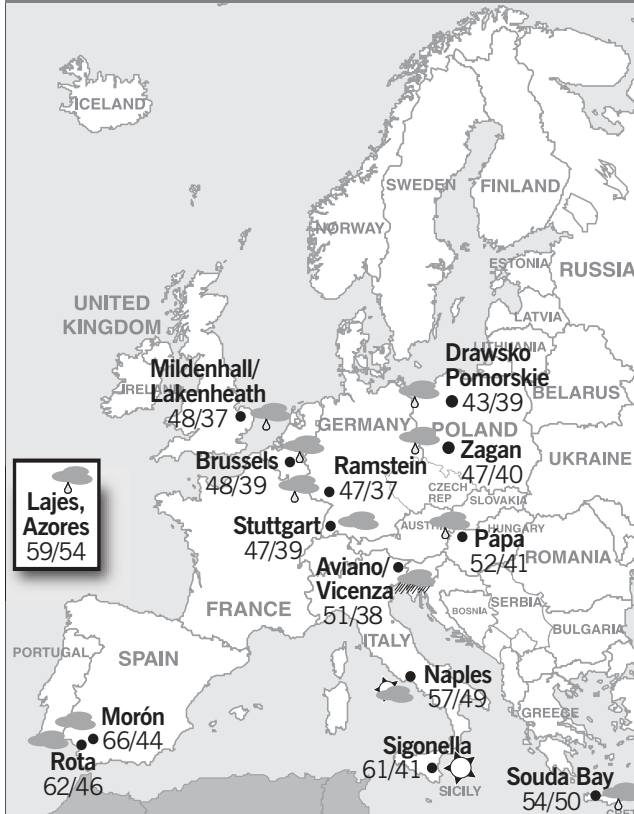
INTEREST RATES			
Prime rate		3.25	
Interest Rates Discount rate		0.75	
Federal funds market rate		0.04	
3-month bill		0.04	
30-year bond		2.24	

## 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.

## TODAY IN STRIPES

- American Roundup ..... 36
- Classified ..... 37
- Comics ..... 38-39
- Crossword ..... 38-39
- Faces ..... 35
- Opinion ..... 40
- Sports ..... 41-48

## STARS AND STRIPES

However you read us, wherever you need us.

Mobile • Online • Print

### EUROPE

CustomerService@stripes.com

+49 (0) 0631.3615.9111  
DSN: 314.583.9111

### MIDDLE EAST

CustomerService@stripes.com

+49 (0) 0631.3615.9111  
DSN: 314.583.9111

### PACIFIC

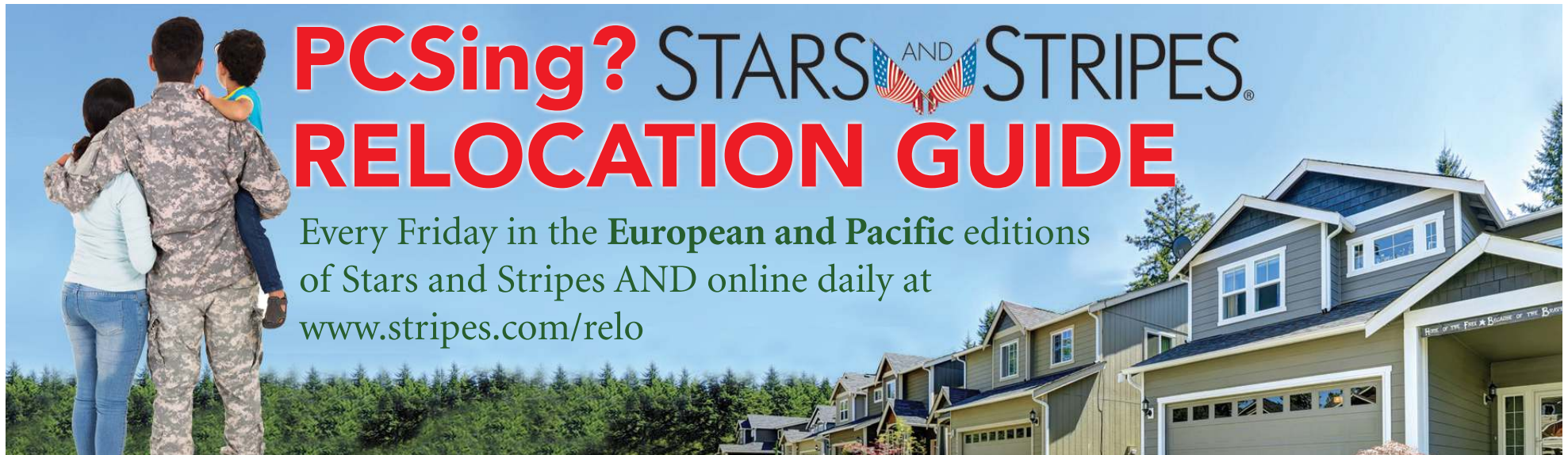
ICHIRO KATAYANAGI

PacificAdvertising@stripes.com

CML +81 (42) 552.2511 ext. 77313  
DSN: 227.7313

# PCSing? STARS AND STRIPES RELOCATION GUIDE

Every Friday in the European and Pacific editions of Stars and Stripes AND online daily at [www.stripes.com/relo](http://www.stripes.com/relo)



## PACIFIC

# Navy sails Taiwan Strait; command talks China plans

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy sent its third warship in a little over a month through the Taiwan Strait on Wednesday, just a day after Indo-Pacific Command's leader warned legislators of China's intent on overtaking Taiwan.

The guided-missile destroyer USS John Finn steamed through the 110-mile-wide strait that separates China from Taiwan to "demonstrate the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Mark Langford said in a statement Thursday morning.

"The United States military will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows," he said, employing a phrase often used by Navy officials following such operations.

Beijing considers reunification with Taiwan a top priority and regularly protests Taiwan Strait transits, claiming foreign vessels must first ask permission before passing through.

Guided-missile destroyers USS John S. McCain and USS Curtis Wilbur steamed through the strait without asking permission on Feb. 4 and Feb. 25, respectively.

After the Feb. 4 transit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin called U.S. strait transits "provocations" that threaten China's "national sovereignty and territorial integrity," according to a translated transcript.

The transit Wednesday came a day after the head of Indo-Pacific Command, Adm. Philip Davidson, told the Senate Armed Services Committee he believed China could overtake Taiwan and force reunification "in the next six years."

"I worry that [China is] accelerating their ambitions to supplant the United States and our leadership role in the rules-based international order," Davidson said Tuesday. "They've long said that they want to do that by 2050. I'm worried about them moving that target closer."

He further suggested the U.S. review its policy regarding relations with Taiwan. For four decades, the U.S. has considered Taiwan's status unsettled but acknowledges that China asserts sovereignty over Taiwan with the "One China" policy.

"I would submit that we've got more than 40 years of the strate-

gic ambiguity has helped keep Taiwan in its current status," he said. "But you know, these things should be reconsidered routinely. I'd look forward to the conversation."

Some lawmakers have called for closer relations with Taiwan. Late in 2020, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., introduced the Taiwan Relations Reinforcement Act to "update U.S. policy toward Taiwan to better reflect the realities on the ground," Rubio's office said in a statement Oct. 20.

In a press conference Thursday, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin "believes it's in no one's interest" for conflict to occur over Taiwan.

"There's no reason for that to happen," Kirby said. "We take our responsibilities to Taiwan seriously, as has administrations bipartisan and legislators bipartisan for many, many years."

Still, Kirby said Austin is "treating China as the pacing challenge ... and that means having the right operational concepts in place; making sure that we are properly resourced in the Indo-Pacific; and that we are developing the proper capabilities to make sure that we can meet that challenge from a military perspective."

"Clearly China is behaving in ways that are not in keeping with an international rules-based order and as the secretary of state has said, they seek to not only challenge that order but to supplant it," Kirby added.

The latest transit came the same day Austin on Twitter announced plans to tour the Indo-Pacific beginning Saturday. He will visit Indo-Pacific Command headquarters in Hawaii before making stops in Japan, South Korea and India.

"I'll meet with my counterparts and other officials to discuss the importance of our alliances and partnerships, and together we'll reinforce the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region," Austin said in his tweet.

It will be his first overseas trip since taking over as defense secretary in January with the Biden administration. In another tweet on Wednesday, Austin said the Indo-Pacific remains "a priority theater" for the department.

doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com  
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos



JACKIE SANDERS/U.S. Air Force

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin speaks with reporters aboard the USS Nimitz off the California coast last month. He begins his first overseas trip Saturday with visits to key allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific.

## Austin chooses Indo-Pacific region for 1st overseas trip as defense secretary

By WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin begins his first overseas trip Saturday with visits to key allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific, with meetings planned with counterparts in Japan, South Korea and India, the Pentagon said Wednesday.

The choice of Asia for Austin's inaugural trip underscores the growing importance of the region in both the Pentagon's strategic planning and America's economic interdependence with the Pacific.

"I'll meet with my counterparts and other officials to discuss the importance of our alliances and partnerships, and together we'll reinforce the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region," Austin said in a tweet Wednesday.

He has been in the job since Jan. 22.

The Pentagon's national defense strategy has, in recent years, pivoted away from emphasizing counterinsurgency and the Middle East toward greater focus on so-called "great power" competition with China and Russia.

Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee this week, Adm. Philip Davidson, head of Indo-Pacific Command, said the United States needs to invest more in troops, missile detection and weapons in the region in response to China's growing military capabilities.

"I see [China] developing systems, capabilities and a posture that would indicate that they're

interested in aggression," he said.

Austin will first stop in Hawaii, which is headquarters for Indo-Pacific Command, Pacific Fleet, Marine Forces Pacific, Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Army Pacific and Special Operations Command Pacific.

He will meet with troops and senior commanders while there, the Pentagon said.

He will then fly to Japan to join Secretary of State Antony Blinken for the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee, informally called 2+2. That is being hosted by Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs Toshihiro Motegi and Minister of Defense Nobuo Kishi, the Pentagon said.

The meeting, scheduled Monday through Wednesday, is intended to emphasize "that the U.S.-Japan Alliance has never been more resolute and resilient — the cornerstone of peace and security in a free and open Indo-Pacific in the face of long-term competition with China," the Pentagon said.

Tensions have risen this year between Japan and China over the disputed Senkaku islands.

China in February gave its coast guard authority to fire at boats entering waters claimed by China, to which Japan responded by permitting its coast guard crews to fire on foreign ships attempting to reach the Senkakus.

Both U.S. Cabinet members then travel to South Korea to attend a meeting hosted by South Korean Foreign Minister Chung

Eui-yong and Minister of Defense Suh Wook.

The meeting is intended to underscore America's "ironclad commitment" to the security of South Korea and emphasize the alliance as "a linchpin" of security in Northeast Asia, the Pentagon said.

Austin will then head to India to meet with Rajnath Singh, the minister of defense, and other senior national security leaders.

They will discuss ways to further advance cooperation made possible in 2016 when the U.S. designated India as a Major Defense Partner.

Mutual disdain over China's desire to dominate the region has deepened defense ties between the U.S. and India, particularly over the past year.

Last summer, Indian and Chinese troops clashed in hand-to-hand combat on the disputed border between the two countries, leaving at least 20 Indian soldiers dead in the Galwan Valley. While the border has long been a point of contention between the countries, the skirmish was the first time that shots were fired since the two sides entered into a no-fire agreement in 1996.

Former Defense Secretary Mark Esper and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with top leaders in India in October and signed an agreement to increase sharing of military satellite information.

olson.wyatt@stripes.com  
Twitter: @WyattWolson

## PACIFIC

# General downplays N. Korea missile display

By **SETH ROBSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

The top U.S. general on the Korean Peninsula has poured cold water on the North's claim of possessing the "world's most powerful weapon."

Pyongyang showed off its new submarine-launched intercontinental ballistic missile during a parade in January.

However, U.S. Forces Korea commander Army Gen. Robert Abrams, in written testimony to the House Armed Services Committee on Wednesday, said North

Korea's claims aren't evidence of a viable nuclear weapon.

"Projecting a capability in a parade, while an effective communication strategy, does not necessarily equal the ability to deliver it," he said. "In fact, there has been no reporting to indicate that North Korea has exhibited a platform capable of delivering the weapons we were shown."

There remains a "significant gap" between asserting North Korea possesses the "most powerful weapon" and certifying they possess not only the actual weapons

but also a platform capable of successfully delivering it, Abrams said.

However, he added: This "new, possibly larger" intercontinental ballistic missile that can be launched by submarine may be an "intermediate step" toward obtaining solid-propellant ICBMs.

North Korea test-fired its new missile in October 2019. However, it has yet to launch it from a real submarine, Kim Hyun-wook, an American studies professor at Korea National Diplomatic Acad-

emy in Seoul, said in an email Thursday.

"So, [North Korea's] real capability of launching a SLBM is not ready yet," he said.

The North also lacks the technology to build a nuclear-powered submarine, Kim added.

Pyongyang tested a nuclear weapon and an ICBM in 2017 but hasn't repeated the experiments in recent years as leader Kim Jong Un and former President Donald Trump held summit meetings and U.S. forces scaled back training on the peninsula.

North Korea continues to develop nuclear and advanced missile systems, cyber capabilities, and conventional and asymmetric military technology, Abrams told the committee by video link from a bunker in an undisclosed location on the peninsula Wednesday.

However, he added: "There remains a palpable reduction in tensions that originated in 2018 after a very dangerous and provocative 2017."

robson.seth@stripes.com  
Twitter: @SethRobson1

## US bases mark decade since quake

By **SETH ROBSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A bell rang out 11 times at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo at 2:46 p.m. Thursday, marking a decade since the Great East Japan Earthquake shook the country.

Marine Corps bases on Okinawa sounded tsunami warning sirens while airmen gathered at Misawa Air Base in northeastern Japan for a moment of silence.

The tributes marked the moment the magnitude-9.0 earthquake — the biggest ever recorded in Japan — shook the country. It created a massive tsunami that inundated the northeastern coast, killing more than 19,000 and causing a meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

The memorials were also a reminder that more than 20,000 American troops worked alongside their Japanese allies to respond to the disaster.

President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, in a joint statement Thursday, praised those involved in the response known as Operation Tomodachi.

"Our joint efforts hold a special place in the hearts and memories of both our peoples — a testament to the special bond and the unshakable friendship that is the Japan-US alliance," the pair said.

Standing in front of the 374th Airlift Wing headquarters and backed by a UH-1 Huey helicopter and a red fire engine, wing commander Col. Andrew Campbell recalled how the Yokota community provided food and shelter to passengers of 11 jumbo jets diverted there from commercial airports after the quake damaged their runways.

In all, the wing deployed more than 1,000 personnel and flew more than 600 missions during Operation Tomodachi, delivering personnel, supplies and equip-

ment to devastated areas, he said.

After the ceremony, Lt. Col. Ryan Wong, who flew nine C-130H sorties after the disaster, recalled seeing the battering that towns along the coast took from the wave.

"It was shocking to see it, but we were trained for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief," he said.

Master Sgt. Joshua Brown, who flew eight sorties during Operation Tomodachi as a C-130H flight crew chief, remembered banking over the northeastern city of Sendai and seeing the damage.

"It was so much devastation," he said.

The helicopter displayed at the Yokota ceremony was one of those that had flown over 100 missions during the disaster, Campbell said.

"Our Huey crews put themselves in harm's way," he said.

Yokota firefighter Nobohito



AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

**Master Sgt. Joshua Brown attends a ceremony at Yokota Air Base, Japan, on Thursday marking 10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake. Brown flew eight sorties during Operation Tomodachi.**

Takeda helped deliver a fire engine to Fukushima so that it could be used to battle the reactor fires.

After Thursday's ceremony, he recalled his concern about radiation as he approached the power plant.

"I saw so many Japanese emergency vehicles," he said.

Another at the ceremony, Masa-

hiro Shinozaki, from Yokota's Mission Support Group, was charged with monitoring the radiation exposure of personnel during Operation Tomodachi.

Radiation levels in Tokyo were never dangerous but some of the exterior panels on aircraft that had flown through radiation were changed as a precaution, he said.

## Marines Corps' sunset tweet above Okinawa draws fire

By **MATTHEW M. BURKE**  
AND **HANA KUSUMOTO**  
*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The 1st Marine Aircraft Wing removed a tweet Monday of an Okinawa sunset photographed from a helicopter in flight after it provoked a sizeable negative response.

The sunset wasn't the problem, according to local media reports, but the view included the barrel of a .50-caliber machine gun and the caption: "Oki views! A view down the barrel with HMH-465 'Warhorse' on a recent flight in Okinawa!!" The caption included the hashtags #FightNow and #FreeAndOpenIndoPacific.

The photo showed two CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 returning to Marine Corps Air Station Futenma

in Ginowan city after a training mission, wing spokesman Maj. Ken Kunze said in an email Thursday to Stars and Stripes.

"The weapon in the lower left of the photo that is pointing away from any populated area below was locked in the up position for travel and no Marine was manning it when the photo was taken," he wrote.

Nonetheless, The Okinawa Times, for one, reported the tweet as insensitive for depicting weaponry being flown over Okinawa cities.

"Ordinary residents get startled when they see guns," even though they often see service members carrying them, Takashi Kishimoto, director of Okinawa Heiwa Undo Center, or Okinawa Peace Movement Center, told Stars and Stripes by phone Thursday. "It is unthinkable from the residents'

point of view to post a photo showing guns."

Kunze maintains the wing's Twitter account and posted the tweet Sunday, he said during a follow-up phone call Thursday with Stars and Stripes. Typically, the wing's posts get about 10,000 impressions, he said. This tweet went from about 10,000 to about 90,000 in 24 hours' time.

"The focus of the photo was the sunset and the weapon in the foreground was incidental," Kunze said. "Our aircraft fly around Okinawa frequently with weapons mounted while transiting to training areas ... Weapons are always locked in an elevated position while in transit and Marines are not manning them."

Kunze said the photograph drew many positive comments but also attracted many vulgar

and misleading ones. He said he took the tweet down because he could not respond to all the negative and misleading remarks, not because he believed the tweet was inappropriate.

"The post was taken down because inappropriate and misleading comments were being made," Kunze said in his email. "Some of the comments were vulgar and it was suspected that some of the responses and retweets were being promoted by individuals outside of Japan in an attempt to spread the misleading information."

Okinawa Prefectural Officials declined to comment Thursday. Ginowan city officials did not respond to requests seeking comment.

burke.matt@stripes.com  
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke1  
kusumoto.hana@stripes.com  
Twitter: @HanaKusumoto



Oki Views!

A view down the barrel with HMH-465 "Warhorse" on a recent flight in Okinawa!! Photo cred to Cpl Dayton from Airframes!  
#FightNow  
#FreeAndOpenIndoPacific

ツイートを翻訳



Twitter

**The Marine Corps said this tweet was removed Monday after it drew many vulgar and misleading comments.**

## MILITARY

# The leaked US plan to end the Afghanistan War

By SUSANNAH GEORGE  
*The Washington Post*

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — A leaked State Department document presents the clearest picture yet of a political settlement to the Afghan conflict that would satisfy the Biden administration and pave the way for the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops from the country.

The United States delivered the document to the Taliban and Afghan government last week as frustration grows in Washington over long-stalled talks between the two Afghan sides and as violence rises across the country. It comes as the Biden administration is conducting a review of U.S. Afghanistan policy and the agreement between the U.S. and the Taliban, which calls for the full withdrawal of U.S. troops by May 1 if the militants met specific conditions.

The Washington Post obtained the eight-page proposal and verified its authenticity with two senior Afghan officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to comment on a sensitive policy proposal. The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the document.

The yearslong U.S. diplomatic strategy behind the push to end the conflict in Afghanistan has

largely been shrouded in secrecy. Under the Trump administration, only a four-page summary was released after the U.S. and the Taliban reached a peace deal in February 2020.

In contrast, sections of the draft peace agreement go into detail, especially in the suggested structure of Afghanistan's future government. In some instances, the number of people on powerful councils and commissions is specified.

Overall, the document calls for Afghanistan's current government to be replaced with temporary leaders, a new constitution to be drafted and a cease-fire to be brokered. Within those proposals are elements both sides have described as nonnegotiable, so the plan is unlikely to be implemented in its current form.

Below are some of the most important issues raised by the proposal.

## ■ Who will govern Afghanistan

One of the key stumbling blocks in talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban is the militant group's claim that President Ashraf Ghani's government is illegitimate — an issue that is addressed in the latest U.S. peace proposal with the establishment of an interim government.

After eking out a slim election victory for a second term, Ghani



RAHMAT GUL/AP

**Security personnel inspect the site of a bomb attack in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sunday. The bomb attached to a minibus exploded Sunday in Afghanistan's capital, killing several people and wounding several others.**

has repeatedly refused to step down despite the Taliban's unwillingness to negotiate with him or his administration.

And while Ghani's government has expressed openness to amending the Afghan constitution, it opposes rewriting it. Language in the U.S. proposal does set parameters for how the constitution can potentially be rewritten, stating that Afghanistan's "2004 constitution will be the initial template."

Afghan government officials and supporters of democratic structures fear that a new constitution could pave the way for the Taliban to secure significant power in a future government. Such authority could give the militants the ability to roll back women's rights, curb civil liberties such as freedom of speech and craft an archaic justice system.

## ■ The role of Islam and the question of elections

The draft agreement appears to attempt to balance the Taliban's demand that Afghanistan be ruled by Islamic law and the Afghan

government's appeal for the country to be governed democratically.

The U.S. proposal calls for elections to be held after the formation of an interim government. While it does not specify when, this could be viewed as a compromise to the leaders in Kabul because the Taliban has described elections as a red line in the past, deeming them a Western-imposed construct.

Islam also plays a prominent role in the draft peace plan. According to the document, a "High Council for Islamic Jurisprudence" would provide guidance and advice "to all national and local government structures." But in cases where the council disagrees with the country's judiciary, the position of the country's Supreme Court would be "final and binding."

## ■ How to end the fighting

The proposal calls for a cease-fire to begin within hours of the deal signing. The end of hostilities is described as similar to the successful temporary reduction in violence that preceded the signing

of the U.S.-Taliban agreement, but this move would be "permanent and comprehensive."

The U.S. and the international community for months have called for violence levels to be reduced. Afghanistan remains the most violent conflict in the world, with the Taliban and Afghan forces clashing across the country as the militants look to expand their territory.

The U.S. draft also calls on the Taliban to "remove their military structures and offices from neighboring countries," a reference to Pakistan.

The Taliban deny the existence of such sanctuaries outside of Afghanistan and would probably refuse to agree to a document calling for their elimination. But reports including from the Pentagon claim Pakistan has long hosted Taliban leaders and their families, and provided medical treatment to the movement's fighters. The longtime relationship would be complicated to untangle. Pakistan denies supporting the Taliban.

## Lawmakers say they still hear reports of 'horror stories' in post housing

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

Lawmakers continue to hear of unacceptable living conditions in privately run, on-base military housing more than one year after passing major reforms meant to address those issues, they told executives running some of the largest companies in charge of maintaining the residences.

"We have heard and seen firsthand horror stories in these houses, from mold, to water leaks to incorrect lead abatement that has directly affected the health and safety of these families," said Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., chairwoman of the House Armed Services Committee's subpanel on military personnel.

Top representatives for three of

the four largest companies that run privatized on-post housing told House Armed Services Committee members on Wednesday that they were making progress in improving housing conditions and customer service at hundreds of locations that they run across the United States. Those testifying before a joint session of the House committee's personnel subpanel

and its readiness subpanel included executives from Balfour Beatty Communities, Lendlease Americas and the Corvias Group LLC.

The executives said the companies believe they are on the right track — improving communication with their residents, responding to problems quicker and undergoing internal company reor-

ganizations since the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act mandated a series of private military housing reforms following news reports that revealed widespread subpar conditions in on-post residences on dozens of bases.

dickstein.corey@stripes.com  
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

## HAVE YOU BEEN INJURED?

Defense Base Act Legal Representation

Including Non-US Citizens



If you work for a company under contract with the United States Government outside the U.S. and fall ill or are injured at work, you may have the right to pursue a claim in the U.S. for benefits under the Defense Base Act. This law protects and applies to all injured employees, regardless of their citizenship or nationality. Under the law, you may be entitled to select a doctor and to payment of wages if restricted from working.

Hire Us Online Now!  
www.barnettandlerner.com  
For a FREE consultation  
888.732.7425

Barnett, Lerner, Karsen,  
Frankel & Castro  
Professional Association  
Attorneys and Counselors at Law

## MILITARY

# Top Army leader rebukes Carlson talk on women

BY KARIN ZEITVOGEL  
Stars and Stripes

Women in the military deliver more than babies, senior military leaders said after Fox News host Tucker Carlson said on his show that pregnant women “are going to fight our wars” and make a mockery of the U.S. military.

“Women lead our most lethal units with character. They will dominate ANY future battlefield we’re called to fight on,” Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston said on Twitter on Thursday, adding that Carlson’s comments hours earlier were divisive and “don’t reflect Army values.”

Carlson said in a roughly 30-second clip on his show Wednesday, “So we’ve got new hairstyles, maternity flight suits. Pregnant women are going to fight our wars.”

“It’s a mockery of the U.S. mil-

itary,” he added, going on to compare America’s armed forces to China’s, which he said were “becoming more masculine” as they assembled the world’s largest navy.

Carlson showed a photo during his broadcast of an Air Force officer wearing an artificial pregnancy bump while modeling a maternity flight suit still in development. The Air Force has changed some of its rules to allow pregnant service members to fly nonfighter aircraft through their second trimester without a waiver.

The changes were initiated during the Trump administration.

At least three generals also responded to Carlson’s comments, calling them ill-informed and wrong-footed.

Gen. Paul E. Funk II, commander of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, praised the



TWITTER

A screenshot from Tucker Carlson's Fox News broadcast Wednesday.

“thousands of women (who) serve honorably every day around the globe.” U.S. female service members are “beacons of freedom” who prove Carlson wrong, he said on Twitter.

Lt. Gen. Ted Martin, deputy commanding general and chief of staff of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, posted a picture of his daughter in fatigues with the comment: “Contrary to what you may be hearing this WOMAN & 1000’s of WOMEN like her are NOT ‘making a mockery of our military.’”

Maj. Gen. Pat Donahoe, commander of Fort Benning, Ga., and the Army Maneuver Center of Ex-

cellence, posted a video of himself conducting a reenlistment ceremony “for one of the tens of thousands of women who serve in our Army.”

“Just a reminder that @TuckerCarlson couldn’t be more wrong,” he said on Twitter.

Female service members were also quick to respond to Carlson, posting pictures of themselves during deployments.

“Is this what mockery looks like?” asked the host of the Parenting in Uniform podcast in a tweet above a picture of her manning a .50-caliber machine gun on a Humvee.

The picture was taken during

her first deployment in Afghanistan in 2005, when she was a platoon leader with the 846<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, she told Stars and Stripes. She deployed three more times during nearly 18 years of service.

A National Guardsman who tweets as @SilverBeaty shared an image taken during her 3 a.m. shift guarding the U.S. Capitol building.

“Just trying to make sure I understand the line between being part of the Nation’s defense and part of the feminization of the military,” she wrote.

zeitvogel.karin@stripes.com  
Twitter: @StripesZeit

## Luster: Confidence in military drops to 56% as several hot-button issues debated

FROM PAGE 1

survey’s findings.

Ten percent of individuals surveyed had a “great deal” of confidence in Congress, 30% in the presidency, and 39% in law enforcement in 2021 — all far behind the level of faith the public puts in the military.

The Pentagon’s press secretary on Wednesday shrugged off the survey results, but emphasized the department takes the issue seriously.

“Even though the numbers in this survey seem to show a drop in this particular survey, it’s clear that the American people still support and trust the men and women in the military,” Pentagon chief spokesman John Kirby told reporters.

Seventy-four percent of those polled support increasing military spending, but funding for the military is a “top priority” for only 11%, trailing behind other issues such as health care and education, the poll found.

The survey also found 63% of people asked support maintaining military bases overseas, rather than reducing the U.S. military’s footprint overseas.

While Hoff pointed out findings do not explain what’s behind the diminishing trust, she offered “the

politicization of the military, growing awareness surrounding the issue of sexual assault, or recent headlines about extremism in the ranks” as potential drivers.

The survey’s results come as the Pentagon is grappling with how to address a number of hot-button issues such as rooting out extremism in the ranks and preventing sexual assault and harassment.

Following the deadly Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, news reports have linked several active-duty service members and veterans to the riot. An NPR analysis last month found about 14% of the people charged in connection with storming the Capitol have ties to the military.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin pledged to Congress during his confirmation hearing that he would work to combat extremism in the military. In early February, he directed all Defense Department commanders and supervisors to lead a one-day stand-down within the next 60 days.

The problem of sexual assault and harassment in the military has continued to garner increased attention in recent years. Austin also told Congress that he will consider making sweeping changes in how those crimes are prosecuted. The defense secretary recently announced a civilian-led commis-

sion that would investigate the problem and gave the panel 90 days to review Defense Department policies and processes that address sexual assault in the military.

During the summer, the use of armed forces by former President Donald Trump to contain social justice protests also sparked public outcry.

Police and National Guard troops cleared out demonstrators in Washington in June, using tear gas to allow for a photo-op of Trump outside a church. The incident prompted criticism and sparked debate over civilian control of the military.

The survey by the Ronald Reagan Institute was conducted from Feb. 4 through Feb. 14 and had 2,527 respondents. Telephone interviewers accounted for 1,011 responses and another 1,516 responses were gathered online. The results were weighted by numerous factors such as age, race and region that were drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2019 American Community Survey to ensure the results accurately reflect the demographics of the country, according to a summary of the poll’s results.

cammarata.sarah@stripes.com  
Twitter: @sarahjcam

## Man accused in slayings turns himself in to police

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER  
AND JENNIFER H. SVAN  
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — A German man who prosecutors say killed his mother and her partner turned himself in to police Thursday, ending a search for him in the villages near Ramstein Air Base.

Daniel Mentel, 38, is accused of killing his mother, 60, and a man, 65, whose bodies were found Tuesday around noon in a building where they all lived together in Weilerbach, the Kaiserslautern district prosecutor’s office said in a statement Thursday.

Mentel turned himself in at a Kaiserslautern police station at 1:55 p.m., the statement said, ending a search that began Tuesday in an area that is home to many U.S. military personnel and their families.

Prosecutors have accused Mentel of killing his mother and her partner either Monday or on Tuesday morning.

Police showed up at the Weilerbach residence Tuesday after getting a worried call from the mother’s workplace.

Mentel opened the door to the police and said that his mother had left, prosecutors said. He fled before police discovered the bodies, the statement said.

The accused appeared before a

Kaiserslautern District Court judge Thursday and exercised his right to remain silent before being returned to jail, prosecutors said. The court upheld a warrant issued Wednesday related to the killings and Mentel’s escape.

An investigation is ongoing and motive remains unclear, prosecutors said.

Mentel is also being accused of arson for setting fire to a carport and a barn in Mackenbach on Sunday around 10 p.m., and hours later setting a garage in Erzenhausen on fire, the prosecutor’s statement said.

Men who had business ties to Mentel lived in the apartment buildings connected to the burned properties, the statement said.

A window and construction business, Fensterbau Mentel, is registered to the address where Mentel lived with his mother and her partner.

Anyone with information on the case can still call the Westpfalz police at 0631-369-2999.

Preliminary autopsy results found “that the death of the two victims was caused by violence — but not by gunshot wounds,” Rheinland-Pfalz police said in a statement Wednesday.

kloeckner.marcus@stripes.com  
svan.jennifer@stripes.com  
Twitter: @stripesktown

## VIRUS OUTBREAK

## USFK administering J&amp;J's one-shot vaccine

By JOSEPH DITZLER  
*Stars and Stripes*

The U.S. military in South Korea said it received 7,900 doses of Johnson & Johnson's one-shot COVID-19 vaccine on Tuesday and started to administer it immediately.

Twenty percent of the 58,000 people in the U.S. Forces Korea community were already inoculated when the new doses arrived, command spokesman Col. Lee Peters said Thursday on American Forces Network Radio.

On Friday, inoculations will come to the next group of individuals in the Defense Department priority list at Camp Humphreys: DOD faculty and staff, Army and Air Force Exchange Service and commissary workers, bus drivers and other customer-facing employees, Peters said. Vaccines should come to Osan Air Base and Daegu Garrison next week.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, ap-



MATTHEW KEELER/Stars and Stripes

**A 51st Fighter Wing airman receives the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine at Osan Air Base, South Korea, on Thursday.**

proved for emergency use Feb. 27 by the Food and Drug Administration, is a game-changer in the fight against COVID-19, the coronavirus respiratory disease, according

to Peters and USFK command surgeon Col. Douglas Lougee.

"I'm excited to talk about vaccines anytime," Lougee said on the program. "This is the time to hit back at this virus that's destroyed our lives this past year."

He said the vaccine is safe and effective and encouraged everyone to get inoculated, although pregnant women should first consult with their doctors.

Lougee said the Johnson & Johnson shot provides its full protection 28 days after inoculation. Afterward, he said, "your chance of getting COVID is less than getting hit by lightning."

USFK on Thursday reported that nine new cases of COVID-19, all among new arrivals to the peninsula, were discovered between Feb. 22 and Monday.

Four service members arrived Feb. 22 and 24 and Monday at Osan Air Base aboard the Patriot Express, a government-contracted passenger service. Another four

service members and a contractor arrived Feb. 23, March 4 and 5 at Incheon International Airport.

Six tested positive upon arrival and before entering quarantine; three came up positive on the test required to exit the mandatory 14-day quarantine, according to USFK.

U.S. military bases in Japan reported two new coronavirus cases Thursday.

At Naval Air Facility Atsugi, southeast of Tokyo, one person tested positive prior to exiting the restricted movement period required of new arrivals to Japan and returning travelers, base spokesman Sam Samuelson told Stars and Stripes by phone.

The Marine Corps had one person at Camp Foster on Okinawa test positive Wednesday, according to a base Facebook post.

ditzler.joseph@stripes.com  
Twitter: @JosephDitzler

## Europe: Vaccine delay comes as infections climb in Germany

FROM PAGE 1

the second dose will receive it "as soon as we are resupplied," LPMC said. They will not have to go back to square one and have the first dose again, it said.

The Moderna vaccine is around 94% effective at preventing the disease caused by the coronavirus if two doses are administered about 28 days apart, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But the second dose can be given as many as six weeks after the first with little impact on the vaccine's efficacy, the CDC has said.

The delays were announced as new infections climbed in Germany — from a weekly average 65.4 new cases per 100,000 people to 69.1 from Wednesday to Thursday

— and the head of the public health agency, the Robert Koch Institute, said the third wave of the virus was beginning in the country.

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden warned on its Facebook page this week that its vaccine supplies were also limited "and shots are not guaranteed."

The delay comes a week after Army Lt. Gen. Robert Place, head of the Defense Health Agency, told a virtual town hall that a "significant number" of DOD locations would begin vaccinating the general population, including civilians, next month.

President Joe Biden has said there will be enough vaccine for every American adult in the U.S. to be inoculated by the end of May.

In South Korea this week, the U.S. military received nearly 8,000 doses of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which recently received emergency use authorization from the Food and Drug Administration.

Air Force Central Command, whose area of responsibility stretches from Egypt to Kazakhstan, received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine this week, command officials told Stars and Stripes. Navy officials in Japan have said they expect to receive it soon.

The Defense Department has prioritized distribution and is "initially focusing on distributing doses" of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine "to forces deployed to austere locations," LPMC said on Facebook.

But neither Japan nor South Korea are typically considered austere by the military.

While the military in Europe can order the one-shot vaccine, the Defense Logistics Agency, which distributes the vaccine, "has not received any orders from the Military Services to ship the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to bases in Europe at this time," spokeswoman Michelle McCaskill said.

There are no vaccine shipping delays or backlogs to any locations, McCaskill said.

Meanwhile, military personnel and family members in Europe are growing frustrated at the slow pace of the vaccination campaign where they live.

"It feels like troops overseas are being de-prioritized because no

one can brag about us in their state vaccination stats. We are orphaned," a commenter said on LPMC's Facebook page this week.

"I just wish we were a priority," said another.

Army health clinics in Europe submit the number of beneficiaries they have in each DOD vaccine priority group to the Department of the Army, said Gino Mattorano, spokesman for Regional Health Command Europe.

The Army uses that information to help determine vaccine allocations, he said, noting that "supply constraints and Army priorities limit how much vaccine is sent to each location."

svan.jennifer@stripes.com  
Twitter: @stripesktown

## DOD pushes more vaccines to CENTCOM after increase in cases

By CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

Officials are urging "continued vigilance" as troops deployed to the Middle East await coronavirus vaccine shipments following what one doctor said was an uptick in infections last month.

There had been a "large increase in COVID-19 cases, both in host nations, as well as on U.S. military installations" in the region, said Air Force Dr. Daniel Hatcher, a colonel who commands the 378th Expeditionary Medical Squadron at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.

The country was seeing "a concerning rise" in cases, he said in a video posted online Wednesday.

There may have been a slight increase when the video was recorded in late February, officials have said, but U.S. Air Forces

Central spokeswoman Capt. Carrie Volpe in Qatar told Stars and Stripes there were less than five active cases in AFCENT as of Thursday.

"It's not uncommon for us to see fluctuations in the number of COVID-19 cases here (due to rotations)," she said.

Though there are fewer cases among deployed troops than in the population back home, officials were working to get more COVID-19 vaccine doses to forward-deployed forces, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said.

In Saudi Arabia, the base's medical personnel and first responders recently received the first round of the shots, Hatcher said. More vaccine would arrive and be provided "to all personnel who desire it," he said.

AFCENT has received both the

two-shot Moderna vaccine and the single-dose Johnson & Johnson one, Volpe said via email this week. The command is following DOD's tiered distribution plan.

Troops in theater have been given a higher priority for vaccination after initial rollout plans had placed them below those preparing to deploy, Kirby said at a press briefing. Early on, some commanders had been concerned that the second shot of the two-dose vaccine might make deployed troops ill.

"The vaccines have proven themselves very safe and effective, so there's an increased demand," Kirby said.

Serious adverse reactions have been rare, though as with many vaccines some patients have reported side effects such as a sore arm at the site of the shot, fever

and muscle aches.

Some 166,000 service members have tested positive for the virus. Among those, over 1,400 have been hospitalized and 24 have died.

DOD has administered over 1.3 million vaccine doses, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's online tracker data shows.

None of the vaccines are mandatory for military personnel because the Food and Drug Administration has only approved them for emergency use. Military officials have urged troops to get vaccinated after some in Congress expressed concerns over data showing that large numbers had declined or delayed getting the shot.

