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Alaska heating up



PHOTOS BY JASON WELCH/U.S. Army

Paratroopers from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division "Spartan Brigade" strike a pose before an exercise near Fort Greely, Alaska, on March 21. The Army is changing its focus in Alaska to more effectively counter Russia and China.

Amid Russia tensions, Army poised to revamp forces in preparation for Arctic fight

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The U.S. Army is poised to revamp its forces in Alaska to better prepare for future cold-weather conflicts, and it is expected to replace its Stryker brigade with a more mobile infantry unit better suited for the frigid fight, Army leaders say.

Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said she expects to make a final decision soon about the Alaska troop change, saying she will likely convert the Stryker unit, which uses eight-wheeled vehicles, to an infantry brigade.

"I think right now the purpose of Army forces in Alaska is much more about creating an extreme cold weather capable formation" that could be used in Europe or the Indo-Pacific,



Paratroopers from the "Spartan Brigade" train in Alaska. The Army has decided that Alaska-based troops should train in their home state, under the weather conditions they would face in an Arctic fight.

Wormuth said on a recent trip to Alaska to meet with senior commanders and troops. "We're trying to get to a place where we have Arctic capable forces — forces that can survive and operate in that environment."

The U.S. has long viewed the Arctic as a growing area of competition with Russia and China, particularly as climate change brings warmer temperatures and opens the sea lanes for longer periods of time. But officials have acknowledged that the U.S. lags behind those nations. Russia has taken steps to increase its military presence there, and China views the region as economically valuable for shipping and natural resources.

The changes in the Army were under consid-

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WAR IN UKRAINE

Finland says it will apply to join NATO

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Finland on Thursday announced its intent to join NATO, a landmark decision that is expected to win swift approval from allies and could lead to more U.S. military training missions in the Arctic.

"Finland must apply for NATO membership without delay," Prime Minister Sanna Marin and President Sauli Niinisto said in a joint statement.

The move, prompted by Russia's war on Ukraine, reverses Finland's quasi-neutral status, which dates to the Cold War. Sweden, citing the same concerns as Finland, is also expected to announce its plan to join NATO in the coming days.

Over the years, Finland has become a close partner with NATO, carrying out joint exercises and taking part in operations in places such as Afghanistan.

U.S. troops have also carried out periodic training events in the country. With full-fledged Finnish membership in NATO, those opportunities to carry out joint missions are expected to expand.

Finland's modernized military would also bring significant assets to NATO's northeastern flank along the 800-mile border Finland shares with Russia.

Finnish leaders said NATO membership would strengthen the country's security and also

SEE FINLAND ON PAGE 8

RELATED

Ukraine retakes some towns, but Russia advances in Donbas [Page 8](#)

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Beyond Meat shares tumble on disappointing Q1

Associated Press

Plant-based meat company Beyond Meat reported lower-than-expected revenue in the first quarter as it slashed prices and demand from restaurants fell.

The El Segundo, California, company said its revenue rose 1.2% to \$109.5 million in the January-March period. Wall Street had forecast revenue of \$112 million, according to analysts polled by FactSet.

Beyond Meat's shares — already down 60% from the start of

this year — tumbled 24% in after-hours trading.

Beyond Meat said the total volume of products sold in the first quarter rose by 12%, but net revenue per pound dropped 10%, largely because of discounts and reductions in list prices.

Beyond Meat President and CEO Ethan Brown said lowering prices in order to achieve parity with animal-based meat products remains the company's long-term goal. But in the first quarter, he said, the company felt

pressure to drop prices because of a raft of new competitors, including lower-priced store brands.

Beyond Meat said its U.S. retail revenue jumped 6.9% in the quarter, but that was mostly due to the introduction of Beyond Meat Jerky, a meatless jerky developed as part of a snack food partnership with PepsiCo. Beyond Meat said U.S. revenue from its other products, including burgers and sausages, was lower than the prior year.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates			
Euro costs (May 13)	\$1.02	South Korea (Won)	1291.16
Dollar buys (May 13)	0.9327	Switzerland (Franc)	0.9998
British pound (May 13)	\$1.19	Thailand (Baht)	29.86
Japanese yen (May 13)	127.00	Turkey (NewLira)	15.3994
South Korean won (May 13)	1251.00		

(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.)

Commercial rates			
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770	Prime rate	4.00
Britain (Pound)	1.2205	Interest Rates Discount rate	1.50
Canada (Dollar)	1.3044	Federal funds market rate	0.08
China (Yuan)	6.7854	3-month bill	0.89
Denmark (Krone)	7.1555	30-year bond	3.04
Egypt (Pound)	18.3320		
Euro	0.9616		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8500		
Hungary (Forint)	368.05		
Israel (Shekel)	3.4610		
Japan (Yen)	129.77		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3069		
Norway (Krone)	9.8993		
Philippines (Peso)	52.43		
Poland (Zloty)	4.49		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7513		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3965		

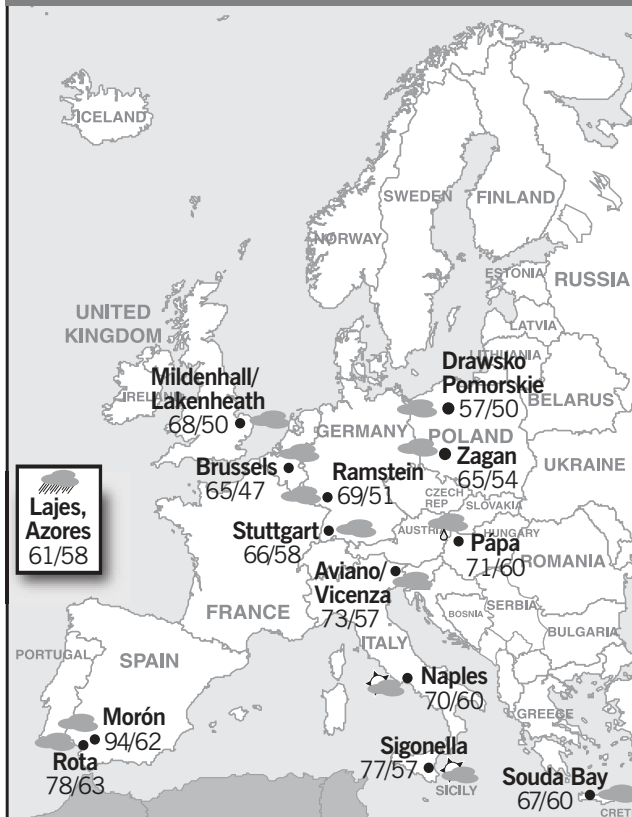
INTEREST RATES

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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MILITARY

N. Korea fires 3 missiles off eastern coast

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — North Korea launched three short-range ballistic missiles off its eastern coast on Thursday, according to South Korean military officials.

The weapons were fired around 6:29 p.m., the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a message to reporters. It said it was coordinating with the United States on the matter.

The missiles were estimated by the Joint Chiefs to have flown about 224 miles at a peak altitude of 56 miles.

The Japanese prime minister's office in a tweet said it also detected a suspected missile being fired from North Korea.

The missiles mark North Korea's 15th round of weapons testing so far this year. The regime's latest launch was conducted on May 7, when it fired a short-range submarine-launched ballistic missile.

The launches come two days after South Korea inaugurated its newest president, Yoon Suk Yeol. A conservative member of the People Power Party, Yoon has vowed to reinforce the country's alliance with the United States and respond firmly against North Korean provocations.

In his inauguration speech on Tuesday, Yoon said "the door to dialogue will remain open" for North Korea to "resolve" its nuclear weapon program.

"If North Korea stops develop-

ing its nuclear program and turns to substantive denuclearization, I will prepare for an audacious plan to achieve epoch-making improvement in North Korea's economy and North Koreans' lives in cooperation with the international community," Yoon said in his speech.

The president also floated the idea of a vast economic package for the North, should it take steps toward denuclearization.

North Korea has a history of conducting weapons tests shortly before and after significant events in South Korea. The regime test-fired around five missiles one month after former South Korean President Moon Jae-in took office in 2017.

U.S. State Department spokes-

man Ned Price in a press briefing on Wednesday said "there is no more pressing challenge than that posed by" North Korea's weapons program.

"We have made very clear that we are willing to engage in good-faith diplomacy with [North Korea]," he said. "We do so, of course, with no hostile intent."

Multiple U.S. officials in recent weeks have speculated that North Korea has no plans to discontinue missile or nuclear tests.

Defense Intelligence Agency Director Army Lt. Gen. Scott Berrier during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Tuesday briefed lawmakers that the regime will likely continue its testing and "justify its actions by using U.S. policy, South Korea's mil-

itary modernization, and combined U.S.-South Korean military exercises as pretext to normalize North Korea's military advancements."

In a press briefing on May 6, State Department principal deputy spokeswoman Jalina Porter said the North may conduct its seventh nuclear test as early as this month.

North Korea last conducted a nuclear test on Sept. 3, 2017. The test, carried out in an underground facility in the northeastern mountains at Punggye-ri, was measured as a 6.3-magnitude earthquake by the U.S. Geological Survey.

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Number of acknowledged US strikes hits 15-year low

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

The number of declared U.S. military airstrikes around the world last year declined to the lowest total since 2006, a recent report by an international monitoring group said.

The civilian death toll from U.S. airstrikes also fell as a result of the end of combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the report, which was published Tuesday by the London-based nonprofit group Airwars.

The U.S. Air Force launched 500 airstrikes in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria in 2021, compared with 915 such missions in 2020, public data from the service says.

But additional airstrikes may be undeclared, said the Airwars report, which accused the U.S. military of not being transparent about collateral damage to civilians.

"U.S. assumptions of low civilian harm from its own actions in recent conflicts remain highly problematic," the group's director, Chris Woods, said in a statement in the report.

The number of aerial campaigns over Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria spiked in 2017, the first year of Donald Trump's presidency, before falling over the course of his term.

This trend continued under President Joe Biden, who ordered an undeclared six-month pause on U.S. counterterrorism strikes in Somalia and Yemen, The New York Times reported last year.

Estimates of the number of civilians killed by U.S. drone strikes vary widely between independent monitoring groups and the military's own assessments.

The Pentagon's policies on assessing whether its missions are hurting civilians need reform, according to a January report by Rand Corp., a nonprofit research group that contracts with the Defense Department.

The U.S. does not sufficiently reach out to external sources such as witnesses or reporters, instead depending on its own unreliable technological tools before assessing its culpability, the Rand report said.

The Airwars findings regarding civilian casualties from U.S. airstrikes dovetail with those of a New York Times investigative series last year. The newspaper found that airstrikes in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria killed civilians whom the U.S. had declared to be militants, and that the process for determining culpability was flawed.

The Times was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in international reporting Monday for



J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

An Afghan policeman watches the aftermath of strikes by U.S. F-16 jets against Islamic State fighters in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan, in 2018.

its series "Airstrikes Gone Wrong."

On Tuesday, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby acknowledged the reporting by the Times and congratulated the newspaper on its award for the series.

"We're trying to learn from those mis-

takes," Kirby said. "And we knew that we weren't always as transparent about those mistakes as we should be."

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Kim Jong Un orders lockdown amid first COVID-19 cases

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — North Korea for the first time has confirmed there are COVID-19 infections within its borders and said it is facing a "grave" situation due to an outbreak.

The state-run Korean Central News Agency reported Thursday that the North has implemented the "largest scale epidemic prevention and control system" upon the discovery of the coronavirus respiratory disease's omicron var-

iant.

The news agency did not provide case counts or fatality rates in its report but said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had ordered a "lock down" of all cities and their combined population of roughly 25 million people.

Pyongyang's decision to confirm COVID-19 infections in the country comes two years after South Korea reported its first cases. Previously, the North did not report a single infection and released updated case numbers for

other nations.

In 2021, North Korea rejected nearly 3 million doses of the Chinese-produced Sinovac Biotech vaccine from UNICEF, saying they would be needed elsewhere. The North is part of the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access plan, or COVAX, that provides vaccines to impoverished countries.

Pyongyang also rejected deliveries of the AstraZeneca vaccine through COVAX, citing potential side effects, South Korea's Institute for National Security Strategy

said in July 2021.

While North Korea imposes strict limits on access beyond its borders, it allows humanitarian aid groups, such as the World Health Organization, to operate inside the country.

Meanwhile, South Korea's Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency reported 35,906 new COVID-19 cases in its population of 51 million people on Wednesday.

Seoul dropped its mask mandate and a host of other social dis-

tancing requirements in May. The country's one-day record is 621,187 cases on March 1.

U.S. Forces Korea, the command responsible for about 28,500 troops in the country, counted 98 cases from the week ending Monday. The U.S. military also dropped much of its social distancing restrictions for its forces across the country as over 98% of its personnel is vaccinated.

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

MILITARY

House panel raises alarm on carrier deaths

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — House lawmakers on Wednesday raised alarm over the string of suicides on the USS George Washington and the readiness of the Navy overall as the Pentagon's top official acknowledged shortcomings with how sailors are housed on ships undergoing repairs.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told a subpanel of the House Appropriations Committee that the Pentagon is awaiting the results of two investigations into the George Washington and figuring out how to lodge sailors in the future after three of the ship's crew members died in less than one week in April.

"Whether or not we made the right choices is left to be said," Austin said. "Certainly there's a problem there. We've got to understand what the problem is a bit more and then we have to figure out what to do to ensure we don't have these kinds of problems in the future."

Rep. Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, said she was "terribly concerned" that the slow pace of ship repairs was creating a "dispirited situation" for the crews assigned to them. The George Washington has been undergoing a mid-life overhaul and refueling process at Newport News, Va., since 2017.

"For hundreds of sailors, they have no access to housing or a car, and they're stuck on the ship," Kaptur said. "This is really demoralizing."

Work on the George Washington was expected to end in late 2021 but will now stretch into 2023, she said. Austin attributed the delay to the coronavirus pandemic and said the repair of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier such as the George Washington required "very, very sophisticated work."

"It certainly was not anticipated that the ship would be in a repair cycle this long, but nonetheless I expect the leadership to make the right decisions and I look forward to seeing what the investigations show," he said.

The Navy allowed more than 200 sailors from the carrier to move to temporary housing at another local service installation earlier this month. Austin said Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro will meet with the ship's command Tuesday.

Kaptur and several other lawmakers said they were worried the

"Whether or not we made the right choices is left to be said."

Lloyd Austin
U.S. Secretary of Defense

Navy was not spending enough money to improve repair backlogs, improve morale or prepare for the rising threat from China. The Pentagon's requested budget for fiscal year 2023, which begins Oct. 1, seeks to retire 24 ships and decreases the fleet size from 298 ships today to 280 by 2027.

"I am troubled by the [Department of] Defense submission on the Navy because I see it getting worse," Kaptur said. "I wanted to point a flashlight on this part of the budget and say we've got to do something ... we are not taking care of those who are in service to our country right now."

Kaptur and Rep. Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, pressed Austin to prioritize mental health services as the military grapples with rising incidents of suicides across various branches. Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif., questioned how the Navy can keep up with China's rapidly growing fleet.

"With no clear shipbuilding plan and only eight ships requested in the budget, I have a very big concern that we're not taking China in the South [China] Sea seriously, especially when China is building 22 ships this year," Calvert said.

Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the Navy carefully assessed the risks and benefits of a "divest to invest" strategy that focuses on quality rather than quantity. Rep. Betty McCollum, D-Minn., chairwoman of the subcommittee, noted much of China's fleet consists of smaller support ships.

Austin told lawmakers the military has to counter China through multiple domains, and the totality of investment in air, land, sea, space and cyber in the defense budget will meet that challenge.

"There is significant investment in a number of capabilities that are absolutely relevant to competition with China," he said.

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MARQUEON A. D. TRAMBLE/U.S. Navy

Contractors with Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command collect water samples at Red Hill Elementary School in Aiea, Hawaii, on March 11.

Hawaii sets fall deadline for Navy plan for closing Red Hill fuel tanks

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Navy has waived the right to contest a revised emergency order issued by the Hawaii Department of Health last week that set a Nov. 1 deadline for submitting a plan for permanently closing the Red Hill underground fuel storage facility.

The health department's May 6 order also requires the Navy to submit by the end of June a plan for emptying the fuel tanks, including an implementation schedule for defueling the roughly 150 million gallons stored there.

"The Navy's decision means that work to defuel and close the Red Hill facility can begin without further delay," Kathleen Ho, deputy director of environmental health for the Hawaii Health Department, said in a news release Monday.

Leaking jet fuel from the World War II-era facility contaminated the Navy's drinking water system that serves thousands of homes on military housing communities on and around Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The petroleum contamination became acute in late November, forcing thousands to relocate to area hotels for most of the winter as the Navy isolated the contaminated well and flushed the system.

Many residents have complained

of medical issues ranging from rashes and headaches to fatigue and gastrointestinal problems. More than 100 residents have already filed claims for compensation for illnesses and hardships with the Navy's Office of the Judge Advocate.

The Hawaii Department of Health issued its original emergency order in December, which required the facility to be emptied, but no timeline was included. The Navy unsuccessfully contested that order, which took effect in January.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin issued an order March 7 directing the storage facility be permanently closed, but the timeline for doing so was broad.

The Hawaii Department of Health's revised emergency order requires the Navy by Friday to provide the state with an assessment by an independent contractor regarding the facility's operation.

The Navy contracted Simpson Gumpertz & Heger, a privately held firm based in Waltham, Mass., earlier this year to prepare the Red Hill work plans, conduct assessments and recommend system repairs and improvements for safely defueling the massive tanks.

The emergency order contains a provision that the Health Department has discretion to grant "reasonable" extensions of time re-

quested by the Navy regarding document submissions if "good cause" can be established.

"Our main focus is ensuring that defueling and closure operations are performed safely and expeditiously," Ho said in the news release.

Among the provisions of the revised emergency order are:

- Continued suspension of operations at Red Hill.

- Maintaining and treating the petroleum-contaminated Red Hill well.

- Submitting a phased plan for the defueling and closure of the facility.

- Meeting with health department officials on or before July 15 regarding planning and scheduling of the closure.

- Providing the state with all documents the Navy supplied to the contractor.

- Submitting versions of all documents and material that can be publicly released.

"This work will have consequences for us and for future generations, and on behalf of the people and environment of Hawaii, we will hold the Navy accountable to honor its commitments," Ho said.

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Texas sailor killed in Navy training accident

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Navy on Wednesday said the Naval Special Warfare sailor killed in a training accident in Virginia was Petty Officer 1st Class Ryan DeKorte from Lubbock, Texas.

DeKorte, an electronics technician, died Monday from injuries received late last week in a heli-

copter landing incident during an exercise at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story in Virginia. He was 35.

"Ryan was an exceptional teammate, and we mourn his tragic loss," said Rear Adm. H.W. Howard III, commander of Naval Special Warfare Command. "Ryan was one of our premiere

combat support technicians, who possessed all the attributes that make our force combat ready for highly complex and high-risk missions in the nation's defense."

Howard said DeKorte's "humility, stewardship and commitment to Naval Special Warfare made an indelible mark on his teammates and our community."

MILITARY

USAF probes claims of racism over shaving waiver

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Officials at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., are investigating a claim made by an airman that he was denied a job because he is Black with a medical waiver to forgo shaving daily.

The 56th Fighter Wing at the base said the unit initiated the investigation after a photo of a text message conversation between the airman seeking a job and another airman was posted May 4 to a Facebook page popular with Air Force members known as “Air Force amn/nco/snco.”

“We won’t be sending your name up,” one airman wrote to the other. “We personally do not feel as if you are a good choice for the squadron. You currently have a shaving waiver which isn’t a professional image, and I think the Air Force is looking for somebody of white complexion and with the image that the Air Force needs.”

The Black airman, who has been selected for promotion to noncommissioned officer, had applied to work as the unit’s fitness assessment cell, which conducts and oversees physical fitness tests, according to a source close to the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The airman responded to the job denial by saying it’s the third time a job “has been held over my head due to my looks, and something that’s based on personal prefer-

ence.”

The statement released by Luke Air Force Base did not verify the conversation took place.

“Without going into specifics of the investigation, we can categorically say that Luke airmen are held to a high standard of conduct and that we maintain a zero-tolerance policy regarding acts of discrimination based on race,” the base said.

This investigation comes nearly two years into the efforts by the Air Force to improve inclusion and diversity among troops. A December 2020 report from the Air Force inspector general confirmed racial disparity exists for Black service members when it comes to leadership opportunities and professional military education development, among other areas of service. Missing those opportunities can hold back members from career advancement.