A "large batch" of the J&J vaccine, which was approved for emergency use in late February, was expected at Al Dhafra Air

Base in the United Arab Emirates this week, said Maj. Gigi Rey, 380th Expeditionary Medical Group chief of medical staff.

"We're standing by, ready to push that out," Rey said Wednesday on the base's Facebook page.

Not only is the new vaccine a "one-shot deal," she said, it only requires refrigeration, rather than freezing like the Moderna and Pfizer immunizations, making it easier to ship and distribute in downrange environments.

"The arrival of this COVID-19 vaccine really harkens, in my opinion, the beginning of the end of this pandemic," Rey said. "I think it is in all of our best interest to get as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible."

garland.chad@stripes.com  
Twitter: @chadgarland

## VIRUS OUTBREAK

## Congress OKs \$1.9T relief; Biden to sign Friday

By ALAN FRAM  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Congress riven along party lines has approved the landmark \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill, as President Joe Biden and Democrats claimed a major triumph on legislation marshaling the government's spending might against twin pandemic and economic crises that have upended a nation.

The House gave final congressional approval Wednesday to the sweeping package by a near party line 220-211 vote precisely seven weeks after Biden entered the White House and four days after the Senate passed the bill. Republicans in both chambers opposed the legislation unanimously, characterizing it as bloated, crammed with liberal policies and heedless of signs the crises are easing.

"Help is here," Biden tweeted moments after the roll call, which ended with applause from Democratic lawmakers. Biden said he'd sign the measure Friday.

Most noticeable to many Americans are provisions providing up to \$1,400 direct payments this year to most people and extending \$300 weekly emergency unemployment benefits into early September. But the legislation goes far beyond that.

The measure addresses Democrats' campaign promises and Biden's top initial priority of easing a one-two punch that first hit the country a year ago. Since then, many Americans have been relegated to hermit-like lifestyles in their homes to avoid a disease that's killed more than 529,000 people — about the population of Wichita, Kan. — and plunged the economy to its deepest depths since the Great Depression.

"Today we have a decision to make of tremendous consequence," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., "a decision that will make a difference for millions of Americans, saving lives and livelihoods."

For Biden and Democrats, the bill is essentially a canvas on which they've painted their core beliefs — that government programs can be a benefit, not a bane, to millions of people and that spending huge sums on such efforts can be a cure, not a curse. The measure so closely tracks Demo-



ALEX BRANDON/AP

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., sign the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill during an enrollment ceremony Wednesday on Capitol Hill.

crats' priorities that several rank it with the top achievements of their careers, and despite their slender congressional majorities, there was never real suspense over its fate.

They were also empowered by three dynamics: their unfettered control of the White House and Congress, polls showing robust support for Biden's approach and a moment when most voters care little that the national debt is soaring toward a stratospheric \$22 trillion. Neither party seems much troubled by surging red ink, either, except when the other is using it to finance its priorities, be they Democratic spending or GOP tax cuts.

Republicans noted that they've overwhelmingly supported five previous relief bills that Congress has approved since the pandemic struck a year ago, when divided government under then-President Donald Trump forced the parties to negotiate. They said this one solely reflected Democratic goals by setting aside money for family planning programs and federal workers who take leave to cope with COVID-19 and failing to require that shuttered schools accepting aid reopen their doors.

"If you're a member of the swamp, you do pretty well under

this bill. But for the American people, it means serious problems immediately on the horizon," said House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., referring to the added federal borrowing the measure will force.

Even so, Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., touted the bill's \$29 billion for the ailing restaurant industry, tweeting it would help them "survive the pandemic" without mentioning he had voted against the legislation. Democrats predicted this week that Republicans would do that, with Pelosi saying, "It's typical that they will vote no and take the dough."

Wicker told reporters, "I'm not going to vote for \$1.9 trillion just because it has a couple of good provisions."

A dominant feature of the 628-page bill is initiatives making it one of the biggest federal efforts in years to assist lower- and middle-income families. Included are expanded tax credits over the next year for children, child care and family leave — some of them credits that Democrats have signaled they'd like to make permanent — plus spending for renters, feeding programs and people's utility bills.

Besides the direct payments and jobless-benefit extension, the measure has hundreds of billions

for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments, state and local governments, schools and ailing industries from airlines to concert halls. There is aid for farmers of color, pension systems and student borrowers, and subsidies for consumers buying health insurance and states expanding Medicaid coverage for lower earners.

"Who's going to help? Do we say this is all survival of the fittest? No," said House Budget Committee Chairman John Yarmuth, D-Ky. "We rise to the occasion. We deliver."

The legislation would reduce the number of people living in poverty this year by around one-third, from 44 million down to 28 million, the liberal-leaning Urban Institute estimated Wednesday. The poverty rate for children would be reduced by over half, said the institute, which examined the impact of the measure's stimulus checks, jobless benefits, food stamps and tax credits for children.

Rep. Jared Golden, of Maine, was the only Democrat to oppose the measure. He said some of the bill's spending wasn't urgent.

The measure was approved amid promising though mixed signs of recovery.

Americans are getting vaccinat-

ed at increasingly robust rates, though that is tempered by coronavirus variants and people's growing impatience with curbing social activities. The economy created an unexpectedly strong 379,000 jobs last month, but there remain 9.5 million fewer than before the pandemic struck.

Republicans said the country will pay a price for the extra spending.

"It's certainly good politics to say, 'Hey, we're going to hand you a check for \$1,400,'" said Rep. Tom Rice, R-S.C. "But what they don't talk about is what this bill costs."

An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll found last week that 70% of Americans back Biden's response to the virus, including a hefty 44% of Republicans. According to a CNN poll released Wednesday, the relief bill is backed by 61% of Americans, including nearly all Democrats, 58% of independents and 26% of Republicans.

Yet until November 2022, when control of the Senate and House will be at stake, it will be uncertain whether voters will reward Democrats, punish them or make decisions on unforeseen issues.

The bill's pathway has underscored Democrats' challenges as they seek to build a legislative record to appeal to voters.

Democrats control the Senate, split 50-50, only because Vice President Kamala Harris gives them the winning vote in tied roll calls. They have just a 10-vote advantage in the House.

That's almost no wiggle room for a party that ranges from West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin on the conservative side to progressives like New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

On the relief bill, progressives had to swallow big concessions to solidify moderate support.

The most painful was eliminating the House-approved federal minimum-wage increase to \$15 hourly by 2025. Moderates also succeeded in trimming the emergency jobless benefits, which in an earlier version were \$400 weekly, and phasing out the \$1,400 stimulus checks completely for earners at lower levels than originally proposed.

## US jobless claims fall to 712,000 as pace of layoffs eases

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits fell last week to 712,000, the lowest total since early November, evidence that fewer employers are cutting jobs amid a decline in confirmed coronavirus cases and signs of an

improving economy.

The Labor Department said Thursday that applications for unemployment aid dropped by 42,000 from 754,000 the week before. Though the job market has been slowly strengthening, many businesses remain under pressure, and 9.6 million jobs remain

lost to the pandemic that flattened the economy 12 months ago.

In February, U.S. employers added a robust 379,000 jobs, the most since October, reflecting an economy in which consumers are spending more and states and cities are easing business restric-

tions. Thursday's figure, though the lowest weekly figure in four months, showed that weekly applications for jobless benefits still remain high by historical standards: Before the viral outbreak, they had never topped 700,000, even during the Great Recession.

All told, 4.1 million Americans are receiving traditional state unemployment benefits. Counting supplemental federal unemployment programs that were established to soften the economic damage from the virus, an estimated 20.1 million people are collecting some form of jobless aid.

## NATION



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

A resident eats in front of a row of tiny homes for the homeless, last month in the North Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

## LA opens first tiny home village to ease homelessness

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Amy Skinner took notice when brightly colored structures started taking shape earlier this year on a drab patch of asphalt across from a Los Angeles park where she occasionally slept outdoors.

Skinner, who's been homeless for three years, watched as workers built a fence with a security gate and transformed the city-owned property into LA's first tiny home village offering interim housing and services for people who lack shelter.

Then in early February, Skinner was handed the keys to one of the 39 prefab units at the one-acre plot in a North Hollywood neighborhood. She and her partner, John Golka, moved into the 64-square-foot space with their little dog, Smalls.

It's cramped but comfortable inside their temporary home — with four windows, two beds, shelving and an A/C unit. The inscription on the welcome mat at the front door captures their new mood: "This is our happy place."

"Being able to lock the door and have a place to sleep is huge," Skinner, 48, said after a morning smoke with other new residents in the community's shared outdoor space. Bright red picnic tables stood nearby and a "hygiene trailer" with toilets and showers was just steps away.

"Just being able to fall asleep! That's so hard to do when you're on the streets," she said.

Tiny homes have been promoted as the solution to all kinds of housing needs — an affordable option in expensive big cities and simplicity for people who want to declutter their lives. They are increasingly used as shelter for homeless people in other California cities, including San Jose and Sacramento, as well as nationally

in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Des Moines, Iowa.

Chandler Street village was developed and funded by Los Angeles as part of an emergency response to the worsening homelessness crisis. A 2020 tally found there were 66,400 homeless people in Los Angeles County — up more than 12% from the previous year.

More than 150,000 people are homeless statewide. Gov. Gavin Newsom said Tuesday during his State of the State address that he plans to commit \$2 billion this year to create more housing for those without shelter, while simultaneously addressing mental health and substance abuse issues.

The pandemic has forced even more residents onto the streets, as congregant shelters cut capacity to maintain social distancing. Meanwhile, a 2016 Los Angeles ballot measure meant to fund as many as 10,000 supportive housing units took too long to ramp up and advocates for the homeless demanded officials act immediately. The city and county began looking for creative, affordable solutions to get people out of the tents that line sidewalks near downtown and under freeway overpasses in suburban areas.

City Councilman Paul Kerkorian, whose district includes North Hollywood, said officials zeroed in on the abandoned, awkwardly shaped slice of land across from the park.

"It was ideally suited for this use and not much else," Kerkorian said.

The tiny home village had to overcome some "not-in-my-backyard" reactions from nearby residents who needed to be convinced it's a safe, clean opportunity for shelter, Kerkorian said.

## 3rd-degree murder charge is OK'd for ex-cop in Floyd death

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A judge on Thursday granted prosecutors' request to add a third-degree murder charge against the former Minneapolis police officer charged in George Floyd's death.

Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill reinstated the charge after the former officer, Derek Chauvin, failed to get appellate courts to block it. Cahill had earlier rejected the charge as not warranted by the circumstances of Floyd's death, but an appellate court ruling in an unrelated case established new grounds for it.

Chauvin already faced second-degree murder and manslaughter charges. Legal experts say the additional charge helps prosecutors by giving jurors one more option to convict Chauvin of murder.

The dispute over the third-degree murder charge revolved around the conviction of another former Minneapolis police officer

in the unrelated killing of an Australian woman. The appeals court recently affirmed Mohamed Noor's third-degree murder conviction in the 2017 shooting death of Justine Ruszczyk Damond, and the state used that affirmation to argue that it established new justification for the charge in Chauvin's case.

Cahill agreed that the precedent has now been established.

"I feel bound by that and I feel it would be an abuse of discretion not to grant the motion," he said.

Floyd was declared dead on May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against the Black man's neck for about nine minutes. Floyd's death sparked sometimes violent protests in Minneapolis and beyond, leading to a nationwide reckoning on race.

The ruling came ahead of resumption of jury selection Thursday. Five jurors had been seated after just two days of screening by

attorneys and the judge, who has set aside at least three weeks to fill the panel.

Attorneys have given considerable attention to the jury pool's attitudes toward police in the first two days of questioning, trying to determine whether they're more inclined to believe testimony from law enforcement over evidence from other witnesses to the fatal confrontation.

A questionnaire explores potential jurors' familiarity with the case and their own contacts with police. Their written answers have not been made public, and the jurors' identities are being kept secret. Their racial backgrounds often aren't disclosed in open court.

Chauvin and three other officers were fired. The others face an August trial on aiding and abetting charges. The defense hasn't said whether Chauvin will testify in his own defense.

## Career CENTER

# We're hiring!

## Licensed Clinical Counselor

Location:

- Camp Humphreys, South Korea

For more information, contact Lindsay Alano at [lalano@patriotenterprisesllc.com](mailto:lalano@patriotenterprisesllc.com)

or

Visit our career page at

[www.patriotenterprisesllc.com/careers/-2-3](http://www.patriotenterprisesllc.com/careers/-2-3)



## NATION

# Report: Cuomo groped female aide at home

Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — An aide to New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo says he groped her in the governor's residence, a newspaper reported Wednesday, in the most serious allegation made yet by a series of women against the embattled Democrat.

The Times Union of Albany reported that the woman, who it did not name, was alone with Cuomo late last year when he closed the door, reached under her shirt and fondled her. The newspaper's reporting is based on an unidentified source with direct knowledge of the woman's accusation. The governor had summoned her to the Executive Mansion in Albany, saying he needed help with his

cellphone, the newspaper reported.

"I have never done anything like this," Cuomo said through a spokesperson Wednesday evening.

"The details of this report are gut-wrenching," Cuomo said, adding that he would not speak to the specifics of this or any other allegation, given an ongoing investigation overseen by the state attorney general.

Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan said in a statement Wednesday night that no criminal complaint had been filed by the alleged victim to the Albany Police Department.

The three-term governor faces harassment allegations from sev-



MARY ALTAFFER/AP

Activists with VOCAL-NY block traffic in Manhattan on 3rd Avenue outside New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's office, Wednesday, in New York. Cuomo faces harassment allegations from several women.

eral other women and increasingly urgent calls for his resignation or impeachment from at least some fellow Democrats. Cuomo has repeatedly said he won't resign.

"He's openly said he will not resign. And with further mounting allegations that are deeply credible, we are in a position now where I think we should impeach," said Assembly member Jessica Gon-

zález-Rojas, a Democrat who had previously pushed for his resignation.

The woman whose account was reported by the Times Union said Cuomo had touched her and made flirtatious comments on multiple occasions. According to the newspaper, her allegations came to light as Cuomo staffers watched the governor's March 3 news conference, his first after a new round

of sexual harassment claims made in late February.

In it, he denied ever touching a woman inappropriately. The aide subsequently became emotional, and told a female supervisor who approached her about her encounters with the governor. At least one supervisor reported the allegation to an attorney in the governor's office Monday, the newspaper reported.

# Hawaii's downpour, flooding cited as part of climate change

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Heavy rains are part of the winter wet season in the Hawaiian Islands. But the downpours triggering flooding that destroyed homes and bridges and set off mass evacuations on multiple islands this week are also an example of the more intense rainstorms officials and climate scientists say are occurring more frequently as the planet warms.

Two key ingredients came together in Hawaii in recent days to deliver the rain: an upper-level disturbance and extra moisture in the lower layers of the atmosphere. The downpours first affected Maui, moved northward up the island chain to Oahu and Kauai, then circled around and hit the southernmost part of the Big Island.

Meteorologists on Wednesday extended a flash flood watch for the entire state through Friday because of the potential for more rain and because the ground was already saturated.

The onslaught destroyed and heavily damaged two Maui bridges, along with at least six homes on the island.

The rain filled a 138-year-old reservoir once used to irrigate sugar plantation fields that has re-

cently been kept empty as its owners prepare to dismantle it this summer. So much water accumulated it started overflowing from the 57-foot high structure at one point Monday, and county officials ordered people downstream to evacuate amid fears the earthen dam could breach. Ultimately, the reservoir didn't fail, and water levels dropped as the rain let up.

The National Weather Service reported 13.2 inches fell over eight hours in the vicinity of the dam in Haiku on Maui's north coast.

"This is really an example of climate change in the present day," Suzanne Case, the head of the state agency that regulates the dam, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, said in a statement. "We have a flood emergency because of the heavy rain bomb. And we're seeing these more and more across the island chain — more frequent and more extreme events."

On Oahu, flooding covered roads and yards in towns on the eastern coast. Rising waters in the Opaelua Stream, which carries waters from the mountains down to the ocean, set off an evacuation order for the small town of Haleiwa, a mecca for big-wave surfers.



JAMM AQUINO, HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER/AP

People stand at the edge of floodwaters along Haleiwa Road on Tuesday, in Haleiwa, Hawaii.

Honolulu firefighters on Tuesday rescued a 27-year-old man after his truck was swept down a stream. They found him standing on the truck's roof. On Wednesday, they suspended another search for an individual a witness saw in a stream in Pearl City.

Pao-Shin Chu, a University of Hawaii professor and the state's climatologist, said theoretical studies suggest that for every one-degree Celsius increase in sea surface temperatures, there is likely to be a 7% increase in atmospheric moisture.

Hawaii is experiencing some of this increased moisture already. In 2018, Kauai set a national record for the amount of rain re-

corded in a 24-hour period when 49.69 inches fell from April 14 to April 15. The same storm set off landslides and blocked the only highway connecting small Kauai north shore towns to the rest of the island.

The frequency of intense rains like that one and this week's are an indication people should be prepared for such events more often, Chu said.

"Don't think that this is like a once-in-a-hundred-years event that you'll only see once in your lifetime. It is changing," Chu said.

Less time is lapsing between them, he said. "So it could be once every 30 years. Who knows?" Chu said.

# Miss. limits transgender athletes

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Mississippi Republican Gov. Tate Reeves signed a bill Thursday to ban transgender athletes from competing on girls or women's sports teams.

Mississippi is the first state this year to enact such a ban, after a federal court blocked an Idaho law last year. The bill is set to become law July 1, although a legal challenge is possible.

More than 20 states are proposing restrictions on athletics or gender-confirming health care for transgender minors this year. Conservative lawmakers are responding to an executive order by Democratic President Joe Biden that bans discrimination based on gender identity in school sports and elsewhere. Biden signed it Jan. 20, the day he took office.

Reeves has three daughters who play sports and he said March 4 on Twitter that Mississippi's bill would "protect young girls from being forced to compete with biological males for athletic opportunities."

"It's crazy we have to address it, but the Biden E.O. forced the issue," Reeves tweeted that day. "Adults? That's on them. But the push for kids to adopt transgenderism is just wrong."

# NATION

## House OKs stricter gun background checks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Emboldened by their majorities in the House and Senate, Democrats are making a new push to enact the first major new gun control laws in more than two decades — starting with stricter background checks.

The House passed legislation on Thursday to require background checks on all firearms sales and transfers. The chamber was also voting on, and expected to pass, a bill to allow an expanded 10-day review for gun purchases. Similar bills were passed by the House in 2019, shortly after Democrats won the majority, but languished in the GOP-controlled Senate for the next two years.

Democrats now hold the Senate, as well, giving the party hope that the legislation will at least be considered. But the bills would need significant bipartisan support to pass.

The renewed push is the latest effort by Democrats — and some Republicans — who have repeatedly tried, and failed, to pass

tougher gun control laws since the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut that killed 20 children and six educators. While enhanced background checks are generally popular with the American public, even with some conservatives, Congress has so far not been able to find compromise on the issue. It is unclear whether Senate Democrats could find deep enough support among Republicans to pass new gun control legislation in a 50-50 Senate, as they would need 60 votes to do so.

Still, the bills are part of an effort by Democrats to move on several major legislative priorities while they hold both chambers of Congress and the White House. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said Thursday that the Republican “legislative graveyard is over” and that the legislation to require background checks on all firearms sales will have a vote in the Senate.

“A vote is what we need,” Schumer said, and they will see where Republicans stand.

### MAX REFUND

in person or virtually.

You can get your taxes done by a tax pro in our office, or virtually via phone or e-mail. Just send a pic of your docs and an expert does the work. But no matter how you file with us, your maximum refund is always guaranteed.



**Virtually**



**Via drop off**



**In an office**

### THANK YOU

for trusting us with your taxes.

**KLEBER-KASERNE KAISERSLAUTERN**  
next to Food Court  
BLDG 3231 - 0631/414 58444

**EINSIEDLERHOF - KAISERSLAUTERN**  
0631-3554711  
Kaiserstr. 55

**SMITH-BARRACKS BAUMHOLDER**  
next to BurgerKing, Alterations, BarberShop  
BLDG 8243 - 06783/98 1041 or 0160/545 6538

**BAUMHOLDER**  
06783-981041  
Kennedy Allee 28

**PANZER-KASERNE BÖBLINGEN**  
BLDG 2903 - 07031/631 4800

**STUTTGART-VAIHINGEN**  
Patch BKS  
0711-1207624  
KurmarkerStr. 30



**PHONE: 0800 293 2584**

**elmer.stokes@hrblock.com**

**www.stokes-agencies.com**



**LANDSTUHL  
AMERICAN  
DENTISTRY**

Dental MVZ Doryumu & Kollegen GmbH

**Family & Cosmetic Dentistry**



Kaiserstraße 36 • 66849 Landstuhl  
Phone: 06371 560 8075 or 06371 594 6275  
Email: info@american-dentistry.de



**www.american-dentistry.de**



**BIG NEWS! Our new location will be opening very soon!**

Located conveniently in Landstuhl, about 5 mins from us.

Dr. J's Ortho Corner will be needing a full staff to help serve our KMC Family. We are in need of the following full time positions:

Front desk receptionists, certified Dental Assistants, Dental Hygienists and a wide variety of doctors.

We are conducting interviews immediately. Please send your resume to [manager@american-dentistry.de](mailto:manager@american-dentistry.de) for consideration.

*Thank you for your continued support and for voting for Landstuhl American Dentistry as your #1. We are honored!*

# WHERE HEROES WORK



If you're a Veteran looking for a challenging and rewarding career, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service wants you.

Committed to hiring 50,000 Veterans and military spouses, the Exchange offers excellent employment benefits including an associate transfer program, spousal hiring preferences and benefits retention throughout your career.



LEARN MORE ABOUT EXCHANGE CAREER AT [APPLYMYEXCHANGE.COM](https://applymyexchange.com)

# WHERE HEROES SHOP

The Exchange is committed to serving Veterans with two lifelong shopping benefits. All honorably discharged Veterans can shop tax free at [ShopMyExchange.com](https://shopmyexchange.com). In addition, the Department of Defense expanded in-store military exchange and commissary shopping privileges as well as MWR resale facility use to all Veterans with service-connected disabilities.

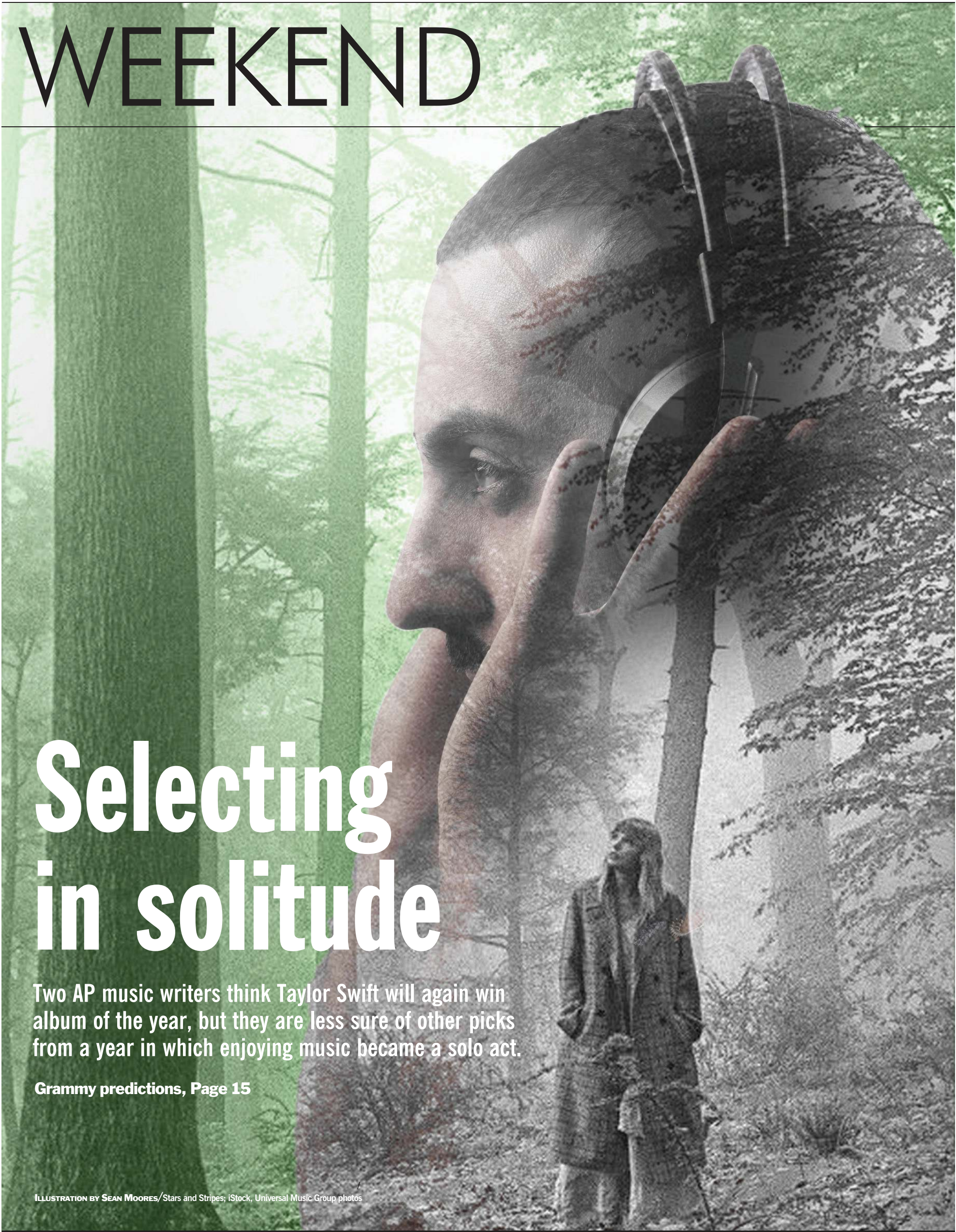
LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE BENEFITS AT [SHOPMYEXCHANGE.COM/VETS](https://shopmyexchange.com/vets)



SERVING THE BEST CUSTOMERS IN THE WORLD SINCE 1895



# WEEKEND



## Selecting in solitude

Two AP music writers think Taylor Swift will again win album of the year, but they are less sure of other picks from a year in which enjoying music became a solo act.

Grammy predictions, Page 15

ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN MOORES/Stars and Stripes; iStock, Universal Music Group photos

## WEEKEND: GADGETS &amp; TECHNOLOGY

## Live panoramic picture, sound

How a mannequin head revolutionizes how music can reach audiences

By MICHAEL ANDOR BRODEUR  
*The Washington Post*

I look up and behold the ornately ornamented ceiling of Detroit's Orchestra Hall, a place I've never actually been. I look down and my legs have vanished, replaced by a single black pole terminating into a tripod. I look all around and find every other seat in the hall empty, though I'm told that at least 10 of us are in attendance. And onstage in front of me, I see the 19 socially distanced members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra tuning their instruments in complete silence — that is, until I pop in my earbuds.

Such are the dissonances that attend settling into one's figurative seat at Orchestra Hall to experience the DSO through virtual reality.

I'm "here" to virtually attend a rehearsal of "Stride," a stirring newer work from the British composer Anna Clyne. And Clyne is "here" with me as well, watching along through the eyes and ears of Ted — a standard-issue mannequin head, purchased off the internet and outfitted with a 360-degree camera and an array of microphones by creator, audio engineer and Clyne's husband, Jody Elff.

Ted offers a live panoramic view of the hall and a crisp stereo audio signal, and, most important, allows Clyne to connect with the musicians playing her music in a way that the pandemic has rendered next to impossible.

Ten years ago, Elff launched a small company to provide underfunded arts organizations with robustly featured and lower-cost live-streaming capabilities. With this infrastructure in place, it wasn't long before Elff began imagining how to enhance the streaming experience he'd built, such as adding binaural (i.e., left/right) audio or 360-degree video.

"There's always going to be somebody that wants to see a show but can't get in for some reason," he says.

The Grammy-winning engineer thinks his homemade prototype could set an example for the role virtual reality could play in expanding the audience for classical music well past the pandemic. Ted takes up only one seat, but could one day serve as a proxy for thousands of listeners.

"I love the idea that for the cost of a \$6 cardboard viewer, you could actually jump into another space elsewhere in the world and have something like a presence experience," Elff says. "You can sell out your 2,000 seats in the hall, but now let's go sell 10,000 more to virtual viewers."

Elff's early vision for Ted was driven by the idea's big implications, but it was only when the pandemic and its practical demands set in that things came to a head.

For composer Clyne — who just released the fantastic "Mythologies," a decade's worth of her orchestral work — the constrictions of the crisis actually felt strangely compatible with the solitary



SARAH SMARCH/The Washington Post

**The Detroit Symphony Orchestra uses Ted, a mannequin head outfitted with binaural microphones and hi-def cameras, which "hears" and then transmits live-sounding immersive audio and video to people who cannot be physically present.**



ANNA CLYNE AND JODY ELFF/The Washington Post

**Composer Anna Clyne and her engineer husband, Jody Elff, with Ted.**

nature of her practice. But they also severed an essential connection — with the musicians themselves.

The first run of a new work requires an enhanced level of listening. Clyne uses these preliminary rehearsals to make nuanced adjustments in dynamics or tempos, and to do so with a sense of the acoustical space that will shape the sound.

Travel bans and spiking case numbers have disrupted that process indefinitely, and the audio quality of most videoconferencing software proved untenable as a stopgap measure, let alone as a long-term substitute.

Clyne had streaming premieres scheduled through the fall and winter with the Orlando Philharmonic (where she is composer-in-residence), the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra and the DSO, but no way to hear what they truly sounded like.

"Suddenly," she says of Ted, "this idea that's been sort of bubbling away is a really viable option to be present, and to nurture this relationship with the musicians and conductors and organizations in a way that wouldn't be possible without the technology."

I can confirm that despite Ted's rough DIY edges, he delivered something closer to an escape from my couch than just about anything else I've experienced from my couch.

The sound in Orchestra Hall washes over his mic array and reaches you in a rich, spatial stereo wash. The separation

and clarity is convincingly transportive — and richer than most of any live-streaming audio I've experienced — just "live" enough to detach you from the living room.

It's exciting to think what improved video could add to the experience. There are plenty of consumer-level 360-degree cameras on the market, but most can snap only panoramic stills or record video. Cameras designed for HD live-streaming of 360 content can cost tens of thousands of dollars — a smidgen more than Elff or Clyne were seeking to spend for a system that now maxes out at 10 users.

The couple imagine Ted iterations featuring audio tracking, which would allow the sound to change in accordance with the position of the listener's head.

At one point in the DSO rehearsal, guest conductor John Storgårds paused the orchestra and pivoted on the podium. I shifted uncomfortably in my seat as I realized he was looking directly at me. He hollered a question about the rhythms of a certain measure into the hall, and, after a slight pause, from somewhere behind me, a woman's voice responded. I turned and saw nothing but vacant rows.

It was Clyne — her voice piped into the hall through a speaker but her attention somewhere inside Ted's head, swirling around with my own. At this point in the pandemic, I honestly thought we'd exhausted our options for bizarre, technologically enabled social interactions, but sharing a mannequin head with a composer in a faraway concert hall is definitely a new one for me.

But while the great temptation of virtual reality is to go wild, dissolve all the boundaries of old media and treat freedom itself as a medium (and, inevitably, an excuse), the real strength of a head like Ted is its singular focus. He's there to fill a very specific gap — your seat in front of an orchestra.

And after just a few minutes of "Stride" taking full, soaring flight seemingly right before my ears, the virtual sure felt a lot like the actual. I was no longer negotiating with audio. I was listening to music.



BENQ/TNS

**The portable BenQ GS2 projector can be connected to almost any device.**

## Projector streams from your device

By GREGG ELLMAN  
*Tribune News Service*

The BenQ GS2 projector is not only portable but truly lives up to its claim of "hassle-free wireless setup." Going into it skeptically, I was pleasantly surprised to have the BenQ GS2 streaming from my iPhone within minutes of unboxing it.

Just minutes after I unpacked it, I had the projected image on my homemade plywood outdoor screen. The image and resolution were crisp and sharp, edge to edge, with vivid, accurate colors. The image was clear when viewed from from side angles as well as straight.

For the most part, any flat, sturdy surface will work. Merely attach it with the bottom-sided thread to a tripod or something similar. The BenQ GS2 has a built-in keystone adjustment of 1D, Vertical ± 40 degrees, making it easy to get a level image.

Once the BenQ GS2 is powered up, focused and centered in your screen, choose the Wi-Fi network and your device (iOS, MacOS or Android) and connect them. It was seamless connecting an iPhone, iPad and MacBook Pro.

The content you stream varies by your device and is dependent on access, as stated on the BenQ website: "Please be informed that watching online streaming media content, like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, or Disney+, from mobile devices with a BenQ projector is not currently a viable option at this moment. This is due to their subscription-based business model with license and copyright concern."

Hopefully someday soon the copyright gods will give our iPhones streaming permission with Netflix and other services to all devices.

An on-screen menu takes you through focusing, connecting to Wi-Fi and whatever device you are using to stream (iOS, MacOS, Android). Specific directions are displayed depending on your choice.

Going the iPhone route, connecting was easy. Aside from the streaming services that couldn't be played, I was able to get directly onto specific TV apps for local stations and CNN.

The BenQ GS2 is built with durable construction, unibody structure and a soft rubber exterior, enabling it to withstand a 1.6-foot drop. It is also IPX2 splash resistant. Even knowing this, play it safe. Don't drop it and don't set it up next to your pool or sauna. The power adapter connects magnetically, disconnecting instantly in the event of a foot getting tangled, letting it separate from the projector and keeping everything intact.

Online: benq.com; \$599

## WEEKEND: MUSIC

## Social dissonance

AP writers predict Grammy winners — and sometimes even agree — in an unpredictable year

By MESFIN FEKADU AND KRISTIN M. HALL  
Associated Press

Putting out music in a pandemic, without the ability to connect directly with fans through touring, felt sort of like a tree falling in the forest with no one around to hear it.

Experiencing music in 2020 became a solo experience, for good and for bad, and music that was able to transcend the physical bubbles we put around ourselves felt rare and special. In some ways, the Grammy nominees represented that difference with albums and music meant for self-exploration or dancing like no one was watching. Sometimes the omissions speak volumes.

Associated Press Music Writers Mesfin Fekadu and Kristin M. Hall dissect the best of an extremely unpredictable year in music.

The Grammys will be presented Sunday night, and air live on AFN-Atlantic. Check local listings.

**ALBUM OF THE YEAR:** “Chilombo,” Jhené Aiko; “Black Pumas (Deluxe Edition),” Black Pumas; “Everyday Life,” Coldplay; “Djesse Vol. 3,” Jacob Collier; “Women In Music Pt. III,” HAIM; “Future Nostalgia,” Dua Lipa; “Hollywood’s Bleeding,” Post Malone; “folklore,” Taylor Swift.

**FEKADU:** Congratulations Taylor Swift, you will make history and become the first female artist to have three albums win album of the year at the Grammy Awards. Though “folklore” is the best of this bunch in my opinion — with Jhené Aiko a close second — the issue here is that the Recording Academy has designed a swift win for Tay Tay. The Grammys didn’t nominate Swift’s last two albums for this honor, and they are making up for it this year with easy competition. While Dua Lipa and Post Malone had multiple hits, that won’t be enough for them to win this. No shade, and as much as I love HAIM, Black Pumas and Jhené, do you really think they have a chance of winning here?

No. And who even remembered that Coldplay dropped an album? There’s a small chance that the uber-talented Jacob Collier — if you don’t know him LOOK HIM UP! — could win, but it’s not likely. If the academy wanted to really challenge Swift and “folklore,” they would have nominated critically acclaimed albums from Fiona Apple, Brittany Howard, Tame Impala or even The Weeknd — acts who have a real shot at winning.

**HALL:** I’m sending you a virtual fist-bump, Mesfin. When I look at this list, I think more about the albums I loved that weren’t nominated. While Swift’s introspective pandemic album definitely deserves to be in this category, “folklore” feels like a safe, obvious choice for voters. We’ve seen artists (cough cough, Fiona, cough cough, Run the Jewels) take great creative leaps and bounds and yet we’re served up a pre-packaged win. That being said, there are sometimes under-the-radar wins in this category, so I think HAIM’s complex and intriguing album has a chance (however slight) to win.

**RECORD OF THE YEAR:** “Black Parade,” Beyoncé; “Colors,” Black Pumas; “Rockstar,” DaBaby and Roddy Ricch; “Say So,” Doja Cat; “Everything I Wanted,” Billie Eilish; “Don’t Start Now,” Dua Lipa; “Circles,” Post Malone; “Savage,” Megan Thee Stallion and Beyoncé.



Swift

**HALL:** Three words, “Classy, bougie, ratchet,” propelled Megan Thee Stallion to viral fame with an insanely catchy song while her fellow Houston native added fire to the remix. Rap songs don’t often win in these top categories and with Beyoncé and DaBaby also competing for votes, I predict one of the most popular songs of the year probably isn’t going to win here. Dua Lipa put the dance club in our bedrooms this year with “Don’t Start Now” and she’ll walk away a winner.

**FEKADU:** That’s a smart choice, Kristin! Normally I would think Dua Lipa — who is this decade’s Katy Perry (no Grammy wins) — wouldn’t have a chance here. But then I remembered that Dua won best new artist over H.E.R. and Luke Combs, and also picked up best dance recording that year, which proves voters really like her. Still, “Don’t Start Now” won’t win now. My mind tells me Beyoncé will win her first record of the year honor, but my body says Billie will win her second.

**SONG OF THE YEAR (songwriter’s award):** “Black Parade,” Beyoncé, Jay-Z, Derek Dixie, Denisia Andrews, Stephen Bray, Brittany Coney, Akil King, Kim “Kaydence” Krysiuk and Rickie “Caso” Tice; “The Box,” Roddy Ricch, Samuel Gloade, Larrance Dopson, Adarius Moragne, Eric Sloan and Khirye Anthony Tyler; “cardigan,” Taylor Swift and Aaron Dessner; “Circles,” Post Malone, Louis Bell, Adam Feeney, Kaan Gunesberk and Billy Walsh; “Don’t Start Now,” Dua Lipa, Caroline Ailin, Ian Kirkpatrick and Emily Warren; “Everything I Wanted,” Billie Eilish and Finneas; “I Can’t Breathe,” H.E.R., Dernst Emile II and Tiara Thomas; “If the World Was Ending,” Julia Michaels and JP Saxe.

**FEKADU:** Just rename this award “The Eilish Family Prize.”

**HALL:** I am not really feeling a Grammys 2020 redux this year. And where is “Blinding Lights”? Nevertheless, “Black Parade” is a well-crafted cinematic celebration that evokes the history of Black music. Even without releasing an album last year, Beyoncé is still dominating the Grammys and I think she has a resonant and timely message.

**BEST NEW ARTIST:** Ingrid Andress; Phoebe Bridgers; Chika; Noah Cyrus; D Smoke; Doja Cat; Kaytranada; Megan Thee Stallion.

**HALL:** While the records from Andress and Bridgers were an emotional salve during a tough year, Megan’s momentum is unstoppable. She built up to her debut full-length record, “Good News,” with back-to-back hits and huge collaborations on songs like “Hot Girl Summer” with Nicki Minaj and backing up Cardi B on “WAP.” She’s also used her platform in the past year to speak about violence against Black women. This stallion has already won the race.

**FEKADU:** Let’s not forget she got shot in the foot and didn’t deserve that! So there will be extra sympathy votes for the rap princess, who deserves this honor more than any other artist.

**BEST POP SOLO PERFORMANCE:** “Yummy,” Justin Bieber; “Say So,” Doja Cat; “Everything I Wanted,”



Lipa



Eilish

Billie Eilish; “Don’t Start Now,” Dua Lipa; “Watermelon Sugar,” Harry Styles; “cardigan,” Taylor Swift.

**FEKADU:** Let’s start with who won’t win here: sorry Biebs, Tay and Doja. I’m split between Billie, Dua and Harry, but I’m going with “Watermelon Sugar” for two sweet reasons: The song was irresistible, and the win will make up for Harry’s snubs in the big three categories.

**HALL:** I appreciated the subtle (go Google it) sexiness that Styles plays with on “Watermelon Sugar,” for sure. T-Swift has been nominated in this category multiple times without a win, which is a bit surprising, but I think voters are going to be drawn to the whisper queen Eilish.

**BEST ROCK PERFORMANCE:** “Shameika,” Fiona Apple; “Not,” Big Thief; “Kyoto,” Phoebe Bridgers; “The Steps,” HAIM; “Stay High,” Brittany Howard; “Daylight,” Grace Potter.

**HALL:** I don’t want to date myself, but seeing all these female rock artist names together makes me long for the late ’90s Lilith Fair concerts where I felt among a like-minded community. Fiona Apple’s return after several long years was personal and unconventional, intimate and experimental, and her exploration in “Shameika” of feeling recognized, even in a small way, by another young girl just zeroed in on all my millennial feelings.

**FEKADU:** The apple of my eye (and this award): Fiona and “Shameika.”

**BEST R&B SONG:** “Better Than I Imagined,” Robert Glasper, H.E.R. and Meshell Ndegeocello; “Black Parade,” Beyoncé; “Collide,” Tiana Major9 and EARTH-GANG; “Do It,” Chloe x Halle; “Slow Down,” Skip Marley and H.E.R.

**FEKADU:** As a card-carrying member of the Beyhive — with platinum status — I’m marching in Beyoncé’s “Black Parade.”

**HALL:** I, too, stan the Queen, but I have fallen in love with “Slow Down” featuring these two young stars. The mixture of their distinct voices and the blending reggae and R&B on a sweet love song is just beautiful. Grammy voters have already crowned H.E.R. as the genre’s next big star who has been collaborating all over the place, while Marley, the grandson of reggae legend Bob Marley, has shown the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.

**BEST RAP SONG:** “The Bigger Picture,” Lil Baby; “The Box,” Roddy Ricch; “Laugh Now Cry Later,” Drake and Lil Durk; “Rockstar,” DaBaby and Roddy Ricch; “Savage,” Megan Thee Stallion and Beyoncé.

**HALL:** Megan and Beyoncé will not be denied.

**FEKADU:** I don’t want no smoke with B, but there’s another rap hit that dominated the year more than “Savage,” and that’s “The Box.” The Grammys love Roddy — he was a newbie and won his first Grammy last year — and “The Box” is also nominated for song of the year and “Savage” isn’t. Plus, “The Box” offers one of the best lines, especially necessary during the pandemic era: “Don’t wear no shoes in my house!”

**BEST COUNTRY DUO/GROUP PERFORMANCE:** “All Night,” Brothers Osborne; “10,000 Hours,” Dan + Shay and Justin Bieber; “Ocean,” Lady A; “Sugar Coat,” Little Big Town; “Some People Do,” Old Dominion.

**FEKADU:** Dan + Shay have won this honor the last two years, and their Bieber-assisted track was a huge pop hit, but I don’t think “10,000 Hours” will win here. This year marks Brothers Osborne’s sixth nod in this category, but they’ll fall short to Old Dominion’s “Some People Do,” a touching tune that’s also nominated for best country song.

**HALL:** With big hit after hit, I would bet \$10,000 on Dan + Shay winning the trifecta in this category. Shay Mooney’s vocals are among the best in the genre, while Dan Smyers is a studio whiz. Welcome to Bieber country.

## WEEKEND: MUSIC



CHRISTINA HOUSE/Los Angeles Times

# ■ icon in the making

Dua Lipa is pop's new superstar. She's also a bit of a mystery.

By MIKAEL WOOD  
*Los Angeles Times*

**W**hen Dua Lipa was 15 years old, she left her parents and two younger siblings behind in the family's native Kosovo and moved more or less on her own to London.

The plan, at least as understood by her mom and dad (who'd only agreed to it because she'd be rooming with the older daughter of a family friend), was to finish high school and then enter university. By the time Lipa graduated, though, she'd turned her focus to music, posting covers online and recording hooky originals she co-wrote while supporting herself as a hostess at a Mexican joint in London's Soho neighborhood.

"I kept telling my parents, if I take a gap year, then I don't have to pay off my university debt," the singer says today with a laugh.

Asked how long she was willing to stretch that gap year — how long she was prepared to grind in the hopes of becoming a pop star — she smiles as though amused by the misconception that she'd been struggling.

"That was a great life — I was working in a restaurant, I was partying all night, then I'd wake up in the morning and go to the studio," she says. "I had so much fun."

But also: A struggle suggests she might have accepted anything less than success.

"I've always been persistent, and I've always fought for the things that I've wanted," Lipa, now 25, says in her crisp English accent. "So as much as this was my passion, I feel like it was also my destiny."

## Grammys GAF

Now Lipa, named best new artist at the Grammy Awards in 2019, is among the most-nominated acts at this month's 63rd Grammys ceremony, where she's up for six prizes, including album, record and song of the year. (Only Beyoncé has more nods.)

A decade after she set out from home, it's tempting to think she was right. Last year, Lipa's "Future Nostalgia" — a sophomore LP full of sticky vocal melodies, shimmering guitar licks and crazy-funky bass lines — topped the U.K. album chart and was certified gold in the U.S. "Don't Start Now," the project's disco-throwback lead single, has been streamed nearly 2 billion times on Spotify and YouTube.

In November, more than 5 million people tuned into an elaborate, Studio 54-inspired livestream that featured cameos by Elton John, Bad Bunny and Kylie Minogue, the last of whom praised Lipa's "clever songwriting" and "instantly recognizable voice" in a tribute she wrote when *Time*

magazine put Lipa on its Next 100 list of young influencers.

"Massive icon," Lipa says, returning the favor, of Minogue. "For her to even know who I am is mad."

Now Lipa, named best new artist at the Grammy Awards in 2019, is among the most-nominated acts at this month's 63rd Grammys ceremony, where she's up for six prizes, including album, record and song of the year. (Only Beyoncé has more nods.)

Says Tom Corson, cochairman of Lipa's label, Warner Records: "What we're seeing is the dawning of a new superstar."

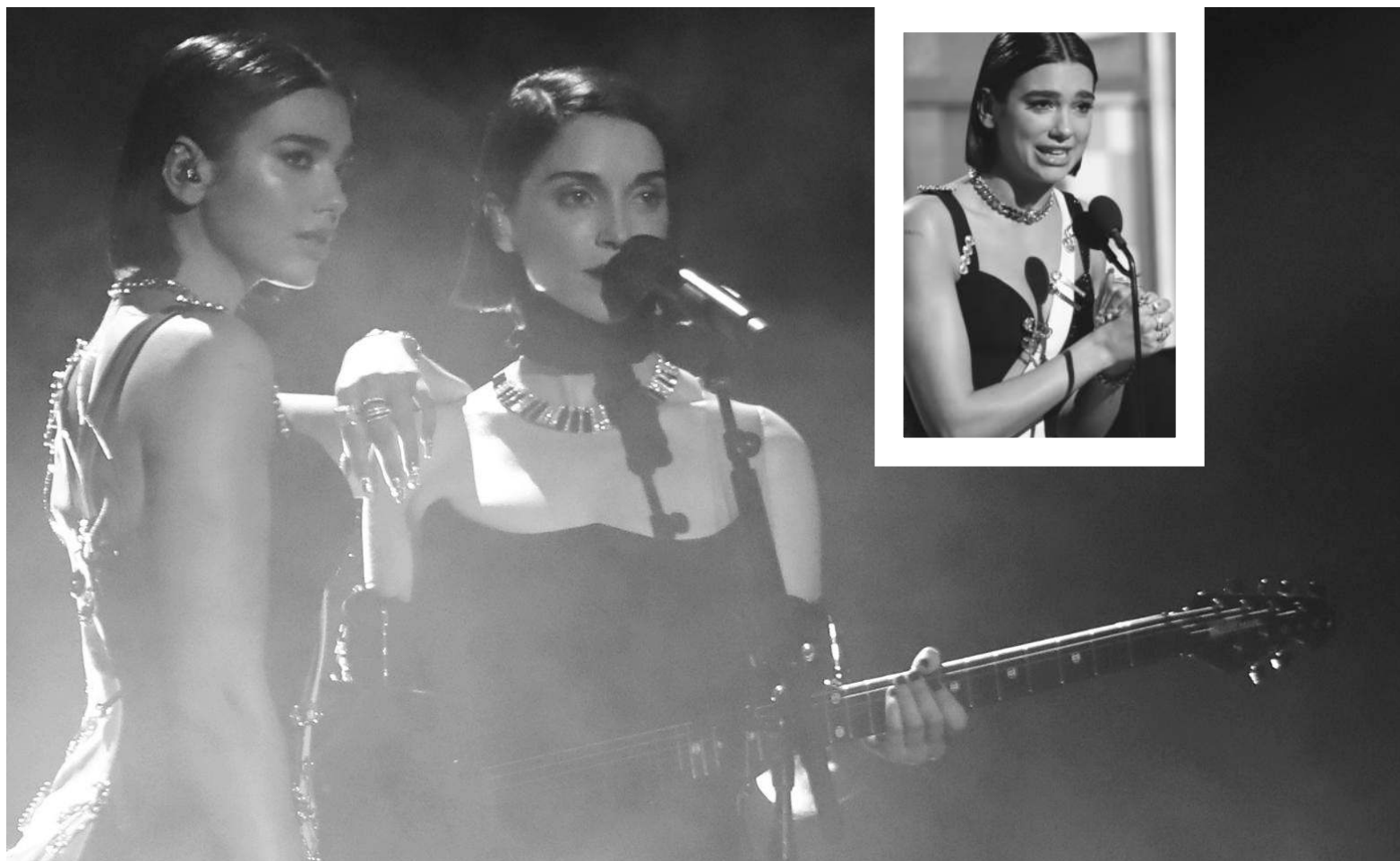
According to Grammy oddsmakers, "Future Nostalgia" trails Taylor Swift's rootsy "Folklore" for the highly coveted album award, which Swift has won twice since 2010. Yet academy members have demonstrated a soft spot for the kind of crafty, intricate, hand-played dance music that Lipa's disc represents: In 2014, Daft Punk upset expectations when the French duo beat their highly favored competitors (including Swift's blockbuster "Red") to take album of the year with "Random Access Memories."

Lipa says the beautifully rendered "Future Nostalgia" is meant to evoke memories of music by swank '70s and '80s acts like Blondie and Chic — the latter of whose Nile Rodgers featured prominently on "Random Access Memories" — and to put across a more unified vibe than her grab bag of a self-titled 2017 debut.

Lipa's first album spawned

SEE MYSTERY ON PAGE 17

## WEEKEND: MUSIC



AP photos

Dua Lipa, left, and St. Vincent perform a medley at the 61st annual Grammy Awards Feb. 10, 2019, in Los Angeles. In the three years since winning that night for best new artist, Lipa has become an in-demand collaborator across a wide range of genres.

## Mystery: Lipa's album became relief from pandemic

### FROM PAGE 16

a couple of monster streaming hits in "IDGAF," a tart kiss-off with marching-band drums, and "New Rules," which layers her low, husky singing over a sleek, EDM-ish beat. But "the only thing that connected each song was my voice," as Lipa puts it in a video call from her place in L.A.

A reliably glamorous presence on magazine covers and in music videos, the singer is low-key this morning in a baggy tie-dyed top and purple beanie as her dog, a black Lab mix named Dexter, clambers onto the couch beside her. Lipa, who lives with her boyfriend of nearly two years, model Anwar Hadid (younger brother of fashionistas Bella and Gigi), gladly splits her time between here and London.

Producer Stephen "Koz" Kozmeniuk, who helped build both of Lipa's albums from the ground up, says the singer wanted "Future Nostalgia" to reflect her buoyant mood. "She was happy, feeling good — like, 'I just wanna dance,'" Koz says. "It was also a bit of a reaction to the fact that all the other music in the world was quite down at the time — the Billie Eilishes and all the trap stuff."

Lipa, of course, didn't know that COVID-19 was looming as she completed her big feel-good statement in early 2020. But when it came out last March, the album ended up offering a welcome escape from a quickly

darkening reality. What's more, "Don't Start Now" touched off a plague-times disco revival that yielded pleasure-obsessed hits by the likes of Lady Gaga, Harry Styles and Doja Cat, whose "Say So" is nominated against "Don't Start Now" for record of the year.

"Something this pandemic has taught us, I think, is to live in the moment," Lipa says.

If space got crowded under the glitter ball, Lipa still stands out. For starters, there's the exceptionally wide range of her appeal, which in recent months has led to both a collaboration with the hip-hop boy band Brockhampton and a country-fied cover of "Don't Start Now" by Nashville's Ingrid Andress. (Among Lipa's other duet partners of late are Miley Cyrus, J Balvin, DaBaby and Andrea Bocelli.)

"Dua is super-cool," says Brockhampton's Kevin Abstract, a hero to Supreme-clad kids more attuned to Camp Flog Gnaw than to the Hot 100. What did his fans make of Lipa's appearance on a remix of Brockhampton's song "Sugar"? "They were probably like, 'Whoa, I didn't expect this — but why does it kind of work?'" Abstract says.

There's also Lipa's unique handling of her celebrity. At a moment when music by many female pop stars is scrutinized for insight into their private lives — be they established A-listers like Swift and Ariana Grande or up-and-comers like Olivia Rodri-

go of "Drivers License" fame — Lipa's songs resist a closely personal read. It's not that they're unfeeling; bangers such as "Levitating" and "Hallucinate" combine whooshing grooves with words about bodies in motion to create something downright ecstatic.

But the music tends proudly toward abstraction; it's seeking to embody the emotional experience of love or sex or adventure, rather than inviting you to ponder any given episode between her and Hadid. And because she's such an expressive singer, with loads of texture in her voice, she pulls it off.

"Dua brings a real star quality to her songs," says Sarah Hudson, a veteran songwriter who's worked with Katy Perry and Camila Cabello and who wrote "Levitating" with Lipa, Koz and Clarence Coffee Jr. "But she's slightly mysterious. At the same time, she's so genuine that you feel close to the music." Hudson is right: You feel close to the music, if not necessarily to Dua Lipa herself.

Polished but forthright in conversation, Lipa cops to a certain self-protective instinct after a few years in the limelight. "I've grown to be more private because so much of my life is public, and I probably censor myself more than I used to," she says. "I also don't love the idea of making music for headlines or for controversy." She's seen "Framing Britney Spears," the much-dis-



"The feeling of going down the street and they're trying to catch you in this very awkward picture — it can be anxiety-inducing, honestly," she says. "And Britney's time was pre-Instagram when everything was purely about the tabloids, and there were no laws in place about what paparazzi were allowed to do. She was being harassed — that's exactly what it was."

Though paparazzi shots can "still circle the internet — you looking nuts after you've just woken up trying to get to the gym," as Lipa puts it with a shudder — Instagram has fundamentally changed the way we see pop stars. Yet curating her presentation hasn't prevented her from being called out online by fans who've questioned her need to travel to so many exotic locations during a pandemic.

"There are a lot of eyeballs on my social media," she says, somewhat philosophically, of being judged on occasion by some of her 61 million followers. "But I'm very much the same person onstage as I am at home." Her point seems to be that she never puts on the persona of a jet-setting glamazon; the reality can seem more like she never takes it off.

Indeed, there's a let-them-eat-cake quality to her stream of carefully styled photos that, along with her aversion to oversharing, registers as another difference between Lipa and her ostensibly relatable American counterparts. The singer's European-ness — more Posh Spice than Amy Winehouse — feels essential to her identity, which hasn't been true of a breakout female act in this country for ages.

Lipa was born in London but moved to Kosovo at 11 when her parents, who'd emigrated during the Balkan conflicts, deemed it safe to come back. In Pristina, the country's capital, she "learned about my roots," she says, played basketball at school (she stands a willowy 5-foot-8) and perfected her Albanian, which she still uses daily with her family and in text messages with her old friends.

Returning to London as a teenager was a product of her need to "be in a place where everything was happening," she says, including the club culture she soon discovered. "Future Nostalgia" showcases Lipa's earnest embrace of dance music and its rich history; she even released a companion remix album, "Club Future Nostalgia," with new versions of the songs by house and techno O.G.s such as Moodymann, Larry Heard and Masters at Work.

"Her investment is totally legit," says the Blessed Madonna, the respected DJ and producer who oversaw the remix set. "To me Dua is the pop girl who really gets it."

**"There are a lot of eyeballs on my social media," Lipa says, "But I'm very much the same person onstage as I am at home." Her point seems to be that she never puts on the persona of a jet-setting glamazon; the reality can seem more like she never takes it off.**

## WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

The Wii U feels like the generation that time forgot. The console's popularity wasn't as explosive as its predecessor, and fans overlooked several great games that came and went. With the success of the Nintendo Switch, Nintendo has re-released Wii U titles on its current machine.

Players who missed out on Pikmin 3 have another chance to check out the deluxe version. The criminally underrated *The Wonderful 101* was remastered for the system as well. For the 35th anniversary of Super Mario Bros., Nintendo has launched Super Mario 3D World + Bowser's Fury. It's an enhanced release with a big bonus.

The core game is a remarkable oddity that came out between the stellar Super Mario Galaxy 2 and the clever Super Mario Odyssey. It's a title that lets Mario roam in three dimensions but has a camera angle with little wiggle room. It stays mostly fixed to players as they traverse eight worlds trying to rescue the Sprixie Princesses from Bowser's clutches.

It's an iteration of the franchise that's sandwiched between the traditional 2D games and the forward-thinking 3D adventures. Surprisingly enough, it's a game that fits closest to the Super Mario Bros. 3 mold as Nintendo's mascot grabs several power-ups that lets him skate on ice, throw boomerangs and scamper through levels as a cat.

It's a title that carries the ethos of the NES-era level design and brings it to a 3D environment. Each timed level has a distinct beginning and end as players venture through obstacles, uncovering secrets such as Green Stars and collectible stamps, which they can add to screenshots in the photo mode. The Green Stars are important because they unlock certain stages. There are also warp zones that let players skip levels, though it means they won't save all the Sprixie Princesses, and that's reflected in the ending.

Although it's chock-full of content, the hybrid 3D game's camera has more drawbacks than advantages. The fixed angle makes jumping and avoiding enemies onerous. It's tough to judge the distance from a platform, and that also makes it hard to stomp on foes. It can be particularly frustrating in narrow spaces.

With that said, 3D World does use the fixed camera in smart ways. In one level, it goes overhead and creates a *Zelda*-like perspective that helps Mario as he lights braziers so he can find his way through a scenario. In other stages, Nintendo plays with shadows and reflections to hide items and secret passages.

In addition, the update features online and offline multiplayer modes, which can get chaotic as four players try to beat a level without getting in each other's way. One of the more interesting aspects of 3D World is that players can also choose among four characters — Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach and Toad. Each character has its own traits: Luigi has a higher jump. Peach floats a little more when leaping. Toad is the fastest but may not jump the highest. Mario is average at everything.

# Flexible fury

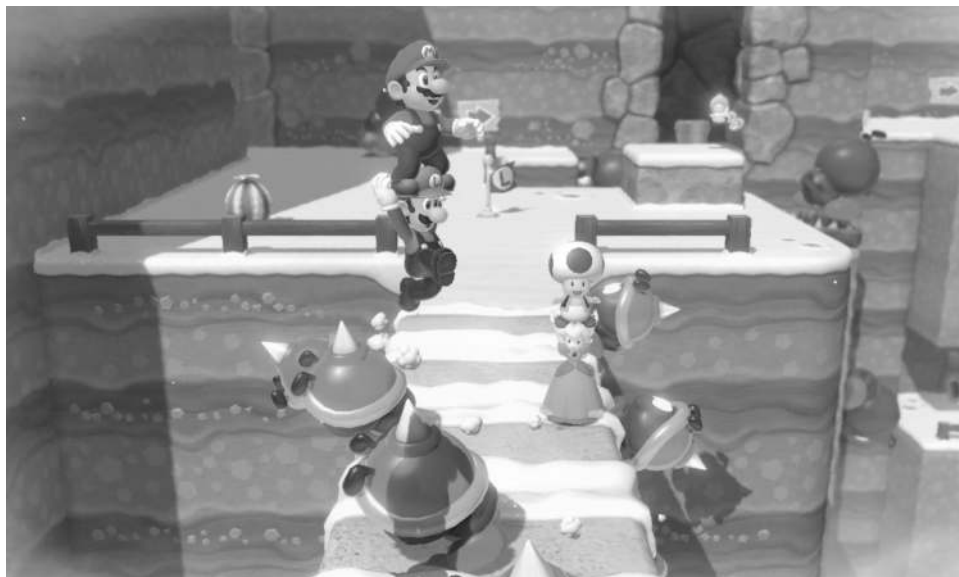
## Mario 3D World + Bowser's Fury hints at a new direction for Nintendo franchise

BY GIESON CACHO  
*The Mercury News*



NINTENDO/TNS photos

**Above: Mario powers up to an enormous size using the Giga Bell in Bowser's Fury, an addition to the classic title Super Mario 3D World.**



**The fixed camera creates interesting level design opportunities, but it also makes some parts of Super Mario 3D World more difficult.**



**Seafaring dinosaur Plessie can ferry Mario to different islands in Bowser's Fury. Many power-ups and characters will be familiar, but the open nature of the campaign is new.**

3D World also features the seeds of what later became *Captain Toad: Treasure Tracker*. His side levels let players control the hero as he collects Green Stars. He has no jump button and can only sprint across stages, but the limitation creates some of the more inventive parts of the campaign. His puzzlelike stages are a joy to complete.

The other part of this Mario double feature is *Bowser's Fury*, which comes off as another experimental curiosity. It's couched in the language of 3D World. Players will recognize the same power-ups and characters such as Plessie, a seafaring dinosaur, but the big difference here lies in the open nature of the short campaign.

Mario is on an archipelago in Lake Lapcat, and he has to help out Bowser Jr., whose father has turned into an enormous rage monster. Players have to use the power of the Giga Bells to turn the mustachioed hero into an enormous cat with glowing fur reminiscent of *Dragon Ball Z*'s Goku. He then battles Bowser in a *Godzilla*-inspired brawl until the boss gets knocked out for a short time.

Over the course of the campaign, players must collect Cat Shines to erase the muck coating the Lake Lapcat lighthouses and the water. Players are free to explore any islands they can reach, and each locale has its own set of quests. Some are distinct, such as fighting Koopa kids in a tiny arena, while others are repeat missions, such as collecting blue coins, but set in a different space.

The notable part about *Bowser's Fury* is how it essentially creates the foundation for an open-world Mario game. Instead of levels, players have islands that they travel to and explore. Power-ups are stored and can be accessed at almost any time. Players don't have to worry about lives, but they must be concerned about the number of coins, which goes down with each death.

Taken together, it's a fascinating look at a possible future Super Mario Bros. series. It's almost like Mario done in the style of *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker*, with Plessie being the boat that ferries the hero along to locales.

As players collect more Cat Shines and explore Lake Lapcat, they open up more islands. At the same time, they also have to deal with the furious Bowser, which attacks Mario at timed intervals.

The campaign's goal is to grab as many Cat Shines as possible and unlock the power of Giga Bells so that Mario can eventually cleanse the bad juju infesting Bowser.

The one issue facing *Bowser's Fury* is that it does push the Nintendo Switch to its limits. The game is noticeably worse in the mobile mode while it plays better docked. Players experience slow-downs and other hiccups either way, but it makes this part of the package feel like a rough draft of something bigger.

Whatever the case, it's a worthwhile experience for Mario fans or those interested in the open-world genre. *Bowser's Fury* makes a persuasive case that the franchise should explore this genre because it opens up new opportunities for play. Much like 3D World, *Bowser's Fury* pushes the franchise in a new frontier and direction that holds plenty of promise.

Platform: Nintendo Switch

Online: [supermario3dworld.nintendo.com](http://supermario3dworld.nintendo.com)

## WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



MISTWALKER/TNS

Game designer Hironobu Sakaguchi meshes animation and photographed dioramas for games like *Fantasian*.

# A game made with 150 dioramas

Creator of *Final Fantasy* says a look back at *FFVI* offers reminders, lessons for modern game development

By **TODD MARTENS**  
*Los Angeles Times*

**B**efore Hironobu Sakaguchi began work on his latest role-playing game — he's championed and explored the RPG genre throughout his career — the creator of the famed *Final Fantasy* series looked back before setting his sights forward.

Sakaguchi not too long ago replayed *Final Fantasy VI*, the 1994 entry in the franchise that is still considered among the series' best. Having turned his attention to mobile game development — with his next, *Fantasian*, launching as an exclusive to Apple Arcade, the tech giant's subscription service — Sakaguchi says *Final Fantasy VI* offered a number of reminders and lessons for modern game development.

"Back in the day, everything was done in tiles," says Sakaguchi, speaking last week via a translator. "Your character would move one tile at a time. That introduces puzzle-like elements, in which you might see a treasure chest that you can't access. But if you walk around the building and go through the back door, you might be able to reach that chest."

"When the player," continues Sakaguchi, "reaches the ending, it feels like they have seen everything this world has to offer. That desire — that craving that humans have — we're trying to re-create."

For *Fantasian*, Sakaguchi wanted to present players with an overview of a game world, offering them a universe that invites curiosity via what is shown rather than what is hidden. And yet the renowned Japanese game designer didn't want to create a retro game.

*Fantasian*, however, is a bit old school, at least in how it places century-old storytelling techniques at its forefront — in this case, about 150 hand-built dioramas.

*Fantasian*, then, is the rare video game that will not just utilize physical environments but also celebrate them.

Those environments add a feeling of fragility and a lived-in, aged look to the game. Digital characters traverse landscapes that are heavily stylized, living photographs. A tiny bed looks like a cloud made of porcelain, towns and buildings emerge from hand-sculpted caverns, and the very real rocks have a foreboding presence when they clash with the game's animation.

Video game engines today are capable of powerful, cinema-ready graphics, but with *Fantasian*, Sakaguchi has created a mobile game that feels tactile — a world we want to touch.

"To be able to get that feeling from the other side of a glass screen was almost a poetic experience," he says.

Sakaguchi isn't kidding. When he speaks of the intricate dioramas for the game, he talks not only of a renewed appreciation for game design but also life itself.

"A big surprise for me — there's a mountain-scape stage — and in the dioramas, there's a little bit of green and flowers littered about the pathway," he says. "I'm sure it was just a small decoration, but as we photographed it for transitioning it into a 3D-mesh and bringing it into the digital world, I would zoom into these flowers and — my goodness — it was amazing how strong their presence was inside of these scenes."

And although the game could have been made entirely

**Video game engines today are capable of powerful, cinema-ready graphics, but with *Fantasian*, video game creator Hironobu Sakaguchi has created a mobile game that feels tactile — a world we want to touch.**

with computer graphics — rather than by building dioramas, taking hundreds of photographs of them and then scanning them — Sakaguchi says he wasn't interested in that potential "shortcut," although he stressed that development time would have been about the same.

In part, he simply wanted a role-playing game that looked strikingly different from anything else on the market. Also, after decades of working in the RPG space, the 58-year-old wanted a challenge.

"It's possible to create something that is diorama-esque in the 3D, CG space, but I think there's a unique handmade touch that cannot be replicated," Sakaguchi says. "For instance, if you're creating a vast forest in CG, regardless of whether you put in diorama-esque fixtures or give it that shading to give it a handmade feel, at some

point it will become repetitive, too symmetrical. When making something with your hands, it warps the visual in a very unique way that can't be replicated."

The game, about three years in the making and with no current plans to be made available outside of the Apple Arcade ecosystem, is nearing completion, with Apple beginning a promotional push this month by touting the exclusive, without a specific release date, in its App Store. And although Sakaguchi's Mistwalker studio has worked in the mobile space before, with *Fantasian* he says he wanted no direct concessions to the smartphone and tablet-focused medium, saying it is his job, and goal, to create a game worthy of ignoring text message notifications.

"On a technical level, there have been some learnings from recent projects Mistwalker has undertaken," Sakaguchi says. "But *Fantasian* is a full-blown console RPG experience. I drew upon that experience. I want to re-create that feel and touch for *Fantasian*."

The game starts with players in control of a protagonist named Leo, a character on a quest for his missing father. In relatively standard video game fashion, however, Leo's memory is wiped, and he travels from a machine-driven world to the more rustic one represented by the dioramas. Sakaguchi says this simply scratches the surface, and memories of in-game characters are presented as mini fairy-tale-like novels.

In *Fantasian*, you will read.

"The novels are a system in the game that progresses between scenes," says Sakaguchi. "Humans, when you read something, it really jogs the imagination in ways that being fed audiovisual cues does not seem to do. We're talking about dioramas and, now, novels, which are a very old-world, old-school medium, if you will, and as you go through and read these stories, it gets the player to shift their mindset and use different parts of their brain as they go through this interactive experience."

None of this should be a surprise to fans of Sakaguchi's work. Over his more than three-decade career, Sakaguchi has steadfastly focused on the RPG genre. What brings him back, he says, is the way RPG stories are told.

A good one, Sakaguchi says, should make the player feel like a tourist.

"The idea of exploring a completely new world is akin to traveling to a country we've never experienced before," he says. "You're walking down the street and discover this really cute cafe or boutique. There is a sense of discovery and wonder that comes with the RPG genre."

## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

# Fine living at a Parisian market

As we've had to postpone our travels because of the pandemic, I believe a weekly dose of travel dreaming can be good medicine. Here's a reminder of the fun that awaits us in Europe at the other end of this crisis.

I grew up thinking cheese was no big deal. It was orange and the shape of the bread: slap, fwomp ... cheese sandwich.

Even though I'm still far from a gourmet eater, my time in Paris — specifically shopping at the Rue Cler street market with my restaurateur friend Marie — has substantially bumped up my appreciation of good cuisine.

In the skinny shadow of the Eiffel Tower, Rue Cler still feels like village Paris. Lined with shops that spill out into the street, it's also bustling with shoppers. Marie explains that Parisians shop almost daily for three good reasons: their tiny kitchens have tiny refrigerators, fresh produce makes for a good meal, and they like shopping. It's an important social event: a chance to hear about the butcher's vacation, see photos of the

florist's new grandchild, relax over un café, and kiss the cheeks of friends.

The neighborhood produce shop wraps around the corner with an enticing rainbow of fruits and vegetables on display. Next door, the fishmonger sells the freshest fish, which are brought in daily from ports on the English Channel, 100 miles away.

At the boucherie, Marie shows me things I might have otherwise avoided on her menu: rognons (kidneys), foie (liver), coeur de boeuf (heart of beef). She hoists a duck to check the feet; they should be rough and callused, an indication that they weren't stuck in an industrial kennel but ran free on a farm. She explains, "While Americans prefer beef, pork, and chicken, we French eat just as much rabbit (lapin), quail (caille), lamb (agneau), and duck (canard). The head of a calf is a delight for its many tasty bits."

Farther down Rue Cler, the picnic-friendly charcuterie (or



Rick Steves



DOMINIC ARIZONA BONUCCELLI/Rick Steves' Europe

Rue Cler's stores, in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, make picnic shopping fun in Paris.

traiteur) sells mouthwatering deli food to go.

The smell of cheese heralds the fromagerie. It's a festival of mold, with wedges, cylinders, balls and miniature hockey pucks all powdered white, gray and burnt marshmallow. Browsing with me through a world of different types of cheese, Marie explains, "Ooh la la means you're impressed. If you like cheese, show greater excitement with more las. Ooh la la la."

The white-smocked cheese-monger points out the old photo on the wall from when his father ran the shop. It was labeled BOF for beurre, oeuf, fromage. For

generations, this has been the place where people go for butter, eggs, and cheese. He takes us into the back room for a peek at les meules — the big, 170-pound wheels (250 gallons of milk go into each). Explaining that the "hard" cheeses are cut from these, he warns me, "Don't eat the skin of these big ones ... they roll them on the floor. But the skin on most smaller cheeses — the Brie, the Camembert — that is part of the taste."

And what's cheese without bread? The bakery is our final stop. Locals debate the merits of rival boulangeries. It's said that a baker cannot be good at both

bread and pastry. At cooking school, they major in one or the other. But here on Rue Cler, the baker bucks the trend. Marie explains that this baker makes good bread (I get a baguette for my sandwich) and delicious pastries. Voilà, dessert!

By now, I've assembled the ingredients for the perfect picnic. Marie heads off to her restaurant, while I head for a park bench, settle in, and enjoy my Rue Cler feast. A passerby wishes me a cheery "Bon appétit!"

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.

## Establishing a foothold to enjoy Europe's marvelous sights

Admiring architecture, sampling street foods and watching street artists perform are just a few of the many activities that naturally combine with taking in the sights of a new town. Those who look at running not as a fleeting fancy but rather a way of life have at their disposal another means of conquering new horizons. Let's lace up our running shoes to tour these special corners of Europe.

### Epic waterfronts

Discover Hamburg, Germany's largest port city, by means of a route running alongside the Elbe River, one of Central Europe's major waterways. A run along the 11-mile stretch between the Elbphilharmonie/Baumwall U-bahn stop in Hamburg and the western suburb of Wedel provides a glimpse of the constant comings and goings of vast container ships. The tour passes by the famous St. Pauli Fish Market and through the upscale Altona neighborhood. The view from the park high upon a bluff, known as the balcony, reveals cranes, gas tanks and endless stacks of shipping containers. From there, the scenery gives way to elegant old sea-captains' homes, a harbor filled with historical sailing vessels, and the Blankenese neighborhood, an area of winding alleys and hidden staircases. If your timing's right, you might be able to return to the city aboard the Liinsand catamaran; otherwise the S1 commuter train will whisk you back to the city center in no time.

The Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, is a four-mile stretch of coast lapped by the crystal waters of the Côte d'Azur. Along the palm-studded, multi-purpose trail, runners are treated to views of pebbly beaches and yacht-filled harbors. As the space is shared with skateboarders, Segway-riders and pedestrians in no particular hurry, tackling the route early is a wise strategy. From the city



iStock

The oceanside Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, is a beautiful four-mile stretch — as long as you remain on the lookout for others enjoying it also.

center, runners can board tram line number 2 out to the airport terminal and run back along the promenade.

### Runs through time

The ancient Appian Way, whose construction began in 312 B.C., once linked up Rome with Brindisi, an important port city on southeast Italy's Adriatic Sea. A 16-mile circular route proposed in Runner's World magazine removes runners far from the snarl of traffic and toxic fumes that can mar a jog through the Eternal City. The run commences in front of the Appian Way Park Authority info point, just steps away from the Domine Quo Vadis church. The route passes the catacombs of San Callisto, which hold the remains of 16 popes, and those of San Sebastiano, named for a Roman martyr, as well as the

remains of a stadium in which chariot races were once staged. Another highlight is the tomb of Cecilia Metella, a rotunda festooned with bulls' heads. As basalt stones scarred by centuries of carriage traffic don't offer the safest of footing, the dirt paths flanking the route make for a safer option. The Archeobus, departing hourly from the Termini main railway station, offers convenient access the area and makes several stops within the park itself. Online: [tinyurl.com/pc4fvjy4](http://tinyurl.com/pc4fvjy4)

A run along the left bank of the UNESCO-listed Upper Middle Rhine Valley leads through an area so littered with castles and romantic ruins it inspired countless artists and poets. By starting a run at the confluence of the Rhine and the Nahe river by Bingen and heading north for some 10 miles along the Rheinradweg cycling path, you'll view such iconic landmarks as the Niederwald Monument commemorating the formation of the German Empire; the Mouse Tower, prettily perched on an island; Burg Rheinstein, a 13th-century toll castle; and the Stahlberg, a castle-turned-hostel. From Bacharach, board a regional train for a quick ride back to your starting point.

### Guided runs

Guided running tours taking advantage of knowledgeable and fit local guides are widely available throughout Europe. Go Running Tours is just one such company specializing in this type of outing. The company's six-mile "In Fair Verona" tour harks to the opening lines of a Shakespeare play and develops the theme by passing Romeo's house and Juliet's famous balcony. Other sights encompassing 2,000 years of history include a perfectly-preserved amphitheater, gothic monuments, hills planted with olive and cypress trees and the mighty Adige River. A private tour costs between 66 and 33 euros per person, depending on the number of participants. Online: [gorunningtours.com/run/in-fair-verona-10k](http://gorunningtours.com/run/in-fair-verona-10k)



Karen Bradbury

## WEEKEND: FOOD &amp; DINING



PHOTOS BY BRIAN FERGUSON/Stars and Stripes

Customers wait to order at Bicol Express during its stop March 3 at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center gas station. The truck moves to a different location weekly, including Ramstein Air Base, Baumholder, Kleber Kaserne, Sembach and others.

## Bicol Express

**Location:** Depends on the week; check the Bicol Express Facebook page.

**Cost:** 3.50 to 11.50 euros per dish; menu varies.

**Hours:** Times vary by location, check their Facebook page.

**Information:** Online: facebook.com/bicorexpress-ramstein

Brian Ferguson



The pork and chicken adobo with rice, lumpia and a fried egg from Bicol Express.



The pork siomai, or steamed dumplings with chili garlic on top, from Bicol Express.