The report also said Black service members have reported being a target for discrimination because of their personal appearance, including hair and grooming standards, such as shaving.

“Under this question, survey participants indicated they experienced discrimination primarily from their immediate supervisors and/or leadership. For example, members described being assigned extra work, picked on, harassed, isolated, or humiliated based on their race,” according to the re-

port.

As recommended by the report, the service established the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in January 2021 to address the problems it identified.

Waivers to forgo daily shaving are more common for Black men because they are more likely to have a skin condition called pseudofolliculitis barbae, or PFB, according to a study in Military Medicine, a peer-reviewed medical journal.

Those with the condition can experience painful bumps and scarring when repeatedly shaving close to the skin. It typically doesn’t respond to topical medications or different shaving techniques, according to the study. It’s most effectively treated by allowing the hair to grow long enough to curl away from the skin.

The American Osteopathic College of Dermatology estimates up to 60% of Black men suffer from PFB.

In 2020, the Air Force approved a five-year medical waiver that allows for short facial hair growth. The Military Medicine study found, anecdotally, the waiver has been used to exclude airmen from serving as recruiters, basic training instructors and members of the Thunderbird demonstration team.

“Male beard growth beyond that allowed by [U.S. Air Force] regulation can cast members in a negative light as it can be con-



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

A photo of a text message conversation was posted May 4 on Facebook.

sidered unprofessional,” according to the study.

The study also found an association between shaving waivers and delayed promotions.

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PACIFIC

'The bases are necessary' Young Okinawans are optimistic, but feel weight of US military presence

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND MARI HIGA
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Fifty years after Japan regained dominion over Okinawa, the island prefecture's young people are more accustomed than their parents and grandparents to the U.S. military presence on the island.

Yet the mammoth U.S. footprint on Okinawa continues to grate on many locals, particularly those who lived through World War II and the subsequent American rule that ended May 15, 1972.

"The older generation experienced the war and that is why they have different opinions from young people," Momoko Tsubaki, 22, of Ginowan city, told Stars and Stripes while strolling a shopping mall in Kitanakagusuku earlier this year. "But for us, U.S. military bases were already here when we were born. I have a friend who is a member of a military family."

The U.S. post-war legacy in Japan survives nowhere like it does on Okinawa, where tens of thousands of American troops, their military machines and their culture still command attention. Okinawans have long questioned their share of the cost of Tokyo's alliance with Washington.

According to a poll by Japanese sociologists in 2017, people on Okinawa, ages 18 to 34, agree with the older generation that the prefecture shoulders a disproportionate burden of American bases, just over 65%, versus nearly 74% for ages 65 and up, Wako University sociology associate professor Yukihiro Yoneda told Stars and Stripes.

Even then, the younger generation tends to choose softer language like "somewhat agree," Yoneda said. The poll data was released in April.

"Younger people tend to choose moderate answers such as 'somewhat agree,' 'somewhat disagree,' or 'neither agree nor disagree,'" he said. "Compared to the older generation, there is a decrease in strong feelings or views toward U.S. bases."

An April poll of 1,500 Okinawans ages 18 and older by Kyodo News found that locals would prefer a downsized U.S. presence. Most, 84%, believe Okinawa bears a disproportionate share of the U.S. military burden, according to Kyodo. While 76% "expressed affinity" for the U.S., 51% said they don't trust the U.S. military, according to the report.

Okinawa, roughly the same area as Tokyo and with a population of 1.4 million, is home to about 30,000 U.S. service members and another 50,000 civilian employees and family members, according to information from the 1st Ma-



FRANK ANDREWS/Stars and Stripes

People hang out in American Village, an American-themed outdoor mall in Chatan, Okinawa, on Thursday.



Naha Museum of History

An American service member stands in front of a burned car in Koza, now known as Okinawa city, after the Koza Riot of Dec. 20, 1970.

rine Aircraft Wing and U.S. Forces Japan.

The U.S. has 32 installations, including one it shares with the Japan Self-Defense Forces, that occupy about 18% of the island, according to Okinawa prefecture. They range from Kadena Air Base, a vital Western Pacific airlift and fighter base, to Camp Schwab, home to Marine rapid responders, the 4th Marine Regiment and 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion.

Junsei Yabiku, 19, of Ginowan, a math major at University of the Ryukyus, told Stars and Stripes that he is used to the American presence, but Okinawa bears more than its share.

"It is still questionable if Okinawa is part of the U.S. or Japan."

Seizures, restrictions

Hard fighting during the 1945 Battle of Okinawa, the last major ground battle of World War II, claimed the lives of 14,000 Americans, 110,000 Japanese troops and at least 140,000 Okinawa civilians.

The U.S. under the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan kept control of Okinawa until the Nixon administration agreed

in 1971 to return it. The handover, or "reversion," took place May 15, 1972.

Under its administration, the U.S. restricted free speech and union activities on Okinawa and seized property to make way for military bases, said Michihiro Akiyama, associate professor of sociology at Okinawa International University.

"The 1950s was about resistance against the U.S. military forcibly taking the land," he said. "This was the beginning of Okinawan people's resistance against the U.S. military bases."

Meanwhile, crimes perpetrated by U.S. service members often went unpunished, and reminded Okinawans that the military presence presented a threat to their lives, Akiyama said. Crimes and aircraft mishaps colored the older generation's attitudes and fed the protest movement that still exists on the island.

Okinawans do not share a monolithic attitude toward the U.S. presence. The Americans promoted democracy, founded banks and schools and fostered a revival of Okinawan, or Ryukyu, culture, said Toshiaki Arashiro, a visiting professor of history and

education at Okinawa University. "However, people's expectations were betrayed," he said. "Americans were friendly and nice, but in inconvenient situations, American interests were prioritized. It was an American-first democracy."

Momentum built for a return to Japanese authority that reached its peak in the 1960s, Arashiro said. At the time, Okinawans pressed for "complete reversion," meaning the removal of all U.S. bases. Lacking that, the return to Japan for older Okinawans is unfulfilled, he said.

Ordinary Okinawans still see their own wellbeing as secondary to U.S. interests, which contribute to lingering ill-will.

"The feeling that the military bases threaten people's lives and existence and the memories from the war are part of the reason why protest against the bases still continues," Akiyama said.

North to Henoko

In contemporary times, prefectural Gov. Denny Tamaki campaigns to shrink the U.S. presence, focusing the fight on plans to relocate Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from crowded Ginowan to Camp Schwab farther north in the rural Henoko district of Nago.

Tamaki would rather see the air station removed completely and has thrown administrative hurdles in its path, to little avail.

Meanwhile, Japan supports construction of the Schwab airfield, but has agreed to pay \$3 billion of the \$8.7 billion cost to build a Marine Corps base on Guam to relocate some aviation units from Okinawa.

Most younger Okinawans, 66.3%, prefer the Schwab site over Ginowan or have no opinion, according to Yoneda. Conversely, 66.6% of Okinawans ages 65 and

older want the air base off the island altogether, he said.

"I never disliked the U.S. military presence," Tomonosuke Bise, 36, of Tomigusuku city, said as he shopped recently with his wife at the Aeon Mall.

The locals need more protection from aircraft mishaps and falling parts, but "U.S. bases are kind of fun," he said. "I think it is a good part of Okinawa."

Younger Okinawans are less concerned with the U.S. bases as a political issue than their parents and grandparents, which has led to "reluctant acceptance or moderate agreement," Yoneda said.

As evidence, he pointed to the reelection of Nago Mayor Take-toyo Toguchi, 60, to a second term in January.

Toguchi, backed by Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, stayed quiet on the airfield issue, denoting "tacit approval," according to a Jan. 23 report in the Asahi newspaper. He overtook the challenger, former city councilman Yohei Kishimoto, who opposed the Henoko project, with 57% of the 33,963 votes cast in a low-turnout election Jan. 23.

"Young people want economic issues to be prioritized more than U.S. base issues," Yoneda said.

Nanami Kina, 18, a student of global and regional studies at the Ryukyus university, seemed to agree. "The bases are necessary because 'people make a living doing base-related jobs,'" she said.

The share of island revenue generated by the U.S. presence fell from about 15% to 5% after the handover, according to data from the prefecture. Tourism filled the gap, growing from a relative handful of visitors annually in the late 1970s to 10 million in 2019, according to the Asahi newspaper in January 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic slashed that number in 2020 to 3.73 million, the report said.

Towa Maeda, 17, of Yonabaru town, said she is comfortable with the U.S. military presence as she recently strolled around American Village, a popular tourist destination on Okinawa.

"I think it's good. We've become close with the American people," she said.

Ami Uchihira, 18, of Okinawa city, sees the occupation and the reversion as a positive part of Okinawa's history.

"Having a connection with the U.S. is the advantage of Okinawa," the University of the Ryukyus education student said on the Nishihara campus. "Having foreigners around has good influence on people's values and people are more open to study abroad."

MILITARY

IG: Space Command HQ choice was legal

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

An Air Force decision to locate U.S. Space Command headquarters in Alabama, instead of keeping it at its temporary home in Colorado, followed all the necessary procedures, according to a report released Tuesday by the Defense Department inspector general.

However, the inspectors could not verify three of the 21 criteria used in the process, so the service agreed to re-analyze the issues of child care, affordability of housing and access to military and veteran support services before finalizing its decision to build its Space Command headquarters at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Ala.

Members of Congress from Col-

orado asked for the decision to be reviewed for political bias after it was announced in January 2021 that the command would move to Alabama from its temporary headquarters at Peterson Space Force Base in Colorado Springs, which is also home to other space-related military agencies North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, and U.S. Northern Command.

Space Command, which operated from 1985 to 2002, was reestablished in 2019 just months before Space Force, the newest military service branch, was founded. Space Command is a joint, combatant command that oversees the military's various space-based infrastructure and operations.

"We found that the process Air Force officials used to select Huntsville, Alabama, as the preferred permanent location for the U.S. Space Command headquarters complied with law and policy and was reasonable in identifying Huntsville as the preferred permanent location," the report states.

State and federal lawmakers in Alabama praised the report. When the members of Space Command arrive in Alabama "they'll be living and working in the most military-friendly state in the nation," said Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Ala.

Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth said in a statement Wednesday that the report reflects "the hard work and

legislative accomplishments of the Alabama Military Stability Commission," of which he is the chairman. The commission is tasked with retaining and expanding the federal military footprint in the state.

"Despite baseless protests from competing states, the DOD inspector general report determined that the criteria used to judge the best site for headquartering Space Command was sound and the selection of Huntsville over other alternatives was just," according to the statement from Ainsworth's office.

In Colorado, lawmakers were disappointed by the findings.

"Our position remains that the [Space Command] basing process

was untested, lacked transparency, and neglected critical national security and cost considerations," according to a statement from Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, both Democrats.

The two said they are reviewing the findings of the report and will share more about it in the coming days.

A second report on the decision is expected soon from the Government Accountability Office. Bennet, Hickenlooper and Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., said in April that they were briefed on the GAO's report but not to comment on what they were told.

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Alaska: Arctic exercise highlighted need for better vehicles for terrain

FROM PAGE 1

eration well before U.S. tensions with Russia soared following its invasion of Ukraine.

Under the new Army plan, the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, now based in Alaska, would be converted to a light infantry brigade. Combined with the division's 4th Infantry Brigade Combat team, the two units will become the 11th Airborne Division, based in Alaska. And the large Stryker vehicles, which are somewhat old, would be replaced by other vehicles that are more suitable for the icy and snowy terrain, Wormuth said.

The greater focus on cold-weather war includes a move to conduct major training exercises for the Alaska-based troops in their home state, under the weather conditions they would face in an Arctic fight. The troops had been scheduled to go to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La., in March, but Army leaders decided to keep them in Alaska so they could train under the frigid temperatures and frozen terrain that they would encounter in any cold-weather battle.

"I think it really makes sense to have forces trained in the Arctic environments that they would be used for," Wormuth said after spending two days at the still snowy base. "If we're going to have ground forces in Alaska, that's what we need them to be able to do. They can't get that experience going to the Mojave Desert or to Fort Polk."

Last year, in an initial trial event, Pacific-based forces stayed in Ha-

waii for their scheduled exercises at the National Training Center in California's Mohave Desert. Commanders said they have learned from these first two moves, as they try to recreate conditions and relocate personnel and equipment from well-established training centers to more remote locations.

During her visit to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Wormuth met with commanders who called the training shift a success. Maj. Gen. Brian Eifler, commander of U.S. Army Alaska, said the benefits outweighed any shortfalls created by the need to build the infrastructure for the training exercise in the remote north.

"You're getting the best of both worlds, without losing too much," Eifler said. "We did get a lot more out of it than we thought we would."

Eifler said that while they didn't have as many training observers or civilian role players as they would have at one of the training centers, the trainers that did come were able to learn more about Arctic weather operations.

In addition, Eifler said, the change avoided the costly and time-consuming shipment of vehicles, weapons and other equipment to Louisiana and back. The lengthy packing and shipping process before and after a training exercise in Louisiana or California often forces troops to be without their weapons systems and other equipment for weeks.

During briefings at the Alaska base, commanders said the training included large-scale combat operations under extreme weath-



JASON WELCH/U.S. Army

Paratroopers conduct surveillance as part of the opposition force during Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center rotation 22-02 near Fort Greely, Alaska, on March 19.

er conditions in what they called the "most challenging environment on earth." They said that 10,000 troops — including Canadian Army and Air forces — were involved in the exercise.

But they said the exercise also underscored the need for better cold-weather vehicles, including those capable of carrying Arctic infantry forces.

Gen. Joseph Martin, the vice chief of the Army who was in Alaska this year, said the service has been studying what would be the best type of vehicle for the troops. "Is the Stryker the right vehicle for an Arctic warrior? In the winter, you need vehicles that can move across snow," he said.

In addition, he said, the vehicle also needs to be able to operate in the spring or summer thaw, when the ground turns to mud.

As Wormuth wrapped up her

visit, she suggested that the decision on the Stryker Brigade is moving forward soon. Any final decision would need approval from Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

"If you're going to do big movements of equipment and things like that, the summer is a pretty important window because it's a lot easier to move vehicles around than doing it in the dead of winter," she

said.

And in conversations with congressional lawmakers, including during a hearing this week, she made clear that the change would not reduce the number of soldiers in Alaska. Instead, she said that while the infantry brigade will be smaller, the Army would offset that loss by increasing the size and capabilities of the headquarters.

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EUROPE

Ukraine retakes villages, Russia gains in Donbas

BY OLEKSANDR STASHEVSKYI
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine's military recaptured some towns and villages in the country's northeast, but acknowledged that Russian forces have seen "partial success" farther south in the eastern industrial region of the Donbas.

In the wake of their failure to take Kyiv, Russian forces pulled back and regrouped — and switched their focus to Ukraine's eastern Donbas, a region where Moscow-backed separatists have fought Ukrainian troops for eight years. While Russia's advance there has been slow, the general staff of Ukraine's armed forces noted Thursday that Moscow has achieved a "partial success."

Western officials have said Russia has gained ground and taken some villages, but has not managed to seize any cities.

Associated Press reporters heard explosions Thursday and saw plumes of smoke near the town of Bakhmut, an area of the Donbas that has seen heavy fighting. The Ukrainian military said Russian forces were "storming" two villages near Bakhmut, but the source of the blasts wasn't immediately clear.

Russian advances in the east follow weeks of their stubborn efforts to push through Ukrainian defenses in the Donbas. It's unclear how significant the Russian gains have been.

But any gains in the east may have come at the expense of territory elsewhere. Britain's Defense

Ministry said Russia's focus on the Donbas had left its remaining troops around the northeastern city of Kharkiv vulnerable to counterattack from Ukrainian forces, which recaptured several towns and villages around the city.

Still, Russian rocket strikes Thursday killed one person and wounded three in a suburb of Kharkiv, the regional governor said. Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, has suffered heavy Russian bombardment during the war as Russia sought to encircle it.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's military also said Russian forces had fired artillery and grenade launchers at Ukrainian troops in the direction of Zaporizhzhia, which has been a refuge for civilians fleeing Mariupol, and attacked in the Chernihiv and Sumy regions to the north.

Overnight airstrikes in Chernihiv killed three people and wounded 12, according to local media citing emergency services. The regional governor said the strikes on the town of Novhorod-Siverskyi damaged a boarding school, dormitory and administrative building.

The military governor of the southern Ukrainian region of Kryvyi Rih accused Russia of using prohibited cluster bombs and phosphorus munitions. The claim could not immediately be verified. Ukraine has previously accused Russian forces of using such munitions in the Donbas, and Ukrainian authorities have launched investigations into their use.

In the southern port city of Mariupol, which has seen some of the



ANDRIY ANDRIYENKO/AP

Men stand next to an apartment building damaged by Russian shelling in Bakhmut, Donetsk region, Ukraine, on Thursday.

worst destruction of the war, Ukraine offered to release Russian prisoners of war in exchange for the safe evacuation of badly wounded fighters trapped inside the Azovstal steel mill, the last redoubt of Ukrainian forces in the ruined city.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said negotiations were underway to release the wounded. She said there were different options, but "none of them is ideal." Russia hasn't confirmed any talks on the subject but

seems unlikely to agree to any such swap as the release of the fighters would be a major morale boost for Ukraine.

Russia's forces have taken control of the rest of the city, which they besieged for weeks, as residents ran short of food, water and medicine, though Petro Andriushchenko, an adviser to the Mariupol mayor, said Thursday that troops have resumed water supplies to two neighborhoods as a test.

"The occupiers turned Mariu-

pol into a medieval ghetto," said Mayor Vadym Boychenko in comments published by City Hall, as he called for a complete evacuation of the city.

Officials said in recent weeks that about 100,000 residents could still be trapped in Mariupol, which had a prewar population of over 400,000. Russian and Ukrainian authorities have periodically agreed to cease-fires to evacuate residents, and repeatedly blamed each other when those efforts failed.

Finland: Approval likely to be fast; Sweden expected to announce application soon

FROM PAGE 1

"the entire defense alliance."

The view from Washington is similar.

Both Finland and Sweden would bring "advanced capabilities and abilities into the alliance" should they join NATO, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters last week.

Russia's foreign ministry on Thursday said in a statement that the country would be forced to take "retaliatory steps" should Finland follow through on its NA-

TO membership bid.

"Helsinki must be aware of the responsibility and consequences of such a move," the statement said.

The Kremlin did not spell out what types of military moves it could make, but one option is to add more troops and weaponry to its western border with NATO.

Moscow's prior warnings of unspecified consequences should Finland move to join NATO have prompted the United States and United Kingdom to offer assu-

rances during a transition period, when Finland would be without the Article 5 security guarantees that come with membership.

Kirby, without offering details, said last week that the U.S. "would be able to find ways to address any concerns that either Sweden or Finland might have about the period of time between a NATO membership application and their potential ascension into the alliance."

It can typically take about one year for prospective members'

bid to work its way through the approval process, which needs ratification from member-state parliaments and the U.S. Congress.

Finland could be fast-tracked, however, given security concerns over Russia and a recognition within the alliance that the country already meets all NATO military standards.

NATO's summit in Madrid in June, which will be attended by President Joe Biden, is a venue where Finland's membership could be made official.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has said he expects both Finland and Sweden to be quickly welcomed should they decide to join.

Public support for joining NATO has soared in Finland since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, with 76% of the population in favor of joining the alliance, according to public broadcaster Yle.

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Ukraine to hold first war crimes trial of captured Russian soldier

Associated Press

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine — Ukraine's top prosecutor disclosed plans Wednesday for the first war crimes trial of a captured Russian soldier, as fighting raged in the east and south and the Kremlin left open the possibility of annexing a corner of the country it seized early in the invasion.

Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova said her office charged Sgt. Vadin Shyshimarin, 21, in the killing of an unarmed 62-year-old civilian who was gunned down while riding a bicycle in February, four days into the war.

Shyshimarin, who served with a tank unit, was accused of firing through a car window on the man

in the northeastern village of Chupakhivka. Venediktova said the soldier could get up to 15 years in prison. She did not say when the trial would start.

Venediktova's office has said it has been investigating more than 10,700 alleged war crimes committed by Russian forces and has identified over 600 suspects.

Many of the alleged atrocities came to light last month after Moscow's forces aborted their bid to capture Kyiv and withdrew from around the capital, exposing mass graves and streets and yards strewn with bodies in towns such as Bucha. Residents told of killings, burnings, rape, torture and dismemberment.