# Rolling past the social media storm

Catch up with the Bicol Express food truck around Kaiserslautern for lip-smacking lumpia

BY BRIAN FERGUSON  
Stars and Stripes

I've been craving lumpia ever since I saw a post on a Facebook military spouses page that got people hotter than a backcountry Philippine barbecue.

The Ramstein-area post asked whether a neighbor should be paying German taxes for selling lumpia out of her home, without the original commenter really knowing the circumstances. Most of the hundreds of community responses amounted to "mind your own business," putting it mildly.

Judging by the lines outside the Bicol Express food truck, which is one of the few places to get Philippine food in the Kaiserslautern Military Community, I'm probably not the only one made hungry by a little social media controversy.

Before finding out about Bicol Express, I'd started out with a quick internet search, which didn't find any brick-and-mortar Philippine restaurants in the area.

It seemed the only way for me to satisfy my craving was going to be to make the food myself or pay someone on the spouses' page to make it for me. Since I don't know how to make lumpia and I don't want to anger anyone's neighbor, I decided to keep searching.

I caught up with Bicol Express, which operates on several U.S. military bases, during a stop at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center gas station. The truck



## AFTER HOURS GERMANY

moves weekly, serving Ramstein Air Base, Baumholder, Kleber Kaserne and Sembach, to name a few.

I knew I wanted lumpia, but what else? Pictures displayed in the truck window helped me figure it out.

I bought two orders of lumpia, chicken adobo, pork adobo with fried egg and pork siomai. The bag was heavy and smelled delicious.

Since I had a 20-minute drive home, I hoped the lumpia would stay crispy and flaky, and to my pleasant surprise, they did. The order also came with three small cups of sweet chili sauce for dipping. In my opinion, the sauce makes the lumpia, and it did not disappoint.

Both the chicken and pork were tender and juicy, and the meat slipped right off the bones. The pork siomai, a steamed dumpling with chili garlic on top, was not what I expected, but it did have a spicy kick.

Besides the flavorful food, Bicol Express impressed me with their service. The staff is pleasant and genuinely helpful, and it only took about five minutes to get my order, even as customers lined the parking lot.



Bicol Express, a Filipino food truck that operates on U.S. military bases in Germany, might be the only one of its kind in the Kaiserslautern area that sells fresh lumpia.

This isn't the only lumpia I've had in Germany, but it is the only lumpia I have ordered from a restaurant locally. So, if you have a friend, neighbor or relative who can make lumpia for you, congrat-

ulations. If you don't want to wait, find the truck and you won't be disappointed.

ferguson.brian@stripes.com  
Twitter: @BrianFerg57

## WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

# A park that Bliss built

Brandon Country Park near Lakenheath features a variety of trails, maybe a ghost

BY KYLE ALVAREZ  
*Stars and Stripes*

A 15-minute drive from Lakenheath and slightly longer from Mildenhall lies a 30-acre oasis from the daily grind.

Brandon Country Park offers visitors miles of heathland and forests, fresh air, hiking and biking trails, glimpses of unique wildlife, trees you don't expect to see in England, a walled garden, historic buildings — even a rumored ghost.

It has strong ties to the military, not just through its proximity to the two U.S. air bases at Mildenhall and Lakenheath, but going back to its inception in the 19th century.

Brandon, the town that gives the park its name, once produced most of the flint used by the army of the British empire. Local businessman Edward Bliss made his fortune selling gunflint to the army during the Napo-

leonic Wars, which lasted from May 1803 until November 1815.

When demand for flint fell after the end of the wars, Brandon's economy went south. But Bliss stepped in and gave jobs to the town's unemployed, paying them to plant trees on a vast stretch of heathland that he'd bought with the money he made off the flint.

Millions of trees were planted, creating Thetford Forest and, within it, Brandon Country Park. In other words, these two havens of tranquility are the products of more than a decade of conflict in Europe.

Many of the trees in the park are not native to England. I know this, not because I'm an arborist but because of the many signs in front of them. The giant redwood, for example, from northern California, was introduced to the area in 1853.

In the park's walled garden, once planted with vegetables for



PHOTOS BY KYLE ALVAREZ/Stars and Stripes

Three-year-old Penelope Alvarez stands in front of a pond in Brandon Country Park, near the town of Brandon, England. The mansion in the background was originally built as a home for the family of the park's founder, Edward Bliss, but now serves as a luxury care home.



The mausoleum on the grounds of the Brandon Country Park was built by Edward Bliss in the 1800s as the resting place for him and his wife. The ghost of Bliss' nephew is said to wander the grounds.

the Bliss family, there are trees like Himalayan birches and the handkerchief tree, which has heart-shaped leaves and takes 50 years to fully grow.

Irish yew trees surround the Gothic mausoleum built by Bliss as the final resting place for himself and his wife. It's here that the ghost of Bliss' nephew, Baron Boretto, is said to roam, dressed in knee breeches and a deerstalker hunting cap like Sherlock Holmes used to wear, and carrying a lantern shaped like a human skull with a lit candle in it.

The mausoleum is also home to tiny pipistrelle bats. They are said to each eat some 3,000 insects every night.

If ghosts and bats aren't your thing, the park has hiking and biking trails of varying distances, most of which are color-coded. The 1-mile red trail, which my family and I took, goes through the park's arboretum and is easy enough for a 3-year-old to do. Other trails are longer — up to 5.75 miles for the cycling trail — and go into Thetford Forest.

There are also two play areas with climbing frames, assault courses, swings and slides, a tearoom (because this is England), and conference rooms available for rent. The indoor facilities, including the tearoom, were closed when we went because of coronavirus restrictions.

Dogs are welcome everywhere in the park except for the walled garden and, when it's open, the tearoom.

## On the QT

**Location:** Brandon Country Park, Bury Road, Brandon, IP27 OSU. The park is five minutes from the A11.

**Hours:** The park is open every day of the year from dawn to dusk.

**Costs:** Entry to the park is free but parking costs 1 pound for up to two hours on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., or 2 pounds for the day. On weekends and British holidays, the cost goes up to 1.50 pounds for up to two hours during the week, and 3 pounds for the entire day. Annual parking permits are available for 30 pounds. Cash or the RingGo app accepted.

**Food:** When it's open, the Copper Beech Tearoom serves breakfast, starting at 10 a.m., through to afternoon tea. From April to October it closes at 4:30 p.m., from November to March at 3:30 p.m., with last orders for hot food about an hour before. It has vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options.

**For more information:** call +44 (0)1284 757088; send an email to parks@westsuffolk.gov.uk, or message them on Facebook at facebook.com/BrandonCountryPark; Website: westsuffolk.gov.uk/leisure/Parks/brandon-countrypark.cfm

Kyle Alvarez



A mile-long trail in Brandon Country Park near Brandon, England, goes through the arboretum and is easy enough for a 3-year-old. Other trails are longer and go into Thetford Forest.

## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

# Putting travel savings to good use

## Would-be travelers swapping vacations for big-ticket toys

By AMANDA LOUDIN

Special to The Washington Post

It was supposed to be a dream wedding and honeymoon. First up, the nuptials in scenic Banff, British Columbia, surrounded by their children from previous marriages. After spending a few days there, Lisa Fichman and her fiancé, Mike Zampi, were headed to Switzerland for a hiking trip in the Alps, and a few days at the Montreux Jazz Festival.

Then came the pandemic, and Fichman, a retiree from Columbia, Md., found herself on the phone, postponing their June 2020 plans. Like everyone at this time last year, the couple could not have imagined that a pandemic would be raging a year later. “We figured we would be delayed for a while,” Fichman says. “Then we decided maybe we should reschedule for the summer of 2021. Now, we don’t really see it happening anytime soon, if at all.”

As that reality sank in over the past few months, Fichman and her fiancé started thinking about how they might pivot and use the money they had slated to their big wedding and honeymoon. “We decided to channel our time and money into something fun and safe,” she says.

Fichman and Zampi are creative and crafty, so the result became an unexpected passion project: They bought a cargo trailer, and with Fichman serving as design consultant, Zampi has set to work converting it into a customized RV. “We’ve been tricking it out with solar panels for electric and air conditioning, installed a Murphy bed, added skylights, a table, and wired it for sound,” she explains. “Mike made the table himself and is going to add cedar planking to the exterior. We think of it as a Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired tiny house on wheels.”

While the camper was a big investment, it’s comparable to the money the couple would have spent on their far-flung wedding and honeymoon. In swapping one for the other, Fichman and Zampi joined a pandemic trend: using vacation dollars for a pandemic alternative.

It’s hard to name an industry that has been hit harder by the pandemic than the travel industry. According to U.S. Travel Association data, total travel spending by U.S. residents in 2019 topped \$1.1 trillion dollars. In 2020, that number plummeted to \$680 billion. It projects 2021 spending to rebound marginally, to \$760 billion.

While vaccinations are helping some feel more confident about travel, for many would-be vacationers, this summer remains a time of caution. Instead of hopping onto planes to reach destinations far away, they are turning their sights to fun ways to recreate closer to home.

Boats, RVs, skis, high-end bikes — all experienced record high sales in 2020 and show no signs of slowing down as the calendar turns toward summer 2021.

New Hampshire-based real estate developer Michael Farris recently put in an order with Malibu Boats for just this reason. “In the current situation, this was a no-brainer,” he says. “We’re not planning any vacations right now, so with a boat, we can go to different lakes nearby and have a great day.”

Farris also considers a boat a safe way to spend time with friends who have similar coronavirus-avoidance behaviors. “When you travel, you’re interacting with all kinds of people in restaurants, elevators, hotels, and you don’t know how they approach COVID. On a boat, you can be outside and socially distance with people you trust.”

Powerboats do not come cheap. One like Farris purchased can range from \$20,000 to \$200,000-plus. He says

**“Instead of using disposable income on international travel, cruise ships or eco-tourism, people are choosing outdoor recreation.”**

Frank Hugelmeyer

President of National Marine Manufacturers Association



TREVOR BORYCKI/The Washington Post

Carrie Lyons bought a trailer so she could comfortably take their kids to nearby outdoor sites. As the pandemic enters its second year, more people are spending unused travel funds on big-ticket recreation toys instead.

this is a good trade-off to vacation spending, however. “The entry point is high, but after that it’s just gas,” he says. “I have three kids and we’ll be able to water-ski and tube and see so much on a boat, for years to come.”

According to the National Marine Manufacturers Association, sales of boats, marine products and services hit \$47 billion in 2020, up 9% from 2019. President Frank Hugelmeyer sees no sign of that trend slowing in 2021. “This segment of outdoor recreation is on fire,” he says. “Instead of using disposable income on international travel, cruise ships or eco-tourism, people are choosing outdoor recreation. Our campaign this year has been ‘the water is open,’ and all sales metrics support that line of thinking.”

The boating industry is just one facet of outdoor recreation that is enjoying robust growth because of the pandemic. According to the NPD Group’s retail tracking data, five outdoor recreation categories saw explosive growth last year: bike sales by 63%, paddle sports by 56%, golf sales by 51%, camping equipment by 31%, and binocular sales by 22%. The Outdoor Industry Association, which will soon issue a report on its participation expectations for 2021, reported

that the jump in outdoor recreation participation this past year amounts to “the largest annual increase we’ve seen since we began tracking the numbers.”

Carrie Lyons, a teacher in Alberta, has always prized her travel, often spending time in the U.S. Rockies each summer and running trail races, among other trips. She and her husband had plans for an anniversary trip to Panama this year, but as the pandemic heads into Year 2, they have pivoted to buying new recreation toys.

“Last year, we bought a trailer so that we could com-



LISA FICHMAN/The Washington Post

Lisa Fichman and her fiancé, Mike Zampi, used money set aside for a wedding and honeymoon abroad for a cargo trailer that they turned into a customized RV.

fortably take our kids to some of the nearby sites,” she says. “This summer, we’re adding two stand-up paddleboards to the mix. We can travel an hour away to a beautiful lake and still have a great time.”

Lyons says the trailer cost about \$32,000, and the paddleboards about \$800 each. “We figure we get a lifetime of memories and adventures with the trailer,” she says. “We’ve also saved a lot of money this year by not going to restaurants, paying for child care, kids’ sports and other activities. It was an easy swap for us — it’s just a different way of spending vacation dollars.”

While Lyons and Fichman are satisfied with the new ways they’re spending their vacation dollars, both admit to mixed emotions. “I was crestfallen at first,” Fichman says. “But you make adjustments and figure out a different plan. It’s disappointing, but we recognize our fortune to be in this position, and everything will be OK.”

Lyons concurs. “We haven’t lost anyone to COVID, we still have jobs, and we’re fortunate to have a stable life,” she says. “I remind myself that we can still have amazing adventures close to home. Still, right now, when it’s freezing outside, I’d give anything to escape to a warm beach.”

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

# Hipster hotel in a small space

## Tiny Inn in Fussa brings taste of Portland's tiny home trend to Japan

By ERICA EARL  
Stars and Stripes

After a trip to Portland in 2017, a businessman and artist in Japan felt inspired by the food carts and tiny home trends there and decided to bring a touch of the American Pacific Northwest back to bustling Tokyo.

"I want it to be a place where people from the United States or who have visited will experience that culture as much as possible," said Ryuma Sato, creator and owner of the Tiny Inn.

Sato opened The Tiny Inn, a two-room retro-style trailer, in Fussa, last fall in hopes of attracting service members at nearby Yokota Air Base as well as Tokyoites looking to escape from the city while travel was limited due to the coronavirus.

Fussa, a small suburban area in western Tokyo, is quiet in comparison to the Japanese capital's city center. Part of its tourist appeal is the American flavor the air base presence lends the shops and cafes along four-lane Route 16.

The Tiny Inn truly is tiny, built to accommodate a maximum of two people. I am only 5 feet, 2 inches tall and still managed to bump my head on the doorframe walking into the bedroom. Its minimalist design features a wooden deck, a semi-double bed and a bathroom with a toilet and shower.

Weekday stays cost 3,500 yen, or \$33 per night, and weekend and holiday stays cost 15,000 yen, or \$141, per night.

During high season, March through September, weekday stays cost 5,500 yen, or \$51 per night and weekend and holiday stays cost 20,000 yen, or \$188 per night.

Billed on its website as a "mobile hotel," the Tiny Inn doesn't actually move, but Sato said he hopes to eventually also have an Airstream or similar model on property that guests can rent and drive around to explore Japan's natural beauty "in the style of the American road trip."

Sato and his business partners spent four months building the trailer from parts he either found or bought secondhand.

The Tiny Inn is situated on a former storage lot right next to another one of Sato's projects, Delta East, a food cart park that opened in 2019. Sato helped found Delta East as the creative director of the nonprofit organization Flag, which helps entrepreneurs develop their project ideas.

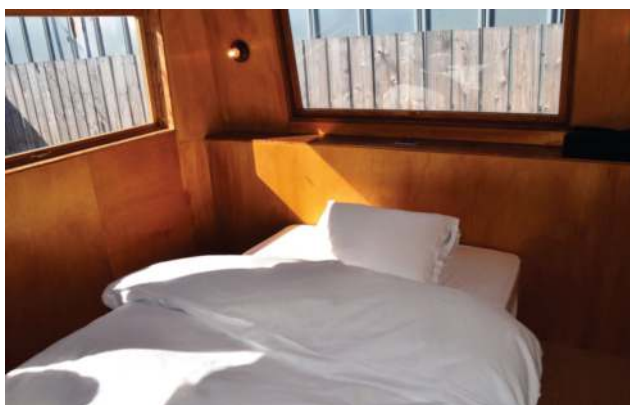
Delta East hosts a variety of food carts serving New York-style pizza, Vietnamese bahn mi, coffee, craft beer and more.

Sato said he has long been intrigued by American pop culture, being raised by a "hippie dad" who Sato said had long hair like John Lennon. He said he envisions the park being a "hipster haven" for artists, military members and youth in the community to come together, eat and skate in the small, empty pool that serves as Delta East's centerpiece.



PHOTOS BY ERICA EARL/Stars and Stripes

Ryuma Sato is the creator and owner of the Tiny Inn, a two-room retro-style mobile hotel near Yokota Air Base. The trailer was built by Sato out of parts he found or bought secondhand.



The Tiny Inn near Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo truly is tiny, built to accommodate a maximum of two people.

"I want to see a bunch of cool, tattooed kids working here bringing local flavor from where they're from," Sato said.

Delta East was originally going to be a spot where people could rent vintage cars of different styles, but Sato figured food trucks would be a simpler business model and attract more people.

Sato said he hopes to continue to revamp both Delta East and the Tiny Inn by adding more food carts and attractions, but does not know when that will be because of the ongoing pandemic.

earl.eric@stripes.com  
Twitter: @ThisEarlGirl

### On the QT

**Directions:** From Yokota Air Base's main gate, turn right onto Route 16, then left at the Shorin-dori intersection. You will see Delta East with its food carts, banners and hanging lights on the right just before the railroad crossing. Limited parking is available. Google Plus code: P8XP+5M Fussa, Tokyo

**Times:** Open year-round

**Costs:** \$33 per night weeknights and \$141 per night weekends and holidays. March-September; \$51 per night weeknights and \$188 per night weekend and holidays

**Food:** Food carts just steps away feature pizza, Vietnamese bahn mi, chicken and rice dishes, coffee and craft beer.

**Information:** tinyinn.jp

Erica Earl



The Tiny Inn in Fussa, Japan, is situated right next to Delta East, a food cart park that opened in 2019.



Memories with STARS AND STRIPES Pacific

Share your Memories with Stars and Stripes Pacific!

Your photos/stories will appear on the Stars and Stripes Pacific 75th Anniversary Website, [75.stripes.com](http://75.stripes.com).



# WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

## Specializing in medium rare

The burgers at Under the Cascade in Tachikawa have the perfect bit of pink

BY CHRISSEY YATES  
Stars and Stripes

If you're near Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo and looking for an easy place to drive or take the train to, as well as some good burgers, look no further than Under the Cascade in nearby Tachikawa.

This American-style restaurant is in Green Springs, a retail and recreation complex that features an event hall, shops, restaurants and a hotel. There's plenty of green space like the name suggests. It's a great place to walk around to get some fresh air, window-shop and people-watch.

The burgers at Under the Cascade are stacked high and served with the perfect bit of pink in the middle. The menu lists salads, a poke bowl and pancakes as well as a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, which makes it a decent weekend brunch spot.

So far, I have tried the baked apple burger (1,280 yen, or about



**AFTER HOURS JAPAN**

\$12) and the classic burger (88 yen for the single patty). I prefer the latter as the smoky caramelized onions combined with the perfect dollop of mustard on top of the patty were delicious.

Each burger comes with fries that are the right mix of crunchy on the outside and chewy in the middle, a little cup of onion soup and a tiny serving of coleslaw in a little ramekin.

On my most recent trip to Cascade, I dined al fresco with a friend, and we were determined to try the pancakes. We were provided blankets as it was a chilly day and we sipped on perfectly creamy coconut lattes while we waited. However, dining outside involves bistro tables that seem a bit flimsy, especially



CHRISSEY YATES/Stars and Stripes

The baked apple burger from Under the Cascade in Tachikawa, Japan, comes with fries, coleslaw and a cup of onion soup. The restaurant specializes in American fare with burgers with the perfect hint of pink.

with multiple plates and drinks stacked on top.

Sadly, my creme brulee pancakes (1,180 yen) did not live up to the enticing menu picture. They were thinner: not quite a pancake, not quite a crepe, and a bit too eggy. The brulee topping was ice cold in places and the sugar was not melted or burned all the way through. The end result was a gritty texture instead of that fun crackle you chip at with a spoon. My friend's tiramisu pancakes (1,180 yen), a special, limited-time item, were

better, but not the brunchy knockout we were expecting.

A simple and affordable kid's menu offers pancakes, a burger or curry for 500 yen.

While most of the menu is in English and the rest translates easily enough using a phone translation app, there is a daily special grill plate and a steak salad plate listed only in handwritten Japanese. Every time I went, the choice was between chicken or beef.

yates.christina@stripes.com  
Twitter: @Chrissy\_Stripes

### Under the Cascade

**Location:** 3-1 Midoricho, Tachikawa City, Tokyo

**Hours:** Open daily, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. (last order at 7 p.m.)

**Prices:** Lunch will run you between \$9.50 and \$14, and between \$23.50 and \$28 for dinner

**Dress:** Casual

**Directions:** A 25-minute drive from Yokota Air Base or a 5-minute walk from JR Tachikawa Station

**Information:** 042-519-3077; greensprings.jp/shop/under\_the\_cascade (in Japanese)

Christina Yates

## Dressed-up chicken salad

BY GRETCHEN MCKAY  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Light but still satisfying, chicken salad is the ultimate girls' lunch menu item. But it also can be dressed up with fruits and spices to create a quick and easy weeknight meal.

I serve the chicken salad on fresh baby salad greens, but it also can be scooped on top of a thick piece of crusty bread for an open-faced sandwich, or stuffed into a roll or between two slices of bread.

### Crunchy Curried Chicken Salad

**Ingredients**

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt

2 teaspoons curry powder, or more to taste

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 1/2 heaping cups cubed or shredded rotisserie chicken

3 scallions, white and green parts, chopped

1/2 large green apple, such as Granny Smith, diced

1/3 cup raisins, soaked in hot water to soften

1/4 cup toasted sliced almonds

Handful of fresh, leafy lettuce



GRETCHEN MCKAY/TNS

**Crunchy Curried Chicken Salad is light, but satisfying.**

4 thick slices crusty bread for an open-face sandwich, or 8 slices for a regular sandwich

**Directions**

In a medium bowl, stir together the mayonnaise, yogurt and curry powder. Then add a generous pinch of salt and a good grind of black pepper. Taste and adjust seasonings.

Add cooked chicken, scallions and apple and stir until well combined. Fold in raisins and toasted almonds. Stir to combine well.

Serve chicken salad tucked between two slices of bread as a sandwich or spooned on top of fresh mixed greens as a salad.

Serves 4.

STARS AND STRIPES.

# Month of the Military Child

Let's Celebrate by Sharing Your Story!

Submit Today: [militarychild.stripes.com](http://militarychild.stripes.com)

## What's Your Story?

Stories will be...

- Featured on our website, [militarychild.stripes.com](http://militarychild.stripes.com).
- Printed in Stars and Stripes and Pacific community papers.



LIVE MÁS



WingStreet



MILITARY COMMUNITY YOUTH MINISTRIES

## WEEKEND: BOOKS

# Murder, mystery and mayhem, but no gore

Readers have been turning to 'cozy' whodunit mysteries for escape from the realities of pandemic life

By TAMARA LUSH  
Associated Press

“A book,” author Neil Gaiman may or may not have said, “is a dream you hold in your hand.” And right now, in an era of pandemic and polarization, Americans have — and need — a lot of dreams.

We dream of unfettered travel, of a world free of face masks and hand sanitizer, of days that are exciting and new and not the grinding tedium of spending hour after hour staring, horrified, at the TV news. We dream of going back to school. Of eating a meal with family. Of hugs.

And some of us — well, some of us dream of murder. Small-town murder. Gentle murder. Quiet murder.

For those who find their dreams in books, there's a group of readers who are hungrily consuming a particular style of narrative to escape from the past year's reality: “cozy” mysteries.

In an unfathomably complex year, a gently told tale of murder and mayhem whittles the sharp edges of reality to a manageable, smooth surface.

“Murder is definitely dark, but in a cozy the reader is with the protagonist every step of the way as each clue is revealed,” says Michelle Vega, executive editor of Berkley, who works with several cozy authors. “You can enjoy the perfect cup of tea and pretend you're sitting in that comfy

bookshop with the protagonist, smiling along with the banter as she and friends figure out whodunit. It is escapist perfection.”

In television form, the cozy can be seen in popular shows such as “Murder, She Wrote,” “Midsomer Murders” and “Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries.” Cozies claim roots in early 20th-century British mysteries by such writers as Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. But with the advent of the e-book, authors are setting their gentle crime scenes in RV campgrounds in the American South, tourist towns in the Pacific Northwest and in neighborhoods in Brooklyn, to name a few.

The genre's parameters are few: no swearing, no sex, and little to no gore. Just what the pandemic-era doctor ordered.

“The cozy mystery is a familiar way to encounter the two seemingly unreconcilable realities of death and country peace at the same time,” says Sarah Allison, an associate professor of English at Loyola New Orleans who is working on a book about “escape reading.”

“The restoration of order at the end of the novel might be less significant than the way this genre makes beautiful scenery and grisly details feel like they go together naturally,” she said in an email. Such mysteries, she says, promise a messy murder and a tidy resolution, “a welcome contrast to the way we've all been suspended between life as it was before COVID and life

as it will be after.”

Kelly Vaiman, a longtime cozy fan, has tried to avoid thinking about real life this past year. First she was wary of going places due to the pandemic, then her elderly mother's health declined while in a Pennsylvania nursing home. Vaiman couldn't travel to say goodbye, and her mother died.

“After her passing, during the mourning period, I just couldn't handle the grief,” Vaiman says. “So I'd pick up a cozy mystery to take my mind off everything.”

She estimates that she reads 120 books a year. They're not all cozies, but those are what she turns to when she needs a comforting read.

Valerie Burns writes gentle murder mysteries under the pen name of V.M. Burns, and her “Mystery Bookshop” series is now six stories long. Since the pandemic began in early 2020, she's noticed that more readers are taking the time to email her about her work, seeking that human connection that's sorely missing.

Burns, who lives in Chattanooga, Tenn., is an avid cozy reader as well as a writer of them. She acknowledges the unusual nature of cozies — that they revolve around a murder, yet are also soothing to read. But, she adds, trying to solve a mystery gives a feeling of accomplishment when so much of life seems stalled.

“It's basically a puzzle, but there's that safety net in knowing there's not going to

be a whole lot of blood and guts and violence,” she says, laughing. “It's contradictory. A murder mystery with no violence. But I can pick up a cozy, and can figure out clues and try to figure out whodunit, but I don't have to live in all of the horror associated with true crime or a noir.”

Unlike big blockbuster stories that revolve around one near-superhuman character (who is usually a man), cozy series cultivate an amateur sleuth (usually a woman) and a cast of quirky secondary characters.

Readers become attached to the entire ensemble, says author Bree Baker, and consider them old friends. That's why readers love series that stretch to multiple books.

“I think we all need a place to belong, at the core of everything. We need to have our people,” Baker says.

And at a time when we can't see our own people in real life, fictional stand-ins will have to do. Solving a murder in one's mind, dreaming of the day when we can languidly enjoy a coffee and conversation with friends, knowing that what's right will prevail in the end — those are the reasons people turn to cozies. And, not coincidentally, they overlap with the ways people are coping at this moment in history.

“We have enough horror in our day-to-day lives,” Burns says. “Right now, that's all I want to do is escape. Escape into a world where justice prevails.”

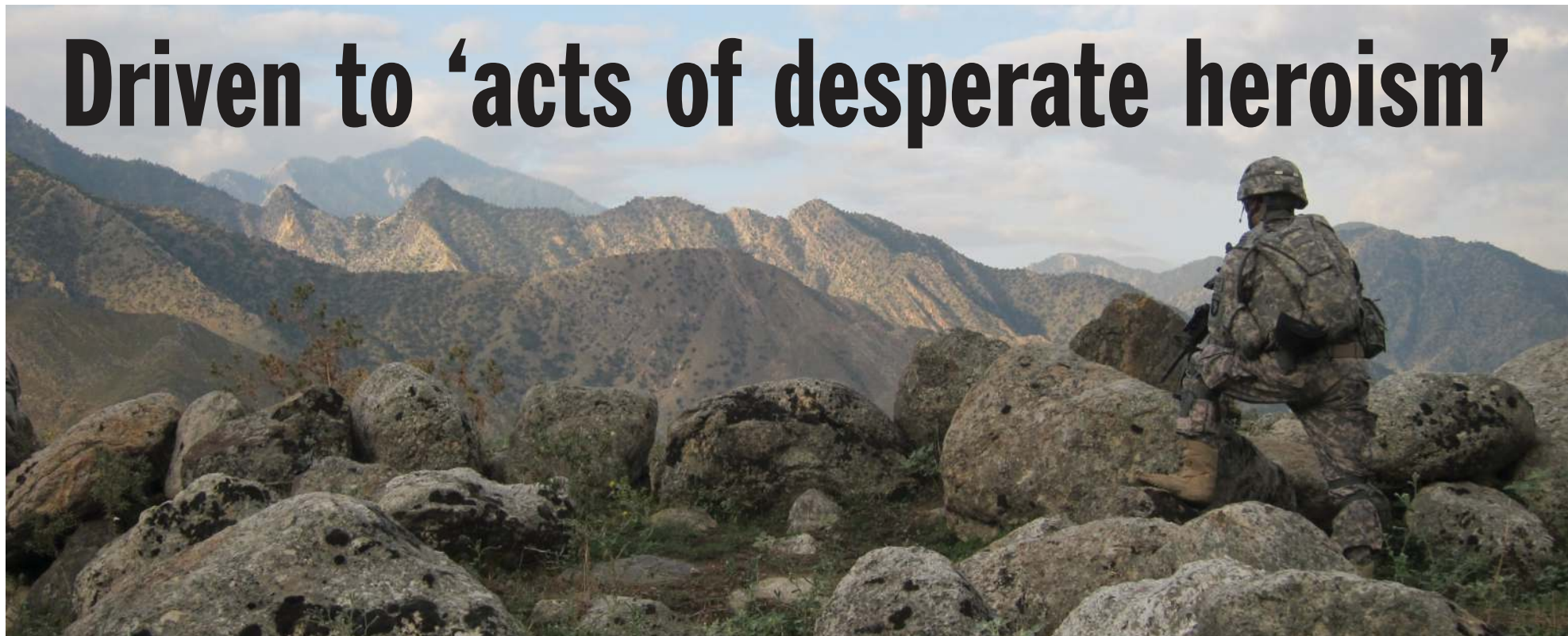


Kelly Vaiman poses for a photo Feb. 19 in her living room where she sometimes likes to sit and read in Boynton Beach, Fla. Vaiman is an avid cozy mystery reader.

WILFREDO LEE/AP

## WEEKEND: BOOKS

# Driven to 'acts of desperate heroism'



Wesley Morgan

A 101st Airborne Division soldier patrols northeastern Afghanistan's Pech Valley in 2010. The book "The Hardest Place" explores how the valley became Taliban territory.

## Military journalist explores the mistakes that led to the US losing the Pech Valley in northeastern Afghanistan

By J.P. LAWRENCE  
*Stars and Stripes*

America's deadliest infantry battle of the Afghan war began in the early hours of July 13, 2008. Taliban fighters unleashed a torrent of machine gun fire and rocket-propelled grenades at a newly built American base in the town of Wanat in northeastern Afghanistan.

The base, located in an area that had turned against the Americans, was nearly overrun. Just under 50 U.S. troops fought waves of enemies, mere feet away from them.

The battle ended with nine Americans dead and 27 wounded. The U.S. withdrew from Wanat, sometimes written as Wanat, shortly after.

The soldiers displayed courage under fire, but why had they been in such a desperate situation in the first place? That question lies at the heart of "The Hardest Place: The American Military Adrift in Afghanistan's Pech Valley," a new book by military affairs reporter Wesley Morgan on the failed U.S. counterinsurgency campaign in rugged northeastern Afghanistan.

The book focuses on the Pech River Valley, and its tributaries, the Korengal and the Waygal. Known for some of the fiercest fighting of the war, the region was the setting of the documentaries "Restrepo" and "Korengal" by filmmaker Sebastian Junger.

Morgan's book is a compendium

of failures by U.S. military officers in the Pech, leading to broken soldiers, dead civilians and a valley lost to the Taliban. He interviewed hundreds of U.S. troops and local Afghans to go beyond not just the "who" and "how" of each battle, but the often-hazy question of "why?"

For example, why had intelligence of a large, imminent attack been ignored? Why hadn't there been a drone overhead? Whose fault was it that those nine soldiers died?

A military investigation after the battle recommended two U.S. officers be criminally charged for "insufficient oversight," Morgan writes, but the decision was overturned later.

This lack of accountability repeats throughout the book, in which the U.S. seems ever eager to highlight the heroism of its fighters, while ignoring the mistakes of the officers who put them in harm's way.

"When soldiers on the ground are put into positions where they commit acts of desperate heroism, something has gone wrong," Morgan wrote.

Today, the Taliban controls much of the Pech. But when U.S. forces entered the valley almost two decades ago in search of al-Qaida operatives, locals welcomed them. When one of the Green Berets shot and killed a villager, the others understood that it was an accident and accepted their apologies.

But as U.S. troops stayed in the Pech, their mission expanded from killing al-Qaida to finding anyone connected to them, to killing Taliban, to building roads, to allying with corrupt politicians and unwittingly taking sides in local timber rivalries.

U.S. troops began launching

complicated air assault operations, which left a lot of militants dead but seldom captured anyone important. Each operation also invariably killed civilians, Morgan wrote.

Seemingly every village had stories about how the Americans killed someone dear to them. U.S. troops apologized each time. Eventually the apologies fell on deaf ears.

The book is infuriating in its repetitiveness. This is not the fault of the author, but of the U.S. military officers who kept repeating their predecessors' mistakes, and who come off as allergic to learning.

An example of this amnesia occurred after the infamous Operation Red Wings, where three Navy SEALs died, and one would almost be captured. In the movie "Lone Survivor," based on a book by one of the SEALs, Marcus Luttrell, four operators infiltrate an isolated Afghan valley in search of a close associate of Osama Bin Laden, leading to an intense firefight with more than 100 fighters.

Morgan adds additional context to Luttrell's narrative, which has been criticized for its inaccuracies.

The SEALs had most likely been discovered immediately, as they were placed in the backyard of the enemy by a helicopter that villagers said they could hear from miles away.

The lightly armed SEALs were killed by fighters numbering closer to the few dozen Luttrell described in his mission debriefing, not the 140 he had in his book, Morgan wrote.

Morgan says the fight most likely did not last as long as Luttrell described, based on how few shell casings Rangers at the scene found.

Other units who were supposed to rescue the SEALs were delayed. Another team of Navy SEALs rushed there without coordinating with a different rescue force, and without waiting for attack helicopters to clear the landing site. Their helicopter would be shot down by an RPG, leading to the deaths of all 16 aboard.

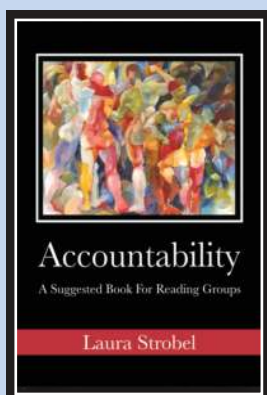
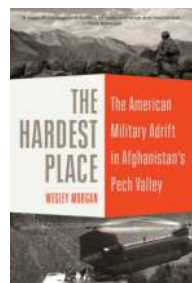
The target, who escaped, was not connected to Bin Laden, but a local thug whose reach barely extended outside his home province.

The operation's failure was the result of poor planning, overconfidence and leaders unwilling to communicate, Morgan contends. "But there was no reckoning with what had gone wrong during Red Wings," he wrote.

One SEAL who visited the battle site after Red Wings said, "There's a deep pain among the survivors, when you take a version of their story and just tell the parts that allow it to be a legendary epic about flawless heroism. When you uphold only the hero image, you deny those same heroes the ability to commit mistakes ... [creating] a distorted reality."

Morgan's book does not shy away from these mistakes. It's a sober telling that might help future military leaders who wish to avoid the kinds of failures that lost the Pech Valley.

lawrence.jp@stripes.com  
Twitter: @jplawrence3



**A Terrible Ordeal becomes an Enlightening experience with Empowering Insights!**

**International Praise and Four of Four Star review for this True Story!**

**Buy it : PRINTED AUDIO eBOOK on Amazon**

**Read or Listen to the First Chapter and her Blog at [www.LauraStrobelAuthor.com](http://www.LauraStrobelAuthor.com)**



## WEEKEND: MOVIES



APPLE TV+/AP

Spider-Man actor Tom Holland goes dark as an opioid-addicted veteran in his new film, "Cherry."

# Unmasking a superhero

## Tom Holland embraces 'darker role' of drug addict veteran turned bank robber in 'Cherry'

By PETER SBLENDORIO

New York Daily News

There's much more to Tom Holland behind the mask.

The actor, who rose to fame playing Spider-Man, embraced an entirely different type of character in the addiction drama "Cherry," which reunited him with "Avengers" directors Joe and Anthony Russo.

"Playing a much darker role was very freeing, because there were no boundaries," Holland told the Daily News.

"The sky was the limit. I was definitely nervous. I've never played a character like this before, and a lot of the emotions that I had to go through are emotions I've never experienced, and emotions I hope to never experience in my personal life. It was very daunting, but I love a challenge."

The film, now available on Apple TV+ and currently playing in select theaters, stars Holland as a wayward Army veteran named Cherry who develops a PTSD-fueled opioid addiction and resorts to robbing banks to afford drugs for himself and his wife, Emily, played by Ciara Bravo.

The British actor, 24, immersed himself in the role by meeting with veterans and people who had suffered from addiction and PTSD.

"When you're telling a story that represents millions of people around the world, you have a certain level of responsibility to do justice to those people and those characters," Holland said. "For me, it all boiled down to doing as much research as possible."

The Russo Brothers were finishing up 2019's "Avengers: Endgame" — their third Marvel movie with Holland — when they were introduced to the semi-autobiographical novel by Nico Walker that inspired the new film.

Holland was their choice to star in "Cherry" because of his "incredible range" and "commitment," Joe Russo explained.

"He has a charisma that you can't create, you can't coach into somebody, you can't direct," Joe Russo told The News. "He just has this energy that makes you want to follow him, and more important-

ly, root for him."

To illustrate the toll drugs can take, Holland lost about 30 pounds for the role, sticking to a diet of 500 calories a day. He quickly put the weight back on to shoot different scenes, then dropped it again toward the end of production.

"I knew what heroin was and I knew the effects it had on people, but I didn't know quite how substantial this problem was," Holland said.

"I was unaware that the support system for veterans was so poor. They train these civilians to be killers, but they don't train the killers to be civilians again. It was really interesting to hear people's different stories. They'd all been through a very, very similar process, which was so sad to hear. I really hope that this film will shed the light on a problem that is invisible."

Holland describes Cherry as a person who "tries his best and can't seem to catch a break" and finds purpose through his relationship with Emily.

"It's important to remember that these characters are very young," Bravo, 23, told The News. "They're being backed into a corner and forced to make these very adult decisions before being given a chance to really learn about the world."

The film begins with Cherry in college, follows him during his tour of duty in Iraq after 9/11, and shows his struggles after returning home to Ohio.

The release of "Cherry" comes during a busy year for Holland, who has the sci-fi thriller "Chaos Walking" now in theaters and "Spider-Man: No Way Home" out this December.

He's excited for audiences to see a different side of him.

"It's something I've been trying to do for a long time. Even since I've been Spider-Man, I've been working with different directors, people that I really look up to, playing characters where I think they're big departures from myself," Holland said.

"Cherry" would be the first time that it's had a lot of coverage, with the Russos, and it's a story about an American veteran, so lots of people are going to be interested in that. It's the first time I've really done it on the big stage."

## 'Cherry' is a bomb that misses the mark

By MARK KENNEDY

Associated Press

Tom Holland has bravely stripped off his Spider-Man costume to play a gritty, heroin-addicted veteran in the new movie "Cherry," looking in no way like a superhero. Unfortunately, no one told the filmmakers.

"Cherry" has an identity problem, and that may be because directing duties have been handed to Anthony and Joe Russo, best known for directing films in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, including two Captain America films as well as "Avengers: Infinity War" and "Avengers: Endgame."

That means the brothers who gave us such universe-changing events as the Thanos snap are telling one Cleveland man's story of heartbreak, aimlessness, soldiering, addiction, robbery and incarceration. And yet they haven't changed the way they make films.

Overly long, bombastic and poorly focused, "Cherry" is based on a semi-autobiographical 2018 novel by Nico Walker, a decorated U.S. Army veteran who served time in prison for turning to bank robbery to feed his addiction.

Holland should get credit for giving his all in a harrowing role, complete with navigating the terrors of war, PTSD afterward, drug-addled semi-consciousness, lesions on his haggard face due to heroin and bank-robbing swagger.

But it's largely wasted as the Russo brothers add gimmick after gimmick — slo-mo, writing "AARGHH" in red letters, magical realism, aerial pan shots, stolen techniques from Martin Scorsese and Wes Anderson, the use of classical music or opera to goose the drama level, saturated colors, breaking the fourth wall by having Cherry talk directly to the camera and inconsistent embrace of the ridiculous.

This story really needed an unflashy, unflinching hand that

connected all the various parts of a life into a coherent profile. Instead, the directors opted for look-at-me filmmaking. They turned a book into a comic.

It's not even overly clear what this movie is saying. Is it about the long-term costs of deploying our military? The depravity of addiction? The redemptive power of love? An indictment of the American penal system? Or late-stage capitalism? Or lack of veteran medical care? Maybe just pick your friends with caution? Say something, anything.

Holland's character — he is unnamed throughout, but is told at one point in Iraq that "you got your cherry popped today" so becomes Cherry — goes through several chapters in the film and his relationship with Emily (a supremely excellent Ciara Bravo) emerges as the spine. They meet, fall in love, fight, get separated while he goes to Iraq and fall into addiction when he returns. It likely will not end well: "Sometimes I feel like I've already seen everything that's going to happen. And it's a nightmare," Cherry says.

Part Three — in Iraq — plays to the filmmakers' strengths. As anyone who has seen them direct an Avengers movie, the Russos know violence, and the chaotic war scenes of dusty explosions, fiery vehicles and the whistle of bullets are first-rate. Fellow soldiers are callous and sadistic. "Everything there was about dying," Cherry says.

The epilogue is perhaps the best part of the film — a wordless montage covering Cherry's 14 years in prison, a seemingly endless loop that echoes the rhythm of the years he spent in the Army. When he emerges, will Emily be there? Is she even alive? And, more importantly, is there anyone out there still watching?

"Cherry" is rated R for graphic drug abuse, disturbing and violent images, pervasive language and sexual content. Running time: 141 minutes. Now streaming on Apple TV+.



APPLE TV+/AP

Tom Holland plays a opioid-addicted veteran in a scene from "Cherry," now streaming on Apple TV+.

## WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

# Saying 'no' not allowed

Parents give into kids' wishes for 24 hours in the predictable, family-friendly 'Yes Day'

BY JAKE COYLE  
Associated Press

**L**ike an innocuous kid version of "The Purge," Miguel Arteta's "Yes Day" imagines an annual 24-hour holiday of lawlessness.

The concept comes from Amy Krouse Rosenthal's 2009 picture book, which suggested a day when parents — regularly such fonts of "No!" — have to answer in the positive to their children's demands. For some, the idea had real appeal, not just for giving kids a shot at decision-making freedom but for momentarily relieving parents of the burden of constant disapproval.

One parent, in particular, took to "Yes Day": Jennifer Garner. The actress has previously spoken on social media about holding the holiday with her three children. And she's a producer of the film, which is now available on Netflix.

"No is part of the job," narrates Allison Torres (Garner) in the film's opening scenes. But so stern is Allison — the bad cop next to her more easygoing husband Carlos (Edgar Ramirez) — that her three children's school

projects suggest a dictatorship in need of a coup. One makes a video comparing her to Stalin and Mussolini.

When a guidance counselor (Nat Faxon) suggests "Yes Day" as a remedy, Allison goes along, with a few stipulations. You can't break laws, and you've got to stay within 20 miles of home. This leads to a day of wall-to-wall fun, with bed-jumping, ice-cream feasts, a car wash trip with the windows down and a surprise theme-park visit. The day tests both Allison's helicopter parenting impulses and the kids' own desire for independence. That's especially true for 14-year-old Katie (Jenna Ortega, an impressively poised young actor), who wants to attend a concert without her mom.

It's all lightly predictable as the family works out a level of comfort that isn't all yes or entirely no. There's something to be said for lower-stakes family films, a genre that has increasingly aped the world-ending scale of superhero films. (One pandemic discovery for my family was 1974's "Swallows and Amazons," a charming British film about kids just playing on a



NETFLIX/AP photos

**Everly Carganilla and Julian Lerner play two of the lucky children in "Yes Day," in which the kids request, among other things, that their parents take them through a car wash, car windows rolled down.**

lake. On their own, they're plenty capable of making their own tents and adventures.)

"Yes Day" isn't nearly so sweet. Arteta ("The Good Girl," "Cedar Rapids") has an underrated ability at crafting comic, humanistic movies out of commercial concepts. But "Yes Day" slides too often into contrived, loudly scored montages of "fun" that don't transfer to those of us watching. And while Garner and Ramirez are both very fine actors, neither of them is funny. Not to be negative on "Yes Day," but it would be a lot better if, say, Will Ferrell and Maya Rudolph played the parents. (Though what movie wouldn't be improved with that casting?) The film's best moments come courtesy of Faxon and the very funny Arturo Castro, the "Broad City"



**Julian Lerner, left, and Jenna Ortega in a scene from "Yes Day."**

actor who makes every scene he's in better. Here he plays a hapless and needy police officer.

Of course, after a pandemic year that has ruled out so much for kids, "Yes Day" may be a welcome reprieve for them. My

kids, naturally, loved the idea and will probably take me to task for saying anything but "Yes" to "Yes Day."

"Yes Day" is rated PG for some rude and suggestive material, and brief language. Running time: 86 minutes. Now streaming on Netflix.

## Like a dream, lo-fi 'Come True' hard to resist

BY LINDSEY BAHR  
Associated Press

The murky and illogical territory of dreams and nightmares has always provided fertile ground for filmmakers. Not only can your imagination run wild on screen, but there's even less of an expectation that it make any sense in the end. How could a creative soul resist?

In "Come True," a lo-fi indie from director Anthony Scott Burns, the nightmare is always the same for a runaway teen, Sarah (Julia Sarah Stone), who sleeps on a playground slide and guzzles coffee to stay awake as long as she can. When you see the muscular, shadowy figure with the glowing eyes that looms in her dreams, you'll start to understand why she has a perpetually haunted and twitchy demeanor. Sleep is not peace for Sarah, and she's starting to crack.

So when she spots a flyer at the local coffee shop for a university sleep study that pays, she heads right there. It seems like business as usual, with a peppy research assistant and a few repeat subjects coming back for more monitored sleep. But she soon discovers that it's a little more experimental than she thought and possibly even sinister. They're not just studying sleep. They're mapping the dreams. Cue the "Inception" music.

With David Cronenberg overtones, "Come True" is a slow-burn experience that also feels very independent.



IFC FILMS/AP

**Julia Sarah Stone appears in a scene from "Come True," a film by Anthony Scott Burns about a young woman (Stone) who participates in a sleep study with the hope of getting relief from her recurrent nightmares. But the researchers aren't just studying her sleep.**

The cast is scarcely recognizable, and the film was made with a slim crew. Burns not only wrote and directed, but also shot the film and helped compose the moody, synth-y score. It's why it feels so much like a singular vision,

which in this case has pros and cons. The film is a striking exercise in tone and builds to a few terrific crescendos that will surely leave viewers with some goosebumps.

Burns is not an impatient filmmaker, and the steady hand pays off. Burns has an affinity for deserted hallways, nighttime vistas and distorted video screens. Stone, too, is excellent in a difficult and taxing role. She fills the frame with nervous and vulnerable energy.

The story itself and the dialogue leave something to be desired, however. It's a smart film, certainly, but maybe not as smart as it wants to be. And there are a couple of clunkers that bring the mostly meditative experience to a halt.

Then there's a subplot with a researcher (Landon Liboiron) who develops a crush on his teenage subject that just feels far too icky for a modern movie. That she is technically 18 does not make it better. The end, too, is oddly specific and gimmicky for a film that has thus far basked in its own vagueness. And it might leave you incredulously asking "What?" a la Oprah during last weekend's Meghan and Harry interview.

But for as frustrating as it sometimes is, "Come True" is hard to resist, not unlike a dream itself.

"Come True" has not been rated. It contains disturbing images. Running time: 105 minutes. In theaters and on demand.

## WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

# Marking time in a memorable way

COVID-19 has changed the way life's milestone events are celebrated, leaving many wondering whether those changes will have lasting impact

By LEANNE ITALIE  
Associated Press

**W**edding anniversaries for Elizabeth O'Connor Cole and her husband, Michael, usually involve a dinner reservation for two at a fancy restaurant. Not this time around.

As the pandemic raged last May, the Chicago mom of four unearthed her boxed wedding gown from 19 years ago, got it zipped with help from one of her daughters and surprised her spouse.

Cole re-created their reception menu — a shrimp appetizer and beef tenderloin — and pulled out her wedding china and silver after enlisting another of her kids to DJ their first-dance song, "At Last," for a romantic turn around the living room. And the priest who married them offered a special blessing on Zoom with friends and family joining in.

"Spontaneous and a bit chaotic," O'Connor Cole pronounced the celebration. "Still, it was probably the most meaningful and fun anniversary we've had."

As the pandemic enters its second year, there's a pent-up longing for the recent past, especially when it comes to life's milestones. When the crisis finally resolves, will our new ways of marking births and deaths, weddings and anniversaries have any lasting impact? Or will freshly felt sentiments born of pandemic invention be fleeting?

Some predict their pandemic celebrations have set a new course. Others still mourn the way their traditions used to be.

Milestones, rituals and traditions help set the rhythm of our lives, from the annuals like birthdays and anniversaries to the one-timers like births and deaths, extending beyond those boundaries to more casual events like opening day (choose your sport), drinks out after work with colleagues and that first swim of summer.

Jennifer Talarico, a psychology professor at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania who studies memory and personal experience, says certain events shape lives differently — and have been reshaped just as differently during the pandemic. Perhaps most devastatingly impacted, she says, are death and dying, sitting at bedsides to comfort and attending funerals to mourn as the coronavirus has killed more than 2.3 million people around the world.

"That's being felt the hardest because it's the hardest to replace," Talarico says. "That's probably going to have the most lasting impact."

Renee Fry knows the feeling well. Her grandmother, Regina Connelly, died Dec. 6 of COVID-19 at her nursing home in Hollidaysburg, Pa. She had just turned 98. There was no dropping everything to be at her bedside. There was no large church celebration of her life followed by dinner for all.

"We had to rely on video conferencing," Fry says.

But they also did something else. She and her sister, Julie Fry, put together a "memory book" shared with far-flung family and friends. They included



PHOTOS FROM ELIZABETH COLE AND JESSICA TAMPAS PHOTOGRAPHY/AP

**Left, Elizabeth Cole wears her wedding gown May 26, 2020, with her dog Holly at her home in Lake Geneva, Wis. At right, Cole dons the same gown with her dog McGee on her wedding day, May 26, 2001. To celebrate her anniversary, Cole surprised her spouse by putting on her wedding gown from 19 years ago, re-created their reception menu and enlisted one of her four kids to DJ their first-dance song. And the priest who married them offered a special blessing on Zoom with friends and family joining in.**

Regina's favorite prayer, the Hail Mary, and asked loved ones to recite it on her behalf. They filled pages with photos through the years, from a portrait of young Regina in a fine red dress (lipstick to match, gold pendant around her neck) to more casual shots with grandchildren.

The sisters — Renee in Quincy, Mass., and Julie in Port Matilda, Pa. — wrote the story of how Regina met her husband on a blind date, then lost him when he died in 2010 after 64 years of marriage. They wrote of how she spent most of her teen years caring for her two brothers after their mother died suddenly when she was 13. They included rosaries with each of the 32 booklets they mailed.

Judging from the response — a second cousin called to say thank you, and a caregiver for Regina wrote a two-page letter offering thanks as well — it made an impact.

"It was incredibly meaningful," Renee says.

Such a booklet will be created when the family faces death once again. The pandemic, Fry says, has proven that distance no longer denies lasting meaning.

Daryl Van Tongeren, an associate professor of psychology at Hope College in Michigan, studies meaning in life, religion and virtues. Rituals, symbols and milestones help provide structure to our worlds, he says, demarcating the passage of time or a significant accomplishment but more importantly lending meaning to life itself.

"One of the things that these milestones and these rituals do is

they connect us with other people and things that are larger than ourselves," he says.

Sometimes left behind in a swirl of celebration is the core significance of something just as important — the events themselves. Students who missed out on the walk across the stage at their graduations remain graduates. Couples forced to elope or give up their dreams of weddings for 200 for smaller affairs still have their marriages to experience.

While some predict a Roaring '20s renaissance once the crisis has ended, "there are going to be a number of people who are changed," Van Tongeren says. "They're going to say, 'I'm going to emerge from this pandemic with a new set of values and I'm going to live my life according to new priorities.'"

Last year, Shivaune Field celebrated her 40th birthday on Jan. 11 with a group of friends at a downtown restaurant in Los Angeles, where she lives. It was just weeks before the coronavirus made its way to the U.S. This year, when she turned 41, the adjunct professor in business at Pepperdine University simply took to the beach with her pals.

"It felt much more authentic; a nicer way to connect without all the bells and whistles," she says. "I think it's really nice to get back to that. It reminds me of childhood."

Field grew up in Melbourne, Australia, where she says her parents kept birthdays rooted in family outings to the beach or bike rides followed by a treat of ice cream.

"Weekend get-togethers are now in sneakers with dogs sitting on grass and picnic rugs rather than on stools in fancy restaurants," she says. And Field is just fine with that.

Marking time has changed during the pandemic. There's the ticking off of months based on trips to the hair salon and the length of pandemic beards. There's Zoom creativity and socially distanced trips outdoors. Re-creating celebrations of the past for major, time-marking events has been difficult as time blurred and safety restrictions took over.

"We have all of this cultural baggage, in a good way, around those events," Talarico says. "It's a reinforcing cycle of events that we expect to be memorable."

Memorable has been hard to achieve. But the rethink has been important for many, and its effects may ripple long after the virus has ebbed.

"For those wanting to reminisce years later about important events that happened during the pandemic, there will likely be nostalgia mixed with more than a tinge of trauma," says Wilfred van Gorp, a past president of the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology.

"It may remind us of the loneliness and isolation brought about by the pandemic, our fear of catching the virus, fear of dying, fear of losing loved ones and loss of any we knew who may have died from COVID-19," he says. "And recollections of what we didn't have, what we missed, and the experiences we couldn't share together."



GERALD W BRUNSKILL/AP

**Last January, Shivaune Field celebrated her birthday with a small group of friends at a downtown restaurant in Los Angeles. This January, when she turned 41, she (center) went to Carbon Beach in Malibu, Calif., with her pals.**

## WEEKEND: TELEVISION

## NEW ON DVD

**“Promising Young Woman”:** Carey Mulligan gives a memorable performance in this daring rape-revenge fantasy, the directorial debut from Emerald Fennell, an English actress and showrunner on “Killing Eve’s” second season.

Mulligan is Cassie, a medical school dropout turned coffee shop clerk who spends her nights in bars looking for men to take her home. In smeared makeup and too-tall heels, with a convincing head loll, she seems drunk and helpless, going along with their coercions before dropping the act and enacting her revenge, Tribune News Service critic Katie Walsh wrote in her review.

“Fennell’s film isn’t all that gory, but it has the attitude and tone of a horror movie, rendered in cupcake colors. Cassie utilizes her ultra-feminine presentation of long blonde locks, florals and garish makeup as armor, a disguise, and as a weapon in her war,” she wrote.

“It’s a reflection of the film’s internal logic that nothing is what it seems: The script is built on constant reveals that walk the viewer down one path before ripping the rug out.”

Also available on DVD:

**“Brothers by Blood”:** Set in the City of Brotherly Love, this crime drama depicts the violent world of Philadelphia organized crime. Stars Matthias Schoenaerts, Joel Kinnaman and Maika Monroe.

**“Des”:** David Tennant portrays Scottish serial killer Dennis Nilson, arrested in 1983, in this three-part TV miniseries.

**“Don’t Tell a Soul”:** Fionn Whitehead and Jack Dylan Grazer are teen brothers who steal money to help their ill mother, played by Mena Suvari, while engaging with Rainn Wilson’s security guard character.

**“Money Plane”:** This heist thriller finds a debt-ridden thief needing to do one final job, complete with a team of the world’s most dangerous criminals. Stars Adam Copeland, Kelsey Grammer, Thomas Jane.

**“PG: Psycho Goreman”:** Nita-Josee Hanna and Owen Myre are siblings who find a gem that lets them control an ancient monster, attracting all sorts of unwanted attention to their small town.

**“Sheep and Wolves: Pig Deal”:** The sheep and wolves enjoy a peaceful existence in this Russian-language animated film, that is until two unexpected guests come along.

**“Songbird”:** Inspired by the health crisis of the past year, this Michael Bay-produced film set in 2024 follows a handful of characters amid a global pandemic. Stars K.J. Apa, Sofia Carson and Craig Robinson.

— Tribune News Service



CW photos

Tyler Hoechlin stars as Superman in “Superman & Lois,” a series that focuses on the couple as they try to save the world while raising kids.

# Parents first, heroes second

In a new CW series, Clark Kent and Lois Lane realize they need to prioritize their teens

BY KATE FELDMAN  
New York Daily News

**W**hat do two teenage boys call the world’s greatest hero and the world’s greatest journalist?

Mom and Dad.

The CW’s newest superhero show, “Superman & Lois,” which airs Sundays on AFN-Spectrum, asks just how much parenthood has changed the Metropolis couple, if at all.

For Elizabeth Tulloch, Lois Lane to Tyler Hoechlin’s Superman, the failures are often more interesting than the successes.

“Part of what makes them interesting is we’ve seen a lot of versions of them where they’re perfect,” the 40-year-old actress told the Daily News. “Now you’re seeing them failing and struggling and messing up.”

Lois and Clark are far from the perfect parents of twin boys that they would like to be. One twin, Jonathan (Jordan Elsass), has grown into a jock who relentlessly picks on his anxiety-riddled brother Jordan (Alexander Garfin). While Jonathan has risen to high school fame and glory, Jordan has receded in the shadows as a bystander.

Thinking they were protecting their children, Lois and Clark have chosen not to reveal Dad’s night job — reaching for an ever-ready lie when he misses Jor-



Alexander Garfin, left, stars as Jordan Kent and Jordan Elsass as Jonathan Kent — the twin sons of Superman and Lois Lane (Bitsie Tulloch, right) — in “Superman & Lois.”

dan’s therapy or Jonathan’s game. It becomes untenable.

“What’s setting our show apart is there’s so much emphasis on the family and the foursome,” Tulloch told The News. “They’re hiding their secrets from the boys, then the boys have to hide their secret from other people. We’re not just focusing on the romance of Lois and Clark. They know they need to prioritize their sons.”

The show, the seventh series to join the CW’s Arrowverse, propels Lois and Clark into their futures, past the awkward flirtations in the newsroom and joy of

new love. They have now settled into patterns, and superpowers are painted as a fun fact for the couple rather than the basis for a relationship.

At home, it’s Clark and Lois.

“Even though Superman is Superman, she is his equal,” Tulloch said. “They’re built on a foundation of mutual respect and admiration.”

“Superman & Lois” — and the Kents — move to Smallville, a once-idyllic hometown that has crumbled under a growing meth problem and disappearing factory work. Morgan Edge, the union-busting hedge fund owner

who just bought the Daily Planet, has promised to rebuild the town and bring in hundreds of jobs.

Lois isn’t so sure.

“She initially assumes everyone is going to see her side of things, but they view her as an outsider who doesn’t understand their struggles,” Tulloch told The News. “They say, ‘we just need work. We need to put food on the table. We don’t care if the person is corrupt or evil.’”

Figuring out how to relate to Smallville is part of Lois’ learning curve — because even when she faces opposition, she knows she’s right.

“This is Lois Lane. She wants to save the world with words,” Tulloch said. “What could be more hopeful than believing that all the world needs to change is to hear the truth?”

That’s the point of “Superman & Lois”: hope. Not just the crest on Superman’s chest, but the idea that things can get better if people try to make them better.

“People need hope and they need Superman, but they need to be able to relate to him a bit more. Superman does the right thing because it’s the right thing. He could use his powers for evil, and he’s choosing not to. If he wasn’t Superman, if he was just Clark Kent, he would still be good,” Tulloch told The News. “You don’t need to have powers or be crazy strong to be good.”

## WEEKEND: HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Quelling the green-eyed vaccine monster

The wait to get vaccinated for COVID-19 is long for some, but these strategies can help ward off vaccine envy

BY ANGELA HAUPT  
The Washington Post

The coronavirus vaccine rollout has been chaotic and confusing in many places, leaving some elderly residents and front-line workers unprotected, while those further down the priority list have been able to obtain shots. That's leading to a new affliction: vaccine envy.

"Somebody's got to be the first to say it," said Aaron Foley, 36, a writer in New York. He grew up in Detroit, where he says the rollout is going well, and every time he opens Facebook, he sees another vaccine selfie from family and friends still there.

"There's starting to be a lot of people in my orbit, one by one, who are getting their first dose," Foley said. "I think the envy might come from everybody takes the picture of them either getting the shot or posting the little vaccine card" on social media sites. "It's getting to be more and more of an endurance race. The frustrating part is we're so close, yet so far away."

Michele Parisi, 52, who works in health care communications in the San Francisco Bay area, likens the wait to standing in line for concert tickets: "And you're like, OK, it's a two-hour line, but I'm happy to wait, as long as it's orderly and we're going in turn. But when I see people jumping the line, I start getting really anxious and upset. And that's how I'm starting to feel about vaccines."

Who gets vaccinated first varies from state to state, but in most parts of the country, health officials are still focused on vaccinating front-line essential workers, those in long-term care facilities and people ages 75 and over, as well as those with certain preexisting conditions. A potentially long wait — paired with news stories about real and perceived inequities in delivery — has spawned armies of green-eyed monsters. Debates about vaccine access are dripping with tension: Former basketball star Charles Barkley, for example, recently said NBA players "deserve some preferential treatment" in getting vaccinated because they pay high taxes.

It's not surprising that vaccine envy is rising, said Ash Nadkarni, an associate psychiatrist and an instructor at Harvard Medical School. The pandemic has fueled anxiety, depression, loneliness and uncertainty, all of which can feed into envy.

"The fear early on was expansive," she said. "For a lot of people, that settled into the doldrums of every day being like 'Ground-



iStock

Everyone is anxious to get one of the few COVID-19 vaccines currently available.

hog Day' — and an inability to have a sense of freedom or control over their lives. Now, it seems like a panacea is available to all of us, and I think a lot of people feel a great deal of urgency around obtaining that. They finally see an opportunity to regain a sense of control."

Wanting something that others have is "one of the most painful feelings of the human psyche," said Eric Zillmer, a neuropsychology professor at Drexel University. "We all want the vaccine, and it seems accessible; it's not like a villa in Beverly Hills. But envy is like a weed. It starts growing, and if you don't prune it, it will cover the entire tree."

Here are strategies that can help stave off vaccine envy — or at least make living with it more tolerable.

## Be honest with yourself

"Don't pretend you don't feel this," said Susan Whitbourne, a professor emerita of psychological and brain sciences at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. "And don't get mad at yourself for feeling this way. People say, 'I'm a terrible person. I resent the fact that Grandma got vaccinated.' You're not a terrible person."

Brushing off envy, or burying it instead of acknowledging it,

isn't helpful, she said. The only way to fight envy is to be emotionally honest with yourself about what you're feeling and why.

## Reframe the situation

Envy causes a certain blindness, Zillmer said.

Instead of focusing on how the rollout affects you, consider the bigger picture: "If everybody gets vaccinated, it actually helps us, right? We forget about that; we're just thinking about ourselves. But this entire process of vaccination only works if everybody gets vaccinated," he said, referencing herd immunity, the concept that a disease is less likely to spread when enough of the population has become immune to it through previous infection or vaccination. "So, the fact that people are getting needles into their arms means it's going to be a healthier place for us to be around."

## Focus on your own health

If waiting to get vaccinated makes you anxious, channel that anxiety into staying healthy. That includes eating well, exercising, wearing a mask and practicing social distancing.

"Because ultimately, we're still going to need those," Whitbourne said. "The problem is if people

think, 'Oh, the vaccine is here! I can throw all these behaviors away.'"

Acknowledging that the vaccine is not a pass to engage in all the activities you miss can help keep envy in check.

## Practice mudita, a form of Buddhist meditation

This is about learning to relish other people's well-being, Nadkarni said.

"The idea is to cultivate an appreciative joy at the success and fortune of others," she said. "Joy isn't zero-sum. Because somebody else's joy goes up doesn't mean yours should go down. It's more that there's a sense of infinite joy that could be available to everybody, regardless of the circumstances."

## Try emotional brain training

Laurel Mellin, a health psychologist at the University of California at San Francisco, attributes vaccine envy to "stress overload." One way to ease that stress and break free of unhelpful thoughts, she said, is a method she developed called emotional brain training.

The first step is to let loose and unleash negative emotions: "Say,

'I feel angry that I can't get the vaccine. I can't stand it. It's so unfair, I hate it, I hate it, I hate it,'" Mellin suggested.

Then, move on to expressing other feelings, such as what you're sad about and what you fear.

Finally, give voice to a couple of positive emotions. For example: "I feel grateful that I'm alive, I feel happy there's a vaccine, and I feel secure that someday I'll get it," Mellin said.

Repeating this process can help quash envious feelings, making room for more positive ones, such as gratitude that vaccines were developed so quickly.

## Get informed

Do research online or talk with your doctor to better understand when it might be your turn to get vaccinated. As Nadkarni points out, it's easier to cope with an unknown when there's a specific time frame to focus on, even if it's far off.

## Spring into action

It takes 7½ minutes for Zillmer's water to start boiling on the stove. He knows because he counted as the minutes crept by.

"It's the longest 7½ minutes if I just watch it," he said, and that holds true for most things we're anticipating.

Instead of sitting and stewing while you await your turn to get vaccinated, use the time productively: Sign up for waiting lists at hospitals or pharmacies, or help older friends and family members get in line.

"That way, you're not really waiting. You're trying to solve a problem," Zillmer said. "You're also flipping the script. You're not a victim; you're initiating."

## Reflect on what will make you proud in the future

Parisi, the San Francisco mom struggling to stave off vaccine envy, said her mind has darted to uncomfortable scenarios: Is there a back-alley way to secure vaccinations for her family? What if she got a call from a hospital saying it had an extra dose of a vaccine; would she take it, even if she knew someone else might need it more?

Her family's ethos throughout the pandemic has been to do what they consider the right thing: not spending the holidays with relatives, for example, to keep socially distant.

"In two years, hopefully this will be behind us, and I won't look back and go: 'Oh, God, I'm kind of ashamed of how I behaved,'" she said. "I want to look back and say: 'I'm really proud of the way our family did what we should have done.'"

## WEEKEND: FAMILY



iStock

Organizing a virtual club for arts and crafts, foreign languages or another subject could be a good way for friends missing out on extracurricular activities to spend time together.

# Less talking, more doing

Parent shares ideas for virtual activities friends can do together while apart

BY KRISTEN CHASE  
For The Washington Post

A few weeks ago, I realized that it had been a while since I dodged my 12-year-old daughter's regular routine of walking through my bedroom while on FaceTime with her best friends. After a year of this, they probably all think I live in my bathrobe.

When I asked her how her friends were doing, she shrugged and told me the words I thought I'd never hear: "I'm kinda tired of talking to them," she mumbled, moping back up to her room to read yet another Harry Potter fan fiction.

I started to chase after her, worried that she needed some sort of intervention involving ice cream and a High School Musical marathon, when I realized she might not actually be tired of talking to them. Rather, she might just be tired of talking to them ... on screens.

Sheryl Ziegler, psychologist and author of the book "Mommy Burnout," says it makes sense: "It's not really until you're an adult that the center point of your social relationships is just talking. Kids play and engage in activities together, then laugh and talk about what they did. These days, they don't have those shared experiences, so it's important to create those opportunities for them when possible."

For many kids, after being home from school for almost a full year, the combination of both learning and socializing online is causing fatigue. Breshaun Joyner, an eighth-grade English teacher at Santa Fe Preparatory School in New Mexico and the mom of a 16-year-old son, agrees.

"At first, online school was novel, and therefore, in some ways, more tolerable. Then it got old, and now,

it's reaching untenable," she says. She has seen kids go from working at desks and tables to lying in bed and hiding in their cinched-up hoodies.

We all know that socializing in person would make kids a lot happier, which is what Joyner is seeing, in small doses, as her students and teenage son transition from a fully online schedule to a hybrid model. For children who don't have that option, she believes that "giving kids truly social time on screens can be a close second."

With that in mind, I decided that instead of popping my daughter's weight in microwave popcorn and cueing up a very adorable Zac Efron circa 2006, I'd offer some creative ways that she could safely see her friends on screens — beyond their omnipresence in my house while on FaceTime.

## Stream a movie together

Watching a show or movie together is a wonderful shared experience that will give kids plenty to process and talk about well after it's over. Your kids may already be watching movies with friends in different homes by video chatting and starting the same movie at the same time, then hitting mute on their phones.

But several streaming services have created their own watch-party features, making the experience way more fun — and more like an actual movie night. Teleparty, formerly Netflix Party, syncs the playback for shows or movies on Hulu, Netflix and HBO, as well as Disney+ (though it has GroupWatch, its own version of this feature), so everyone gets to watch at the same time. Then, they can start a private chat room to gab about what's playing or anything else they'd like to

talk about, all while getting a break from their phones.

## Create a daily podcast

Kids are really missing all those small social moments, such as greeting each other in the hallway or hanging out in front of their lockers. You can help them re-create a bit of that with Cappuccino, an app that lets them create a group podcast that gets sent to all the contributors the following morning at 7 a.m. It's like group chats, but without the 40,000 distracting notifications. Plus, they get to hear their friends' voices.

During the day, kids can share audio clips on the app, which then get mixed together with background music and turned into a "podcast." It's such a clever way for kids to keep up with their friends and share parts of their day without the constant ping of chat notifications.

## Host a virtual club

Although a club definitely has a more formal ring to it than calling a friend to video chat, a scheduled meeting for kids who have lost out on many of their previous extracurriculars might not be such a bad idea, especially for high school students who might need activities on their college applications.

You could do something more formal, such as a foreign language or science club, or go the dance party or crafts route. This is also a chance to tap into the services of dancers, artists and other performers who may be looking for paid opportunities, given the bleakness of their industries right now.

Whatever you decide, try to make it a regular occurrence, so your kids have something to look forward to every week.

## THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



# Never too busy for milspouse bonding

One would think that military spouses are busy enough, managing homes, children, jobs, pets, in-laws, bills, school, and other endless details, often while their active-duty partners are away. In fact, it would make sense if they turned away from added pressures, withdrew from obligations and isolated themselves altogether to maintain control.

However, no matter how many plates military spouses spin in the air, they're always game to add one more.

One weeknight about 27 years ago, I was a new Navy wife, living in Army housing on Fort Ord in California. Although our military marriage was simple without kids, a mortgage, sea duty or complicated taxes, I kept myself busy working as a research attorney for a local law firm. But, when my friend Karen suggested that we go to her neighbor's Tupperware party on post, did I decline? Choosing instead to relax at home after a long day at work?

Hell no. I jumped at the chance like a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs.

Now, mind you, I wasn't the Tupperware Party type. I remembered my mother bringing home burping bowls from one such party in the 1970s. I never pictured myself, a young litigation attorney, seeking that kind of entertainment.

But there I was, crammed with a dozen other military wives in cramped Army quarters, nibbling deviled eggs and cheese dip, watching our host demonstrate Micro Steamers and Modular Mates. The wide-eyed, goofy grin on my face was clear indication that, despite not being "the Tupperware party type," I was happier than a pigeon with a french fry to be with my fellow milspouses.

Captivated by one wife's riveting testimonial about her "timeless" Meat Marinator, I was hooked. I ordered a Freezer Mates starter set (which I still use) and won a door prize — a yellow plastic corn cob butterer with a built-in salt shaker (which we eventually gave to Salvation Army, unused).

During the tours of duty that followed, I had more babies and got much busier, but I always sought out fellow military spouses, even if it meant buying products I didn't need, playing ridiculous games, taking on tedious volunteer responsibilities or adopting hobbies in which I had no interest.

Even after our 3-year-old son was diagnosed with developmental delays — requiring me to do daily home therapy and attend multiple weekly speech and occupational therapy appointments while caring for our infant daughter — I needed the company of other spouses even more. During deployments, I learned that the best way to keep myself together was to meet up with military wives as often as possible.

Despite my sausage fingers and medieval hand stitch, I took up quilting with Army wives. While overseas, I went on countless military spouse shopping trips for antiques, Polish pottery, French linens, Italian leather, Belgian antiques, Czech crystal, Swiss Army blanket bags, Bavarian carved wood, cheese, wine, beer, chocolate — you name it, we used it as an excuse to go shopping together and buy it. I volunteered to be Parliamentarian of the Spouses' Club, just so I wouldn't be left out of Crystal Bingo. I committed to three ... or was it four? ... Bunco groups, joined book clubs, took sailing lessons on base, competed in a wives' base bowling league, golfed on military courses, hung out at the base dog park, and attended every home sales party.

No matter how busy we are, military spouses will always create excuses to get together. Why? Companionship? Understanding? Fun? Distraction? Avoidance? Therapy?

The reasons may be complicated, but being in the presence of fellow spouses reveals one simple, but sometimes hidden, truth about why we volunteer for this crazy military life in the first place:

Because you are never alone.

Read more at [themeatandpotatoesoflife.com](http://themeatandpotatoesoflife.com), and in Lisa's book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*. Email: [meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com](mailto:meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com)

# WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

## NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

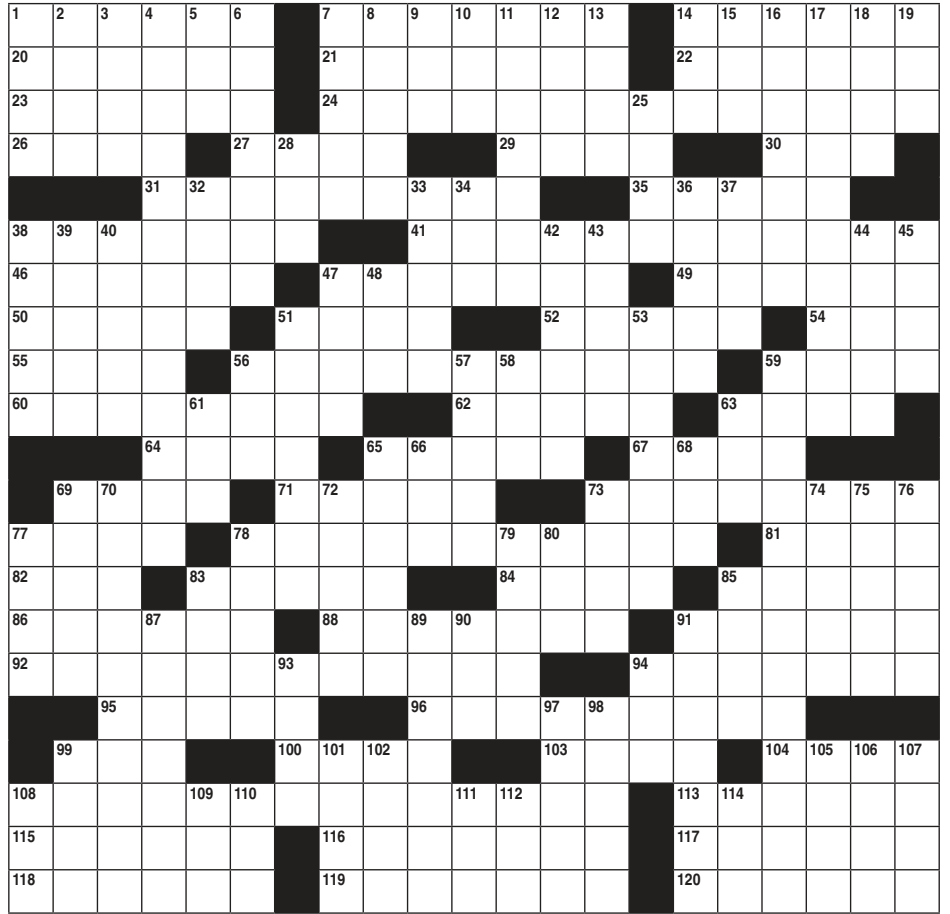
### CROSSWORD BUFF

BY BRAD WIEGMANN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

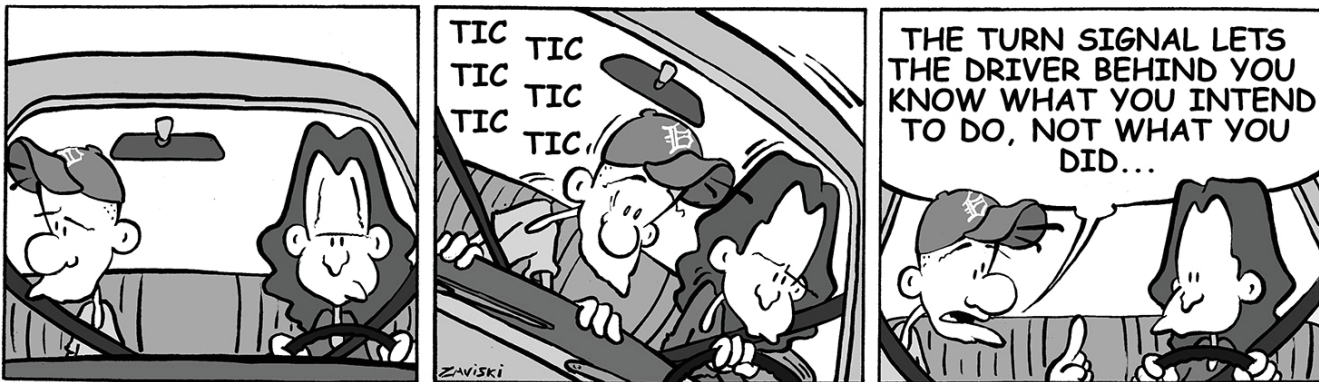
Brad Wiegmann is a national security lawyer for the Department of Justice in Washington. About a year and a half ago, while solving some crosswords during a vacation, he wondered aloud if he could make one himself. It took several tries, but ... voilà! You'll want to put on your silly-puns hat before you begin. — W.S.