Volodymyr Yavorsky of the Center for Civil Liberties said the Ukrainian human rights group will be closely following Shyshimarin's trial to see if it proceeds fairly.

"It's very difficult to observe all the rules, norms and neutrality of the court proceedings in wartime," he said.

EUROPE

Ukrainian attacks are not just lucky strikes

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

The destruction of at least eight Russian vessels in recent weeks has provided a morale boost for Ukraine, which managed to take them out despite having little naval capability of its own.

But it also points to an emerging strategic effort to break a Black Sea blockade that is strangling the Ukrainian economy.

Since March 21, Ukrainian missiles and drone attacks have damaged or sunk about four landing ships, three patrol boats and the cruiser Moskva, the Black Sea Fleet flagship, which sank in April, according to Ukrainian defense ministry announcements and data aggregated by the Istanbul-based ship blog Turkishnavy.net.

All told, Russia has lost about 13 vessels since it launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry stated Thursday.

The attacks can't be attributed to dumb luck or simple and opportunistic hits, said Bryan Clark, a senior fellow and director of the Hudson Institute's Center for Defense Concepts and Technology.

The U.S. provided intelligence helpful in the sinking of the Moskva, the Washington Post reported May 5. However, some analysts say that assistance confirmed information Ukraine already had about the ship's location.

The sinking of one landing ship and the damage inflicted on two others in port at Berdyansk on the Sea of Azov in late March heightened Russia's concerns about the vulnerability of its ships and pushed them further out to sea,



@UA_INDUSTRIAL/Twitter

Images posted to social media April 18 show the damaged Russian missile cruiser Moskva on fire and listing after taking on water. The ship later sank.

Clark said.

The loss of the Moskva, which was about 60 miles offshore, reinforced those concerns. And the attacks on patrol boats, which are what is left to enforce the blockade closer to shore, may further loosen the Kremlin's grip on Ukraine's economy, he said.

"They are taking this very stepwise approach to push Russian naval forces further and further back in an attempt to get the blockade to essentially be lifted," Clark said. "Because that's the goal, to restart the economy."

Last Saturday, Ukrainian attacks on Russian forces at Snake Island destroyed a landing ship, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry said.

Those strikes are likely aimed at

destabilizing Moscow's control of the Black Sea outcropping near the Danube River delta, said Dmitry Gorenburg, a senior research scientist at the Arlington, Va.-based think tank CNA.

In the opening days of the war, Russian forces quickly overwhelmed Ukrainian guards to seize the now-famous island, which is about 70 miles south of Odesa. Russia also established a blockade, shutting down sea lanes to and from Ukraine.

Russia can effectively manage its blockade without Snake Island, Gorenburg said.

But in a postwar environment, the island could further Russian goals to control access to the northwestern Black Sea, protect Crimea and potentially undermine confi-

dence in commercial shipping to and from Romania and Bulgaria, analysts say.

"If (the Russians) were to give Snake Island up, the concern would be that Ukraine puts a bunch of Neptune missiles on it and turns it into ... this outpost where they can basically deny access to the parts of the Black Sea Russia cares about," Clark said. "(Ukraine) could deny access to Crimea almost if you put Neptune missile launchers on Snake Island."

Clark said Ukrainian attacks on the island appear to be an effort to isolate Russian troops and prevent the ability to sustain or resupply them. He characterized the attacks as too small to be a serious effort to reestablish control over the 42-acre island.

On Tuesday, the Russian Defense Ministry said its forces had repelled Ukraine's efforts to regain the island, the Russian state news agency Tass reported.

Gorenburg said it's important to put Ukrainian strikes on Russian ships in perspective of the Black Sea Fleet's overall size and capability.

Even though Russia has lost some vessels, about 20 of its ships and submarines remained in the Black Sea operational zone, the British Defense Ministry tweeted April 28.

"Despite the embarrassing losses of the landing ship Saratov and cruiser Moskva, Russia's Black Sea Fleet retains the ability to strike Ukrainian and coastal targets," it said.

Russia also has destroyed or seized numerous Ukrainian military vessels, including 10 taken in Berdyansk on March 14, according to Turkishnavy.net.

Those losses combined with fears of Russian submarines lurking in the Black Sea have kept what remains of the Ukrainian navy bottled up in port.

Despite the destruction of Russian ships, the Kremlin is unlikely to change its naval strategy of enforcing its blockade and launching occasional cruise missiles to threaten the parts of Ukraine its land forces can't reach, Gorenburg said.

"The main missions that the Russian navy has been performing in the war, they can continue to perform," he said. "But they have to be more careful, and there is a higher level of risk than they probably thought a month ago."

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US: Sanctions forcing Russia to use appliance parts in military gear

BY JEANNE WHALEN
The Washington Post

U.S.-led sanctions are forcing Russia to use computer chips from dishwashers and refrigerators in some military equipment, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said Wednesday.

"We have reports from Ukrainians that when they find Russian military equipment on the ground, it's filled with semiconductors that they took out of dishwashers and refrigerators," Raimondo told a Senate hearing, noting that she recently met with Ukraine's prime minister.

U.S. technology exports to Russia have fallen by nearly 70% since sanctions began in late February, according to Raimondo, whose department oversees the export controls that form a big part of the sanctions package. Three dozen other countries have adopted simi-

lar export bans, which also apply to Belarus.

"Our approach was to deny Russia technology — technology that would cripple their ability to continue a military operation. And that is exactly what we are doing," she said in a response to a question from Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., about the impact of the export controls.

The semiconductor anecdote came from Ukrainian officials, who told the secretary that when they've opened up captured Russian tanks, they've found parts from refrigerators and commercial and industrial machinery that appear to be making up for other unavailable components, Commerce Department spokeswoman Robyn Patterson said.

The number of U.S. shipments to Russia of items subject to the new rules — semiconductors, telecom-

munications equipment, lasers, avionics, and maritime technology — has decreased 85% and their value has decreased 97%, compared with the same time period in 2021, Patterson said.

In her Senate remarks, Raimondo also pointed to recent reports that two Russian tank manufacturers have had to idle production due to a lack of components. The White House, too, has previously highlighted those reports, saying that Uralvagonzavod Corp. and Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant have halted production.

Computer chips, also known as semiconductors, are the brains that operate most modern electronics, from appliances to fighter jets. Russia manufacturers few of its own chips, historically relying on imports from Asian and Western companies.

The world's biggest computer

chip companies began cutting off deliveries to Russia in late February, after the U.S.-led restrictions kicked in.

The United States and other Western nations already had regulated sales to Russia of chips and other electronic components specifically designed for military use. Those sales required a government license to proceed even before Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine.

The new rules tightened those restrictions and also blocked the sale of most dual-use chips, which have both military and commercial applications, to nonmilitary users in Russia, including those in high-tech industries.

The Biden administration said the ban would cut off more than half of Russia's high-tech imports and kneecap the country's ability to diversify its economy and sup-

port its military. The ban was not designed to block deliveries of consumer electronics.

In a novel move that the United States has used only once before — against China's Huawei — it is also requiring companies worldwide to abide by the rules and block such sales to Russia if they use U.S. manufacturing equipment or software to produce chips. Most chip factories around the world use software or equipment designed in the United States, analysts say.

Previous research has shown Russia's military has long relied on western electronics. Russian military drones shot down over Ukraine in recent years have been full of Western electronics and components, according to investigators from the London-based Conflict Armament Research (CAR) group, who dissected the drones.

NATION

Senate bid to save Roe v. Wade falls short

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate fell far short Wednesday in a rushed effort toward enshrining Roe v. Wade abortion access as federal law, blocked by a Republican filibuster in a blunt display of the nation's partisan divide over the landmark court decision and the limits of legislative action.

The almost party-line tally promises to be just the first of several efforts in Congress to preserve the nearly 50-year-old court ruling, which declares a constitutional right to abortion services but is at serious risk of being overturned this summer by a conservative Supreme Court.

President Joe Biden said that Republicans "have chosen to stand in the way of Americans' rights to

make the most personal decisions about their own bodies, families and lives."

Biden urged voters to elect more abortion-rights lawmakers in November and pledged in the meantime to explore other ways to secure the rights established in Roe.

For now, his party's slim majority proved unable to overcome the filibuster led by Republicans, who have been working for decades to install conservative Supreme Court justices and end Roe v. Wade. The vote was 51-49 against proceeding, with 60 votes needed to move ahead.

Congress has battled for years over abortion policy, but the Wednesday vote to take up a House-passed bill was given new urgency after the disclosure of a draft Su-

preme Court opinion to overturn the Roe decision that many had believed to be settled law.

The outcome of the conservative-majority court's actual ruling, expected this summer, is sure to reverberate around the country and on the campaign trail ahead of the fall midterm elections that will determine which party controls Congress.

Security was tight at the Capitol where Vice President Kamala Harris presided, and it has been bolstered across the street at the Supreme Court after protesters turned out in force last week following the leaked draft.

Scores of House Democratic lawmakers marched protest-style to the Senate and briefly watched from the visitor galleries.

Harris can provide a tie-breaking vote in the 50-50 split Senate, but that was beside the point on Wednesday. One conservative Democrat, Joe Manchin of West Virginia, voted with the Republicans, saying he supported keeping Roe v. Wade but believed the current bill was too broad.

"The Senate is not where the majority of Americans are on this issue," Harris said afterward.

Over several days, Democratic senators delivered speeches contending that undoing abortion access would mean great harm, not only for women but for all Americans planning families and futures.

Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, D-Nev., said that most American women have only known a world where abortion access was guaran-

teed but could face a future with fewer rights than their mothers or grandmothers.

"That means women will not have the same control over their lives and bodies as men do, and that's wrong," she said in the run-up to Wednesday's vote.

Few Republican senators spoke in favor of ending abortion access, but they embraced the filibuster to block the bill from advancing.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, an architect of the effort to install conservative justices on the Supreme Court — including three during the Trump era — has sought to downplay the outcome of any potential changes in federal abortion policy.

"This issue will be dealt with at the state level," McConnell said.

Biden urges world to renew COVID fight as US nears 1M deaths

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden appealed to world leaders on Thursday for a renewed international commitment to attacking COVID-19 as he led the U.S. in marking the approaching "tragic milestone" of 1 million deaths at home from the virus. He ordered flags lowered to half-staff and warned against "complacency" around the globe.

"This pandemic isn't over," Biden told the second global pandemic summit. "Today, we mark a tragic milestone here in the United States, 1 million COVID deaths — 1 million empty chairs around the family dinner table."

The coronavirus has killed nearly 999,000 people in the U.S. and more than 6.2 million people globally since it emerged in late 2019, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Biden issued a proclamation Thursday directing that U.S. flags be flown at half-staff through sunset on Monday to honor those who lost their lives to the virus.

The president called on Congress to provide more funding for testing, vaccines and treatments, something lawmakers have been unwilling to deliver so far.

The lack of funding — Biden has requested another \$22.5 billion of what he calls critically needed money — is a reflection of faltering resolve at home that jeopardizes the global response to the pandemic.

Eight months after he used the first such summit to announce an ambitious pledge to donate 1.2 billion vaccine doses to the world, the urgency of the U.S. and other na-

tions to respond has waned.

Momentum on vaccinations and treatments has faded even as more infectious variants rise and billions of people across the globe remain unprotected.

Biden addressed the opening of the virtual summit Thursday morning with prerecorded remarks and made the case that tackling COVID-19 "must remain an international priority." The U.S. is co-hosting the summit along with Germany, Indonesia, Senegal and Belize.

"This summit is an opportunity to renew our efforts to keep our foot on the gas when it comes to getting this pandemic under control and preventing future health crises," Biden said.

The U.S. has shipped nearly 540 million vaccine doses to more than 110 countries and territories, according to the State Department — by far more than any other donor nation.

After the delivery of more than 1 billion vaccines to the developing world, the problem is no longer that there aren't enough shots but a lack of logistical support to get doses into arms. According to government data, more than 680 million donated vaccine doses have been left unused in developing countries because they were set to expire soon and couldn't be administered quickly enough. As of March, 32 poorer countries had used fewer than half of the COVID-19 vaccines they were sent.

U.S. assistance to promote and facilitate vaccinations overseas dried up earlier this year, and Biden has requested about \$5 billion for the effort through the rest of the year.



JEFF CHIU/AP

Lick-Wilmerding High School sophomore student leader Alia, left, speaks to students wearing masks during a freshmen year Public Purpose Program workshop at the high school in San Francisco in March.

Creeping COVID-19 cases result in few schools mandating masks

Associated Press

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — U.S. COVID-19 cases are up, leading a smattering of school districts, particularly in the Northeast, to bring back mask mandates and recommendations for the first time since the omicron winter surge ended and as the country approaches 1 million deaths in the pandemic.

The return of masking in schools is not nearly as widespread as earlier in the pandemic, particularly as the public's worries over the virus have ebbed. But districts in Maine, New Jersey and Pennsylvania have brought masks back, with a few in Massachusetts also recommending them even as the school year enters its final weeks.

Maine's largest school district, in Portland, said this week masks

would return, with Superintendent Xavier Botana saying that was the "safest course at this time" amid rising cases. Bangor, Maine, schools also brought back a universal mask requirement.

High schools in the suburbs of Pittsburgh and in Montclair, N.J., a commuter suburb of New York City, also announced a return to masking, albeit temporarily through this week. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most of the counties in the country considered to have "high" levels of COVID-19 are in the Northeast.

In parts of Massachusetts that have seen high levels of COVID-19 transmission, authorities are also recommending masks in schools.

Reactions have ranged from

supportive to angry. On the Facebook page of Woodland Hills High School in suburban Pittsburgh, one woman called the change "#insane."

Diana Martinez and Owen Cornwall, who have a first grader at Graham and Parks School in Cambridge, Mass., have been following the recommendation to mask their daughter.

"We're very happy about it. It gives us a little peace of mind," said Martinez, 42, a professor at Tufts University. "I think the parents generally trend toward wearing them and that gives us some comfort. It's the same case at our pre-school. There will be a couple of parents who don't mask their child, but we will be masking our child."

FACES



Musicians Amy Ray, left, and Emily Saliers of the Indigo Girls perform onstage at the 32nd Annual Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame Induction Ceremony in April 2017 at Barclays Center in New York City.

Indigo Girls on film

Emily Saliers, Amy Ray talk streaming concert, movie based on their songs, doc on their career

By RODNEY HO

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Unlike, say, Simon and Garfunkel or Tears for Fears, the Indigo Girls have never broken up. The beloved harmony-infused Georgia duo has been together consistently over 35 years.

"We are so close," said Emily Saliers of her duo partner Amy Ray in a phone interview with *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. "We grew up together. We have a lot of respect for each other. We've just worked it out. We also respect each other's autonomy."

They have consistently released studio albums, the latest being 2020's "Look Long," while also pursuing their own side projects. In 2022, they remain super busy.

The pandemic has kept their regular band, some of whom live in Europe, from getting back together. So they are currently touring the country as an acoustic trio with their longtime violinist Lyris Hung. Their next stop will be at Cadence Bank Amphitheatre at Chastain Park in Atlanta on June 9.

As a way to get the band back together remotely, they created a 90-minute concert film, titled "Look Long: Together," that began streaming on May 8. Each band member taped their parts separately while Ray and Saliers did their work in Georgia. Guest stars and friends like Becky Warren, Tomi Martin, Trina Meade and Lucy Wainwright Roche contributed vocals as well.

They explain the origin of some of their classic songs and reveal bits of their home life. Ray, who lives in the north Georgia mountains, showed off a fancy treehouse in her backyard she built during the pandemic. Saliers, who lives not far from where she grew up in Decatur, gives her dogs and her expansive collection of guitars a lot of love.

"It's a combo concert and conversation," Ray said.

The songs they play include classics like "Moment of Forgiveness," "Kid Fears," "Get Out the Map" and "Ghost" as well as more recent cuts such as "The Rise of the Black Messiah" and "When We Were Writers."

"It was a lot of work," Saliers said, noting it took 18

months to edit it and make sure it sounded good.

Saliers had a breakthrough case of COVID-19 last August and had to cancel a few tour dates. Earlier this month, she caught a bronchial infection that Ray also got and the pair had to push back a few dates in Texas. "Bronchitis is something wicked but it's not COVID," Saliers said. "I feel bad postponing the shows but I'd feel worse singing badly during shows."

They are both excited about an upcoming fantastical musical film called "Glitter & Doom" based on their songs.

"I haven't yet seen a rough cut," Ray said. "But the script is amazing. There is a lot of magical realism. And they didn't just use our songs. They mashed them up. We're happy it's something unconventional."

They also agreed to co-write a song for the closing credits, which they have yet to do. Saliers said they've only written two songs together to date: one during the pandemic and another ages ago with (R.E.M. frontman) Michael Stipe.

"We normally write separately," Ray said, "because we have completely different vocabularies. It's really our time to have our own creativity. We also enjoy editing each other's songs."

Following in the footsteps of iconic female artists such as Sheryl Crow, Alanis Morissette and Linda Ronstadt, the Indigo Girls will be the focus of an upcoming documentary. Saliers said they had rejected previous offers to do a doc but ultimately said yes to Alexandria Brombach. They were impressed with Brombach's Sundance award-winning documentary "On Her Shoulders" about a woman who survived atrocities committed by ISIS.

"She's fearless and a badass," Ray said.

Ray was really good about chronicling and saving Indigo Girls memorabilia over the years, which she happily handed over to Brombach. Their longtime manager Russell Carter also kept plenty of clippings and video. "She digitized everything," Ray said. "It would have taken me forever to do that myself."

Not that the duo is anywhere near retirement.

"We don't consider ourselves a legacy band," Saliers said. "We're a working band. We're just very fortunate to have this long trajectory."

Jesse Williams seems unfazed, but theater calls nude video unacceptable

By CHRISTIE D'ZURILLA
Los Angeles Times

If actor Jesse Williams' recent Broadway experience proves anything, it's that people really do need their phones taken away before a live performance.

A theatergoer videotaped Williams' full-frontal nude shower scene onstage in the show "Take Me Out" and then posted it on social media earlier this week. The video circulated widely before efforts to scrub it gained ground.

Fortunately the Tony-nominated Williams, best known for playing Dr. Jackson Avery for 12 seasons on "Grey's Anatomy," appears to be trying to rise above the giggles when it comes to what he called his "nude nude, naked naked" Broadway debut.

"Everybody makes such a big deal," he told host Andy Cohen on Monday's "Watch What Happens Live" after-show. "It's a body! Once you see it, you realize, whatever. It's a body."

But while Williams seems unfazed, the folks behind the scenes of "Take Me Out" were not taking the breach of propriety lightly. Actors' Equity Association condemned the recording and leaking "in the strongest possible terms," saying the leaker knew they were violating the rules.

"At every performance, there is a mutual understanding between

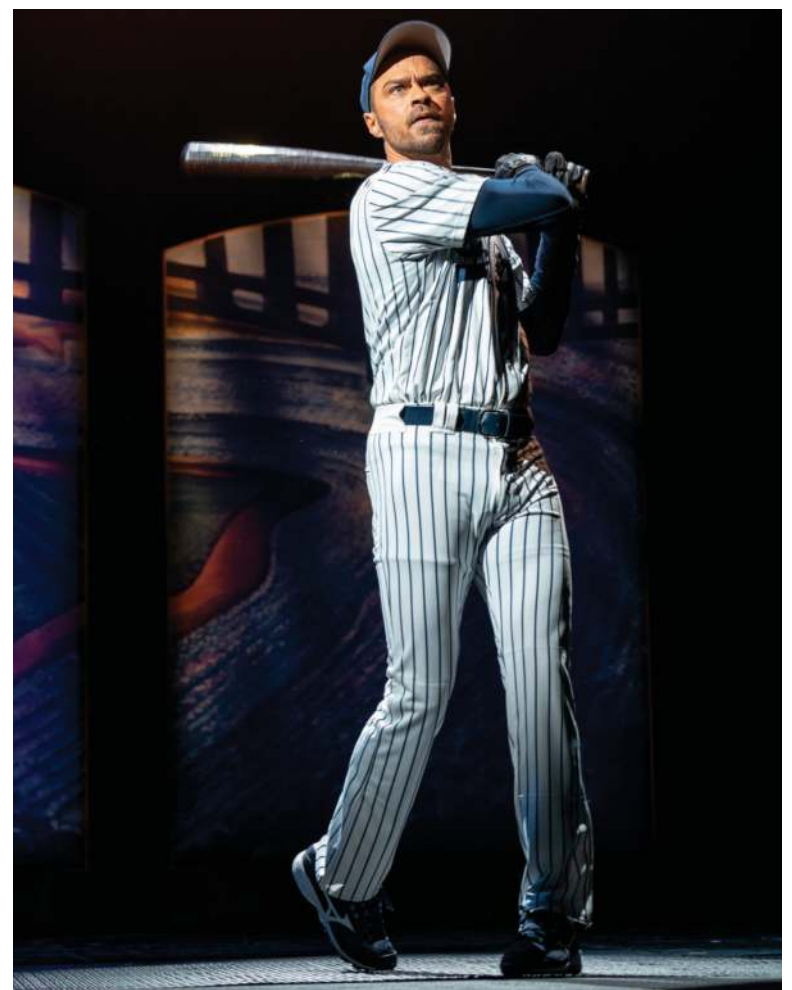
the audience and the performers that we are sharing an experience limited to this time and place; that trust makes it possible for us to be exposed both emotionally and physically," union president Kate Shindle said in a statement Tuesday.

"Trampling on this agreement by capturing and distributing these photographs and videos is both sexual harassment and an appalling breach of consent. It is a violation that impedes our collective ability to tell stories with boldness and bravery."

The folks at Second Stage Theater, where the show is being staged, were similarly "appalled," saying they had worked hard to make the theater a "phone-free space" at all performances.

"Taking naked pictures of anyone without their consent is highly objectionable and can have severe legal consequences," Second Stage said in a statement. "Posting it on the internet is a gross and unacceptable violation of trust between the actor and audience forged in the theatre community."

The theater said it was actively pursuing takedown requests and asked people not to participate in distribution of the video. Additional staff were being added at the theater to help enforce the policy, it said.



JOAN MARCUS, POLK & CO./AP

Jesse Williams stars in the Broadway revival of the baseball-themed "Take Me Out" in New York.

NATION

Judge: Trump must pay \$110K, meet conditions to end contempt of court

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A New York judge said Wednesday that he will lift Donald Trump's contempt of court order if the former president meets conditions including paying \$110,000 in fines he's racked up for being slow to respond to a civil subpoena issued by the state's attorney general.

Judge Arthur Engoron said he will end his contempt finding if Trump submits additional paperwork by May 20 detailing efforts to search for the subpoenaed records and explaining his and his company's document retention policies.

Engoron declared Trump in contempt on April 25 and fined him \$10,000 per day for not complying with a subpoena in New York Attorney General Letitia James' long-running investigation into Trump's business practices.

James, a Democrat, has said her three-year investigation uncovered evidence that Trump's company, the Trump Organization, misstated the value of assets like skyscrapers and golf courses on financial statements for over a decade.

Trump, a Republican, has denied the allegations. He has called James' investigation "racist" and a politically motivated "witch hunt." James is Black. Trump's lawyers have accused her of selective prosecution.

Engoron ordered Trump to pay \$110,000 because that is the total amount of fines he accrued through May 6, when Trump's lawyers submitted 66 pages of court documents detailing the efforts by him and his lawyers to locate the subpoenaed records.

The judge required a company hired by Trump to aid in the search,



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Former President Donald Trump waves to the crowd before the 148th running of the Kentucky Derby horse race Saturday.

HaystackID, to finish going through 17 boxes kept at an off-site storage facility, and for that company to report its findings and turn over any relevant documents.

Engoron said he could reinstate the fine, retroactive to May 7, if his conditions aren't met. He told Trump to pay the money directly to James' office and for the attorney general to hold the money in an escrow account while Trump's legal team appeals the original contempt finding.

Jobless aid numbers up slightly last week

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for jobless aid ticked up slightly last week, but the number of Americans collecting benefits remained at its lowest level in more than five decades.

Applications for unemployment benefits rose by 1,000 to 203,000 for the week ending May 7, the Labor Department reported Thursday. First-time applications generally track the number of layoffs.

The four-week average for claims, which evens out some of the weekly ups and downs, rose 4,250 from the previous week to 192,750.

The total number of Americans collecting jobless benefits for the

week ending April 30 fell by 44,000 from the previous week to 1,343,000. That's the fewest since Jan. 3, 1970.

American workers are enjoying historically strong job security two years after the coronavirus pandemic plunged the economy into a brief but devastating recession. Weekly applications for unemployment aid have been consistently below the pre-pandemic level of 225,000 for most of 2022, even as the overall economy contracted in the first quarter.

Last week, the government reported America's employers added 428,000 jobs in April, leaving the unemployment rate at 3.6%, just above the lowest level in a half-century.

Calif. under-21 gun ban ruled unconstitutional

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A U.S. appeals court ruled Wednesday that California's ban on the sale of semiautomatic weapons to adults under 21 is unconstitutional.

In a 2-1 ruling, a panel of the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Wednesday that the law violates the Second Amendment right to bear arms and a San Diego judge should have blocked what it called "an almost total ban on semiautomatic centerfire rifles"

for young adults.

"America would not exist without the heroism of the young adults who fought and died in our revolutionary army," Judge Ryan Nelson wrote. "Today we reaffirm that our Constitution still protects the right that enabled their sacrifice: the right of young adults to keep and bear arms."

The Firearms Policy Coalition, which brought the case, said the ruling makes it optimistic age-based gun bans will be overturned in other courts.

Adam Winkler, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, said the decision is a clear sign of how courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court which has a major gun case before it, are expanding gun rights.

"Federal judges can read the tea leaves," Winkler said. "In the coming years, the courts seem certain to strike down numerous gun safety measures in the name of the 2nd Amendment. This 9th Circuit ruling is a harbinger of things to come."

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WEEKEND



Latest 'Trek' series has swagger of original
Television, Page 31

Out of the darkness

Arcade Fire dials back the cynicism, revisits the grandiose glory of its early work on 'WE'

Music, Page 28



Michael Marcelle

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/Orlando Sentinel

UCF professor Jayan Thomas, left, and Ph.D. student Deepak Pandey show samples of material being developed that could be used as a battery and the outer shell for electric vehicles on April 22 in a lab at the NanoScience Technology Center at the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Fla.

A power suit for your car

UCF charges on with new battery for electric cars, spacecraft

By JOE MARIO PEDERSEN
Orlando Sentinel

University of Central Florida scientists are charging on with an experimental battery capable of reinventing how automobiles and spacecraft are made.

By reworking the idea of energy sources, a UCF research group is creating a lightweight battery that would double as the outer shell of a vehicle in what the group is calling its “power suit” project.

Led by UCF College of Engineering Professor Jayan Thomas, the group plans to accomplish this with nanotechnology — supercapacitor composite material involving graphene arranged over carbon fiber in a fan-like structure, Thomas said.

“The advantage is it’s lightweight, and can increase the mileage because you’re reducing the weight of the car and in addition to that, you can store energy like your battery in the same composites,” said Thomas, who conducts his research at UCF’s NanoScience Technology Center.

While reducing weight, the suit is thought to increase an electric car’s range by 25% to 30%, equating to about 200 miles per charge, Thomas said. The suit would get its power through charging, like a battery, as well as when the car brakes.

“Its charge-discharge cycle life is 10 times longer than an electric car battery,” Thomas said.

The suit’s ability to repurpose energy captured while braking is why a member of the research group, Deepak Pandey, relates their power suit to the science fiction of Marvel’s Black Panther.

“Black Panther, you know, whatever you shoot at him, his suit absorbs the energy and repurposes it. That’s exactly the thing we’re doing,” said Pandey, a Ph.D student who’s been working on the project since it started four years ago. “When you’re braking, [the suit] absorbs the energy and then when you see a green light and press the gas, it immediately discharges and gives a high burst of current to give you that initial push acceleration.”

The Wakanda King, T’Challa, used his power suit — capable of storing energy from concussive blows — to chase down a Lexus through the neon streets of Busan, South Korea. UCF isn’t looking to do anything quite as explosive.

Actually, quite the contrary. The UCF vehicle power suit wouldn’t be explosive at all — at least that’s the goal.

After all, having the battery on the outside of a

car is potentially problematic in the event of a collision, but explosions wouldn’t be a threat in the case of UCF’s suit.

“In this case, we use a water-based electrolyte. So, then you don’t need to worry about gasoline or any kind of material that could catch fire,” Thomas said.

But with water lies a problem of its own, as batteries can’t hold as much of a charge per cell. However, by using a technique called “asymmetric supercapacitors,” the battery can come pretty close to a standard charge per cell. A typical ion lithium battery can hold 3.4 volts per cell. UCF’s asymmetric supercapacitors can hold 2.2, Pandey said.

“And we believe we can enhance that further,” he said.

For the moment, the research group has only developed a small prototype for a remote control car — the suit itself looks almost reminiscent of Black Panther’s the way the black-scale surface shimmers in the light, and although the carbon fiber material is not as expensive as Marvel’s fictional metal “vibranium,” it is still pretty expensive.

Thomas’ group saw success in its composite material powering the wheels of a toy car after charging for about a minute. As the composite material hooked up to a battery-less toy car, its wheels whined at a high pitch while quickly rotating, to the delight of Thomas and Pandey.

The group is working in tandem with NASA scientists in developing the technique for future space travel and satellite development. NASA declined to comment on the story, explaining it had legal concerns about disclosure. However, in a story published by UCF, co-author of the project’s study, Luke Robinson, said “there are lots of potential infusion points within the economy as well as for future space exploration. ... This is, in my mind, a huge advancement of the technology readiness level to get us to where we need to be for NASA mission infusion.”

As for readiness, the project is near the desired level for NASA’s use. Commercial use development could take around five more years, Thomas said.

An unnamed car manufacture has already expressed interest in the power suit and is in discussions with Thomas and his group about its applications.

“For this product to be on an electric vehicle or spacecraft, that is the dream, right?” Thomas said.

GADGETS

Earbud options that aren’t the ubiquitous white ones

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

“What are the best true wireless earbuds?” is an impossible question to answer since most fit differently, and available features and cost vary wildly. Many options are available in what is now a crowded audio category.

Here are some to choose from, if you’d like some options not produced by Apple. All were tested right out of the box.

Marshall’s Mode II feels well built, has Bluetooth 5.1, boasts 25 hours of playtime (five hours on a single charge and four additional charges with the case), an IPX5 weather-resistant rating, and includes four sizes of ear tips. The ergonomic comfort was great, and the sound was even better. Inside each earbud is a custom-tuned driver with a natural, accurate sound with the right amount of bass.

The Mode II charging case has LED battery light indicators and an IPX4 water-resistant rating, so it takes on accidental splashes around the pool. All the touch controls worked well to manage the music and hands-free calls by touching Marshall’s attractive M logo on the earbud.

Online: marshallheadphones.com; \$179.99

Denon, the famous audio company, debuts in this category with the AH-C830NCW with active noise canceling. Since Denon is an experienced audio company, it’s no surprise these have great sound, feel and controls. They are constructed with a stem, which presents a similar look to Apple’s AirPods.

With the ANC on, they worked well to reduce the background noise. Or keep it in Transparency Mode to hear everything. Denon touts the sound to deliver strong dynamics and crystal clear vocals, which they do. Every playlist sounded precisely as it was supposed to from the 0.4-inch oval, dynamic drivers.

Three sizes of ear tips are included, and you’ll get six hours of playtime on a single charge and up to 24 hours total with the charging case. Tap controls on the earbuds were responsive, and a single earbud can be used for mono listening. Bluetooth 5.0



Marshall Mode II earbuds
HEARTLAND FOTO/TNS

was perfect for pairing.
Online: denon.com; \$159.00

MoveBuds H1 are the first-ever sports earbuds from Tribit. They have an IPX8 rating, making them perfect for the sweatiest athletes, and they can stay in your ears underwater for 60 minutes up to 5 feet deep.

The Bluetooth 5.2 true wireless earbuds have five sizes of ear tips, but what makes these stand out for active users are the attached ear hooks. The ear tips make them comfortable, and the hooks ensure they stay on no matter how aggressive the activity. The ear tips prevent bacteria from growing from dirt, earwax or sweat.

Upon testing them during various activities and long walks, both played music clearly with or without the noise reduction. The same held true for cell calls, which utilize a four-microphone system. The touch controls worked well for adjusting the music and ringing and included volume controls, which many other brands do not have built into the earbuds. Tribit states that the product will play for 15 continuous hours and 50 additional hours from the charging case.

Online: tribit.com; \$89.99

UGreen’s HiTune X6 Hybrid Bluetooth 5.1 Active Noise Cancelling true wireless earbuds are impressive, and not just because of their affordable price. A 10mm diamond-like carbon dynamic driver is inside each ear, with active noise cancellation.

Most of the time, these were tested with the ANC, and the audio played clear, smooth and bass friendly. On-ear tap controls were responsive for turning the ANC on and off, controlling music, volume and answering calls.

They are built with an IPX5 water resistance rating. Three integrated microphones in each ear and Real Clear Voice technology are excellent for calls. They will run for six hours and 20 additional hours with the charging case. A 10-minute quick charge will produce one hour of playback.

Online: ugreen.com; \$55.99

WEEKEND: MOVIES

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

While Martin Scorsese and Thelma Schoonmaker were holed up in an apartment cutting “Raging Bull” — an intense process that would have consumed the thoughts of most filmmakers — Scorsese told his editor to take a break. He had a movie he needed to show her.

“He said, ‘You have to see this one,’” Schoonmaker recalls.

Scorsese was by then already a passionate fan of the films of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, the British filmmaking duo known as the Archers. He considered Technicolor films like “The Red Shoes,” “The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp” and “A Matter of Life and Death” to be masterpieces. But he had held off watching their 1945 black-and-white Scottish romance, “I Know Where I’m Going!” fearing it might be “a lighter picture.” Something about that title. And besides, just how many masterworks could Powell and Pressburger have made?

Yet Scorsese was coaxed into screening it with his friend Jay Cocks the night before shooting began on “Raging Bull.”

“I couldn’t have been more wrong,” Scorsese recalled in an email. “It was funny, it was exciting, it was truly mystical and it was deeply stirring. I’ve seen ‘I Know Where I’m Going!’ many times since then — so many times, in fact, that I’ve almost lost count — and I’m always moved and always surprised every time, and I’m held in suspense right up to those amazing final moments.”

This month, Scorsese and the film restoration nonprofit he founded, the Film Foundation, launched a new virtual theater, the Film Foundation Restoration Screening Room. Every month, for one night only, films that have been restored by the Film Foundation will be presented in free online screenings accompanied by discussions from Scorsese and other filmmakers. The screening room begins, naturally, with the restoration of “I Know Where I’m Going!”

Since it was released in the waning days of World War II, “I Know Where I’m Going!” has played a unique role in the hearts of moviegoers. It isn’t the most celebrated Powell and Pressburger film, nor is it regularly listed on all-time lists. Instead, it’s a movie that tends to be shared moviegoer to moviegoer, like a cherished gift or family treasure. It’s a buried gem that



THE FILM FOUNDATION/AP

Roger Livesey, left, and Wendy Hiller in a scene from “I Know Where I’m Going!,” which was screened online May 9 as part of the launch of the Film Foundation Restoration Screening Room.

Preserving cinema’s past

Scorsese and his nonprofit launch a free monthly online theater to screen, discuss films they’ve restored like ‘I Know Where I’m Going!’

anyone who’s ever seen it wants to tell everyone about. “You have to see this one” is how most conversations about “I Know Where I’m Going!” begin.

“At the end of the war, people had suffered so much,” says Schoonmaker, speaking recently by phone. “And here is this movie that lifts your heart.”

Shortly after seeing “I Know Where I’m Going!” Powell visited Scorsese, who encouraged Schoonmaker to come along to dinner. Powell and Schoonmaker hit it off and by 1984 were married. Powell died in 1990; Pressburger in 1988. Ever since, Schoonmaker and Scorsese have dedicated themselves — when they’re not making films (they’re currently finishing the edit on “Killers of the Flower Moon,” an expansive crime film for Apple about the 1920s murders in Oklahoma’s Osage Nation) — to restoring Powell and Pressburger’s movies. Scorsese recently signed on to narrate a documentary on their films. For years, Schoon-



Schoonmaker

maker has been combing through Powell’s diaries with the hope of publishing them.

“I inherited that,” says Schoonmaker, Scorsese’s celebrated longtime editor. “Michael, when he died, left a little furnace burning inside of me. What keeps me going is loving and trying to get other people to love his work.”

How much can come from loving an old movie? For Schoonmaker, the answer is almost everything. Scorsese’s passion for the Archers’ movies inspired Schoonmaker’s own, and in turn led to the love of her life.

“It was Marty’s passion for film history that made this all happen,” she says, chuckling.

The Film Foundation, which collaborated with the British Film Institute on the “I Know Where I’m Going!” restoration, has restored more than 925 films, preserving wide swaths of film history and picking up the slack of many of today’s film studios, who have showed less interest in preserving cinema’s past than keeping pipelines of new “content” flowing.

“At this point, they’re not film companies anymore, but vast media conglomerates. For them,

old movies are one small item in a wide array of properties and activities,” Scorsese says. “The people who run them are several generations from the very question of cinema: The word is meaningful only as a marketing term. Their interest is not in making good films, but in making their shareholders richer. So, no, restoring a Howard Hawks picture is not high on their list of priorities. The idea that it should be, for reasons that have nothing to do with profits and losses, is not even entertained. In this atmosphere, the idea of art has no place. It throws a wrench in the works.”

“I Know Where I’m Going!,” though, stands for the foolhardiness of best-laid plans. Powell and Pressburger made it in 1944 while awaiting the Technicolor cameras Lawrence Olivier was using to make “Henry V.” Pressburger is believed to have written it in a matter of days. They pitched it to the Ministry of Information, which controlled



Scorsese

wartime moviemaking, as an anti-materialistic tale. (Britain feared a rash of consumerism would follow wartime rationing.)

In it, a headstrong woman, Joan Webster (Wendy Hiller), travels to the Scottish Hebrides (the film was shot on the picturesque Isle of Mull) to marry a wealthy lord. But stormy weather prevents her from crossing to Kiloran (the island of Colonsay). While awaiting passage, she meets a naval officer (Roger Livesey) from the area. They become quickly enmeshed in local life, as we grow enchanted with it. Joan feels increasingly pulled off course.

But summarizing the exhilarating magic of “I Know Where I’m Going!” never quite does it justice. It reverberates with a warm, lyrical spirit that feels poised between past and present, legend and reality. It’s a movie that you, just as helpless as Joan, can’t help falling for.

“I Know Where I’m Going!” is in part about reconnecting with something — with nature and old ways — that makes it a particularly fitting film to kick off the Restoration Screening Room. With appointed showtimes and robust conversation around the film, the virtual theater is set up in a way that clearly differs from the standard streaming experience.

“We’ve gotten used to watching and listening on our own time. Something’s been gained, but something has also been lost,” Scorsese says. “We felt it was important to create a way of watching movies that guaranteed there was a greater audience out there watching and responding at the same time.”

At a time when film culture can be unsure of its direction, the lovingly restored “I Know Where I’m Going!” may help light the way. It is, at any rate, one spirit-lifting port in a storm.

“I’ve always felt that you can’t have a present or a future of cinema without its past. The films that I’ve seen, that I’ve re-seen and studied, that I’ve discovered for myself or through a friend ... they enrich me, they inspire me, they sustain me,” Scorsese says. “I suppose it’s possible to imagine someone making movies without bothering to see anything made before their own time. But the question is: why? What’s the point? Why not see what you come out of? Every film is in conversation with every film before it and every one that follows it. It’s true of all art. Isn’t that amazing?”

“We’ve gotten used to watching and listening on our own time. Something’s been gained, but something has also been lost. We felt it was important to create a way of watching movies that guaranteed there was a greater audience out there watching and responding at the same time.”

Martin Scorsese

filmmaker, founder of the nonprofit Film Foundation

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

A comedy as dark as they come

Acting chemistry between leads Carmichael and Abbott boosts unpredictable buddy film 'On the Count of Three'

By JOCELYN NOVECK
Associated Press

“On the Count of Three” is marketed as a “darkly comic” movie. Well, there’s dark comedy and there’s darker comedy, and then there’s comedy like this — so dark that you wonder if the two words can realistically co-exist in one sentence.

So it’s not clear in which genre to place this edgily confident if bumpy and unsettling directorial debut from talented comedian Jerrod Carmichael, a buddy movie that begins with said buddies pointing loaded guns at each other with the intention of firing at the same time (hence the disturbing title).