#### ACROSS

- 1 Man who had all the answers?
- 7 Some baggage
- 14 Fillet, say
- 20 William Howard Taft or William McKinley
- 21 "It's just me"
- 22 First-aid item for allergy sufferers
- 23 Shared with, for a while
- 24 Leadership style of the nudist-club president?
- 26 Like a senior year
- 27 Dates
- 29 Steamboat Springs alternative
- 30 Pint-size
- 31 Like Ahab's pursuit of Moby Dick
- 35 Winter driving hazard
- 38 Ascribe to, as fault
- 41 When the nudist club was founded?
- 46 They hit the sauce a lot
- 47 "There's another good point"
- 49 "Hold on!"
- 50 Home to the world's three highest capital cities
- 51 Nicolas who directed "The Man Who Fell to Earth"
- 52 Puffs
- 54 Graduation wear for a University of Hawaii student
- 55 Place for a throne
- 56 New members of the nudist club?
- 59 Pans for potstickers
- 60 Time's Person of the Century
- 62 Lit into
- 63 Two are named after Douglas and Fraser
- 64 Big name in tennis balls
- 65 Weigh in
- 67 School with a 15th-century chapel
- 69 It comes straight from the horse's mouth
- 71 "Raspberry \_\_\_\_" (Prince hit)
- 73 Liquor with a double-headed eagle logo
- 77 Polo course?
- 78 What happens in the stand-up show at the nudist club?
- 81 Robert who played A. J. Soprano
- 82 Pro wrestler Flair
- 83 John for whom the Voting Rights Advancement Act was named
- 84 Slangy contraction
- 85 Rock genre
- 86 Soon
- 88 Taco Bell slogan
- 91 Its size may be measured in liters
- 92 Hours spent by the pool at the nudist club?
- 94 Popular hiding spots in hide-and-seek
- 95 Virtual currency
- 96 Sensitive subject
- 99 Mimic
- 100 "Cómo \_\_\_\_?"
- 103 Strong desire
- 104 Not a joke, say
- 108 How people returned from a week at the nudist club?
- 113 Mountaineer's tool
- 115 2006 World Cup champion, to native fans
- 116 Popping up
- 117 Follower of high or dry
- 118 Goal of some workouts
- 119 Break between workouts
- 120 Symbolic gestures
- 15 Cleanup grp.
- 16 Conference with five University of California schools
- 17 '60s TV kid
- 18 Child, in Chile
- 19 Part of the U.K.: Abbr.
- 25 "What's more . . ."
- 28 Poetry night?
- 32 Humbugs?
- 33 A negative has a reverse one
- 34 Acid container
- 36 Joneses
- 37 Baseball Hall-of-Famer Slaughter
- 38 Element of Freddy Krueger's glove
- 39 Hawaiian house feature
- 40 Recipe direction
- 42 "Hey, man!"
- 43 Balrog's home in "The Lord of the Rings"
- 44 Techies and Trekkies, stereotypically
- 45 Elevator innovator
- 47 You might skip it if you're in trouble
- 48 Self starter?
- 51 L.G.B.T. symbol
- 53 Statistic in football or basketball
- 56 Kylo \_\_\_\_, "Star Wars" villain
- 57 Signed i.o.u.'s
- 58 Published
- 59 Victory in the annual nudist-club 1K?
- 61 Face card's value in blackjack
- 63 Supporting
- 65 Question that introduces doubt
- 66 Muscle above an ab
- 68 "\_\_\_\_ So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" (hymn)
- 69 Big name in windshield wipers
- 70 Need for a jailbreak
- 72 Nellie's love in "South Pacific"
- 73 Behaves badly
- 74 Many a goody, they say
- 75 Fighter's fake
- 76 Releases
- 77 The lake in "lake effect" snow
- 78 Whale constellation
- 79 Not as unruly
- 80 Small inlet
- 83 Vanderpump of Bravo's "Vanderpump Rules"
- 85 Privy to
- 87 Tenor Andrea
- 89 In relation to
- 90 Punk cousin
- 91 Supercilious sort
- 93 Syngman \_\_\_\_, first South Korean president
- 94 Sin's counterpart
- 97 First name on the Supreme Court
- 98 Like babies' legs, often
- 99 Thermostat setting
- 101 Permanent marker?
- 102 High-tailed it
- 105 Minimal effort
- 106 Neural transmitter
- 107 Common prescription item
- 108 In shape
- 109 Dark side
- 110 Criticize constantly, with "on"
- 111 Is, in ancient Rome
- 112 Divest
- 114 Many a golden-parachute recipient, in brief

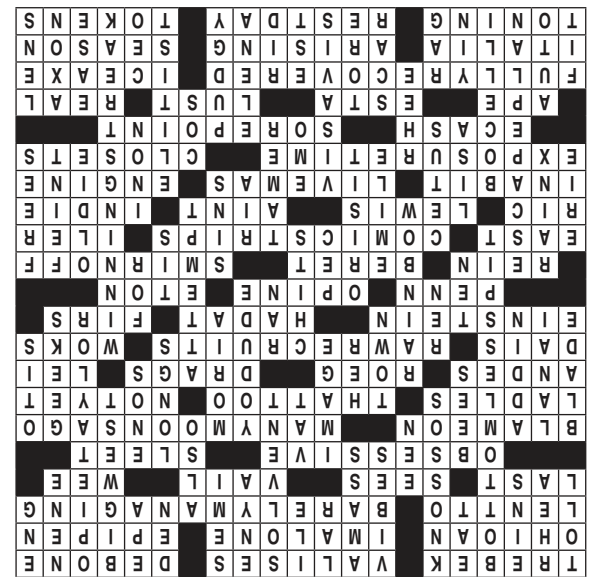


## GUNSTON STREET

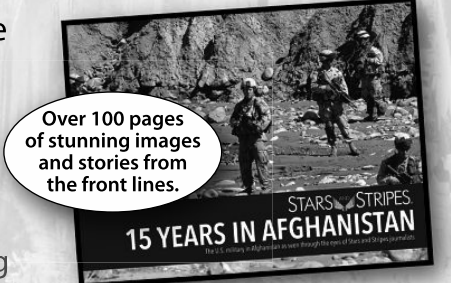


"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

## RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



The story of the U.S. military's role in Afghanistan, as seen through the eyes of Stars and Stripes journalists covering America's longest war.



Only \$14.99 with Free Shipping

ORDER NOW at [www.stripesstore.com](http://www.stripesstore.com)

## FACES

## ‘It’s always special’

Dolly Parton honored with 50th Grammy nod

BY MESFIN FEKADU  
Associated Press

It’s been 51 years since Dolly Parton earned her first Grammy nomination, and this year the national treasure who has won nine Grammys throughout her career is competing for her 50th honor.

Parton’s first Grammy nomination was at the 1970 show for “Just Someone I Used to Know,” a duet with Porter Wagoner. Nine years later she won her first gramophone for “Here You Come Again,” her 19th solo album and first to go platinum.

This year she’s nominated for best contemporary Christian music performance/song for “There Was Jesus,” her collaboration with Christian rock singer Zach Williams. Parton won in the same category last year for her guest appearance on the remix of “God Only Knows” by Christian duo for KING & COUNTRY.

“It’s always special. You always love to be acknowledged,” Parton said of achieving her 50th nod, though she quickly added: “Like I’ve always said, ‘I don’t work for awards and rewards.’”

Parton is the second-most nominated woman in Grammy history, only behind Beyoncé, who has 79 nods and 24 wins. The country icon earned the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award a decade ago.

Among her wins, Parton picked up two

Grammys for the massive hit “9 to 5” and another for “Trio,” her first collaborative album with Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt. An updated version of “Jolene” won Parton and a cappella group Pentatonix a trophy. At the 1983 show, the legend scored a nomination for a re-recording of “I Will Always Love You,” which she wrote and originally released in 1974, and a collaborative performance of the song with Vince Gill earned a nomination at the 1996 show — two years after Whitney Houston’s famous rendition of the song won two Grammys, including record of the year.

The 2021 Grammys will air on March 14. Parton said this year’s nomination for “There Was Jesus” is extra-special because it is a deep track that sits close to her heart.

“That particular song ... was more rewarding to me than winning an award,” she said. “I felt very blessed to be a part of such a wonderful song.”

“But of course, since I grew up in the church and I’m a person of faith, a song like that would mean more to me than a lot of the others, I have to admit.”

In addition to the Grammys, Parton’s busy year includes turning 75 and getting her coronavirus vaccine, months after she donated \$1 million to Nashville’s Vanderbilt University Medical Center for coronavirus research.



Dolly Parton, shown performing in 2015 in Nashville, is competing for a Grammy Award for the 50th time on Sunday. The beloved singer has won nine Grammys.

AP

## ‘The Equalizer’ renewed for second season

BY KARU F. DANIELS  
New York Daily News

There’s much more royalty in store for CBS.

After only four episodes on air, “The Equalizer” — starring Queen Latifah — has been renewed for a second season.

On Tuesday, the network announced that the new action series will get to kick some more ass next year.

“‘The Equalizer’ has proven more than equal to the task of engaging viewers and racking up wins on Sunday night,” CBS Entertainment chief Kelly Kahl said. “We’re extremely proud to see this outstanding broadcast drama, led by Queen Latifah, punch through the competitive landscape and return for a second season.”

The Debra Martin Chase-produced drama is television’s No. 1 scripted series in the key demographics, averaging 14.6 million viewers, CBS said.

Its Super Bowl Sunday premiere was the most-watched debut of the 2020-2021 season, delivering 23.8 million viewers. The prime placement marked only the third time a scripted series landed in the post-game berth for CBS. The other two were “Elementary” in 2012 and “Criminal Minds” in 2006.



BARBARA NITKE, CBS/TNS

Queen Latifah, left, stars as ex-CIA agent Robyn McCall, and Chris Noth is William Bishop, Robyn’s former boss, in “The Equalizer.”

The premiere episode also scored the best viewer and demographic numbers for any entertainment program since the 2020 Academy Awards.

“The Equalizer,” which was filmed in parts of Jersey City, N.J., last fall, follows ex-CIA agent and single mother Robyn McCall — portrayed by the hip-hop and Hollywood trailblazer born Dana Elaine Owens — who uses her extensive skills to help those with nowhere else to turn.

It’s been described as a “new take” on the character first played

by Edward Woodard in the late 1980s CBS TV series, and most recently portrayed by two-time Academy Award winner Denzel Washington in two Antoine Fuqua-directed blockbuster films in 2014 and 2018.

Chris Noth (of “Sex and the City”) plays McCall’s former CIA boss, and “Orange Is the New Black” scene-stealer Lorraine Toussaint plays her aunt.

Although currently on a brief hiatus until March 28, new episodes of “The Equalizer” air Sunday nights.

## LA filming gets boost as virus threat recedes

Filming in the Los Angeles region saw a huge boost in activity last month, as the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic began to recede and officials allowed productions to restart.

February saw 777 film permit applications, up 43% from the previous month, FilmLA said in a report published Wednesday. The permits are for productions filming on location or outside of a certified soundstage or studio backlot in the Los Angeles area.

The surge in production made February the third-busiest month for the industry since the pandemic shut down location filming a year ago, according to FilmLA, the nonprofit group that handles film permits for the city and the county.

Among the shows that started or restarted filming included FX Networks’ “American Crime Impeachment” and HBO’s comedy “Curb Your Enthusiasm.”

## Nancy Grace to host new crime series on Fox

Veteran news anchor Nancy Grace will host a weekly program on Fox Nation tied to the return of “America’s Most Wanted.”

The long-running crime series starts a new season on the Fox broadcasting network next Monday, with Elizabeth Vargas as

host. Immediately after each episode ends, Grace will discuss it on the Fox Nation streaming service on a new show, “America’s Most Wanted Overtime.”

## Joint custody, no spousal support in Adele divorce

Adele will share custody of her 8-year-old son and won’t be paying child support to her now-ex-husband Simon Konecki, according to divorce documents obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

The couple separated in August of 2019, and Adele filed for divorce the following month. A Los Angeles judge finalized the divorce last week.

According to the documents, the 32-year-old Adele and the 46-year-old Konecki used mediation to amicably reach the terms of the split. Both waived the right to seek spousal support and agreed to joint legal and physical custody of son Angelo, who was born in 2012.

## Other news

■ Roger Mudd, the longtime political correspondent and anchor for NBC and CBS who once stumped Sen. Edward Kennedy by simply asking why he wanted to be president, has died. He was 93. CBS News says Mudd died Tuesday of complications of kidney failure at his home in McLean, Va.

From wire reports

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Remains of Cold War-era Russian sub catch fire

**RI** PROVIDENCE — The remains of a Cold War-era Russian submarine once seen in a movie starring Harrison Ford caught fire in Providence on Tuesday morning as workers were using a blowtorch to cut it up for scrap, fire officials said.

The fire at a waterfront scrap yard sent a plume of black smoke over the city at about 9:30 a.m. but was quickly extinguished. No one was hurt.

The hull is sheathed in a 3- to 4-inch layer of rubber and that's what caught fire as workers cut into it with a torch, Providence Deputy Assistant Fire Chief Steve Capracotta said.

After the Cold War, the submarine known as Juliett 484 was sold and used as a restaurant and vodka bar in Helsinki, Finland, and as a set for the 2002 Ford movie "K-19: The Widowmaker."

## Skater gets timely rescue after falling through ice

**NH** SOMERSWORTH — A man who fell through the ice while skating on a river said firefighters arrived to save him just in time.

William Rogers was skating on the Salmon Falls River on Sunday. WMUR-TV reported he was alone and unable to get himself out, but he used his Apple watch to call 911.

"First thing I did was try to waltz up on the ice knowing that I needed to get out of the water as quickly as possible and the ice just kept breaking underneath me," Rogers said.

Somersworth firefighters rescued him.

## 2 students charged with stealing from university

**TN** MURFREESBORO — Two students have been charged with stealing \$114,000 from Middle Tennessee State University, authorities said.

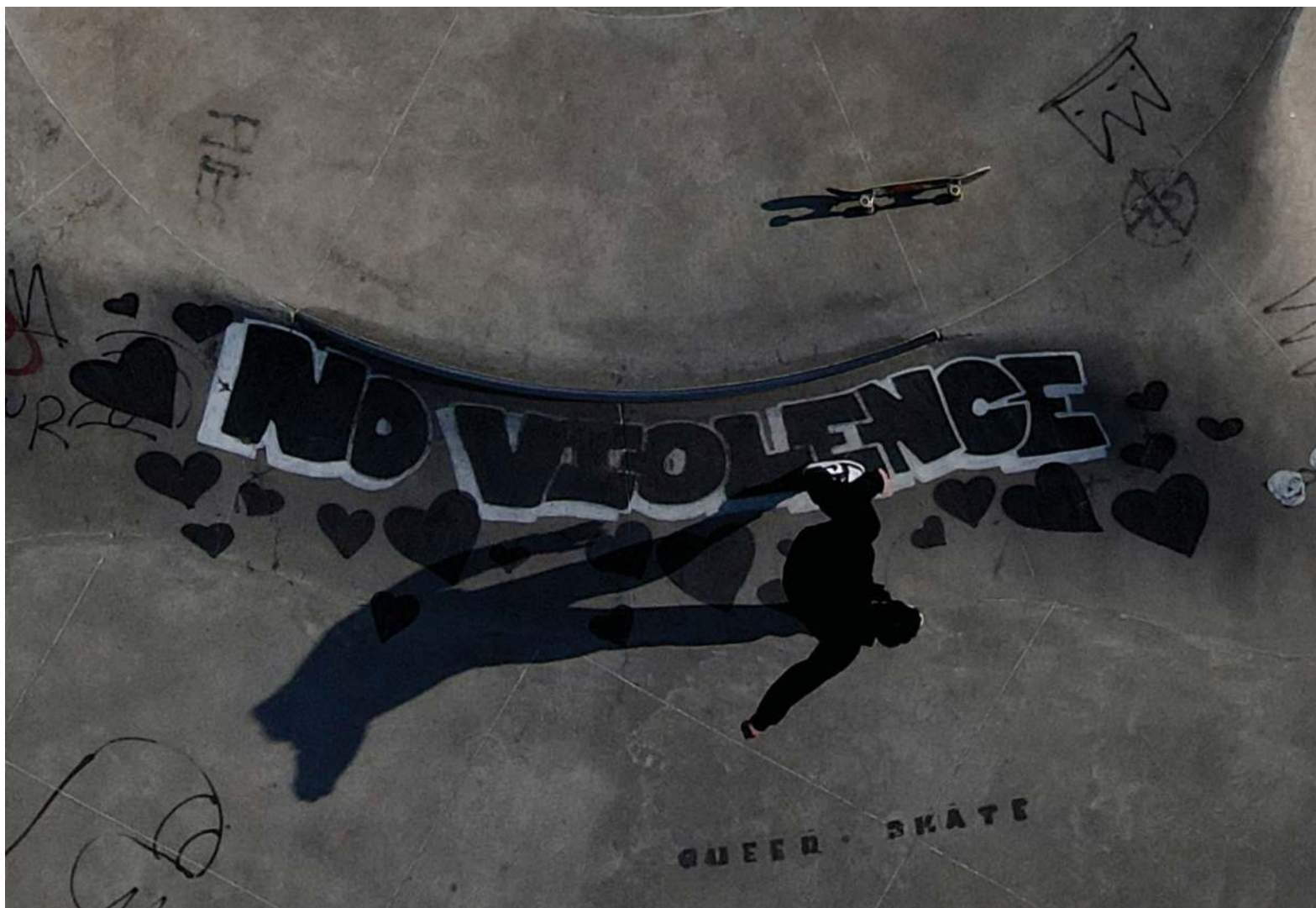
The students were indicted Tuesday by a Rutherford County grand jury, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation said in a statement.

The charges stem from an investigation by the bureau and the Tennessee Comptroller of the school's Somali Student Association and Muslim Student Association. Investigators found evidence that two leaders of the student groups fraudulently obtained more than \$114,000 in student activity fees over a three-year period, the bureau said.

Mohamed Gure and Mohamed Osman, who are both 22, were charged with theft, forgery, and criminal simulation, officials said.

## Man armed with knife holds baby amid standoff

**WI** FOND DU LAC — A long standoff with a driver who held a baby while armed with a butcher knife ended without injury



JULIO CORTEZ/AP

## Overboard

**A skater loses his board while attempting a trick near graffiti asking for "No Violence" at Skatepark of Baltimore at Roosevelt Park on Monday.**

in Dodge County.

A deputy tried stopping the driver for speeding in Fond du Lac County about 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, according to sheriff's officials. The male suspect failed to stop and deputies began a pursuit that continued into Fond du Lac and then proceeded south on rural highways.

The driver attempted to strike a sheriff's squad car before a deputy used a pursuit intervention technique to force the vehicle into a ditch, authorities said.

According to officials, the driver then armed himself with a large butcher knife and he and a female passenger remained in the vehicle. A short time later, a baby was removed from a rear car seat and the man held the child in front of him while still armed with the knife.

Sheriff's negotiators continued to talk to the man for several hours and about 10:15 p.m. he agreed to get out of the vehicle and was arrested.

## Pastor on leave after 'trophy wife' sermon

**MO** MALDEN — A southeastern Missouri preacher went on leave from his church and is seeking professional counseling after giving a sermon that chastised married women who "let themselves go" and held up former first lady Melania Trump as the pinnacle of feminine beauty.

A video widely circulated on social media shows Pastor Stewart-Allen Clark's sermon before the 1st General Baptist Church in Malden.

## THE CENSUS

**\$9M** The amount Seattle ticketing company Brown Paper Tickets has agreed to pay in restitution to an estimated 45,000 customers. The Seattle Times reported the payments will go to ticket buyers owed refunds and event organizers owed box-office revenue largely because of problems that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Washington State Office of the Attorney General filed a consent decree in King County Superior Court on Monday after filing a lawsuit on behalf of customers. Some customers were ticket-buyers who wanted their money back or wanted to donate the cost of their tickets for canceled events, many of which were fundraisers.

The sermon was roundly panned as sexist and counter to Christian teachings.

In the video, Clark berated wives who gained weight after marriage and admonished that they should look good for their husbands, adding, "it's important that he thinks you're hot!"

"I'm not saying every woman can be the epic—the epic—trophy wife of all time like Melania Trump," Clark said, as a photo of the former first lady appeared behind him on a screen. "Most women can't be trophy wives, but you know ... maybe you're a participation trophy."

The church's website said Clark began his leave on March 2 and is seeking professional counseling.

## Ex-director of veterans cemetery arrested

**MS** NEWTON — The former director of the Mississippi Veterans Memorial Cemetery was arrested and accused of embezzling money from the office, authorities said.

Henry Gruno was arrested Mon-

day by the Office of the State Auditor and presented with a \$29,818 demand letter, news outlets reported. The amount includes interest and investigative expenses.

The auditor's office said Gruno embezzled about \$14,000 in public money from Mississippi Veterans Affairs between January 2016 and January 2019.

State Auditor Shad White said Gruno was accused of using a credit card and a fuel card to embezzle the funds. Gruno used the credit card to buy items such as barbecue supplies, toys and luggage, White said.

## Man charged with selling fake autographed gear

**AL** BIRMINGHAM — A Maryland man has been charged with selling fake autographed memorabilia and defrauding Alabama TV stations out of thousands in advertising costs for fraudulent websites, according to federal court records.

Douglas Edward Duren agreed this month to plead guilty to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft,

according to federal prosecutors in Alabama. Authorities alleged he sold items with forged signatures, including sports collectibles and movie posters, over a nine-year period on three fake websites.

Duren was also accused of impersonating advertising agency employees, promising to pay several television stations in Birmingham and Madison County up to \$75,000 to advertise the websites, AL.com reported.

## Bill to lift smoking age from 18 to 21 advances

**ID** BOISE — A House panel on Tuesday approved legislation banning anyone under 21 from buying cigarettes or electronic smoking products.

The House Health and Welfare Committee on Tuesday approved the measure that will bring Idaho in line with the federal smoking age. Then-President Donald Trump signed a law last year that bars tobacco sales to anyone under 21.

Supporters said Idaho stores are already abiding by federal law, but state law needs to be changed to avoid confusion and confrontations in stores.

Opponents said young people age 18 to 20 and who can legally do such things as join the military or buy a house should be able to buy cigarettes or vaping products.

The bill lifting the age to 21 has already passed the Senate.

From wire reports

# Stripes SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market

Transportation

944

## VEHICLE SHIPPING SERVICES

- International Shipping
- Import & Export
- Inland trucking (U.S. & Europe)
- Door to door pick-up/delivery service
- Customs clearance
- All Risk Marine Insurance
- Auto Insurance (Germany only)

For Further Information Please Contact

**Phone:** GERMANY +49-(0)6134-2592730 UNITED KINGDOM +44-(0)1638-515714 U.S.A +1-972-602-1670 Ext. 1701  
**Toll-free:** 0800-CARSHIP (Germany only) +1-800-264-8167 (US only)  
**E-Mail:** info@transglobal-logistics.de enquiries@carshipuk.co.uk info@tgal.us  
**WEB:** www.transglobal-logistics.de www.carshipuk.co.uk www.tgal.us

For 2nd POV Shipments - Offices / Agencies near Military Installations



Are you in the picture?



Reading Stars and Stripes gives you a better handle on issues that affect you most.  
*No one covers the bases the way we do.*

STARS AND STRIPES

Transportation

944

Ship Cars and Containers to and from the USA



**OPENING HOURS:** 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon - Fri  
 0800-522-6274 or 800-WSA-SHIP (972-7447)

For a free rate request, please email: info@worldwide-ship.de  
 Visit our Website: www.worldwide-ship.de

Off Duty? Amuse Yourself!



Concert, events, TV, movies, music, video games, celebrity antics...

Get entertained with...

STARS AND STRIPES

### FREE AD Guidelines:

- Free ads are available only DOD ID Card holders selling personal merchandise.
- Ads may contain up to 32 words. All Ads must contain price and contact information. No websites will be accepted in Free ads.
- Stars and Stripes reserves the right to re-classify, rewrite and reject any ads.

# STARS AND STRIPES CLASSIFIED

Go to [stripes.com](http://stripes.com) to place your free ad. *Sell fast/ Buy fast*

When you see this camera icon go to [stripes.com](http://stripes.com) to view the uploaded photo.

	EUROPE	MIDDLE EAST	PACIFIC
Advertising	Kristi Kimmel kimmel.kristi@stripes.com +49(0)631-3615-9013 DSN 314.583.9013	Kristi Kimmel kimmel.kristi@stripes.com +49(0)631-3615-9013 DSN 314.583.9013	Ichiro Katayanagi PacificAdvertising@stripes.com DSN 227-7313, CML +81 (42) 552-2511 ext. 77313.
Circulation	Karen Lewis lewis.karen@stripes.com +49(0)631.3615.9090 DSN 314.583.9090	Robert Reismann reismann.robert@stripes.com +49(0)631.3615.9150 DSN 314.583.9150	Mari Mori CustomerHelp@stripes.com +81(3) 6385.7333 DSN 315.227.7333
Reader Letters	letters@stripes.com	letters@stripes.com	letters@stripes.com

## Classifieds EUROPE

For information on Commercial Rates: CIV: 0631-3615-9012 or DSN: 583-9012

Announcements 040

Automotive 140

Tax Assistance 940

### SCAM FADS

Classifieds scams can target both sellers and buyers with classified advertisements.

Be aware of the common red flags.

Some of the latest Scam fads are:

- Vehicle buyers wanting to buy sight unseen and have the vehicle shipped through an agent using paypal.
- People saying Free Dog (different breeds) for adoption.

### SELLER BEWARE

Individuals placing classified advertising should use discretion in concluding the sale of their property. Not all potential buyers are reputable or honest. Stars and Stripes suggests that you take precautions to ensure that potential buyers are reputable and will be able to fulfill the terms of the sale. Stars and Stripes is not liable for the contractual relationship between sellers and buyers of merchandise advertised in the newspaper or on the web site.



## H&R BLOCK®



Germany H&R Block Tax Offices  
 Get face-to-face tax help.

<b>Ramstein</b> 06371-8020410	<b>Wiesbaden</b> 06134-256963	<b>Vilseck</b> 01735-736112
----------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Email: [eclemons@hrblock.com](mailto:eclemons@hrblock.com)

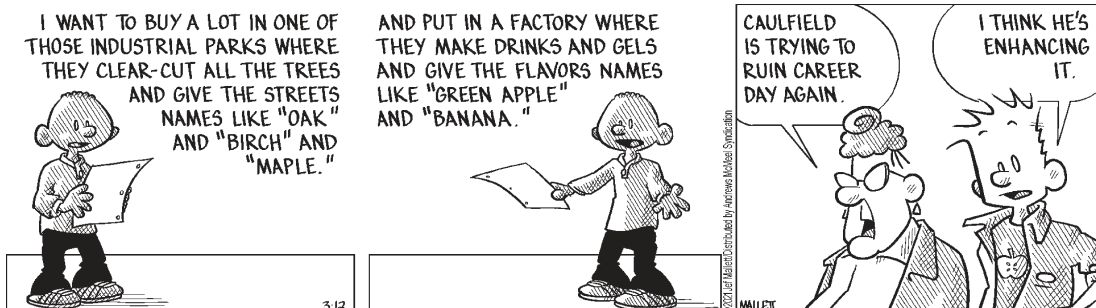
Want a better picture?

You'll get one – just by reading Stars and Stripes military news coverage.  
*In print • Online at stripes.com • Mobile for Android, iPhone & iPad*  
 No one covers the bases the way we do.

STARS AND STRIPES

However you read us, wherever you need us.

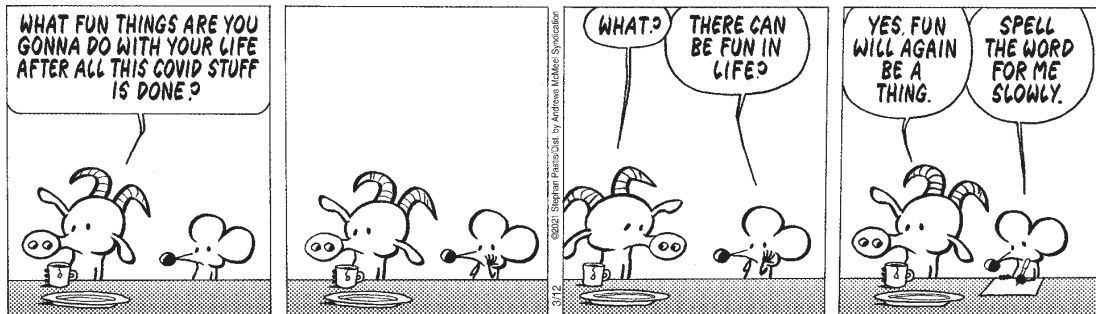
Frazz



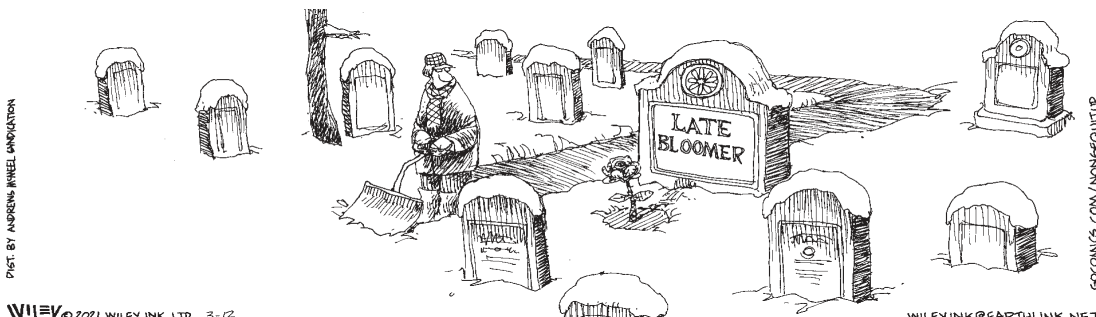
Dilbert



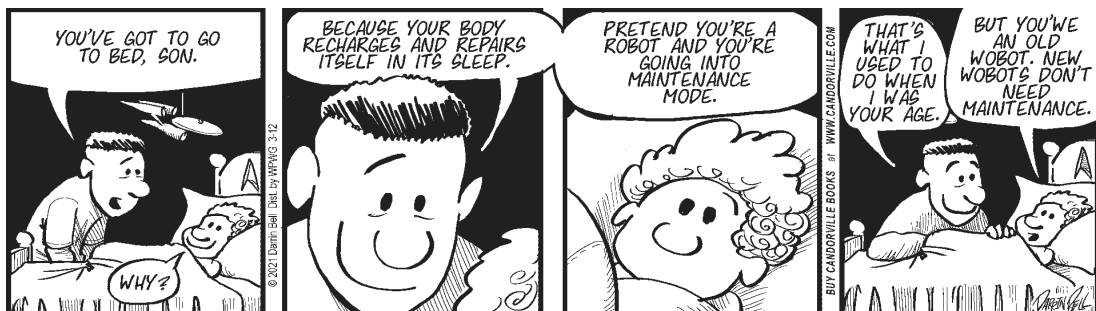
Pearls Before Swine



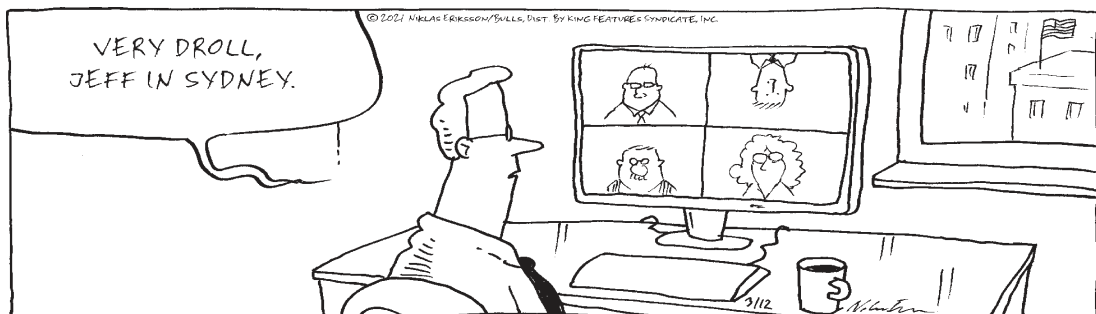
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



### Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
12						13				14		
15						16				17		
		18				19				20		
21	22			23				24				
25			26		27		28					
29				30			31			32	33	34
			35			36				37		
38	39	40				41		42		43		
44					45			46				
47				48				49			50	51
52				53				54				
55				56				57				

#### ACROSS

- 1 Barrels
- 6 Ann Patchett's "— Canto"
- 9 Nipper's co.
- 12 St. Teresa's city
- 13 Brit. record label
- 14 Solo of "Star Wars"
- 15 Watch crystal holder
- 16 Effervescing
- 18 Fanatic
- 20 Hydroxyl compound
- 21 Up to
- 23 German article
- 24 Steak choice
- 25 Leopold's co-defendant
- 27 "When pigs fly!"
- 29 Used hair rollers
- 31 Place for three men
- 35 Archipelago part
- 37 Spanish eyes
- 38 Rural buildings
- 41 New Deal agcy.
- 43 Buddhist sect
- 44 Latin 101 word
- 45 "Mask" actor Eric
- 47 More lightheaded
- 49 From Limerick
- 52 Away from WSW
- 53 Bikini half
- 54 1899 fighters

#### DOWN

- 1 Taxi
- 2 "Hail, Caesar!"
- 3 Extremely hot day
- 4 Swiss artist Paul
- 5 Leafy lunch
- 6 Prior to
- 7 Send forth
- 8 Actress Taylor
- 9 Horned beast
- 10 Church law
- 11 Protractor measure
- 17 Striped equines
- 19 Tennis legend Ivan
- 21 Pampering, for short
- 22 Debtor's letters
- 24 Sawbuck
- 26 Crepe's cousin
- 28 The "V" of IVF
- 30 Curved letter
- 32 Agitated states
- 33 Exploit
- 34 Crib
- 36 Catch
- 38 Ruth — Ginsburg
- 39 Acid type
- 40 Tore down
- 42 Suspect's excuse
- 45 Antitoxins
- 46 Jog
- 48 Co. that created Watson
- 50 Madrid Mrs.
- 51 QVC alternative

#### Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	A	R	I		P	O	P		S	T	A	B
G	U	A	C		A	N	A		C	A	R	E
T	R	U	E		K	O	S		A	N	N	A
S	A	L	A	M	I		T	A	R	G	E	T
				G	A	S		O	A	R		
C	U	T	E		T	A	S	K	B	A	R	S
A	S	A			A	P	P			M	L	I
L	O	N	D	O	N	E	R		P	S	S	T
				T	A	D		A	W	E		
C	O	R	N	E	T		Y	E	L	L	O	W
O	N	U	S		E	F	T		T	A	R	A
R	E	M	O		A	R	A		E	T	A	L
A	S	S	N		S	I	N		D	E	L	T

3-12

#### CRYPTOQUIP

M Q N Z , X I R ' C U A V Q N B N K H

Z D Q Z N ' B C U Q V V X P Q E Q Z

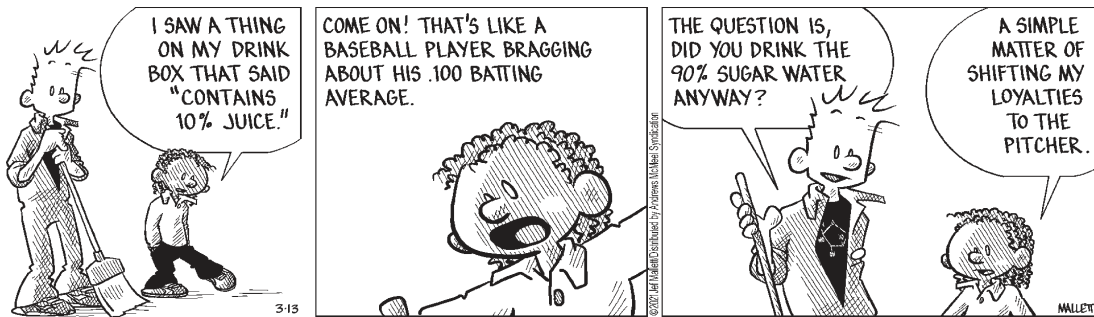
Z X N K H R T P I Q Z F N K T N U C F ?

V I I S M D I ' F E I A S N K H !