Clearly things won’t be going perfectly to plan, because then there’d be no more movie left. But, just a warning: The sense you might get right then and there of “I’m really not sure I can watch this” will likely stay with you for the full 86 minutes, even as you acknowledge the considerable acting chemistry generated by Carmichael, directing himself, and Christopher Abbott.

So, back to that scene. Without divulging too much, Val (Carmichael) and Kevin (Abbott) are longtime friends, but very different trajectories have brought them to this dreary parking lot.

Val is working at a landscaping supply store and his best prospects seem to be a promotion to floor manager. He begins this work day by taking all his allotted



UNITED ARTISTS/AP

Jerrod Carmichael (Val), right, and Christopher Abbott (Kevin) costar in the nearly unwatchably dark comedy “On the Count of Three,” Carmichael’s directorial debut.

smoking breaks, not a good sign.

Val decides to go visit Kevin, and suddenly they’re inadvertently presented with an opportunity to break Kevin out of the institution he’s in. Thus begins a day in which they both seek to right the wrongs committed against them, and perhaps some they’ve committed themselves.

The script by Ari Katcher and Ryan Welch makes a game effort throughout to toggle between humor and pathos, levity and despair, with occasional hits and some

misses, too. (It’s quite a tall order, even without the broader references to issues like police racism and gun control.) What’s consistent is an unnerving unpredictability — we really don’t know how this day will resolve itself — and the authenticity of the lead actors, who make us care even as we struggle to accept some of the plot elements. Without these sharply calibrated performances, the film would flounder.

Each man is given unresolved conflicts,

some more compelling than others. Val, in a relatively restrained performance by Carmichael — who, through his comedy, certainly has experience taking humor to bleak places — has serious issues with his estranged father (J.B. Smoove of “Curb Your Enthusiasm.”) He also has to face up to his inability to be a responsible partner to a trusting girlfriend, Natasha (“Carmichael Show” colleague Tiffany Haddish, underused in a small role).

As for Kevin, played more broadly by Abbott, he has deep anger at a man, now serving his country in the military, who bullied him in younger days. Worse, there’s the creepy doctor who molested him in his youth. (Henry Winkler plays the unfortunate medical professional.)

Not surprisingly, Carmichael proves a director who is nothing if not confident and comfortable with the uncomfortable. He keeps the action moving — at a few moments, the film even feels like an action pic.

A climactic scene has an apocalyptic feel and harks back visually to one of the most famous buddy films of American cinema, though the buddies were named Thelma and Louise.

But it’s the acting that keeps the film afloat. Carmichael is a multifaceted talent, and one wonders what he’ll do next — especially if next time his name is on the script, as well.

“On the Count of Three” is rated R for violence, suicide, pervasive language and some sexual references. Running time: 86 minutes.

‘Mincemeat’ a fresh retelling of WWII British intel operation

By MARK MESZOROS
The News-Herald
(Willoughby, Ohio)

It is said that dead men tell no tales. However, in 1943, the British military hoped one dead man would spin quite the yarn to German officials.

Operation Mincemeat was a British deception effort during World War II designed to draw the Axis powers’ attention from the coast of Sicily, where Allied forces hoped to launch an attack, to Greece, where they did not. To accomplish this, the Brits enlisted the services of a man already dead, whom they would pose as an officer carrying highly sensitive military plans — fictitious plans relating to an upcoming operation in Greece — and whose body would wash ashore in neutral Spain. There, Axis spies could come into possession of the documents and, hopefully, take them quite seriously.

Already the inspiration for the 1956 film “The Man Who Never Was,” the high-stakes endeavor gets a fresh telling in “Operation Mincemeat.” Based on Ben MacIntyre’s 2010 book “Operation Mincemeat: The True Spy Story That Changed the Course of



NETFLIX/AP

Matthew Macfadyen, Colin Firth and Johnny Flynn star in “Operation Mincemeat,” a true story about a British attempt to fool Axis powers.

World War II,” the film is deftly directed by veteran filmmaker John Madden, and it does justice to this fascinating slice of military intelligence history. Madden and writer Michelle Ashford probably could have punched the drama up a bit in spots, but that they went the more refined route feels appropriately British.

“Operation Mincemeat” stars an appealing trio: Colin Firth, as Ewen Montagu, an intelligence officer who must hide his work from friends and family; Mat-

thew Macfadyen, as his colleague Charles Cholmondeley, whose mother has greater affection for his late war-hero brother; and Kelly Macdonald, as Jean Leslie, a lower-level colleague who’s brought into their inner circle after offering her help with a matter and who proves to be an invaluable contributor to the mission.

Also involved with the effort on an intimate level are high-ranking colleagues Hester Leggett (Penelope Wilson of “Downton

Abbey”) and Ian Fleming (Johnny Flynn, “Emma”), the future James Bond scribe who also serves as our narrator.

“In any story, if it’s a good story, there is that which is seen and that which is hidden; this is especially true in stories of war,” he tells us in the film’s opening moments, explaining that theirs is a tale of the war we don’t see, one without bullets, bombs and brute force. “This war is a wilderness of mirrors in which the truth is protected by a bodyguard of lies. This is our war.”

The scheming Admiral Godfrey (Jason Isaacs, “A Cure for Wellness”), doubts the merits of Operation Mincemeat from its inception. However, the ultimate decision as to whether to move forward with the plan rests with Prime Minister Winston Churchill (an impactful Simon Russell Beale of “The Outfit” in limited screen time).

You worry “Mincemeat” will lose momentum after Churchill’s green light, but, to the credit of Madden (“Shakespeare in Love,” “The Debt”) and Ashford (“Masters of Sex”), that isn’t the case. Ewen, Charles and Jean must continue in the combined role of

puppet master, the trio pulling strings in Spain from afar as certain aspects of the plan go awry.

Each of the three actors gives an understated performance, and their occasional bursts of emotion help sell the film’s big moments. Firth (“The King’s Speech,” “A Single Man”) and Macdonald (“No Country for Old Men,” “Boardwalk Empire”) are highly enjoyable together, and “Succession” fans may enjoy seeing Macfadyen — also well known for 2005’s “Pride & Prejudice” — in a role quite different from Tom Wambsgans.

Although it could use a few more combustible moments, the film never drags, never loses the viewer’s interest. And thanks to director of photography Sebastian Blenkov (“Their Finest”) and other behind-the-scenes contributors, it is a lovely dish for the eyes, on top of everything else it has to offer.

It may not be a perfect film, but “Operation Mincemeat” is anything but chopped liver.

“Operation Mincemeat” is rated PG-13 for strong language, some sexual content, brief war violence, disturbing images and smoking. Running time: 128 minutes. Now streaming on Netflix.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Finding utopia in the toilet

HIRO KOMAE/AP

A man uses a transparent toilet that has turned opaque, right, after the door was locked in August 2020 at Haru-no-Owaga Community Park in Tokyo. Wim Wenders is making a film about beautified Japanese toilets that will have what the German director calls “social meaning” about people in modern cities.

Fancy public restrooms in Japan have social meaning for filmmaker Wenders

BY YURI KAGEYAMA
Associated Press

Wim Wenders is making a film about high-end public toilets in Japan that will have what the renowned German director calls “social meaning” about people in modern cities.

“My first reaction was, I must admit: What? Toilets? Chotto mattene,” he said Wednesday, using the Japanese expression for “wait a minute.”



Wenders

But then he began to see what the story could be about.

“For me, they turned from toilets into restrooms. That’s a very nice word in English, the restroom. When I saw these places the next

couple of days, I realized they were restrooms in the true sense of the word,” Wenders told reporters in Tokyo’s fashionable Shibuya district, where the dozen public restrooms are located.

The facilities were designed by leading architects including Kengo Kuma and Tadao Ando, with the idea that a pleasant public restroom could counter the common expectation it had to be filthy, filled with graffiti or associated with crime.

Wenders, the Oscar-nominated director of “Wings of Desire” and “Buena Vista Social Club,” said when he saw the Shibuya bathrooms, he was moved. “This is a truly precious place,” Wenders said.

And so his film’s hero will be a sanitation worker who cleans the toilets, seeing his job as a craft and a service for the

people. Details of the script are still being worked out.

Koji Yakusho, known for playing the Japanese everyman in works like “Shall We Dance” and “Babel,” said he accepted the role as soon as it was offered because he wanted to work with Wenders.

“I have a feeling it’s going to be a beautiful story. And I feel a story that has the toilet as the setting, with the person who works there and the people who use it, will help lead to an understanding of Japan,” said Yakusho.

The Tokyo Toilet project was initially conceived to impress foreign visitors expected for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, before the coronavirus pandemic forced the events to take place without spectators in the stands.

The public restroom designed by Ando is round with frames for the exterior walls, to allow air to circulate.

In real life it gets cleaned without water to avoid mold or decay by men in blue jumpsuits by Japanese fashion designer Nigo.

The project, including Wenders’ film, has the backing of Fast Retailing, the company behind the Uniqlo clothing chain, and The Nippon Foundation, which carries out humanitarian projects using revenue from boat racing.

Wenders said his film, despite its humble setting, will explore a profound concept.

“I almost think it’s a utopian idea because the toilet is a place where everybody is the same. There is no rich or poor, old or young. Everyone is part of humanity,” he said.



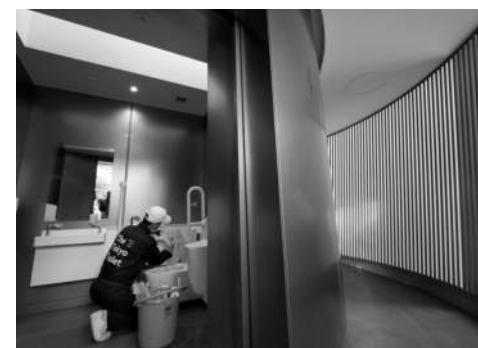
SHUJI KAJIYAMA/AP

A man leaves a public restroom that was designed by architect Tadao Ando in Tokyo on Wednesday. The restrooms were originally designed to impress foreign visitors during the 2020 Tokyo Olympics before the pandemic closed the event to spectators.



HIRO KOMAE/AP

People gather in August 2020 at Yoyogi Hukamachi Mini Park in Tokyo.



SHUJI KAJIYAMA/AP

A worker cleans inside a public restroom that was designed by architect Tadao Ando in Tokyo on Wednesday.

WEEKEND: GAMES



Worldslayer is a digital upgrade of Outriders.

SQUARE ENIX/TNS

Worldslayer: A return to Enoch

New Outriders expansion expands the loot shooter's narrative and expands levels, gear

BY GIESON CACHO
Bay Area News Group

Outriders was built as a standalone game without microtransactions. Everything in the game was accessible and could be earned. That didn't mean that the loot shooter from People Can Fly was perfect, but it did have appealing features and a better-than-average story about a planet colonization gone wrong.

Although it isn't a live-service game, that didn't mean Outriders narrative would end when the credits rolled. People Can Fly has refined the campaign and made fixes to its endgame, and that work has become the franchise's first expansion — Worldslayer.

It's the first piece of paid content for Outriders. It won't be part of GamePass. It's a digital upgrade that features a new campaign, enemies, environments, gear and powers. The expansion continues where the campaign left off as players searched for drop pods. During one of those missions, players encounter something unexpected and that leads to them to face new altered named Ereshkigal, who wields a new and mysterious power.

With the expansion, players can expect a level cap bump to 40. Other changes

including the discovery of level 75 gear. Challenge Tiers will be replaced by something called Apocalypse Tier that's open to everyone. Players will be aided by nearly a hundred new Legendary items, including weapons and two new class-specific five-piece legendary armor sets, and several three-piece legendary armor that any class can use. These legendaries also have new mods built in as well.

What everyone will want is the Apocalypse Gear, which are new variations of Epic and Legendary items that have a third mod slot. The third mod is random, but the deeper players dive into the game and grind, the more likely that mod will be legendary, according to Lukasz Osinski, associate lead of game design balance.

Lastly, the progression system will have an upgrade with new PAX class trees that evolve Pyromancer, Devastator, Technomancer and Trickster further by adding a new sub-class specialization. Worldslayer also has Ascension, which is a long-term system, that lets players add up to 200 points to certain aspects of their Outrider giving them minor bumps to traits such as armor, health or attack power. It's a way to reward those who pour hundreds of hours into the game.

Most of the work and the design philosophy behind Worldslayer can be seen in the new environment and new enemies. In the two locales I encountered, Glacier's Edge and Black Gulch, I ventured through an icy wasteland and a swampy ghost town. Each had enemies that reflected the type of environment. In Glacier's Edge, I fought woolly mammoth-type monsters. As I ventured through caves, I encountered variants of some familiar foes.

Black Gulch had more conventional troopers, and they seem to come out of the woodwork. It was the type of environment in which taking cover was mandatory, while the Glaciers Edge felt more wide open, though it required handling hordes of enemies.

Past improvements and the new content make Worldslayer an intriguing prospect. The extra adventure and gear should entice longtime fans. For newcomers, the ability to jump in and join veteran friends is available with an instant level 30 boost. It's something to look out for when Worldslayer comes out June 30 on PlayStation 5, PlayStation 4, Xbox Series X and Series S, PC. The expansion will cost \$39.99, and a bundle that includes the full game and Worldslayer costs \$59.99.

Knotwords a new puzzle for crossword fans

BY ALYSE STANLEY
The Washington Post

Game designer and artist Zach Gage has made a name for himself breaking down the world's most commonly played games and creating something new from the pieces. He's brought the strategy of poker to solitaire, built a chaotic version of chess with randomized pieces and now made a crossword-style puzzle where the grid patterns themselves are the clues.

It's called Knotwords, a daily logic puzzle that combines design elements from several commonly played games: sudoku, kakuro, kenken and, of course, Wordle — the viral five-letter word-guessing game the New York Times scooped up this year.

Gage co-developed Knotwords — out now on iOS, Android and PC — with designer and longtime collaborator Jack Schlesinger. Like all good puzzles, the premise of Knotwords is deceptively simple: fit all the words in the right places.

The board resembles a crossword puzzle, but there are no trivia questions to help you guess which words go where. Instead, the board is divided into several regions, each with a limited selection of letters you can use. These letters serve as clues to piece together the correct words to fill up the grid, just like in a crossword puzzle. The challenge comes from tinkering with these building blocks, testing out different combinations of letters like you would in a numbers-based puzzle and whittling down the possibilities.

Solving the puzzle then becomes an intricate process that can feel like you're interlocking cogs into a literary machine. Oftentimes, the best place to start is with two- or three-letter words, where there are fewer possible solutions. If you get stumped, you can unlock a hint.

The free version of Knotwords on mobile offers a new puzzle each day along with 10 additional puzzles each month. Players can unlock the full game by subscribing to a \$4.99 yearly subscription service or paying a one-time fee of \$11.99, which includes an archive of past puzzles as well as additional monthly puzzles and variations.

Many of Gage's works have found success on mobile, including Really Bad Chess, Pocket-Run Pool, Flipflop Solitaire and SpellTower Plus.

Saints Row customization will lead to some absurd creations

BY GIESON CACHO
Bay Area News Group

Customization is a form of self-expression in video games. Give gamers the tools, and they can create works of art or designs that you'd be afraid to show your mother. Whatever the case, the new Saints Row will likely sate players' creative desires with its slew of options.

The developer, Volition, showed off what players can do in the reboot to their open-world crime game. The customization goes from the protagonist, which

they call the Boss, and goes through vehicles, weapons, the Saints Row HQ and the gang itself.

Players' imagination can run wild with the character creation. They can give the Boss any body style from body builder to svelte model. They can add all types of body hair, color it in any way they want, add candy corn teeth and throw on some back tattoos.

Players now can create asymmetrical elements as well. For example, characters can have one big eye and one small eye or

a deformed elephant man-looking head. Skin colors aren't just limited to human colors, but now include options such as shiny gold or pale blue.

When it comes to the vehicles, players will have more than 80 rides to collect, and the customization options are just as robust. Players can expect the normal color and body changing, but what's notable is that cars can add nitrous, an off-road kit and a towing cable that lets players drag cars behind them.

Weapons have the customiza-

tion that one would expect. Players can color a magnum however they want and add decals.

Weapons can also appear like different items entirely. Volition showed how a rocket launcher can turn into a guitar case. Players can also wield a sub-machine gun that looks like an umbrella.

Saints Row is scheduled for release Aug. 23. It's coming out on PlayStation 5, PlayStation 4, PC, Xbox Series X and Series S and Xbox One.



KOCH MEDIA/TNS

This Saints Row customized character has candy corn teeth.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Tuscany: Where prosciutto begins

I checked into the farmhouse inn on the Gori family estate. This is Tuscany in the rough: a working farm, not a resort — no TV, no swimming pool, lots of real culture. My host, Signora Gori, is both old-money elegant and farmhouse tough. After I settle in, she takes me on a welcome stroll.

Our first stop is a sty dominated by a giant pig. “We call him ‘Pastanetto’ — the little pastry,” Signora Gori says.

Hiking to the rustic slaughterhouse, we enter a room dominated by a stainless-steel table piled with red sides of pork. “Here begins prosciutto,” Signora Gori says. Burly men in aprons squeeze the blood out of hunks of meat the size of dance partners. Then they cake the ham hocks in salt to begin the curing process, which takes months. While the salt helps cure the meat, a coating of pepper seals it.

In another room are towering racks of aging ham hocks. A man in a white coat tests each by sticking it with a bone needle and giving it a sniff. It smells heavenly.

Back outside, Signora Gori takes me into the next barn, where fluffy white lambs jump to attention. Picking up a baby lamb and giving it an Eskimo kiss, she explains, “We use unpasteurized milk in making the pecorino cheese. This is al-

lowed, but with strict health safeguards. I must really know my sheep.”

This close-to-the-land-and-animals food production is part of Italy’s Slow Food movement. Believing there’s more to life than increasing profits and speeding up production, people like the Gori family



Rick Steves

have committed to making and serving food in the time-honored way. It may be more labor-intensive and more expensive, but it’s tastier. Because Italian foodies are happy to pay higher prices for higher quality, it’s also good business. Tuscany is alluring. Enticed by books like “Under the Tuscan Sun,” a persistent parade of visitors are hell-bent on sampling the Tuscan good life — and its prosciutto. The nearby town of Greve is happy to oblige. It’s a facade of Tuscan clichés, with enough parking and toilets to handle all the tour buses, as well as a vast prosciutto emporium, with boastful newspaper clippings on its door and samples kept under glass. My stroll on the Gori farm reminds me how, especially here, it’s critical to venture off the tourist track.



ADDIE MANNAN/Rick Steves' Europe

Tuscan prosciutto, produced on a small family farm. The curing process takes months.

Walking down another lane, we observe the family’s team of vintners. Signora Gori’s brother empties a bucketful of purple grapes from a dump truck into a grinder, which munches through the bunches, spitting stems one way and juice with mangled grapes the other. Following pipes of this juice into a cellar, Signor Gori explains that winemaking is labor-intensive, “but right now, the grapes are doing most of the work.”

As the new grapes ferment, we taste the finished product. A key word from my Tuscan travels is *corposo* — full-bodied. Lifting the elegant glass to my lips, I sip the wine while enjoying the pride in the eyes of those who made it. Satisfied, I say, “Corposo.”

“Si, bello,” they reply.

That night at dinner, we’re joined by the rest of the Gori family. We sit down to a

classic Tuscan table, focused on simplicity, a sense of harmony and the natural passage of time necessary for a good meal — each of us with a glass of good red wine. Dipping my bread in extra-virgin olive oil and savoring each slice of prosciutto, it’s clear: Great wine goes best with simple food. I nod to my hosts, appreciating that I’m experiencing the true art of Tuscan cuisine.

Full and content, we sip port and enjoy a game of backgammon on a board that has provided after-dinner fun for 200 years in this very room. I realize this evening — so special for me — is just another night on the farm for the Gori family.

Corposo. That’s how I like my wine ... and my Tuscan travels.

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.

Euros or dollars? The wrong choice will cost you

BY CATHERINE HAMM
Los Angeles Times

Q: On trips to Italy and Spain last year, a hotel in each country asked me whether I would like my bill charged in dollars or euros. I had not been to Europe for a while, and I had never been asked this. I didn’t know what to say, so I went one way at one hotel and the other way at the other. Does it matter which currency I choose? Do I have to know what the rate of exchange is for that day to give an intelligent answer? I have a credit card with no foreign transaction fees. Would it matter if I did not?

— Julie Bisceglia
Manhattan Beach, Calif.

A: Bisceglia — and millions of others, including me and probably you too — has stumbled onto one of the newer ways to part tourists from their money. And guess what? It’s mostly legal.

The practice is called “dynamic currency conversion,” and it is not your friend. It works this way: You go to pay your dinner check in, say, France. The merchant asks whether you would like to pay in euros or dollars.

“How thoughtful,” you think, “Someone is trying to help me overcome my conversion aversion and tell me in U.S. dollars how much I owe.”

The merchant isn’t helping you overcome your math problem; he’s helping himself to a few extra of your dollars. He’s banking on the fact that you don’t know what the exchange rate is. If you did, you would see that the dollar exchange rate you’re getting probably is lousy. Guess who gets the difference between the real rate and what you’re paying? Hint: Not you. And, by the way, the merchant is supposed to ask you whether you want this conversion done; sometimes he doesn’t, which is contrary to rules that are almost impossible to enforce because there are so many points of sale.

The answer to Bisceglia’s first question — does it mat-



DREAMSTIME/TNS

ter which currency I choose? — is yes, it does. The currency you should choose when you’re in a foreign country generally is the currency of the country you’re visiting, whether it’s euros, pounds, pesos or whatever.

The answer to Bisceglia’s second question — do I have to know what the rate of exchange is for that day to give an intelligent answer? — is no, you don’t have to know the rate to give an intelligent answer. All you must know is that if you choose U.S. dollars, you’re probably going to get hosed.

How can merchants justify this practice? Kevin Yuann, director of credit cards for NerdWallet, a personal finance website, explains that expressing a total in U.S. dollars is painted as a “convenience” for the traveler.

He’s not defending the practice, mind you; in fact, he has run afoul of it.

“I was paying for a restaurant bill — this was in Italy — and because I’m aware of dynamic currency conversion, I realized there was a 5% fee for using that (total in U.S.

dollars),” he said. He told the waiter he had not authorized a bill in U.S. dollars. The waiter, he said, stared at him blankly. Finally, the manager got involved, and the matter was resolved.

To Bisceglia’s third question — would it have mattered if I was using a credit card that doesn’t charge a foreign transaction fee? — the answer is not really. The dynamic currency conversion fee is separate from a foreign transaction fee, which can add as much as 3% to your bills.

As readers often point out when we’re talking about fees, what’s the big deal over a few dollars?

The big deal, says Odysseas Papadimitriou, chief executive of personal finance websites CardHub and WalletHub, is that the fees add up. If you spend \$1,500 abroad, and you’re not paying attention to the dynamic currency conversion and foreign transaction fees, you could be out as much as \$150 on that \$1,500 you’ve spent. You might as well light that money on fire.

What can you do to protect yourself? The experts offer these suggestions:

■ Familiarize yourself with the exchange rate and carry a calculator (there’s one on your smartphone, or you can use an exchange-rate app) to calculate what you’re being charged.

■ Pay close attention to your bill at the point of sale. If you get a dinner check in dollars, you might wish to ask that it be changed.

■ Keep your receipts. If you are paying in the local currency and a charge shows up on your monthly credit card bill that suggests you’ve been charged in dollars, dispute the charge with your credit card company.

The easiest way to avoid the conversion, of course, is to pay cash, although that comes with concerns about exchange rates, ATM fees and getting pickpocketed.

There is, then, no perfect solution to money abroad, except to be aware of others who will part you from it.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANDAU/For The Washington Post

Fog rolls in toward Tre Cime di Lavaredo, Italy's famous three peaks. In contrast to Italy's historic metropolises of Rome and Florence, the mountainous northern region of Trentino, South Tyrol, feels like another planet. The mountains hide miles of trails and reminders of a complicated and painful history.

A peak Italian experience for hikers

Get lost in the natural beauty of the Dolomite mountains

BY ELIZABETH LANDAU
Special to The Washington Post

My first encounter with Italy's famous "three peaks" — the Tre Cime di Lavaredo — was in a traffic circle. In the picturesque town of Dobbiaco/Toblach, three small painted sculptures in the center of the roundabout marked the gateway to one of the most iconic views in the Italian Alps. At a nearby cafe, my partner's chocolate schnitzel came with a powdered sugar cutout of the peaks, akin to an Eiffel Tower-themed dessert near Paris. "It's the Cime!" I exclaimed. We were on our way.

Above the village, in the jagged Dolomite mountains, rustic huts linked exclusively by footpaths offer food, drink and beds along countless miles of trails, with views of wonder at every turn. This is not what Americans generally imagine when they think of Italy. In contrast to the historic metropolises of Rome and Florence, the mountainous northern region of Trentino, South Tyrol feels like another planet. But for

a few days of our European getaway last year, my partner and I wanted to get lost in natural vistas rather than touristy plazas.

Tour companies abound, but I love planning itineraries and allowing time for spontaneous excursions. So I did a lot of research to find hiking routes that promised spectacular views and included huts, but didn't require a car to access an entry trail. And we had to time it right, because most huts open from part of June through September. We considered several options, but photos of the Tre Cime Natural Park made me stop and wonder: "Wait, how do mountains get to look like that?"

For a night's rest before the journey, I booked Hotel Dolomiten in Dobbiaco, also known as Toblach, for mid-September. Dobbiaco is located on a rail line to Fortezza, which has train connections to major cities with airports. For our hike, we'd catch a bus from Dobbiaco. I made two hut-room reservations by email ahead of time, and left a third night open to the whims of the mountains.

Bus 444 from Dobbiaco took us on a beautiful drive past sparkling Lake Dobbiaco and up to Rifugio Auronzo in less than an hour. Considering the view, it felt like cheating; we hadn't even left the parking lot, and I wanted to take a thousand photos of the mountains and valley below. But we had miles of hiking ahead of us, and for the next few days, our feet would be our only form of transit.

From the bus stop, it was an easy 20-minute walk to Rifugio Lavaredo, where we would spend our first night. Impressively, when we checked in, the staff knew our dietary requirements — nut allergy for me, vegan for my partner — when they presented us with dinner options for later. We dropped our overnight packs in the private room and headed into the sunny afternoon.

The huts, the valleys, the towns, the mountains themselves — everything carries both German and Italian names, the result of a complicated and painful history. Before World War I, the South Tyrol region had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



A cow grazes in Tre Cime Natural Park. Cowbells echo through the valleys, prompting a shout of "more cowbell!" from a hiker.

The glory of the mountains obscures the brutality of war — and winter conditions — that killed many soldiers by the same mountain passes hikers now traverse.

In 1920, Italy formally annexed South Tyrol, and over the next several years, waves of new regulations made the Italian

language mandatory at the government level, then in schools. In 1939, thanks to a collaboration between Mussolini and Hitler, German speakers had to either assimilate as Italian or leave for Germany. After World War II, South Tyrol became a generally peaceful multilingual region, **SEE DOLOMITE ON PAGE 21**

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Dolomite: Dotted the mountains are huts linked exclusively by footpaths**FROM PAGE 20**

with an additional minority Romance language called Ladin. But there are a lot of remnants of war in this region, such as tunnels and trenches.

Our first hike was to the north faces of the Tre Cime. Closest to us was the smallest peak, Cima Piccola, which looks a bit like a fist with a thumb and half a forefinger sticking up. In the middle, the biggest one is — unsurprisingly — Cima Grande, rising more than 9,800 feet above sea level. And on the right was Cima Ovest, the western peak. We scrambled over rocks to the base of Cima Piccola for a breathtaking panoramic view. Each of the Dolomites' natural skyscrapers was pointy or sloping in its own way. The Lavaredo hut we'd left looked like a toy house below us. In the distance, the red-roofed Rifugio A. Locatelli, called Dreizinnenhütte in German, seemed like a mirage among the gigantic peaks and striking slopes around it.

It was an easy walk — maybe another half-hour — along the trail to Locatelli, which has two levels of porches overlooking the Tre Cime and other seemingly impassible rocky peaks and slopes. By now, the weather had changed, with a thick fog covering the Cime and delivering a drizzle as we enjoyed beers on the porch. Rain drenched us as we headed back, and the shortcut hill to Rifugio Lavaredo looked especially perilous. I nearly panicked and longed for the hiking sticks I had decided not to purchase, because airports don't allow them in carry-on bags. Instead, as my partner and I carefully shuffled down the slippery slope, I improvised a silly jingle: "Hütte! Do the little hütte descent!" With patience and a sunny tune, we arrived safely.

That night at Lavaredo, we learned mountain hut customs: Shoes must be replaced with slippers, communal showers cost 5 euros, meals are taken at an assigned time, lights go out around 10 p.m., there's no Wi-Fi and no credit cards are accepted. And after 18 months of pandemic isolation, meeting fellow travelers felt both strange and refreshing; it had been so achingly long since I had struck up a conversation with a stranger or traded travel tips.

On Day 2, we layered up for a just-above-freezing September day, but with the bright sun and rigorous trail, we quickly stripped down to shirts. From above the clouds, we hiked Trail 104 into a valley where cowbells echoed in an incredible concert that seemed to crescendo each time one of the cows mooed. "More cowbell!" I yelled. My thighs were burning by the time we had completed all of the ups and downs of this path, but the cowbell chorus was worth the effort.

After a final strenuous ascent and a last flat jaunt, we arrived at the bustling Rifugio Pian di Cengia/Büllelejochhütte patio, where two musicians performed American folk hits in slight German accents. My partner and I jubilantly sang along to "Blowin' in the Wind" and chatted with a couple of locals who come to this restaurant once a week. Here I discovered my favorite mountain meal: kaiserschmarrn, a shredded pancake with caramelized sugar, powdered sugar and lingonberry

preserves. We took the advice of the locals and hiked to a nearby dramatic overlook, which we had all to ourselves.

Finding Trail 101 toward our next hut, we came upon a sign informing us of a World War I "secured war trail." Curious, we detoured to find a cave where soldiers might have lived — both a sobering monument and a fantastic photo opportunity for the jagged crest of Cima Undici. Outside the cave, the top of the rocky tower beckoned. We climbed precariously steep steps and held on to the attached steel cables to ascend. I found myself panting and shaken from how far we'd climbed in a matter of minutes, but the views calmed me. In the distance, snow-covered peaks were on the horizon, and toward the northeast was Rifugio Comici/Zsigmondyhütte, which would be our home for that night. Because we didn't bring climbing gear for a more ambitious route, we returned to the hiking trail.

Comici offers a broad menu of local delicacies. I chose cheese dumplings with cabbage — plump like two giant matzoh balls infused with cheese, hearty and filling, like a food hug after a full day of hiking. My partner loved his vegan mushroom polenta, too. Unlike at Lavaredo, hikers seemed to keep to themselves, and the after-dinner vibe was "map time," where guests took out their maps and planned their hikes for the next day. Our private room consisted of a bunk-bed set, but we found the mattress more comfortable than at Lavaredo, and we savored the romantic mountain view from the window.

Having now seen many highlights of the park, we decided to make the long trek back to Locatelli to see whether there were beds for our last mountain night. It was a risk; the website boasts "an estimated 10,000 email inquiries per year." But if we got turned down, we'd return to our previous hotel in Dobbiaco, which we nicknamed "the Pizza Hütte" for its pizzeria, whose smell drifts through the hallways.

We found the Locatelli patio crowded, though fellow travelers said this was nothing compared with pre-pandemic times, when the area was "like Times Square." I was glad to see the Tre Cime again, too. At 3 p.m., a young woman with a clipboard told me we could stay in a dormitory room that will have up to 10 people, but all 10 might not show up. Because of the coronavirus, I was reluctant, but she assured me that they spaced out the bunk beds, so only every other set was occupied. I left the final decision to my partner, who just said, "This seems like more fun than a hotel."

I put aside my anxieties as we chatted with German travelers on a more elaborate two-week expedition. When we were mostly done with dinner, I noticed the bright yellow and orange colors of the sunset out the window, and I somewhat abruptly interrupted myself to go and look. Soon, everyone ran outside to ripples of gold, pink and purple in the sky, like a carpet extending toward a rocky peak formation that my partner dubbed "Red Panda Mountain" for its layers of reddish rock. (It's called Croda Rossa.) "We live in a postcard!" I exclaimed.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LANDAU/For The Washington Post

Rifugio Comici, called Zsigmondyhütte in German, with the Cima Undici mountain in the background. Many of the sites in the area have both Italian and German names.



Reminders of conflicts abound in the Dolomite mountains; this view is from the ruins of a lookout that was possibly used during World War I.

When the electricity went off for the night, I whispered to my partner that we should check the rest of the floor for empty beds. Lo and behold, an entire section of the attic dormitory room was vacant. Unfortunately, the mandatory "sleeping bag liners" we'd purchased for 8 euros (about \$8.50) each were like glorified paper towels, and the blankets that apparently don't get washed were very thin. I put on every piece of clothing I'd brought, and that still wasn't enough warmth. We took spare blankets off other beds, but it was a difficult, frigid night.

Nonetheless, there is no better sunrise than at Rifugio Locatelli. The lack of sleep was worth the morning light coloring mountain tips a bright salmon pink.

After breakfast, we took a leisurely 2.5-hour hike to the bus stop, first descending below the Tre Cime, then upward and around the westernmost face, with plenty of pauses for photos. By now, the Tre Cime peaks had become old friends, though still otherworldly. In fact, I later learned that in the Star Wars movie "Solo," the perilous train heist on planet Vandor got its backdrop from this area.

As much time as we spent admiring these striking landscapes, I felt as if I still hadn't gotten enough. On the way down, at a bus stop in Misurina, a fellow hut traveler pointed to the Tre Cime in the distance when the bus doors opened. "Now you can say goodbye forever!" he said.

It made me sad. The mountains had more trails to travel, caves to explore, huts to sleep in. I didn't even finish my song! Hopefully, it wasn't really forever.

If you go**Where to stay****Hotel Dolomiten**

Address: Via Alemagna 3, Dobbiaco, Bolzano

Phone: 011-39-0474-972136

Online: hotel-dolomiten.com/en

A three-star hotel with beautiful town views and excellent pizza restaurant. Convenient to train and bus stations. Rooms from about \$95 per person, per night.

Rifugio Lavaredo

Address: Auronzo di Cadore, Belluno

Phone: 011-39-349-602-8675

Online: rifugiolavaredo.com/english.html

Mountain hut with restaurant near the Auronzo bus stop and a short hike from the Tre Cime di Lavaredo peaks. Open June 15 to Sept. 26. Cash only. Half board in shared room about \$75 per person, per night; half board in private room about \$80 per person, per night; children under 12 about \$64 per person, per night.

Rifugio Comici (Zsigmondyhütte)

Address: Sesto, Bolzano

Phone: 011-39-0474-710358

Online: zsigmondyhuetten.com

Mountain hut with restaurant accessible on foot from Sesto or from the Tre Cime de Lavaredo trails. Opens mid-June. Accepts credit cards. Half board in private room for two about \$84 per person, per night; half board in shared room about \$78 per person, per night.

Rifugio A. Locatelli (Dreizinnenhütte)

Address: Sesto, Bolzano

Phone: 011-39-329-6690335

Online: dreizinnenhuetten.com

Mountain hut with restaurant and outdoor decks facing the Tre Cime di Lavaredo peaks. Cash only. Bring own linens or buy a "sleeping bag liner" for about \$8.50. Beds in shared dormitory about \$34 per person, per night; beds in smaller rooms about \$50 per person, per night.

Where to eat**Rifugio Pian di Cengia (Büllelejochhütte)**

Address: Auronzo di Cadore, Belluno

Phone: 011-39-337-451-517

Online: rifugiopiandicengia.it/en

Traditional foods from South Tyrol available to guests and a la carte. Cash only. Opens June 11.

Information: italia.it/en

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



PHOTOS BY HEATHER BENIT/Stars and Stripes

Children swim at the water playground at Luisenpark in Mannheim, Germany.



One of the playgrounds at Luisenpark has wooden houses and wooden cars for children to climb on. Luisenpark is a great place for kids to burn off some energy.

Find adventure, tranquility in one place

Kids can burn off some energy and adults can discover a bit of peace at Luisenpark in Mannheim

BY HEATHER BENIT
Stars and Stripes

Wandering white storks, gardens, green spaces and gondolettas are just some of the eclectic delights of spending a spring day at Luisenpark in Mannheim, Germany.

My visit in May was inspired by two seemingly opposing goals: finding peace among the peonies and burning energy at the playgrounds.

The 100-acre park along the Neckar River is known for family fun and some of the nicest gardens in Europe, and it is being expanded through a project expected to continue through 2023.

The work interferes with the serenity and scenery in some

On the QT

Address: Theodor-Heuss-Anlage 2, Mannheim, Germany
Hours: Opens 365 days a year at 9 a.m.; closing times vary, depending on the time of year.

Cost: Adult admission from March to October is 7.50 euros for adults and 3.70 for children 6-15. See website for annual pass prices and winter rates.

Food: There are reasonably priced cafes and food stands at the park.
Online: luisenpark.de

Heather Benit

parts of the park. Fortunately, my travel companion was a little boy who thinks construction cranes are as exciting as storks strutting around.

There are seasonal gardens throughout Luisenpark, and

peonies bloom in May at the Chinese tea garden, which surrounds a 2,400-square-foot traditional tea house at the eastern end of the park.

The garden, designed using the principles of feng shui, offers a tranquil space away from the bustle of the city and noise of construction.

There is a foot bridge crossing a koi pond and a rock path that leads under a small waterfall. The cascading water sounds like a sigh of relief as a feeling of relaxation takes over.

The tea house was built in 2001 and is the largest original Chinese tea house in Europe, according to Luisenpark literature. The site has a stage for tea ceremonies and a large terrace where

visitors can sip any of the 30 teas on the menu and eat warm dumplings and pastries.

In front of the tea house and garden is the park's largest Freizeitwiese, or leisure meadow. People relax on blue chairs or lounge on the green grass as resident white storks forage for earthworms and insects next to them.

The leisure meadow has a children's play area and several tire swings that shift the vibe from chill to children at play.

Near the Freizeitwiese is one of the park's many popular playgrounds. It has water pumps and mud and bumps up to another space with wooden cars and slides.

The area has a small farm with

two cows, Shetland ponies, sheep, pigs and rabbits. There is a small barn that visitors can enter.

During our visit, we tested the trampolines, drove miniature cars in circles on a tiny track and crossed wobbly wooden bridges before discovering our favorite spot: a water playground where happy kids, from age 1 to teens, splashed around for hours.

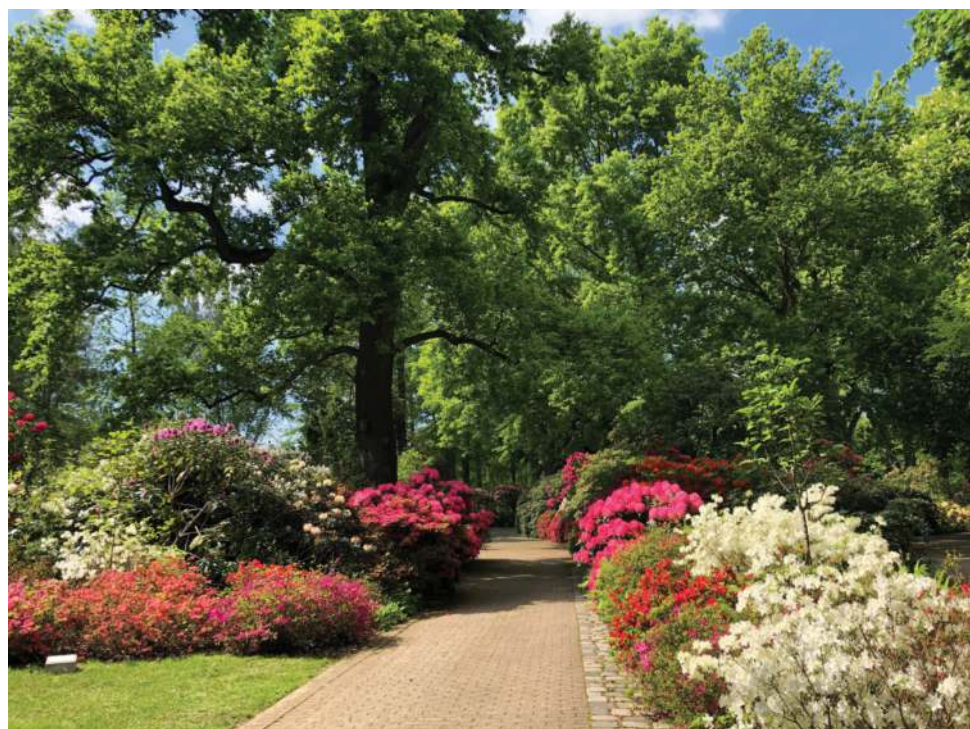
After a full day at the park, there was still much more to see. Luisenpark has a zoo, programs like a science school, and walking paths with fountains, sculptures and wild birds.