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: "STAR WARS" CHARACTER WHO ALWAYS HAD ASTONISHING STROKES OF GOOD LUCK: FLUKE SKYWALKER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals C

Frazz



Dilbert



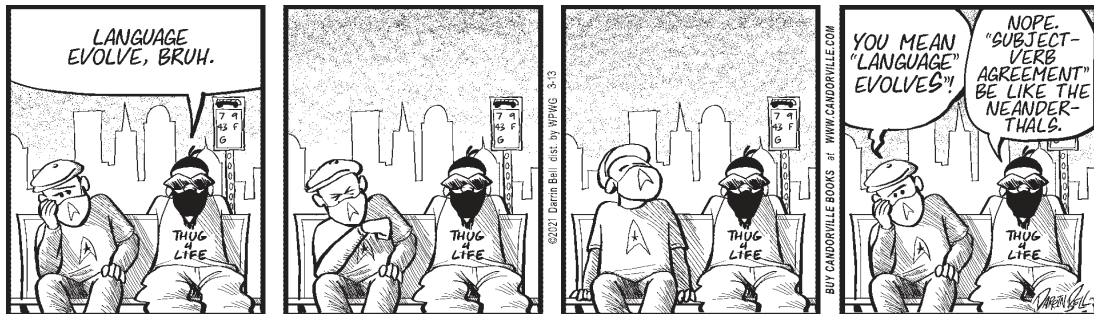
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



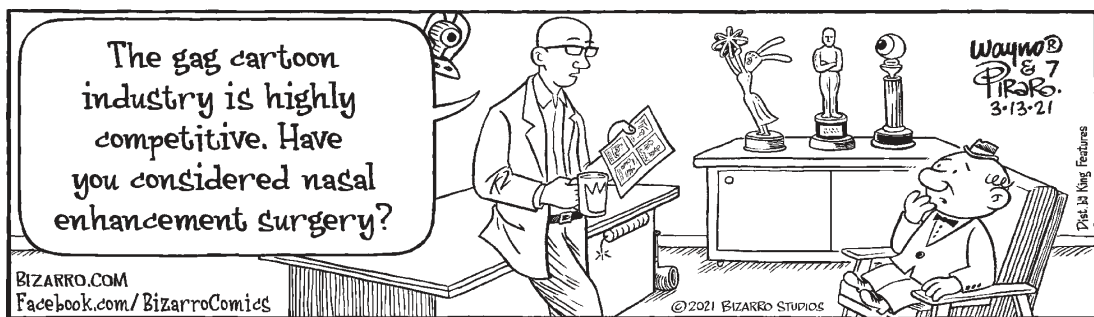
Carpe Diem



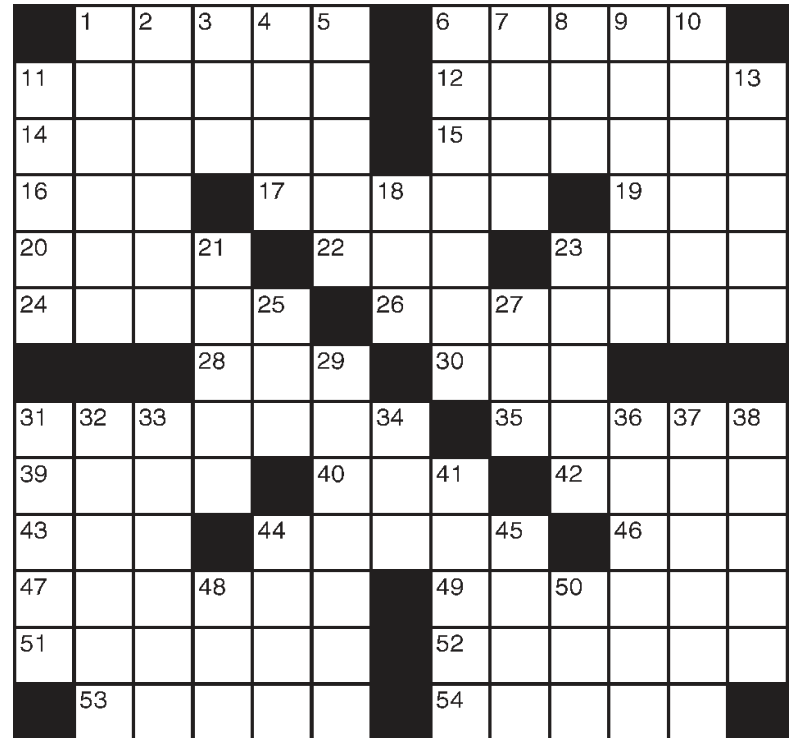
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Troop member
- 6 Burn with steam
- 11 Collar stiffener
- 12 Consecrate
- 14 Table tennis need
- 15 Brain-teaser
- 16 Bruins legend
- 17 Riyadh residents
- 19 Vegas opener
- 20 Stagger
- 22 — out a living
- 23 Joan of rock
- 24 '50s Ford
- 26 Country stores?
- 28 In shape
- 30 Muppet eagle
- 31 Meadow
- 35 Diving ducks
- 39 Skin care brand
- 40 Suitable
- 42 Editor's "keep it"
- 43 Peyton's brother
- 44 Jose's farewell
- 46 Sugar suffix
- 47 Core
- 49 Bicycle seat
- 51 Motion detector, e.g.
- 52 Truthful
- 53 Nitwits
- 54 Humiliate

DOWN

- 1 Gawked
- 2 Close-knit groups
- 3 O'Hare's airport code
- 4 Bruins' sch.
- 5 "Ta-da!"
- 6 Frozen desserts
- 7 NFL analyst Collinsworth
- 8 Do sums
- 9 Soup servers
- 10 Widen
- 11 Fern seed
- 13 Egg holders
- 18 Alias letters
- 21 Southpaw letters
- 23 Blues singer Etta

- 25 Lucy of "Elementary"
- 27 Long. crosser
- 29 Wall street workers
- 31 Frost works
- 32 In cahoots
- 33 Refused
- 34 Prefix with gram or center
- 36 Disagreeing
- 37 "Airplane!" actor Nielsen
- 38 Trusty horse
- 41 Puccini opera
- 44 Oodles
- 45 Swedish auto
- 48 Broadband letters
- 50 "CSI" find

Answer to Previous Puzzle



3-13

CRYPTOQUIP

RODY UM VDNAG'R GTRAUNE  
 IGVY NVDWWE WUYF-YVZSVJ  
 QDQQDWR IVNV JUQTYDYA:  
 AGV FTNDMMTZ OVNTUJ.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WAIT, YOU'RE CLAIMING THAT I'M REALLY BAD AT TYING UP BOATS IN PIERS? LOOK WHO'S DOCKING!  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals N

## STARS AND STRIPES

## OPINION

Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher  
Lt. Col. Marci Hoffman, Europe commander  
Lt. Col. Richard McClintic, Pacific commander  
Caroline E. Miller, Europe Business Operations

## EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor  
leonard.terry@stripes.com

Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor  
reid.robert@stripes.com

Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content  
croley.tina@stripes.com

Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation  
moores.sean@stripes.com

Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital  
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

## BUREAU STAFF

## Europe/Mideast

Erik Slavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief  
slavin.erik@stripes.com  
+49(0)631.3615.9350; DSN (314)583.9350

## Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief  
kidd.aaron@stripes.com  
+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380; DSN (315)227.7380

## Washington

Joseph Cacchioli, Washington Bureau Chief  
cacchioli.joseph@stripes.com  
(+1)(202)886-0033  
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News  
bowers.brian@stripes.com

## CIRCULATION

## Mideast

Robert Reismann, Mideast Circulation Manager  
robert.w.reismann.naf@mail.mil  
xsscirculation@stripes.com  
DSN (314)583-9111

## Europe

Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager  
lewis.karen@stripes.com  
memberservices@stripes.com  
+49(0)631.3615.9090; DSN (314)583.9090

## Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stripes.com  
+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

## CONTACT US

## Washington

tel: (+1)202.886.0003  
633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-3050

## Reader letters

letters@stripes.com

## Additional contacts

stripes.com/contactus

## OMBUDSMAN

Ernie Gates

The Stars and Stripes ombudsman protects the free flow of news and information, reporting any attempts by the military or other authorities to undermine the newspaper's independence. The ombudsman also responds to concerns and questions from readers, and monitors coverage for fairness, accuracy, timeliness and balance. The ombudsman welcomes comments from readers, and can be contacted by email at [ombudsman@stripes.com](mailto:ombudsman@stripes.com), or by phone at 202.886.0003.

Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published week-days (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA, Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations where overseas DOD personnel are located.

The appearance of advertising in this publication does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or Stars and Stripes of the products or services advertised. Products or services advertised shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

© Stars and Stripes 2021

[stripes.com](http://stripes.com)

## Trump has a point about the RNC's ads

BY NOAH FELDMAN

Bloomberg Opinion

Former Republican President Donald Trump is trying to block the Republican National Committee from using his image in their fundraising efforts. He has no legal case: Trump is a public figure and can't stop anyone from using his image in the course of political speech. But if you think of it in terms of U.S. campaign finance customs rather than in terms of free speech, Trump has a point. And that is very rare indeed.

First Amendment principles are clear: Public figures really are different when it comes to image control. It's one thing for an ordinary person to be able to control the use of her image. That makes both legal and economic sense, because as a private person you should be able to choose who gets to display and make a profit from what you look like. But when you have run for president and won and dominated the political conversation for the last five years, you should not be able to control the use of your image in a political context. Such censorship would detract too much from the valuable exchange of political ideas.

Imagine if the Democratic National Committee, not the RNC, were using Trump's image to convince voters to donate money to discourage Trump from returning to politics. We would all have the instinct that this should count as protected political speech. It would be bizarre if Trump could use his own image to promote his own candidacy but the other side couldn't use his image to take the opposite position.

The reason that Trump's argument against the RNC feels different is because, in some sense, the RNC is seeking to financially gain from Trump's image and name — to imply an endorsement where there is none.

Imagine if a for-profit company were trying to use Trump's image to sell its product. Then the legal landscape would change. Because celebrities count as public figures, paparazzi can take their pictures for publication by "news" outlets. But even if someone is a public figure, the law protects him from having his image used to sell Coke or Pepsi. That's why celebrities have to be paid for endorsements.

The RNC is not a for-profit entity, but it is in a loose sense using Trump's image and name for product endorsement of its candidates. Trump, who built much of his real estate pseudo-empire on the deployment of the name "Trump" as a brand, feels instinctively that this is wrong. If I owned a hotel, I couldn't just rename it the Trump Plaza — because Trump rightly owns that hotel brand. (We will leave for another day the question of whether I could do that if I were making a satirical political comment — like if I put the name Trump on a roach motel.)

And that's where Trump is on to something. The RNC is using Trump's name and image differently from the way the DNC would be. The RNC is implying to potential donors that Trump is endorsing its messages and the candidates it will support. And from Trump's perspective, that's just plain deceptive. He only wants the RNC to be able to use his name and image if the RNC is doing his bidding. If it

isn't, then he doesn't want it to have his endorsement. Implying otherwise is deceptive and a lie.

You can fill in here your objection that Trump, king of the big lie in American politics, lacks the standing to object that the RNC is misleading people. I hear you.

Nevertheless, good principles should apply even to repugnant people. And the truth is that there is something troubling about a system that allows political parties to mislead donors about who is endorsing their requests for money.

That leads to a final and more serious problem: that political fundraising is generally categorized as a form of political speech and therefore is exempt from the laws that would ordinarily apply in the context of false advertising. The reason for that is the Supreme Court's embrace of the idea that in politics, the expenditure of money counts as a form of free speech. This theory has had a profoundly distorting effect on U.S. politics and limited the country's ability to regulate election financing. Almost no other country in the world agrees. But here we are.

If the RNC were using Trump's image to sell soap, the former president would have a legal case. But selling candidates is a different matter. Under existing law, Trump can't do anything about it. Maybe that should help us realize that we need an overhaul of how we think of money in politics.

Bloomberg Opinion columnist Noah Feldman hosts the podcast "Deep Background." He is a Harvard University professor of law and was a clerk to Supreme Court Justice David Souter.

## Dems' pro-union bill would only hurt US workers

BY HENRY OLSEN

Special to The Washington Post

House Democrats rammed through the union-backed Protecting the Right to Organize Act on Tuesday night on a mostly party-line vote. It's said to be dead on arrival in the Senate, which is a good thing for American workers.

The bill's name shows its pro-union bias. It would largely gut "right-to-work" laws, which permit workers to opt out of a union and not pay union dues if they so choose. This right was enshrined in the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, which gave states the ability to enact such laws. Twenty-seven states now have them, and workers in those states have the freedom to object to coercive unions in the most powerful way possible: the right to leave. The PRO Act would allow unions to collect dues from these men and women regardless of whether they formally join the union. This would be a serious infringement on personal liberty, and it would remove an important check on abusive union leaders.

The bill infringes on individual liberty in other ways as well. It would redefine when independent contractors can be labeled as employees, potentially reclassifying millions of workers in the gig economy. Union leaders say this would give these people, especially drivers for app-based ride hailing or delivery services, the right to organize — but companies say it would destroy their business model. A similar law in California was repealed via a referendum in November by a 59%-to-41% margin. If deep-blue California

doesn't like this idea, it's surely something most of the country wouldn't like either.

The measure would also deliver a blow to fair union elections. Labor law since the National Labor Relations Act passed in 1935 has allowed employers to require elections with secret ballots to show that employees truly want to be represented by a union. The PRO Act reduces this protection by forbidding employers from calling meetings at which they can present their views on unionization, and by allowing ballots to be cast off of company property. It's not hard to see where this leads: Union organizers put the muscle on wavering employees not to attend employer meetings — and to vote "the right way" at union-staffed, off-site locations.

The bill is primarily a 1930s solution to a 21st-century problem. Less-skilled workers have no doubt experienced stagnating or declining wages for decades. But unlike in the 1930s, when workers won the right to unionize and force their employers to bargain, the problem is not primarily one of employer greed.

Global free trade means U.S.-based companies have to compete against firms from other countries for consumers' dollars. Unions often demand staffing rules and wage packages that effectively undercut those firms' ability to compete. This simple fact is one of the major reasons unionization rates at U.S. companies have declined so much in recent decades. Private-sector unionization rates were at their highest in the mid-1950s, when the United States dominated the global economy. Today, only 6.3% of private-sector

workers belong to a union, roughly one-sixth what it was at its height. Many workers surely know that union "protections" would simply drive their jobs overseas.

Only a comprehensive economic reform can seriously address the decline in earning power among less-skilled workers in the United States. That approach would require creating tight labor markets at home by restricting illegal immigration and instituting a skills-based legal immigration program. It would also reevaluate global free trade and assess whether the gains to U.S. consumers are worth the loss for U.S.-based workers. An imaginative approach to trade could, for example, impose tariffs on goods from countries whose labor standards or wage rates are so much lower than our own that they place unfair pressure on U.S.-based employers. It could also levy an "exit tax" on companies that shift U.S.-based employment to countries with similarly low standards.

Without measures to limit immigration and global trade, the PRO Act would likely shift jobs elsewhere, or encourage firms to replace U.S.-born workers with immigrants who would find nonunion wages quite attractive.

New times require new ideas. Democrats have shown, both with the PRO Act and their spendthrift COVID-19 relief bill, that their minds are still stuck in the 1930s. Art deco and telegrams are things of the past; so too should be the Democrats' economic policies.

Henry Olsen is a Washington Post columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

# SCOREBOARD/AUTO RACING

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL

### Wednesday's men's scores

**EAST**  
Colgate 105, Bucknell 75  
DePaul 70, Providence 62  
Fairfield 79, Monmouth (NJ) 60  
Georgetown 68, Marquette 49  
Iona 55, Siena 52  
Loyola (Md.) 67, Army 63  
Penn St. 72, Nebraska 66  
Rice 72, Marshall 68  
Syracuse 89, NC State 68

**SOUTH**  
Duke 70, Louisville 56  
FAU 76, UTEP 70  
Jackson St. 74, Ark.-Pine Bluff 62  
Miami 67, Clemson 64  
New Orleans 80, SE Louisiana 63  
North Carolina 101, Notre Dame 59  
Vanderbilt 79, Texas A&M 68

**MIDWEST**  
Butler 70, Xavier 69, OT  
Minnesota 51, Northwestern 46

**SOUTHWEST**  
Kansas St. 71, TCU 50  
Lamar 62, Houston Baptist 52  
North Texas 76, Middle Tennessee 56  
Oklahoma 79, Iowa St. 73  
Prairie View 91, MVSU 64  
UTSA 72, Charlotte 62

**FAR WEST**  
Arizona St. 64, Washington St. 59  
California 76, Stanford 58  
Fresno St. 85, New Mexico 77  
Montana 69, Idaho 64  
N. Arizona 77, Portland St. 66  
N. Colorado 90, Sacramento St. 83  
UNLV 80, Air Force 52  
Utah 98, Washington 95  
Wyoming 111, San Jose St. 80

### Wednesday's women's games

**EAST**  
Buffalo 73, Kent St. 66  
Marist 63, Siena 55  
Mount St. Mary's 77, Fairleigh Dickinson 62  
Rider 62, Quinnipiac 50  
Wagner 70, St. Francis (Pa.) 57

**SOUTH**  
Alabama St. 85, Texas Southern 69  
Davidson 69, St. Bonaventure 61  
FAU 72, UAB 66  
FIU 85, Southern Miss. 75  
George Washington 62, George Mason 56  
Jackson St. 70, MVSU 47  
Jacksonville 55, Kennesaw St. 52  
Louisiana Tech 50, Marshall 48  
South Florida 51, Tulane 47  
UCF 61, Houston 39  
UNC-Wilmington 60, Coll. of Charleston 47

**MIDWEST**  
Bowling Green 63, E. Michigan 47  
Cent. Michigan 83, N. Illinois 69  
Iowa 83, Purdue 72  
Michigan St. 75, Penn St. 66  
Nebraska 72, Minnesota 61  
Northwestern 67, Illinois 42  
Ohio 61, Ball St. 59

**SOUTHWEST**  
Abilene Christian 81, Incarnate Word 70  
Houston Baptist 74, McNeese St. 60  
Old Dominion 71, North Texas 66

**FAR WEST**  
Cal Poly 61, Long Beach St. 60  
Grand Canyon 67, Rio Grande 54  
Hawaii 81, CS Bakersfield 67  
Idaho 80, Montana St. 64  
Idaho St. 65, N. Colorado 55  
New Mexico St. 56, Seattle 46  
UC Davis 61, Cal St.-Fullerton 54  
UC Irvine 92, UC Santa Barbara 90  
Utah Valley 61, Chicago St. 43  
Wyoming 59, Fresno St. 56

## DEALS

### Wednesday's transactions

**BASEBALL**  
**Major League Baseball American League**  
**LOS ANGELES ANGELS** — Optioned LHP Hector Yan to Salt Lake (Triple-A West).  
**TORONTO BLUE JAYS** — Sent RHP Jacob Waguespack outright to Buffalo (Triple-A East).  
**National League**  
**CINCINNATI REDS** — Placed 1B Joey Votto on the 10-day injured list.  
**MIAMI MARLINS** — Optioned RHP Edward Cabrera to Triple-A. Reassigned Cs Cameron Barstad and Santiago Chavez, OFs Peyton Burdick, Victor Victor Mesa, Brian Miller, Kameron Misner and Connor Scott, LHPs Jake Eder, Zach King, Dylan Lee and Will Stewart, RHPs Tommy Evelt, Zach McCambley, Kyle Nicolas, Max Meyer and Josh Roberson.  
**NEW YORK METS** — Agreed to terms with INF Luis Guillorme, OF Khalil Lee, Cs Patrick Mazeika and Tomas Nido, RHPs Yennys Diaz, Franklyn Kilome, Sean Reid-Foley, Drew Smith and Jordan Yamamoto and LHPs Joey Lucchesi, David Peterson, Thomas Szapucki, Stephen Tarpley and Daniel Zamora. Renewed contracts with INFs Pete Alonso and Jeff McNeill.  
**BASKETBALL**  
**National Basketball Association**  
**HOUSTON ROCKETS** — Released G Mason Jones.  
**WNBA**  
**WASHINGTON MYSTICS** — Signed G Natasha Cloud to multiyear contract.  
**FOOTBALL**  
**National Football League**  
**ARIZONA CARDINALS** — Released CB Robert Alford. Re-signed LB Tanner Vallejo.  
**BALTIMORE RAVENS** — Tendered RB Gus Edwards, C Trystan Colon-Castillo and LB Kristian Welch.  
**BUFFALO BILLS** — Released WR John Brown and DL Quinton Jefferson.  
**CAROLINA PANTHERS** — Re-signed LS

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

### Saturday's games

**EAST**  
Stony Brook (0-1) at Delaware (1-0)  
Monmouth (NJ) at Robert Morris (0-1), ppd.  
Albany (NY) (1-0) at Maine (0-1)  
Holy Cross at Lehigh  
Rhode Island at Villanova (1-0)  
Fordham at Bucknell, ppd.  
Colgate at Lafayette

**SOUTH**  
Morehead St. (0-1) at Presbyterian (0-1)  
Furman (2-1) at ETSU (1-0)  
Davidson (0-1) at Stetson  
Charleston Southern at Kennesaw St. (1-0)  
Lamar (0-2) at McNeese St. (1-2)  
Richmond (1-0) at Elon (1-2)  
Wofford (1-1) at Samford (1-2)  
The Citadel (0-6) at W. Carolina (0-6)  
Delaware St. (1-0) at SC State (0-1)  
Mercer (1-4) at VMI (2-0)  
William & Mary (0-1) at James Madison (3-0), ppd.  
Northwestern St. (0-1) at SE Louisiana (1-1)

**MIDWEST**  
Valparaiso at Butler  
North Dakota (3-0) at W. Illinois (0-2)  
N. Iowa (2-1) at S. Illinois (3-1)  
San Diego at Drake  
Missouri St. (1-4) at South Dakota (1-1)  
Youngstown St. (0-3) at S. Dakota St. (2-1)  
Illinois St. (0-2) at N. Dakota St. (3-1)

**SOUTHWEST**  
Nicholls (3-0) at Sam Houston St. (1-0)  
Grambling St. (0-1) vs. Prairie View (1-0) at Arlington, Texas  
Tarleton St. (2-2) at Dixie State (1-1)

**FAR WEST**  
UC Davis (1-0) at Weber St. (1-0)  
Idaho (1-1) at N. Arizona (1-1), ppd.  
S. Utah (0-2) at Cal Poly  
E. Washington (1-1) at Idaho St. (1-1)

### Sunday's games

**EAST**  
Duchesne (1-0) at Wagner  
LIU (1-0) at Sacred Heart (0-1)  
Bryant (0-1) at Merrimack College

**SOUTH**  
E. Illinois (0-2) at Tennessee St. (0-2)  
Jacksonville St. (5-1) at UT Martin (1-1)  
Murray St. (2-0) at Tennessee Tech (1-1)  
MVSU at Jackson St. (2-0)

**MIDWEST**  
Austin Peay (1-4) at SE Missouri (1-2)

## AP SPORTLIGHT

### March 12

**1937** — The first National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) men's basketball tournament is won by Central Missouri State. Central Missouri wins the eight-team, single-elimination tournament by defeating Morningside College (Iowa) 35-24.  
**1966** — In the last race of his 40-year career, John Longden wins the San Juan Capistrano Handicap at Santa Anita, aboard George Royal. He retires with a then-record number of victories, 6,032.  
**1984** — Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean of Britain become the first ice dancing team to record nine perfect marks of 6.0 during the world championships.  
**1985** — Larry Bird scores 60 points, including Boston's last 16, to set a Celtics record and lead them to a 126-115 victory over Atlanta.

### Baseball

J.J. Jansen.  
**CINCINNATI BENGALS** — Re-signed QB Brandon Allen to a one-year contract.  
**DALLAS COWBOYS** — Released FB Jamize Olawale.  
**MIAMI DOLPHINS** — Released LB Kyle Van Noy.  
**MINNESOTA VIKINGS** — Released LT Riley Reiff.  
**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS** — Released LB Kwon Alexander and WR Emmanuel Sanders. Re-signed RB Dwayne Washington.  
**NEW YORK GIANTS** — Released RG Kevin Zeitler.  
**PITTSBURGH STEELERS** — Re-signed WR Ray-Ray McCloud.  
**TENNESSEE TITANS** — Released CB Malcolm Butler and S Kenny Vaccaro.  
**WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM** — Tendered QB Kyle Allen.  
**HOCKEY**  
**National Hockey League**  
**NHL** — Suspended Nashville Predators D Dante Fabbro two games for elbowing.  
**ANAHEIM DUCKS** — Recalled RW Vinni from minor league taxi squad. Assigned D Kodie Curran to taxi squad.  
**COLORADO AVALANCHE** — Recalled D Greg Pateryn and RW Logan O'Conner from minor league taxi squad.  
**MINNESOTA WILD** — Recalled RW Kyle Rau from minors taxi squad.  
**NASHVILLE PREDATORS** — Designated C Rem Pitlick, Mathieu Olivier and Alexandre Carrier for assignment.  
**NEW JERSEY DEVILS** — Assigned F Mike McLeod to taxi squad. Reassigned D Connor Carrick and F Brett Seney to Binghamton (AHL). Recalled D Josh Jacobs and F Nick Merkley from Binghamton to taxi squad.  
**VEGAS GOLDEN KNIGHTS** — Recalled D Dylan Coghlan from minors taxi squad. Assigned C Sent LW Tyrell Goulbourne, G Rob-in Lehner and G Oscar Dansk to Henderson (AHL).  
**SOCCER**  
**Major League Soccer**  
**PORTLAND TIMBERS** — Terminated MF Tomas Conechny's contract.

## COLLEGE HOCKEY

### Men's conference tournaments

**x-if necessary**  
**ATLANTIC HOCKEY ASSOCIATION**  
**First Round**  
**(Campus sites, single elimination)**  
**Sunday, March 7**  
Sacred Heart def. Holy Cross, forfeit  
**Monday, March 8**  
Niagara 3, Mercyhurst 2  
**Tuesday, March 9**  
Bentley 7, Air Force 3  
**Quarterfinals (Best-of-three)**  
**Friday, March 12**  
American International vs. Bentley  
Army vs. Sacred Heart  
Robert Morris vs. Niagara  
Canisius vs. RIT  
**Saturday, March 13**  
American International vs. Bentley  
Army vs. Sacred Heart  
Robert Morris vs. Niagara  
Canisius vs. RIT  
**Sunday, March 15**  
x-American International vs. Bentley  
x-Army vs. Sacred Heart  
x-Robert Morris vs. Niagara  
x-Canisius vs. RIT  
**Semifinals**  
**Friday, March 19**  
Highest-remaining east seed vs. lowest-remaining west seed  
Highest-remaining west seed vs. lowest-remaining east seed  
**Championship**  
**Saturday, March 20**  
Semifinal winners  
**BIG TEN CONFERENCE**  
**At Notre Dame**  
**First Round**  
**Sunday, March 14**  
Notre Dame vs. Penn St.  
Minnesota vs. Michigan St.  
Michigan vs. Ohio St.  
**Semifinals**  
**Monday, March 15**  
Wisconsin vs. Notre Dame—Penn St. winner  
Minnesota—Michigan St. winner vs. Michigan—Ohio St. winner  
**Tuesday, March 16**  
Semifinal winners  
**HOCKEY EAST**  
**Opening Round**  
**Wednesday, March 10**  
No. 7 UMass Lowell 5, No. 11 Vermont 3  
No. 10 New Hampshire 7, No. 8 Maine 2

## PRO BASEBALL

### Spring training

**Tuesday's games**  
Tampa Bay 11, Boston 3  
Minnesota 1, Baltimore 0  
Pittsburgh 10, Atlanta 1  
Detroit 6, N.Y. Yankees 5  
Toronto 4, Philadelphia 1  
N.Y. Mets 5, St. Louis 3  
Chicago Cubs 9, Oakland 8  
Cleveland 9, Texas 2  
San Diego 4, Chicago White Sox 2  
Seattle 6, Kansas City 3  
Milwaukee 13, San Francisco 7  
Colorado 11, Arizona 4  
Washington 4, Houston 4  
L.A. Dodgers 5, Cincinnati 3  
**Wednesday's games**  
Washington 3, St. Louis 2  
Baltimore 4, Toronto 3  
Minnesota 6, Tampa Bay 2  
Philadelphia 6, Detroit 4  
Boston 5, Atlanta 3  
L.A. Angels 4, Cleveland 2  
Kansas City 9, Cincinnati 3  
San Francisco 7, Chicago Cubs 6  
Oakland 9, Milwaukee 1  
Texas 17, Seattle 5  
Colorado 7, San Diego 5  
Houston 4, Miami 4  
N.Y. Yankees 6, Pittsburgh 5  
L.A. Dodgers 3, Arizona 2  
**Thursday's games**  
Washington vs. Miami at Jupiter, Fla.  
Baltimore vs. Pittsburgh at Bradenton, Fla.  
Boston vs. Minnesota at Fort Myers, Fla.  
Tampa Bay vs. Atlanta at North Port, Fla.  
N.Y. Yankees vs. Philadelphia at Clearwater, Fla.  
Detroit vs. Toronto at Dunedin, Fla.  
Oakland vs. Texas at Surprise, Ariz.  
Cleveland vs. San Diego at Peoria, Ariz.  
Kansas City vs. Milwaukee at Phoenix  
Chicago Cubs vs. Colorado at Scottsdale, Ariz.  
San Francisco vs. L.A. Angels at Tempe, Ariz.  
N.Y. Mets vs. Houston at West Palm Beach, Fla.  
Chicago White Sox vs. Cincinnati at Goodyear, Ariz.  
Seattle vs. L.A. Dodgers at Glendale, Ariz.  
**Friday's games**  
Tampa Bay vs. Boston at Fort Myers, Fla.  
Toronto vs. Pittsburgh at Bradenton, Fla.  
Philadelphia vs. Baltimore at Sarasota, Fla.  
Atlanta vs. Minnesota at Fort Myers, Fla.  
N.Y. Yankees vs. Detroit at Lakeland, Fla.  
Miami vs. N.Y. Mets at Port St. Lucie, Fla.  
L.A. Dodgers vs. Cleveland at Goodyear, Ariz.  
Chicago White Sox vs. Texas at Surprise, Ariz.  
Milwaukee vs. Chicago Cubs at Mesa, Ariz.  
San Diego vs. Oakland at Mesa, Ariz.  
Colorado vs. San Francisco at Scottsdale, Ariz.  
Arizona vs. L.A. Angels at Tempe, Ariz.  
Houston vs. St. Louis at Jupiter, Fla.  
Cincinnati vs. Seattle at Peoria, Ariz.

## TENNIS

### Dubai Duty Free Championships

**Wednesday**  
**At Aviation Club Tennis Centre**  
**Dubai, United Arab Emirates**  
**Purse: \$1,835,490**  
**Surface: Hardcourt outdoor**  
**Women's Singles**  
**Round of 16**  
Jessica Pegula, United States, def. Karolina Pliskova (2), Czech Republic, 6-0, 6-2.  
Barbora Krejickova, Czech Republic, def. Svetlana Kuznetsova, Russia, 6-3, 6-2.  
Aryna Sabalenka (3), Belarus, def. Anett Kontaveit (15), Estonia, 6-3, 6-2.  
Anastasia Potapova, Russia, def. Belinda Bencic (6), Switzerland, 6-1, 2-6, 7-5.  
Elise Mertens (10), Belgium, def. Caroline Garcia, France, 6-4, 6-2.  
Coco Gauff, United States, def. Tereza Martincova, Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-2.  
Garbine Muguruza (9), Spain, def. Iga Swiatek (8), Poland, 6-0, 6-4.  
Jil Teichmann, Switzerland, def. Ons Jabeur, Tunisia, 6-3, 6-3.

### Guadalajara Open

**Wednesday**  
**At Panamerican Tennis Center**  
**Guadalajara, Mexico**  
**Purse: \$235,238**  
**Surface: Hardcourt outdoor**  
**Women's Singles**  
**Round of 16**  
Marie Bouzkova (2), Czech Republic, def. Mihaela Buzarnescu, Romania, 6-3, 6-2.  
Lauren Davis, United States, def. Danka Kovinic (6), Montenegro, 6-2, 6-2.  
Sara Sorribes Tormo (4), Spain, def. Leonie Kung, Switzerland, 6-3, 6-3.  
Eugenie Bouchard, Canada, def. Kaja Juvan (8), Slovenia, 6-4, 6-3.  
Astra Sharma, Australia, def. Leylah Annie Fernandez (7), Canada, 6-4, 6-4.  
Elisabetta Cocciaretto, Italy, def. Nadia Podoroska (1), Argentina, 7-5, 7-5.  
Anna-Karolina Schmiedlova, Slovakia, def. Renata Zarazua, Mexico, 6-3, 5-7, 6-1.  
Caty McNally, United States, def. Tamara Zidansek, Slovenia, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 6-4.

### Chile Open

**Wednesday**  
**At Club Deportivo Universidad Catolica**  
**Santiago, Chile**  
**Purse: \$325,270**  
**Surface: Red clay**  
**Men's Singles**  
**Round of 16**  
Laslo Djere (4), Serbia, def. Pedro Sousa, Portugal, 5-7, 7-5, 6-3.  
Facundo Bagnis, Argentina, def. Frances Tiafoe (5), United States, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (2).  
Federico Delbonis (8), Argentina, def. Andrej Martin, Slovakia, 6-0, 6-3.  
Holger Vitus Nodskov Rune, Denmark, def. Benoit Paire (2), France, 6-2, 6-3.

### Open 13

**Wednesday**  
**At Palais des Sports**  
**Marseille, France**  
**Purse: Euro 334,240**  
**Surface: Hardcourt indoor**  
**Men's Singles**  
**Round of 32**  
Egor Gerasimov, Belarus, def. Yannick Hanfmann, Germany, 6-2, 6-0.  
Cameron Norrie, Britain, def. Constant Lestienne, France, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 6-3.  
**Men's Singles**  
**Round of 16**  
Matthew Ebden, Australia, def. Emil Ruusuvuori, Finland, 6-2, 6-2.  
Karen Khachanov (3), Russia, def. Mackenzie McDonald, United States, 7-6 (4), 6-4.  
Jannik Sinner (5), Italy, def. Hugo Gaston, France, 6-4, 6-1.

### Qatar Open

**Wednesday**  
**At Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex**  
**Doha, Qatar**  
**Purse: \$787,930**  
**Surface: Hardcourt outdoor**  
**Men's Singles**  
**Round of 16**  
Andrey Rublev, Russia, def. Richard Gasquet, France, walkover.  
Roberto Bautista Agut (5), Spain, def. Alexander Bublik, Kazakhstan, 6-4, 6-3.  
Denis Shapovalov (4), Canada, def. Vasek Pospisil, Canada, 7-5, 6-4.  
Dominic Thiem (1), Austria, def. Aslan Karatsev, Russia, 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-2.  
Nikoloz Basilashvili, Georgia, def. Malek Jaziri, Tunisia, 6-2, 6-2.  
Taylor Fritz, United States, def. David Goffin (6), Belgium, 6-1, 5-7, 7-6 (9).  
Roger Federer (2), Switzerland, def. Daniel Evans, Britain, 7-6 (8), 3-6, 7-5.  
Marton Fucsovics, Hungary, def. Lloyd Harris, South Africa, 4-6, 7-6 (5), 6-2.

## GOLF

### LPGA money leaders

#### Through March 7

	Trn	Money
1. Jin Young Ko	4	\$1,667,925
2. Sei Young Kim	9	\$1,416,993
3. Inbee Park	13	\$1,377,799
4. Danielle Kang	13	\$897,872
5. Nasa Hataoka	12	\$854,024
6. Austin Ernst	17	\$771,092
7. Amy Olson	16	\$763,832
8. Minjee Lee	16	\$724,273
9. Lydia Ko	13	\$677,545

# Harvick remains in a rut

By ALEX ANDREJEV  
The Charlotte Observer

Lest you forget Kevin Harvick's dominance in 2020, the NASCAR driver sat poised on Zoom on Tuesday between two of the nine trophies he won last year, a reminder that one bad finish at Las Vegas this week can't take away his 58 career Cup wins.



Harvick

Harvick spoke with reporters ahead of Sunday's Cup race at Phoenix, where he's led nearly 15% of the series laps he's run at the one-mile dogleg oval—his highest percentage of Cup laps led at a single track. Despite the 20th-place finish after starting on the pole last weekend, the driver is ready to move on to better performances.

"Most of my races are over by Monday whether we've won or lost," Harvick said, adding that "angry takes too much time."

The No. 4 Ford team was the highest finisher of the four-car Stewart-Haas organization Sunday, and Harvick acknowledged that they "just missed it on all levels." But he didn't seem fazed by his team's recent finish due to the particular challenges of Las Vegas and that it's still early in the season. NASCAR has run four races so far on three different styles of tracks.

Harvick noted that this weekend's Phoenix track is drastically different than last weekend's 1.5-mile speedway in Las Vegas. The racing will probably look different, too, with different aero and engine packages being used between the two speedways.

After a No. 4 winless streak that's carried through 11 races starting at the end of last season (Harvick's most recent winless streak that lasted longer was the beginning of 2019), Sunday's finish and Stewart-Haas teammates all finishing out of the top 10 in the first four races this year, it's fair to wonder whether there's concern among the team over an emerging pattern. Harvick, however, seemed unconcerned.

He said his advice to his younger teammates, Chase Briscoe and Cole Custer, about overcoming their early struggles this year would be to maintain the perspective of, "It's a one-week-at-a-time grind."

# NHL

## AROUND THE LEAGUE

# Secondary scoring proves pivotal

### Top teams all have good scoring beyond top lines

BY LARRY LAGE  
Associated Press

The Tampa Bay Lightning hoisted the Stanley Cup last year, leaning on their top line of Brayden Point, Nikita Kucherov and Ondrej Palat to produce nearly 40% of their points during the postseason run.

Tampa Bay is now winning a different way, nearing the midway point of the 56-game, pandemic-shortened season.

The defending champions are off to the best start in franchise history because they have so much more balance on offense even with Kucherov, their leading scorer the previous five seasons, out for the season after having hip surgery.

“The secondary scoring on this team has been a big part of our success,” Lightning coach John Cooper said Tuesday. “But in the end, your best players have to be your best players.”

NHL coaches try to match their No. 1 lines against the top trio of forwards and those stars push one another at both ends of the ice. The best teams keep up the pressure by rolling multiple lines that can score and by having offensive-minded defensemen who can set up goals or light the lamp themselves.

Tampa Bay, the New York Islanders, Vegas and Toronto led their divisions at the beginning of the week, in part because their secondary scoring is a strength. Carolina, Florida, Washington, Minnesota, Edmonton and Winnipeg are among the teams that have been successful so far because they rely on more than their No. 1 line to produce points.

The Oilers have had 20 players score, giving teams more than just Connor McDavid and Leon Draisaitl to worry about.

“We know that Connor and Leon are going to drive some offense, but to be a good team we need to have that throughout our lineup and not just chipping in but we need consistency in that part,” Edmonton coach Dave Tippett said.

The Islanders were the first team in the league this season to have five players, including the four that center each line, score at least nine times. They also have a trio of defensemen with at least 10 points.

“Sometimes in this league, the top lines sort of nullify each other



NATHAN DENETTE / AP

**Toronto Maple Leafs left wing Zach Hyman, second from left, scores past Winnipeg Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck as Jets defenseman Dylan DeMelo (2) watches. The Maple Leafs share the NHL's top record with Tampa Bay and share the league lead in scoring with Edmonton, thanks to a balanced effort.**



DAVID BANKS / AP

**Chicago Blackhawks goaltender Kevin Lankinen, left, makes a save against Tampa Bay Lightning center Blake Coleman. One reason the Lightning lead their division is their scoring beyond their top line.**

out,” New York coach Barry Trotz said. “It’s what the rest of the lineup does, and the rest of the lineup can make a difference.”