Wet and worn out, we headed home having been successful in discovering both tranquility and adventure.

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Peonies bloom in the Chinese Tea Garden in front of the tea house at Luisenpark in May.



Walking paths and seasonal gardens are seen throughout the 100-acre Luisenpark.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING



The Skippy burger, made from kangaroo meat, at the Red Lodge Steakhouse and Bar. The Australian steakhouse opened in 2013 in the village of Red Lodge, England, and serves beef and other specialty meats from Australia.



The Red Lodge Steakhouse and Bar is inside the oldest recorded building in the village.



The filet mignon, shown here, is just one of a variety of steaks, including a kangaroo fillet, that diners can choose at The Red Lodge Steakhouse and Bar.

PHOTOS BY KYLE ALVAREZ/Stars and Stripes

A taste of the exotic Outback

A short drive from RAF bases leads to Australian steakhouse

BY KYLE ALVAREZ

Stars and Stripes

Meat sourced from Australia isn't particularly unusual to find in an English steakhouse, but it's usually beef.

Red Lodge Steakhouse and Bar, a restaurant about 20 minutes south of RAF Mildenhall, serves the steaks and burgers you'd expect, but saves room for more adventurous diners interested in exotic meats.

My family and I popped in for dinner and were pleasantly surprised by both the menu and the decor. The bar is like a fuselage, with airplane-seat booths and a wing as a countertop.

The decor around the tables is styled as an African hunting lodge, with maps on the ceiling, antique cameras on windowsills, a big fireplace and a wall of bookshelves filled with antique guns and books.

Lisa Cooper, the manager of the restaurant, said the interior was designed to reflect the "fun-loving" attitude of the Australian owners.

The Down Under feel isn't



**AFTER
HOURS
ENGLAND**

Red Lodge Steakhouse and Bar

Address: 70 Turnpike Road, Red Lodge, United Kingdom

Hours: Monday-Thursday, 3-10 p.m.; Friday, 3-11 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Prices: Starters range from 5 pounds to 8 pounds; grill menu from 16 pounds to 50 pounds; salads, 10 pounds; burgers, 8 pounds to 13 pounds; pub classics, 7 pounds to 14 pounds.

Information: Phone: 01638 750531; email: redlodgesteakhouse@gmail.com; Online: facebook.com/redlodgesteakhouse

Kyle Alvarez

limited to the surroundings. Besides the usual pub grub of chicken wings, pizza, steaks, salads and burgers, the menu offers kangaroo steak, an exotic dish of the day and a kangaroo burger called the Skippy.



Under new management, the Red Lodge Steakhouse's bar was created to resemble an airplane traveling the world and reflects the "fun-loving" attitude of the Australian owners.

Having eaten my share of unusual dishes in travels to four continents, I had to give the kangaroo a try.

I ordered the Skippy, my wife ordered the filet mignon and my 4-year-old daughter had the mac and cheese. While we waited for our food, I couldn't help but notice how much chatter was going on in the restaurant.

Some people might be bothered by that, but to me it was a good sign. It was a Wednesday night and the restaurant was almost at capacity.

The food came out in a timely manner, but the steak came out well-done even though my wife

ordered it medium-rare. The manager took the situation in stride, apologized and ordered us a new steak.

The steak arrived when I was almost done with my burger, but it was worth the wait, according to my wife. The steak was cooked perfectly. It was delicious, tender and full of flavor.

My first experience with kangaroo meat was quite memorable. The Skippy was jam-packed with a myriad of flavors. It had a lightness to it similar to other lean meats and though it's considered a gamey meat, it wasn't as tough as I expected it to be, compared to other game meats I've had. It was

a juicy burger, and the cheese and the jalapeno mayonnaise sauce went with it extremely well. I didn't feel lethargic at all after eating this unique burger.

My daughter, who has been a picky eater as of late, ate her entire bowl of mac and cheese. As a father who has been struggling to get her to eat all her food, I can say this restaurant did a great job delivering a meal that my kid thoroughly enjoyed.

We finished with a warm brownie with vanilla ice cream, which was a delicious finish to a very tasty meal.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL



Too much of a good thing?

iStock

Irapu Island and the Irapu Bridge, as seen from the Makiyama Observatory Deck on Okinawa, Japan. The 2.2-mile toll bridge connects the Miyao and Irapu islands of the Okinawa prefecture. Since the return of the islands to Japan in 1972, tourism in the Okinawa prefecture has transformed the islands.

Tourist-vitalized islands thriving 50 years after Okinawa was returned to Japan, but not everybody is happy

Japan News

Since reverting to Japan on May 15, 1972, Okinawa Prefecture has become a major tourist destination. However, work remains to improve its economic self-sufficiency and standards of living.

The Irapu Bridge connecting the islands of Miyako and Irapu in Miyakojima, Okinawa Prefecture, opened in 2015. The 2.2-mile-long structure is the largest toll-free bridge in Japan.

“[After the bridge opened,] our sales tripled and the area’s specialty, Shio Chinsuko cookies, disappeared from the shelves,” recalled a woman who works in a nearby souvenir shop.

By fiscal 2018, visitors to Miyakojima had doubled in number to more than 1 million a year. But tourism has transformed the tranquil landscape of sugar cane fields, and the lives of the city’s residents.

A hotel funded by a mainland Japan-based company is currently being constructed in the Sawada district of Irapu Island.

The Miyakojima municipal government’s city landscape ordinance restricts beachfront buildings to two stories, but city officials nonetheless greenlighted the

four-story hotel, saying the building takes the surrounding scenery into consideration.

“A building of that height will block the view of the sunset,” said 64-year-old Mitsunori Kawamitsu, who heads a local neighborhood association. “Even though the area is developing economically, we’re losing precious things inherited from our ancestors.”

A separate villa-type hotel recently started operating in the district, and most of the land near the beach has been snapped up. Land prices in the city have risen and the average monthly rent for a single-room apartment — previously around 30,000 yen to 40,000 yen — soared to as much as 100,000 yen (\$765) at one point.

In some cases, apartment landlords and tenants have gotten into disputes because landlords have tried to raise the rent.

“Even though tourist numbers have gone up, the prefecture’s wage levels haven’t changed,” said a local resident in his 50s. “If things go on like this, it will become impossible for locals to keep living on this island.”

Prior to being returned to Japan in 1972, Okinawa operated under U.S. stewardship.

As cheap foreign products were readily available in the prefecture, the region never developed a manufacturing industry. Rather, it was the tourism industry that drove the local economy.

While under U.S. control, the prefecture ran “Battle of Okinawa memorial trips” to attract tourists from mainland Japan. In 1975, three years after Washington relinquished control of the islands, the Okinawa International Ocean Exposition was held: The event triggered land acquisition on the west coast and other parts of Okinawa’s main island, as well as the opening of a number of hotels operated by companies on mainland Japan. In fiscal 2018, more than 10 million tourists visited Okinawa Prefecture, putting it on a par with resort islands such as Hawaii in the United States.

However, some say that tourism-focused development has stripped the prefecture of its unique charms. In a survey conducted by the prefectural government in fiscal 2020, tourists flagged the “beautiful ocean” and the “landscapes” as their favorite things about the area.

But the reality is, areas in more than 300 locations have been reclaimed. Shallow waters with coral reefs have been replaced by hotels and commercial facilities.

As a result, the prefecture’s size has expanded by some 14.5 square miles, roughly equivalent to 800 Tokyo Domes.

Some people have begun to seek ways to balance tourism and the traditional Okinawan way of life.

Each year, about 500,000 tourists visit Taketomi Island, roughly 250 miles southwest of the Okinawa’s main island. The island’s population of about 350 residents continue to carry out traditional rituals and ceremonies while living in houses with red-tiled roofs. Tourists traverse the island in water buffalo-pulled carriages.

There have been some attempts by outside companies to develop Taketomi Island as well. Now, residents are working toward buying back areas of land. To fund the initiative, locals ask tourists for a 300 yen “entrance fee” at the ferry terminal and other locations. The donation is purely voluntary, and those who opt to pay receive gifts such as island vegetable seeds.

“Tourism is important, but if it goes too far, the island’s culture, nature and charms might be lost,” said Shosei Uchi-mori, the 62-year-old director of a local community hall, which is a self-governing body on the island. “We want to keep living here while upholding the spirit of the island.”

Congratulate your graduate!

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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Crash course in Japanese tradition

Learn the art of bonsai in a village devoted to them

BY JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

Bonsai trees are a wonder of nature bent by the hand of man.

But before your love for these works of living art prompt you to plunk down some yen and take one or three home, take note. This small living thing is more like a pet than a plant; kept correctly, it will become a big living thing and outlive you. By a long shot.

For a crash course on the history, nomenclature and sheer beauty of bonsai, a trip to the Omiya Bonsai Village in Saitama prefecture, just north of central Tokyo, should be first on the to-do list.

The village is the historic remnant of what was once about 30 bonsai gardeners who moved their nurseries from crowded Tokyo into a neighborhood in Omiya after the 1923 earthquake leveled much of the capital city.

Today, only six of the many original gardens remain, along with the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum in the same neighborhood. The museum is a handy starting point for a stroll to the remaining gardens and nurseries.

Admission is just \$2.40 and includes explanatory pamphlets in English. The exhibits are also signed in English. The tour starts with a short stroll through a gallery that explains the two basic types and many styles of bonsai and the terminology that goes along with creating them.

By the end of your tour, you'll know a shohaku from a zoki and a moyo-gi from a yose-ue.

Next, a short hallway deconstructs the specific manner in which bonsai are properly displayed, according to Japanese custom.

A third gallery has exhibits on the history of bonsai and how their styles and displays have changed from their origins centuries ago.

That all leads to the courtyard, where about 70 pots are displayed. Some of Japan's best examples of bonsai, and some of the most awe inspiring, are found here.

The display changes according to the seasons. A visit in April found an 800-year-old juniper; another old-timer, the Blue Dragon, a coniferous giant whose twisted trunk and mane-like needles suggest its namesake; and the 500-year-old pride of the garden, a glorious pine that epitomizes the craft. Plants are available in the nursery in the lot behind the museum.

The trip is not complete without a walking tour of the remaining private gardens nearby.

Placarded maps are erected along the street in the village area, and guides are available at the museum. Most of these charge an admission and have their own displays, along with a nursery with plants for sale. One site is an old Japanese-style home turned to use as a place to rest and have a drink.

I wound up my tour at Fuyo-en, a nursery near the Omiya-koen Station, where row after row of plants are lined up for inspection. Many were mature trees, but one section was filled with "starter kits," smaller trees that retailed for as little as 20,000 yen, cash only, the keeper explained. It's no small investment, and I'm not talking about yen.

Bonsai trees require repotting as their roots outgrow their pots. Trimming the roots and branches in a careful but aesthetically pleasing manner are part of the responsibilities. A host of paraphernalia is also required, from pruning shears to peculiarly designed watering cans.

Bear in mind, too, that the bonsai tree you purchase in Japan is probably not going back with you to the United States. U.S. Agriculture Department regulations generally prohibit importation of bonsai because of the risk of unwanted organisms in their soil.

So go forth to Omiya, enjoy the tour and take plenty of photographs.

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PHOTOS BY JOSEPH DITZLER/Stars and Stripes

This 500-year-old pine is the pride of the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum courtyard in Saitama prefecture, Japan.



The serpentine trunk, gaping branches and bristly needles of a centuries-old bonsai tree at the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum suggest a mythical beast.



Row after row of varying shapes and varieties of bonsai trees await inspection at a nursery just outside Omiya, Japan, a neighborhood devoted to the beautiful creations.

On the QT

Location: Omiya Bonsai Art Museum, 2-24-3 Saitama, Kita Ward, Torochou 331-0804

Directions: By rail on the Shonan-Shinjuku Line from Shinjuku to Toro Station and a 10-minute walk from there. The bonsai village nurseries begin less than 10 minutes from the museum. For motorists, set your directional devices to the Independent Human Resources Development Center, Saitama City, Kita Ward, Toro-chou, 2-24-1, which will guide you to the building next to the museum. Parking is available behind the museum.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., March to October; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., November to February. Last admission is 30 minutes before closing. Closed Thursday.

Costs: 310 yen admission; receptionists may speak English
Food: Plenty of restaurants to choose from along the street near the Omiya-koen Station, where the walk will lead.

Information: Phone: 048-780-2091; Online: bonsai-art-museum.jp/en/access

Joseph Ditzler



Young bonsai trees are for sale at an expansive nursery in Omiya. Bonsai trees require a lot of care to maintain their appearance, so careful consideration must be taken when deciding to purchase one.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Going with the flow of nature

Environmental concerns leading Americans to shift their mindset away from tidy grass lawns

BY JULIA RUBIN
Associated Press

LeighAnn Ferrara is transforming her small suburban yard from grass bordered by a few shrubs into an anti-lawn — a patchwork of flower beds, vegetables and fruit trees.

It didn't happen all at once, says the mother of two young kids.

"We started smothering small sections of the lawn each year with cardboard and mulch and planting them, and by now the front yard is probably three-quarters planting beds," she says. "Every year we do more."

Her perennials and native plants require less upkeep and water than turf grass does. And she doesn't need herbicides or pesticides — she's not aiming for emerald perfection.

For generations, the lawn — that neat, green, weedless carpet of grass — has dominated

American yards. It still does. But a surge of gardeners, landscapers and homeowners worried about the environment now see it as an anachronism, even a threat.

Like Ferrara, they're chipping away at it.

"America is unique in its fixation on the monoculture lawn," says Dennis Liu, vice president of education at the E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation in Durham, N.C.. "Our English inheritance is our own little tidy green space."

Now, drought, crashing insect populations and other environmental problems are highlighting — in different ways, in different places — the need for more kinds of plants in spaces large and small.

Some people are experimenting with more "eco-friendly" lawns, seed mixes you can buy with native grasses that aren't as thirsty or finicky. Others are mowing less and tolerating old foes like dandelions and clover. Still others are trying to replace lawns, entirely or bit by bit, with

garden beds including pollinator-friendly and edible plants.

It all leads to a more relaxed, wilder-looking yard.

"The more you can make your little piece that you're a steward of go with nature's flow, the better off everyone is," Liu says.

In states with water shortages, many homeowners long ago swapped out turf grass for less-thirsty options, including succulents and gravel.

Elsewhere, the pandemic has speeded the trend away from lawns. Gardening exploded as a hobby, and many non-gardeners spent more time at home, paying more attention to the natural world around them.

Municipalities across the country are handing out lawn signs with "healthy yard" bragging rights to homeowners who forgo lawn chemicals or mow less often. Many towns are slapping regulations on common tools like gas-powered leaf

blowers and mowers, mostly because of noise.

"For people interested in gardening, a lot have come to the realization it can't just be ornamental anymore. It has to serve some other purpose, whether food, habitat ... pack in as many uses as you can," says Alicia Holloway, a University of Georgia Extension agent in Barrow County, Ga. "It's a shift in thought, in aesthetics."

Monrovia, a major grower of plants for nurseries and other outlets, has seen lots of interest in a "Garden of Abundance" trend — a more "alive-looking" yard with a variety of plants, says company trend watcher Katie Tamony. She says it's a way of thinking about your yard "as not just being yours, but part of a more beautiful, larger world that we're trying to create."

Plants that attract pollinators were the category most sought-after in a survey of Monrovia's customers, she said.

And yet the lawn isn't disappearing anytime soon.



JULIA RUBIN/AP

A row house in New Rochelle, N.Y., has a front yard full of flowers and other plants, while neighboring houses have lawns of grass. Many people are converting parts of their lawns into planting beds for a variety of flowers, perennials and edible plants.



JULIA RUBIN/AP

A front yard sign in Westchester County, N.Y., pictured on May 4.



LEIGHANN FERRARA/AP

LeighAnn Ferrara's yard in White Plains, N.Y., in 2021. The remaining grass lawn is now mostly a path between flower beds, vegetables and fruit trees. Pictured plants include hydrangeas and viburnums.



JULIA RUBIN/AP

A bee settles on a sunflower in a yard in Westchester County, N.Y., in 2021.

Many homeowners associations still have rules about keeping yards manicured. And lawn services tend to be geared toward maintaining grassy expanses.

Andrew Bray, vice president of government relations for the National Association of Landscape Professionals, a trade group, says lawns are still the mainstream choice. People want neat outdoor spaces for relaxing, playing and entertaining.

He says his group supports the goal of making lawn care more environmentally friendly, but believes some recent ordinances, like those against gas-powered blowers and mowers, have created a "fraught political environment." He says electric alternatives to those tools aren't feasible yet for the big lawns that profes-

sionals handle.

The landscapers' trade group set up a new public platform this year, Voices for Healthy Green Spaces, to present its side of things.

"Whether people want to have a large yard, plant a forest of trees in their backyard, or want a meadow and unstructured plantings," all are green options, he said.

Those concerned that grass lawns fall short in helping pollinators and other species face another problem.

"A lot of people don't want bees — there's fear of nature," says Holloway, the Georgia extension agent. "I think that's changing, but it still has a long way to go."

Replacing grass also takes patience.

"One of the best parts of my job is site visits. I go to backyards that people have been working on for 20, 30 years, and it's helped me get over the mindset that everything has to be done all at once. It really takes time" to create a yard that's got plantings, rather than just lawn, Holloway says.

And it's hard to overcome tradition and neighborhood expectations.

A lawn "looks tidy, and it's easy to keep doing what you're doing," Liu says. But "once you've established the new equilibrium, it's easier; it pays all these benefits."

Some neighbors might see a yard without a lawn "and think, there's the crazy person," he says. "But a lot of people will just think it's so cool."

WEEKEND: BOOKS

Our octopus narrator

Cephalopod tells feel-good story in 'Remarkably Bright Creatures'

By ALEXIS BURLING

Special to The Washington Post

Humans love a good, old-fashioned morality tale told from the perspective of an animal. “Watership Down,” “Animal Farm,” “The One and Only Ivan”: These beloved books, and so many others like them, take life’s toughest challenges — death, belonging, fear, loneliness — and make them a little easier to swallow.

Joining the menagerie is Shelby Van Pelt’s “Remarkably Bright Creatures,” an ultimately feel-good but deceptively sensitive debut about what it feels like to have love taken from you, only to find it again in the most unexpected places. The best part? It’s narrated by Marcellus McSquiddles, a giant Pacific octopus who cannot only think and feel as humans do but also pick locks, squeeze out of his tank at the aquarium to go on late-night snack runs and serve as the town’s secret matchmaker.

“Remarkably Bright” is framed as a mystery, relayed in two storylines that eventually converge. The first stars set-in-her-ways Tova Sullivan who, at 70 and recently widowed, likes things just so. When she’s not lurching and gossiping with three longtime girlfriends who affectionally call themselves the Knit-Wits, she’s volunteering as a night janitor at Puget Sound’s Sowell Bay Aquarium and conversing with Marcellus as she patters about cleaning.

For Tova, staying busy is the key to a content life and a quiet mind — a respite after too many years spent obsessing over what happened to her 18-year-old golden-boy son,

Erik, who was found at the bottom of a lake nearly 30 years ago and whose death she believes was wrongly ruled a suicide.

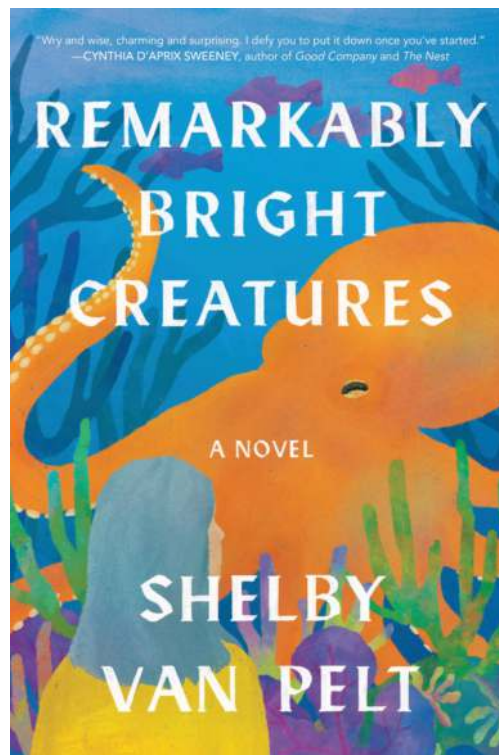
The second narrative involves down-on-his-luck Cameron, a 30-year-old garage rocker and odd-jobber whose deadbeat mother left him with his aunt in a California trailer park when he was 9 and never returned. After too many failed relationships and lost jobs, he’s headed up to Sowell Bay on a whim to search for his long-lost father and shake him down for overdue child support.