Maple Leaf stars Auston Matthews and Mitch Marner are among the NHL’s scoring leaders, but their team didn’t start the week leading the league in points because of just the dynamic duo.

With the luxury of having a star such as John Tavares playing on the second line and third-line wing Zach Hyman capable of scoring and setting up goals, Toronto may finally get to celebrate winning a

Stanley Cup title for the first time since 1967.

“Having great depth is something championship teams have and being able to provide scoring throughout the lineup,” Hyman said. “It also helps with team morale and chemistry when everyone feels like they’re contributing. It’s always fun to score.”

### Still shining

The Western Conference-champion Dallas Stars got off to a rough start this season that started with a COVID-19 outbreak that led

to postponements. All-Star center Tyler Seguin and goaltender Ben Bishop are also recovering from offseason surgeries.

After routing Chicago 6-1, Dallas has now won two of three by a combined 11-1 after dropping four straight games. Stars coach Rick Bowness insisted he likes his team’s chances to bounce back, especially if they can play more 5-on-5 hockey by avoiding penalties.

“I’m happy with our team game even though the record doesn’t reflect that,” Bowness said.

### Flame out

Calgary, coming off consecutive postseason appearances for the first time in a decade, became the second NHL team to fire a coach this season. The Flames fired coach Geoff Ward last week and replaced him with Darryl Sutter, who is leading the team for the second time.

“We want to get out of this funk we’re in and push to get back in the playoffs,” forward Johnny Gaudreau said.

### Pandemic play

The NHL’s COVID-19 protocols kept just three players off the ice Tuesday night: Edmonton’s Kyle Turris, Nashville’s Erik Haula and San Jose’s Marcus Sorensen.

### Game of the week

Vegas visits St. Louis for back-to-back games Friday and Saturday in a clash of the top two teams in the West Division.

## Scoreboard

East Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
N.Y. Islanders	26	16	6	4	36	75	57
Washington	25	15	6	4	34	84	80
Pittsburgh	25	15	9	1	31	81	77
Boston	23	13	6	4	30	66	56
Philadelphia	23	13	7	3	29	76	73
N.Y. Rangers	24	10	11	3	23	68	67
New Jersey	22	8	11	3	19	55	71
Buffalo	24	6	14	4	16	56	80

Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	24	18	4	2	38	87	51
Carolina	25	18	6	1	37	88	66
Florida	25	16	5	4	36	84	72
Chicago	27	13	9	5	31	83	86
Columbus	27	10	12	5	25	71	89
Nashville	26	11	14	1	23	63	85
Dallas	21	8	8	5	21	62	55
Detroit	27	7	16	4	18	57	91

West Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	23	16	6	1	33	73	51
St. Louis	26	14	8	4	32	83	82
Minnesota	24	15	8	1	31	75	63
Colorado	24	14	8	2	30	72	59
Los Angeles	25	11	8	6	28	78	72
Arizona	26	12	10	4	28	69	77
Anaheim	27	8	13	6	22	62	86
San Jose	23	9	11	3	21	66	88

North Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Toronto	27	18	7	2	38	93	67
Edmonton	28	17	11	0	34	93	83
Winnipeg	25	16	8	1	33	83	72
Montreal	25	12	6	7	31	84	69
Vancouver	30	12	16	2	26	84	99
Calgary	26	11	12	3	25	71	80
Ottawa	29	9	19	1	19	77	115

### Wednesday's games

Minnesota 4, Vegas 3  
Edmonton 7, Ottawa 1  
Colorado 2, Arizona 1, OT  
Los Angeles 5, Anaheim 1  
Montreal 5, Vancouver 1

### Thursday's games

Florida at Columbus  
N.Y. Rangers at Boston  
Nashville at Carolina  
New Jersey at N.Y. Islanders  
Pittsburgh at Buffalo  
Washington at Philadelphia  
Winnipeg at Toronto  
Tampa Bay at Detroit  
Chicago at Dallas  
Montreal at Calgary

### Friday's games

Arizona at Minnesota  
Vegas at St. Louis  
Los Angeles at Colorado  
Ottawa at Edmonton  
San Jose at Anaheim

### Saturday's games

N.Y. Rangers at Boston  
Dallas at Columbus  
Chicago at Florida  
Montreal at Calgary  
N.Y. Islanders at New Jersey  
Nashville at Tampa Bay  
Pittsburgh at Buffalo  
Washington at Philadelphia  
Winnipeg at Toronto  
Vegas at St. Louis  
Edmonton at Vancouver  
San Jose at Anaheim

### Sunday's games

Arizona at Minnesota  
Carolina at Detroit  
N.Y. Islanders at New Jersey  
Dallas at Columbus  
Los Angeles at Colorado  
Toronto at Ottawa

### Monday's games

Nashville at Tampa Bay  
Washington at Buffalo  
Philadelphia at N.Y. Rangers  
Chicago at Florida  
Boston at Pittsburgh  
Vancouver at Ottawa  
Montreal at Winnipeg  
Edmonton at Calgary  
San Jose at Vegas  
St. Louis at Los Angeles

### Scoring leaders

Through Wednesday				
	GP	G	A	PTS
Connor McDavid, EDM	27	15	30	45
Patrick Kane, CHI	27	11	27	38
Leon Draisaitl, EDM	27	11	26	37
Mitchell Marner, TOR	27	10	25	35
Mark Scheifele, WPG	25	11	23	34
Auston Matthews, TOR	24	20	13	33
Anze Kopitar, LA	24	6	24	30

## COLLEGE BASKETBALL



ORLIN WAGNER / AP

Oklahoma forward Brady Manek, left, goes up for a rebound next to Iowa State forward George Condit IV during the Sooners' 79-73 first round win in the Big 12 tournament in Kansas City, Mo., Wednesday.

## Sooners hold on for key win

BY DAVE SKRETTA  
Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Even when Oklahoma built a 19-point second-half lead on slumping Iowa State, the Sooners probably should have known the Cyclones would at least make the game interesting in the closing minutes Wednesday night.

This is the Big 12 Tournament, after all.

So with their first-round game slipping away, the No. 25 Sooners turned to Austin Reaves for an answer. Their standout guard responded by scoring 11 of his 21 points in the closing minutes, allowing Oklahoma to hold on for a nervy 79-73 win that sent coach Lon Kruger's team into a quarter-final matchup with No. 11 Kansas.

"When you drop a few in a row that go down to the wire," Kruger

said afterward, "you have to get that feeling of winning again. I'm proud of the guys to get that one in the win column."

De'Vion Harmon added 18 points and Elijah Harkless had 12 for the No. 7 seeded Sooners (15-9), who had lost four straight and were on a shaky NCAA Tournament bubble heading into the weekend. But with a win over Iowa State, they are likely a lock for the field of 68 — and certainly would be with a win over the Jayhawks on Thursday night.

"This is a big one," Harmon said. "Every team is good. We know the Big 12. It's postseason time. It's win or go home."

The Cyclones (2-22) had won four of the past six Big 12 Tournaments, always playing their best in Kansas City, and were the defending champions by virtue of

their 2019 title when last year's event was canceled by the pandemic.

Iowa State, which hadn't won since beating Jacksonville State on Dec. 20, hung tough until Oklahoma began building a lead out of halftime. The Sooners took advantage of three straight turnovers to begin their charge with Harkless providing a spinning layup in transition and Kur Kuath a reverse ally-oop dunk.

Oklahoma at one point was ranked in the top 10, but a late-season slide left the Sooners needing at least a win Wednesday night to feel better about their NCAA Tournament hopes. Now, they can nearly lock up a berth with a win over short-handed Kansas, which will be missing David McCormack and Tristan Enaruna due to COVID-19 protocols.

## Orange make case to be off bubble

BY AARON BEARD  
Associated Press

Jim Boeheim figures his Syracuse team has done enough to earn a bid to the NCAA Tournament.

The Orange beat North Carolina State on Wednesday in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament, a matchup of the league's two teams facing bubble uncertainty. That certainly helped Syracuse (16-8) as it hovers around the cut line in many projections.

Buddy Boeheim scored 27 points with a season-high six of Syracuse's 14 three-pointers.

"I think when you look at the profile overall, I think we've got a lot of good wins against good teams," Boeheim said, adding: "I think we did what we needed to do this year, but we'll see what happens."

The Orange entered Wednesday at No. 49 in NET and viewed just outside the 68-team field.

Syracuse lacks a headline win and is 1-6 record in Quadrant 1 games — the top category based on an opponent's NET ranking — though Boeheim noted all seven games were played on the road.

He also pointed to the team's 4-1 record against Quadrant 2 teams, with the win against the Wolfpack — coming off five straight wins — likely joining that category.

## On the rise

**Colgate:** The Raiders (13-1) likely need to win the Patriot League Tournament to earn the bid., but they have a curiously high NET of No. 8 (sandwiched between No. 6 Alabama and ninth-ranked Ohio State) despite not playing a Quad-

rant 1 game.

## Hopes fading

**Marshall:** The Thundering Herd (15-7) had won six of seven but likely saw their chances evaporate with Wednesday's loss to Rice in the Conference USA Tournament.

**N.C. State:** The Syracuse loss essentially eliminated the Wolfpack (13-10), with coach Kevin Keatts being asked whether his team would accept a bid to a downsized 16-team NIT. "I hate to think about that," he said, "but certainly that's a good question to ask."

**Xavier:** The Musketeers (13-8) blew a 19-point lead in Wednesday's overtime loss to Butler in the first round of the Big East Tournament. Xavier has to hope wins against No. 17 Creighton and No. 25 Oklahoma are enough.

## Duke pulls out of ACC Tournament

Season is over after positive test, need to quarantine

Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C.— Duke has pulled out of the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament and ended its season after a positive coronavirus test and the resulting quarantining and contact tracing.

The ACC announced that the Blue Devils' quarterfinal game with Florida State scheduled for Thursday night has been canceled. Duke had won its first two tournament games, but finished just 13-11 overall and 9-9 in ACC games.

Athletic director Kevin White said that Duke's season is over, ending the Blue Devils' streak of 24 consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances.

The team entered the week knowing that it likely needed to win the ACC Tournament to extend an NCAA tournament streak dating back to 1996.

Duke failed to live up to its always lofty expectations, but coach Mike Krzyzewski said he loved this young team and was honored to coach it.

"We have not asked more of any team in our history, and they deserve enormous credit for

handling everything like the outstanding young men they are," Krzyzewski said. "I feel deeply for our players, who have done a terrific job all season in taking care of each other and the team."

"I am extremely proud of their collective attitudes and effort, which could not have been stronger."

Blue Devils athletic director Kevin White said someone within the program tested positive after Wednesday's game. He said the men's basketball players and coaching staff had not had a positive test the rest of the season.

White said the players are being quarantined.

"Since last March when the pandemic started, we have listened to our medical experts and always put safety at the forefront of any determinations regarding competition," White said. "As a result, this will end our 2020-21 season. We wish every team still playing college basketball good health and the very best during the next few weeks."

The Seminoles advanced to the ACC Tournament semifinals to play the winner of the North Carolina-Virginia Tech game.

## Teams will need just 5 to continue in NCAAs

BY EDDIE PELLIS  
Associated Press

All a team needs to play in this year's NCAA Tournament is five healthy players. How about a coach? The NCAA will get back to you on that.

The fluid nature of a March Madness played amid the coronavirus pandemic was spelled out Wednesday, hours before the selection committee began meeting to hash out a 68-team bracket that could remain in flux up until the games tip off next week.

In explaining a number of contingencies that could come into play if teams are exposed to COVID-19, NCAA senior VP of basketball Dan Gavitt said that as long as a team has five healthy players, it's good to go. And if that team's coaching staff gets decimated by the coronavirus?

"Honestly, it's probably something we should talk about as a committee," he said.

For months, the NCAA has been laying out protocols to ensure the tournament will go off in somewhat normal-looking fashion. The biggest change is that all 68 teams

will descend on Indianapolis next week, and all games over 19 days will be played in and around the city.

Players and coaches will be subject to frequent virus testing and contact tracing.

Two weeks ago, the NCAA released its policy about how and when teams that make the tournament might be replaced if they're struck by the virus. The bracket comes out during the usual reveal, on Sunday evening. After 6 p.m. Tuesday, teams that make the field cannot be replaced if they get sick, and their scheduled opponents would simply move on in the bracket.

But Gavitt acknowledged that as long as a team has five players, it can stick around for as long as it keeps winning.

"We decided if they had five players eligible and healthy," they could play, he said. "We wrestled with contingencies, and thought it was fairest for a team that earned its way, that even if it was compromised, they should have the opportunity to play rather than be replaced."

# NBA

## 10 THINGS TO KNOW

# What to watch as play returns

## Storylines abound around league as second half gets underway

BY TIM REYNOLDS  
Associated Press

The All-Star break, such as it was, is over.

The NBA returned Wednesday with a pair of games: Washington at Memphis and San Antonio at Dallas. Another 21 teams start their second-half slates on Thursday, and the five remaining teams get back on the court Friday.

Here's 10 things to know about what's happening, what might happen and what to watch the rest of the way:

### No more advantage

Home teams have gone 285-248 this season, a .535 winning percentage. It's on pace to be the lowest in NBA history.

The record in that department is .551, set last season — and it was trending that way even before the pandemic. The bubble and playing the final 88 regular-season games without fans had nothing to do with that change; in fact, "home" teams in the bubble won 56% of their games at Walt Disney World.

But this year, teams believe the lack of fans factors into home-court advantage not meaning much. Plus, road teams are getting more rest than usual — they're often in one city for multiple days to play a pair of games and typically can't leave their hotels for anything other than basketball.

### Heavy crown

Utah has the best record at the All-Star break, which obviously suggests the Jazz are a title contender.

Recent history says otherwise.

In the previous 11 seasons, nine teams that had the best record at the break didn't win the championship. The only exceptions: Miami in 2012 (the Heat were tied with NBA Finals runner-up Oklahoma City that season at 27-7 during the break), and Golden State in both 2015 and 2017.

### Threes still wild

Even with shortened schedules — teams playing 72 games instead of the usual 82 — there is a chance the record for three-pointers made leaguewide in a season gets broken.

NBA teams are on pace to make 27,731 three-pointers this season. That would be just 224 shy of the record, which is 27,955 set in 2018-19.

Teams are averaging 12.8 made threes per game, so the league is on pace to break that record for the ninth consecutive season. They're also averaging 34.9 attempts from three-point range per game, which will be a record for a 10th consecutive season — and nearly double the rate from a decade ago.



MARK J. TERRILL / AP

Phoenix Suns guard Chris Paul, center, passes the ball as Lakers forward Jared Dudley, left, and guard Alex Caruso defend on March 2 in Los Angeles. Paul is 47 assists away from 10,000 for his career.

### East beasts

Washington's Bradley Beal leads the NBA in scoring at 32.7 points per game, and Philadelphia's Joel Embiid is second at 30.2 per contest.

The Eastern Conference having the leaders in this category is a new twist.

No player from an East team has won a scoring title since Carmelo Anthony did for New York in 2012-13. And the last time the East had the league's two leading scorers for a full season was 2008-09 — when Miami's Dwyane Wade won the title, and Cleveland's LeBron James was second.

### Second-half Spurs

There are four teams with active streaks of at least five consecutive seasons with winning records after the All-Star break.

Toronto has five, Portland seven and Houston eight. And they're all light years away from San Antonio.

The Spurs have a winning post-All-Star record in 22 consecutive seasons — a streak so long that it predates the last time the league didn't have an All-Star Game. The Spurs went 22-12 after the break in 1997-98, there was no game because of the shortened season in 1998-99, and the San Antonio streak has kept going every year since.

The Spurs are 449-192 in the last 22 post-All-Star stretches, a 70% winning clip.

### Hectic time

The first half was hectic. There were 533 games in the season's first 72 days (excluding Christmas Eve, always an off day for the NBA), for an average of 7.4 games per day.

The second half could be busier.

If every remaining game gets played — in fairness, that's a very big 'if' — the

league would have 547 games over 68 days in the second half, or an average of just more than eight games per day.

### Rising Suns

Phoenix hit the All-Star break with the league's second-best record at 24-11.

It is a major turnaround.

The Suns' records at the last five All-Star breaks were awful: 22-33 last season, preceded by a league-worst 11-48 in 2018-19, 18-41 (tied for worst in the league) in 2017-18, 18-39 (29th out of 30 teams) in 2016-17 and 14-40 (tied for third-worst) in 2015-16.

The last time the Suns were over .500 at the break had been 2014-15, when they were 29-25. And the last time they were this good by the break was 2007-08, when they were 37-16 — with current Brooklyn assistant Mike D'Antoni coaching, current Golden State coach Steve Kerr running the front office and current Nets head coach Steve Nash playing point guard.

### CP3 nears 10,000

Another note on Phoenix: Chris Paul remains elite.

He's 47 assists away from 10,000 in his career, a milestone only five other players — John Stockton, Jason Kidd, Steve Nash, Mark Jackson and Magic Johnson — have reached.

This is Paul's 16th season. The New Orleans/Oklahoma City Hornets had a losing record in the games that he played over his first two seasons, a difficult time for that franchise following the relocation caused by Hurricane Katrina.

His teams have done nothing but win big since.

This will be the 14th consecutive season in which Paul's team has a winning record when he plays; the Suns are 23-

11 with him in the lineup this season.

All five of Paul's teams over those past 14 seasons — the Hornets, the Los Angeles Clippers, Houston, Oklahoma City and now Phoenix — have at least a .600 winning percentage in his regular-season appearances. Combined, his teams over those 14 years have won 66.4% of their games when he plays.

### Worst best

It's not an easy season for any team, with the games coming very quickly, not a lot of practice time and rosters tending to be in flux because of virus-related matters.

Perhaps that's why no team has some sort of super-gaudy record at the break.

Utah's 27-9 mark after the first half is the league's "worst best" mark since Sacramento was 37-13 to lead the league going into the 2004 All-Star Game.

### Jimmy's art

Miami's Jimmy Butler is one of the league's few players who thrive in the mid-range game.

That includes the unguarded 15-footer.

Butler might do something the league hasn't seen in 12 years. The last time someone averaged at least 20 points per game and got at least 35% of those points at the foul line was 2008-09 when Sacramento's Kevin Martin did it — averaging 24.6 points, getting 36.4% of them at the stripe.

Butler is averaging 20.5 points this season, 35% of that from free throws.

Last season, Butler came close, with 37.9% of his points from the foul line. But he averaged 19.9 points, only three points shy of averaging exactly 20.0.

## Scoreboard

### Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	24	12	.667	—
Brooklyn	24	13	.649	½
Boston	19	17	.528	5
New York	19	18	.514	5½
Toronto	17	19	.472	7

Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	18	18	.500	—
Charlotte	17	18	.486	½
Atlanta	16	20	.444	2
Washington	14	21	.400	3½
Orlando	13	23	.361	5

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	22	14	.611	—
Chicago	16	18	.471	5
Indiana	16	19	.457	5½
Cleveland	14	22	.389	8
Detroit	10	26	.278	12

### Western Conference

Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	18	15	.545	—
Dallas	19	16	.543	—
Memphis	17	16	.515	1
New Orleans	15	21	.417	4½
Houston	11	23	.324	7½

Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	27	9	.750	—
Portland	21	14	.600	5½
Denver	21	15	.583	6
Oklahoma City	15	21	.417	12
Minnesota	7	29	.194	20

Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	24	11	.686	—
L.A. Lakers	24	13	.649	1
L.A. Clippers	24	14	.632	1½
Golden State	19	18	.514	6
Sacramento	14	22	.389	10½

### Wednesday's games

Memphis 127, Washington 112  
Dallas 115, San Antonio 104

### Thursday's games

Detroit at Charlotte  
Atlanta at Toronto  
Boston at Brooklyn  
Minnesota at New Orleans  
New York at Milwaukee  
Orlando at Miami  
Philadelphia at Chicago  
Dallas at Oklahoma City  
Golden State at L.A. Clippers  
Houston at Sacramento  
Phoenix at Portland

### Friday's games

Cleveland at New Orleans  
Denver at Memphis  
Philadelphia at Washington  
Miami at Chicago  
Orlando at San Antonio  
Houston at Utah  
Indiana at L.A. Lakers

### Saturday's games

New York at Oklahoma City  
Detroit at Brooklyn  
Milwaukee at Washington  
Toronto at Charlotte  
Sacramento at Atlanta  
Portland at Minnesota  
Dallas at Denver  
Indiana at Phoenix

### Sunday's games

Memphis at Oklahoma City  
Utah at Golden State  
San Antonio at Philadelphia  
Miami at Orlando  
Cleveland at Atlanta  
Boston at Houston  
Portland at Minnesota  
L.A. Clippers at New Orleans  
Toronto at Chicago

### Scoring leaders

Through March 10				
	G	FG	FT	PTS AVG
Beal, WAS	33	374	251	1074 32.5
Embiid, PHI	30	285	298	905 30.2
Lillard, POR	34	315	237	1013 29.8
Curry, GS	35	343	184	1039 29.7
Antetokounmpo, MIL	35	368	240	1015 29.0
LaVine, CHI	34	350	156	976 28.7
Doncic, DAL	33	328	195	938 28.4
Irving, BKN	26	269	94	708 27.2
Jokic, DEN	36	379	163	977 27.1
Leonard, LAC	30	287	165	799 26.6
Young, ATL	34	262	288	897 26.4

## NBA

# Embiid emerges as MVP front-runner for 76ers

By DAN GELSTON

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Joel Embiid sank a step-back jumper in the final minute of the best game of his NBA career, ran back with his arms raised high over his head as piped-in “M-V-P!” “M-V-P!” chants blared through the arena and beckoned with his hands for imaginary fans — for sure, the Philadelphia 76ers’ fanatics watching at home — to get loud.

Embiid plays with as much fun as any MVP front-runner, and on the February night he dropped 50 points on the Chicago Bulls, he sent a sign to the fans they are with him in spirit.

“The fans are always there for me when I play,” Embiid said. “I play for the fans, I play for the city. All my goals when I play basketball are related to the city of Philadelphia. I feel like they’re here for us even when they’re not. I always feel their presence.”

Guess what, Joel: Sixers fans are allowed back in the building on Sunday, and if they are among the lucky 3,100 to snag a ticket — lower-center tickets can be found on StubHub for up to \$1,250 a pop — they’ll surely show the love worthy of 20,000 back to Embiid.

At 26, Embiid has not only led the Sixers (24-12) to the best record in the Eastern Conference, he’s at last blossomed into the durable, mature and downright dominant force the Sixers expected when they made him the No. 3 pick of the 2014 draft.

“I just want to destroy everything in my path,” Embiid said.

Let’s not raise a “Mission Accomplished” banner quite yet in the Wells Fargo Center rafters.

But what Embiid has done through the All-Star break has made him the betting +200 MVP favorite (Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James is next at +225) and turned — along with fellow All-Star Ben Simmons and Tobias Harris — the Sixers into perhaps the only team that can give Brooklyn a run out of the East. The Sixers have not won the NBA championship since 1983.

“It’s nice to have a big guy in the MVP talk,” Hall of Famer Shaquille O’Neal told The Associated Press. “You have to take a high-percentage shot and take advantage of your opponent. He’s finally playing like that. This is how you play. You want to be good, you want to be great or you want to be the greatest? You decide.”

Embiid, who missed what would have



MATT SLOCUM/AP

**The Philadelphia 76ers’ Joel Embiid is having the best season for a 76ers big man since Moses Malone and he has his team atop the Eastern Conference standings heading into the second half of the season.**

been his first two seasons because of injuries, still put up strong numbers in his first four. But he always left hints there was so much untapped potential in his about 7-foot frame.

His 30.2 points are behind only Washing-

ton’s Bradley Beal and about 2 ½ points higher than his previous career best. Embiid has five games of 40-plus points and 10-plus rebounds in 30 games — the rest of the NBA players combined hit that mark only four times — highlighted by that 50-point,

17-board game on Feb. 17 against the Bulls. Embiid was the first 76er to score 50 since Allen Iverson in 2005.

He is trying to become the first Sixer to win NBA MVP — the fans call it an MVBiid campaign — since Iverson in 2001. Moses Malone (1982-83), Julius Erving (1980-81) and Wilt Chamberlain (who won three straight from 1965-1968) all won the NBA’s top honor.

■ Embiid’s 13 career 40-10 games tie him with Charles Barkley for second-most in team history, behind Chamberlain (31).

■ He leads the NBA in total free throws made (298), free throws made per game (9.9) and free-throw attempts per game (11.6).

■ Embiid, Barkley and Chamberlain are the only three 76ers with at least 900 points and 300 rebounds within their first 30 games of a season.

Embiid said he cared more this season about winning defensive player of the year — though he may have to fight off Simmons — than taking any other individual award.

“When I came in the league, I never thought I would be that good offensively,” he said. “I always focused on the defensive side. That’s been my goal, to win it.”

Leading the 76ers to their first NBA Finals trip since 2001 could bolster his credentials for individual awards. The Sixers previously bottomed out in the standings for a shot at landing a franchise player like Embiid. They did have back-to-back 50-win seasons and consecutive trips to the East semis with Embiid but were swept out of the first round last season.

“Without winning, you’re not part of those conversations when it comes to defensive player of the year and MVP and all that stuff,” Embiid said. “That’s the first thing. I want to win. That’s all I care about.”

Brett Brown was fired after the Sixers were swept and Doc Rivers, a respected coach who won the 2008 NBA title with Boston, was brought in to round Embiid and Simmons into championship form. Daryl Morey, the former Houston Rockets executive, was tasked with running Philadelphia’s basketball operations and helped change the narrative that the two franchise stars could coexist on, and even off, the court.

“One of the things I heard coming in here was that they don’t fit,” Rivers said. “My eyes kept telling me they do fit. They fit very well because of their skill sets. I think now they see that. I think that gives them confidence.”

## Celtics get defensive boost as Smart is cleared

By KYLE HIGHTOWER

Associated Press

BOSTON — Celtics guard Marcus Smart expects to be back on the floor for the first time in more than a month when Boston opens the second half of its schedule at Brooklyn on Thursday night.

Smart said he felt good after practicing with the team Wednesday and that he has been cleared to return for the Celtics’ matchup with the Nets after missing the past 18 games with a torn left calf. “As of right now I will be play-



Smart

“He’s a guy that knows how to play, plays both ends of the court and makes us better on both ends of the court,” Stevens said.

Boston would have had its full roster available for the first time

ing and attending the game tomorrow,” he said.

Coach Brad Stevens said Smart’s return should provide an instant lift.

all season Thursday, but Romeo Langford, who hasn’t played this season following wrist surgery, has been placed in the league’s health and safety protocol and won’t travel with the team to Brooklyn.

Stevens said Langford has been cleared to resume playing and would have been available if he hadn’t been placed in the protocol. Still, Stevens said he’s looking forward to playing the Nets.

“It will be a great litmus test to see where we stand, because I

think they are clearly the team that is going to be very difficult for teams to beat,” he said.

Smart has been the engine of the Celtics’ defense for most of his seven seasons in Boston and the team struggled on that end of the floor without him, going 9-9 and allowing opponents to shoot 46.5% and average 112.5 points over that stretch.

He said it’s been frustrating to watch that decline from the sideline with no ability to affect it.

“Especially when you know

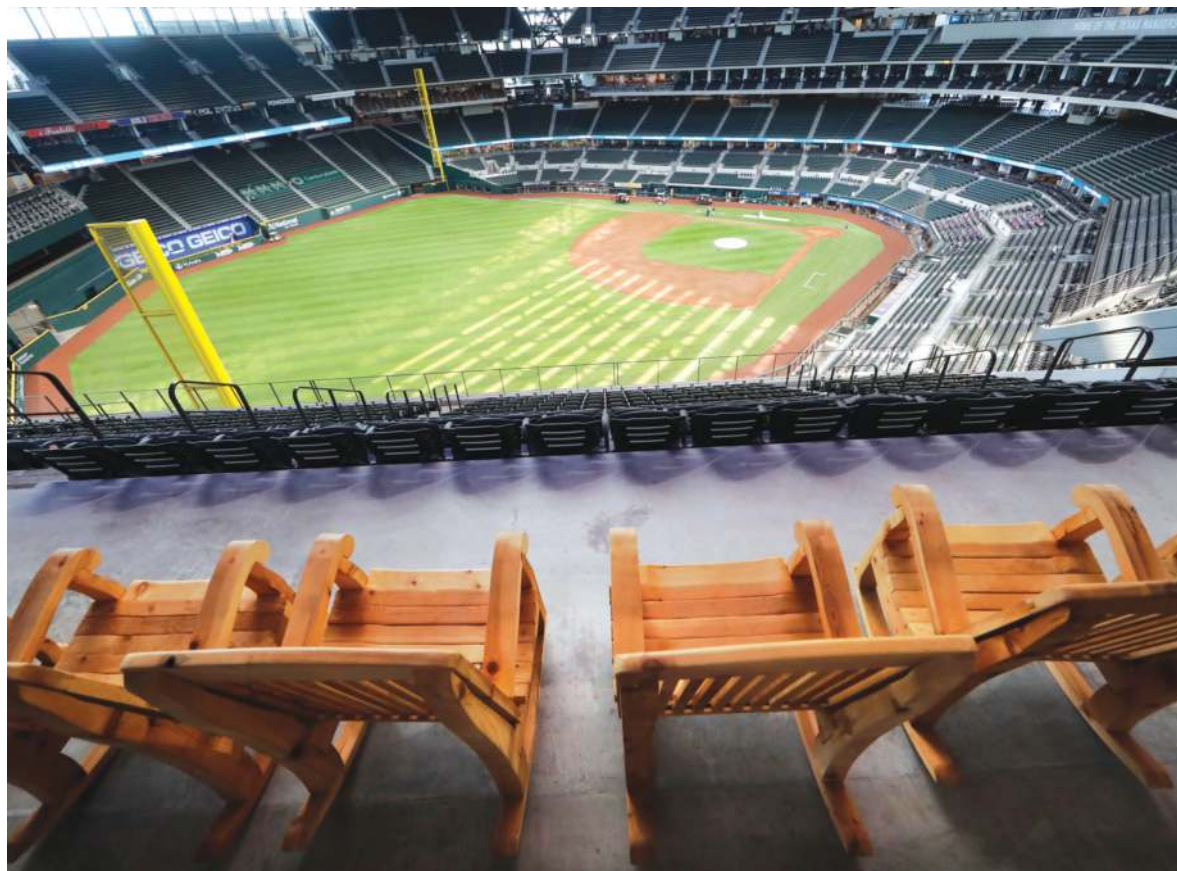
how good of a defensive team we can be — that we are,” Smart said. “And for me, being a defensive guy, it is tough. But being over there I have to look at it from a different perspective. When everybody else is looking at the negatives about it I’m looking at the positives.”

What he sees are things that can be fixed and that the Celtics can control with their effort.

“And what I have to do to bring back the defensive energy for us,” Smart said.



# MLB/VIRUS OUTBREAK



LM OTERO/AP

Oversized rocking chairs sit ready for fans on the patio at the Texas Rangers' home baseball stadium, Globe Life Field, in Arlington, Texas. The Rangers could have a full house for their home opener next month after debuting their new 40,518-seat stadium without fans in the stands last season.

## Rangers first in line for return to capacity crowds

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**  
Associated Press

The Texas Rangers are on track to become the first team in Major League Baseball or any major U.S.-based sports league to have a full-capacity crowd since the coronavirus pandemic started altering the sports landscape a year ago.

On the same day Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's order took effect allowing businesses in the state to operate at 100% capacity, Rangers CEO Neil Leibman said Wednesday that the team hopes to be at that for the April 5 opener against the Toronto Blue Jays.

"We're very confident we won't be a super-spreader event," said Leibman, who is also the team's president of business operations. "With all the protocols that we're following, we'll be extremely responsible and provide a very comfortable environment for somebody to enjoy the game without worrying we're going to be a spreader event."

The pandemic could still alter the team's intent to host a capacity crowd at the 40,518-seat Globe Life Field, which the Rangers opened last year without fans in the stands.

Local officials are still able to impose "mitigation strategies," such as reduced capacity, if virus hospitalizations exceed 15% of all hospital capacity in their region over certain periods.

Even with his order, Abbott has encouraged the public to continue practicing social distancing measures and wearing masks, though they are no longer mandated.

The Rangers will require fans to wear masks for games, unless they are actively eating and drinking at their seats, as was the case for the postseason major league games played at their \$1.2 billion stadium in Arlington, Texas, in October.

After the Rangers played all 30 of their home games during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season without fans, MLB allowed about 28% capacity at the retractable-roof stadium for the National League Championship Series and World Series that were played there exclusively. Abbott was on hand for the World Series opener, where he got to deliver the "Play Ball!" message before a crowd of 11,388.

The Houston Astros announced in January that they would allow fans to attend games at 25% capacity this season, which would allow about 10,300 fans. It's unclear if they will change that plan in the wake of Abbott's order. A team spokesman said it was "still being worked on" when asked about capacity on Wednesday.

Leibman, who is part of the Rangers' ownership group, said MLB allows teams to operate under local capacity policy, as long as adequate protection for players

is in place. The Rangers are installing plexiglass barriers on top of the dugouts and along the back and sides of the bullpens.

All concession and merchandising transactions this season will be cashless, tickets will be digital and the roof will remain open during games when weather permits. The team will enforce social distancing for fans entering and exiting the ballpark, as well as when in lines for concessions or merchandise. No tailgating will be allowed outside the stadium.

Rob Matwick, the team's executive vice president, stressed the need for fans to voluntarily comply with any requirements, but said they will be enforced when necessary.

"We will need fan cooperation, there's no doubt. The good news is the numbers are trending down," Matwick said. "Can we drop our vigilance? No. We need their cooperation."

The Rangers plan to create "distanced seating" sections in certain locations of the stadium, with more space between occupied seats for all games after the home opener.

Texas has been allowing some fans at sporting events, from high schools all the way through the top professional leagues, since last summer and most teams and leagues have kept attendance at sharply reduced levels.

## COVID-19: One year later, sports world still grappling with how to manage virus

FROM PAGE 48

So, when two NBA basketball teams were hastily sent back to their locker rooms, not to return, after pregame introductions on March 11, 2020, and, then, a day later, when two college basketball teams walked off the floor at half-time and also didn't come back — "Game Ppd, pandemic" — it was a shock to the system.

It was one thing for the still-nascent collection of COVID-19 numbers, the interviews with lawmakers and the warnings from Dr. Anthony Fauci to overtake CNN, Fox News and MSNBC. Quite another for all those updates to find their way onto ESPN.

It was a sign that the steadily streaming loop of games we play, and watch — games that have been played amid crisis, in the aftermath of catastrophe and that even resumed less than a week after the 9/11 terrorist attacks — could no longer be taken for granted. For the first time in memory, sports were as much at the mercy of an uncontrolled, unpredictable and ever-changing health crisis as any other segment of life.

A year after the worldwide coronavirus pandemic stopped all the games in their tracks, the aftershocks are still being felt across every sector.

It's true in the pros and colleges, where leagues and conferences found themselves scrambling to figure out how to resume in bubbles, pods and cohorts. Once jam-packed, stadiums are now being used as mass vaccination venues or, in cases where they've reopened their gates to significant numbers of fans, scapegoated as potential superspreader sites. The goal of it all is a return to something resembling "normal," to get back to providing the masses with the programming they sorely missed while still accounting for the high risk the players take for the sake of our round-the-clock entertainment (and, yes, their millions in salaries and profit).

It's also true at the grassroots, where little leagues, swim teams, gymnastics camps and running clubs all went dark, leaving the very existence of their businesses, to say nothing of the sports they fortify from the ground all the way to the elite levels, up in the air.

And at the outdoor playgrounds and courts and courses, which were shuttered, roped off and padlocked for weeks, sometimes months, before slowly gaining cachet as a new, somewhat safer haven for millions of restless citizens shut in by government mandate, or fear, or concern, or some combination of the three.

Some of what was lost, or stopped, has come back over the ensuing 12 months, with the rapid development of a vaccine and a sometimes-begrudging acceptance of mask-wearing and social distancing becoming norms that are now being relaxed in certain parts of the U.S. In many cases, lessons learned in sports have been applied to society in general, and helped make things better. The NFL, for instance, offered a veritable manual for bringing large groups back into the workplace — if you have the resources.

But life at all these levels does not look the same, and some of it might never look "normal" again.

"Urinals, water fountains and hot dog stands where someone hands you food directly; buying game programs and taking ticket stubs home; athletes signing autographs and passing a pen back to you," said sports marketing guru Joe Favorito, spelling out just a short list on how the fan experience has changed for good.

Said media expert Dennis Deninger: "We will never return to the old model of sending commentators, analysts and producers to every game that is going to be broadcast." It will save money but come at a cost, he said: "The broadcast product cannot help but be diminished if those who we as fans count on to be our eyes and ears at an event are not there."

Indeed, we as sports journalists have become comfortable forgoing the locker rooms for interviews via Zoom. The whole concept of "access" will generate debate for what's left of the media when the world regains its health and discovers its new normal.

The prospect of sports without reporters or fans in the stands went from a far-flung germ of an idea to an everyday reality. I worked on a story a year ago this week that never saw the light of day. Topic: What would the NCAA Tournament look like without fans? There was no NCAA Tournament. There will be one this year, albeit in front of 25% capacity crowds and with the entire three weeks' worth of games packed into one city, Indianapolis.

One takeaway that is as relevant today as it was a year ago came from the esteemed media commentator Bob Thompson of Syracuse: A big part of the show IS the fans — the crying flute players, the painted chests, the cheerleaders. Without all that, he said, sports wouldn't feel quite the same, the TV program wouldn't be as fun, maybe the popcorn wouldn't taste as good, even if the games did go on as planned.

How right he was.

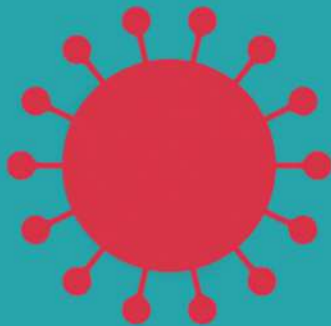
# SPORTS



## Stuck in a rut

Harvick still looking for dominant 2020 form » **Auto racing, Page 41**

### VIRUS OUTBREAK



# The long game

COVID-19 changed the way we play, watch, and cheer sports

By **EDDIE PELLIS**  
*Associated Press*

**I**t's the predictable rhythm of sports that draws us in. Not so much the results of the games themselves as the steady cadence of the seasons — the cutting

down of nets and hoisting of trophies, the pregame hype and postgame deconstructions, the trade talk and injury crises that envelop each passing year with the regularity of an atomic clock.

**SEE COVID-19 ON PAGE 47**



ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN VENABLES  
Stars and Stripes

**Duke's season, NCAA tournament streak end** » Page 43