Astute readers might catch a whiff of where this is going. But that won’t detract from the story’s impact. Instead, putting the plot aside frees readers to focus on some of the book’s more compelling elements — mainly, its characters.

Cameron’s journey — his reunion with the man he thinks is his father; his burgeoning romance with Avery, a hot-mama surf-shop owner in Sowell Bay; and his bumbling efforts to man-up to adulthood after getting a gig at the aquarium — while engaging to read, is nothing special.

What makes the book so memorable and tender is Van Pelt’s depiction of Tova and her insistence on aging like a responsible person should. Much like Kent Haruf’s practically minded Addie Moore in “Our Souls at Night” or a much less insufferable version of Elizabeth Strout’s straight-shooting Olive Kitteridge, Tova won’t have anyone fussing over her — especially jolly old Ethan, the Shop-Way grocery store owner who’s been sweet on her for ages.

Instead, Tova is set on getting rid of her belongings, selling the house her father built and checking herself into a nursing home, despite everyone’s objections: “I am not like you and Mary Ann and Barbara,” she says to the Knit-Wits in a particularly moving scene. “I don’t have children who will come stay with me when I’ve had a fall. I don’t have grandchildren who will stop over to unclog my drain or make sure I’m taking my pills. And I won’t put that burden on my friends



and neighbors.” (Van Pelt writes in the acknowledgments that Tova is based very loosely on her Grandma Anna; her affection for this “unruffled” and “stoic Swede” shines through on every page.)

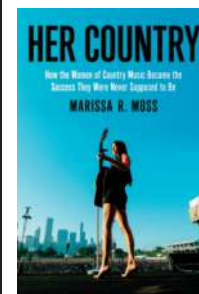
Then, of course, there’s the matter of mischievous Marcellus, whom Van Pelt deftly uses to tie the book’s threads together while throwing in a few octopus facts for good measure. On day 1,349 of his captivity, for example, Marcellus shares a sentiment even the most curmudgeonly of humans can rally behind: “As a general rule, I like holes. A hole at the top of my tank gives me freedom. But I do not like the hole in her heart. She only has one, not three, like me. Tova’s heart. I will do everything I can to help her fill it.”

“Remarkably Bright Creatures” could be described by some as corny or far-fetched. But to those people I say: pish posh. After all, octopuses adapt to their environment by changing the color and texture of their skin. They can open jars and fit inside beer bottles. Some can even recognize and choose to befriend individuals outside their species, including humans. Why shouldn’t an especially wily one crack a decades-old cold case and bring people together while he’s at it?

‘Her Country’ charts stars’ unlikely paths

By MAE ANDERSON
Associated Press

Women have always played a major part of country music, from the Carter Family to Dolly Parton, but in recent years you’d be hard pressed to hear that on country music radio. In “Her Country,” Marissa R. Moss chronicles how three singers — Kacey Musgraves, Maren Morris and Mickey Guyton — found ways to circumvent the traditional Nashville Music Row country music industry path and its “good ol’ boy” mentality to chart successful paths of their own.



In the 1990s, women

country music stars seemed to dominate the airwaves: Shania Twain, Faith Hill, the Chicks (formerly the Dixie Chicks) were mainstream stars. But after the Chicks were essentially blacklisted in 2003 for criticizing George W. Bush, a chill for women settled over the industry. Even today, women are rarely played back-to-back on country radio, and make up less than 20% of airtime.

But the women in “Her Country” have managed to produce some of the most creative, inclusive and successful country music of the moment despite obstacles. Musgraves, Morris and Guyton all started out in Texas as talented singers from a young age, each eventually making their way to Nashville.

Musgraves strove for inclusiveness, both in her lyrics, and by making sure her co-writers Brandy Clark and Shane McAnally took the stage when she won the Country Music Awards Song of the Year Award in 2014 for “Follow Your Arrow.” It was the first time two openly gay people stood on the CMA stage for an award.

Morris found success by self-releasing her songs and then working with Spotify to launch them in 2015. Next, she became a crossover success with the worldwide pop hit “The Middle,” with producer Zedd and musical duo Grey in 2018. She joined the country music supergroup The Highwomen in 2019.

And Guyton overcame years of discrimination as a Black woman singer in the country music business to receive a Grammy nomination in 2020 for her song “Black Like Me” — the first Black female solo artist to get a Grammy nomination in a country music category.

‘Crocodile Bride’ a novel rich in myth, mystery

By ANTHONY BUKOSKI
Star Tribune

Ashleigh Bell Pedersen’s debut novel, “The Crocodile Bride,” takes place over the summer that Sunshine Turner turns 12. She and Billy, her father, live in Fingertip, La., in the Atchafalaya Swamp. A New Deal community built during President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s administration, many of its houses stand empty now in 1982.

Aunt Lou and her 13-year-old daughter, JL, live across from their relatives. In the evenings, they talk on the porch or stroll to the general store and bar.

Nothing happens in Fingertip. Yet as the novel progresses, everything depends on this humid backwater rich with stories and secrets. What troubles Billy Turner? What will happen when Aunt Lou remarries and moves

with JL to Lafayette? What are we to make of Sunshine’s Tennessee grandma, Lou and Billy’s maman, or of Moss Landry and others who directly or indirectly shape Sunshine’s life?



living deep in the Atchafalaya.

The path to the bride’s house begins at the spring-fed lake where Lou, JL and Sunshine swim. Alligators lurk in the brackish water beyond the yellow caution rope Moss Landry

has put up. When they are children, Grandma Catherine tells Lou and Billy that “Nobody knows how a crocodile came to ... this part of the world. There are no other crocodiles here ... Alligators, yes, but crocodiles are even more frightening — and this crocodile was larger and more ferocious than ... the biggest alligator.”

The creature guarding the red house in the haunted woods around Black Bayou arrived before “the country met any white faces at its shores,” before the cypress trees were felled to make “imposing sideboards ... large armoires and ornately trimmed dressers ... the wood finely polished.” With the land despoiled, the balance of nature was upset. More recently, perhaps Billy and Lou’s secrets or Billy and Sunshine’s secrets have

made the creature restive.

In addition to the novel’s literal and figurative meanings, Pedersen adds these historical, ecological and mythological elements. I thought of William Faulkner’s southern landscapes, his mythmaking, and of Maine writer Sarah Orne Jewett’s wonderful nature story “A White Heron” with its brave, if naïve, heroine.

Finally, in a novel so rich, so evocative of a place and its people, readers might need to pause occasionally to sort out who is who. I suspect some readers will be put off by the references to bodily functions.

This said, “The Crocodile Bride” marks an impressive first novel filled with hope, understanding and, ultimately, a tempered forgiveness for the secret things that have happened here.

WEEKEND: MUSIC

REVIEW

All that they can't leave behind

For Arcade Fire, a return to big songs that still come with some big worries

BY MIKAEL WOOD
Los Angeles Times

Treat yourself, if you haven't watched it in a while, to the sight of Arcade Fire winning album of the year over Lady Gaga, Eminem, Katy Perry and Lady Antebellum at the 2011 Grammy Awards.

Barbra Streisand was the presenter that night and, clearly unfamiliar with the Canadian indie-rock band and its album "The Suburbs," seems briefly confused by the words inside the envelope she's opened; cameras trained for reaction shots from each of Arcade Fire's competitors capture emotions ranging from oh-that's-nice-for-them (Perry) to oh-you-gotta-be-kidding-me (Eminem's producer Dr. Dre).

Then the group members crowd behind a microphone, where frontman Win Butler says both "What the hell?" and "Holy s—!" before telling the audience that they're "gonna go play another song 'cause we like music."

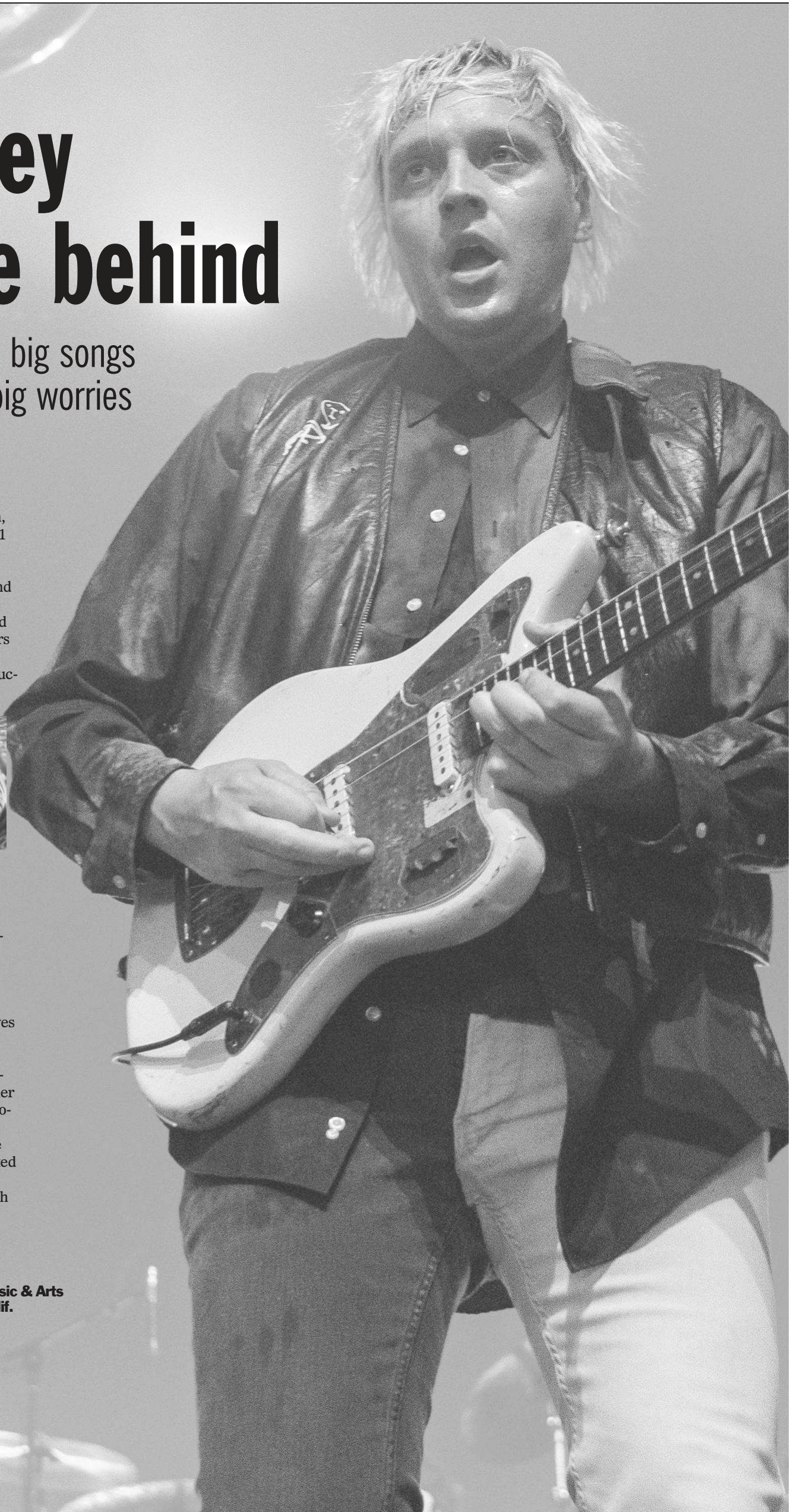
Earnest, exuberant, slightly insufferable: Arcade Fire's unlikely Grammys moment crystallized everything that had powered the band's speedy ascent from Montreal's artsy underground scene to mutually admiring friendships with David Bowie and Bruce Springsteen. But it also marked a pivot point: After "The Suburbs," Butler and his bandmates — including his wife, Régine Chassagne, and his brother, Will — took a darker and more sarcastic turn, trading whoa-oh-oh gang vocals for clammy disco grooves and moving on from thoughts of family and religion to ponder the sneaking encroachments of Big Tech.

"Reflektor," from 2013, had enough of the familiar Arcade Fire energy to maintain the band's festival-headliner status even as the rest of indie rock got dreamy and introspective. Yet 2017's cynical if trenchant "Everything Now" turned off many in the band's audience; it was the first of the group's five LPs not to earn Pitchfork's coveted Best New Music commendation.

Now, five years later, Arcade Fire is back with its sixth full-length album, "WE," which is being framed as a re-



Arcade Fire
WE (Columbia)



SEE BEHIND ON PAGE 29

Win Butler of Arcade Fire performs at the Coachella Music & Arts Festival at the Empire Polo Club on April 15 in Indio, Calif.

AMY HARRIS, INVISION/AP

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Behind: 'WE'
holds out hope
for humanity

FROM PAGE 28

turn to its openhearted ways: an "All That You Can't Leave Behind," essentially, after a "Zooropa" and a "Pop," to make the U2 comparison this crew courted from the get-go. In recent weeks, the band — minus Will Butler, who quit for vaguely stated reasons after recording "WE" — has ventured to some hallowed spots where Arcade Fire made its name, Coachella and New York's Bowery Ballroom among them, for sweaty, small-scale gigs meant to demonstrate its grassroots reengagement.

Which isn't to say that Win Butler's worries about the internet have suddenly been quelled. "Born into the abyss / New phone, who's this?" he asks in his breathy yelp in "Age of Anxiety II (Rabbit Hole)," "We unsubscribe / F— Season 5," goes a line in the final movement of "End of the Empire I-IV." In "Lightning I, II" — hey, I warned you — he glimpses "tires ... burning in the middle of Rodeo Drive," just one scene from a striking dystopian vision.

Unlike "Reflektor" and "Everything Now," "WE" holds out hope that humans may yet remember how to connect in the flesh. "I'll be yours / You can be mine / Love unites," Chassagne sings in "Unconditional II (Race and Religion)," while Butler in the closing title track rhymes "get down on one knee" with "get off this ride with me." "Unconditional I (Lookout Kid)," which the frontman addresses to his and Chassagne's 9-year-old son, counsels faith in one's physical body: "You can dance / And you can shake / Things will break / You make mistakes." It's easy to hear him thinking about his younger self here, especially given the rise of soaring, Arcade Fire-indebted acts such as Gang of Youths who've brought this proudly impassioned approach back into vogue.

Musically, Arcade Fire is reaching back to the hand-played textures of its early material — lots of strings and keys and wind instruments, including harp played by Butler's mother — though the band hasn't sworn off sleek digital beats like those in "Race and Religion," which features moaning background vocals from Peter Gabriel, and "Rabbit Hole." (Butler and Chassagne produced the album with Nigel Godrich, best known for his work with Radiohead.)

It all sounds good. But the long, meandering songs don't stick like the best of Arcade Fire's older ones, not to mention like newish heartland-adjacent rock tunes by fellow indie survivors the Killers and The War On Drugs. There's nothing as euphoric as "Wake Up" or as jittery as "Ready to Start" or as sensual as "My Body Is a Cage"; none of the melodies are as finely sculpted as those on the under-rated "Everything Now," which with any luck will be reappraised once social media attains Butler's predicted level of hellishness.

Arcade Fire's promise from the beginning was transcendence through emotional grandeur. "WE" suggests that it's hard to achieve communion without songs that lift voices and not just spirits.



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Patrick Carney, left, and Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys pose in Nashville on April 20 to promote their 11th studio record "Dropout Boogie." The band debuted 20 years ago with "The Big Come Up."

Self-taught and going strong

The Black Keys still raw, fast and loose on new album, 'Dropout Boogie'

BY KRISTIN M. HALL
Associated Press

Two decades ago, two college dropouts from Akron, Ohio, recorded a rock album together and sent it to a tiny label in Los Angeles. Then came the hard part: Dan Auerbach and Patrick Carney had to learn to play the music live.

In their early 20s, Auerbach had experience playing guitar in a bar band, but Carney had never played drums before they recorded "The Big Come Up," The Black Keys' first album, released in 2002.

At their first show March 2002, Auerbach recalled the owners of the Beachland Tavern in Cleveland telling them they needed to fill 30 minutes. "We're like, 'No problem, we got that,'" Auerbach said. "We played everything twice as fast. Totally blacked out."

"We did like 10 songs or something in 20 minutes," Carney said.

The performance got them invited back for more shows, eventually selling out the venue. Turns out that failing at college was probably the best thing that ever happened to them.

"We realized that we weren't really college material," Carney said.

Instead, they built slowly but steadily off that first show, attracting bigger crowds, larger record labels and critical praise with each album.

On their 11th studio album, "Dropout Boogie," the Grammy-winning duo, now raising school-age children of their own, are reflecting on their early years when they bonded over records as varied as

Junior Kimbrough, The Wu-Tang Clan and Captain Beefheart and played raw, fast and loose in local venues.

"We wouldn't be paying for expensive private school if we hadn't dropped out of school," Carney says with a laugh.

Two decades into their career, the pair still operate mostly like they did on those first records. On "Dropout Boogie," they wrote songs mostly in the studio, not bringing in a lot of pre-written material. Three or four songs on the record are just

"We wouldn't be paying for expensive private school if we hadn't dropped out of school."

Patrick Carney
Black Keys drummer

first takes at recording. The rawness and the imperfections were something they learned from those influential sounds of '70s-era experimental rock and hill country blues. They've kept that creative momentum in recent years; "Dropout Boogie" is their third record in four years.

On the new record, they branched out with collaborators Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, Greg Cartwright of the Memphis rock band Reigning Sound and songwriter and producer Angelo Petraglia.

"It opened up a whole world of possibilities of like, 'Oh yeah, our Rolodex is pretty deep,'" Carney said. "We can just, like, call a lot of people, make a lot of music."

One song came to them from a musicologist named David Evans, a retired University of Memphis professor, who had been sharing with Auerbach rare field recordings of blues artists from Mississippi. One of those recordings he made was a cheerleading squad from Senatobia, Miss., in the '70s singing "Hey, hey, over there / Your team is looking good / But not as good as ours."

The lines stuck in Auerbach's head and at the end of the recording session, when the album was pretty much wrapped, they decided to cover it. Singer Sierra Ferrell jumped in for harmony background vocals. After recording the song, Carney called the band's attorney.

"I was like, 'We have a job for you,'" Carney said. "And she's like, 'What's that?' 'OK, there's this obscure field recording of a cheerleading squad from the middle of nowhere, Mississippi. I need you to find the writing credit so that we don't get sued.'"

The song was based on "The Girl Can't Help It," written by Bobby Troup and performed by Little Richard. So Troup has a songwriting credit on "Your Team Is Looking Good," with The Black Keys.

Carney joked that in the litigious music copyright world, it's better to be generous with credits. "We did the opposite of Robin Thicke," Carney said, laughing. "Get this money away from us. We don't want the money. We want the song."

WEEKEND: TELEVISION



Showtime

From left, Jenifer Lewis, Vanessa Bayer and Molly Shannon in "I Love That for You." The series is loosely inspired by Bayer's experience with cancer.

'We're all kind of telling our stories'

Stars of Showtime workplace sitcom 'I Love That for You' each drew on their own 'great tragedy' to find comedic joy

BY THOMAS FLOYD
The Washington Post

After four-plus decades churning through the show business grind, Jenifer Lewis just wants to have a good time. So when the opportunity arose for the 65-year-old veteran of stage and screen to star alongside "Saturday Night Live" alumni Vanessa Bayer and Molly Shannon in the Showtime comedy series "I Love That for You," she didn't need much convincing.

During a recent video chat with her two co-stars, Lewis can't help but fangirl over Shannon — even delivering her own rendition of the "superstar!" exclamation Shannon immortalized on "SNL." Although Lewis was less familiar with Bayer, "I Love That for You's" co-creator, executive producer and central star, she now lauds the ever-optimistic 40-year-old as an "angel made of cotton candy and Christmas morning."

In fact, Bayer helped cultivate such a cheery vibe on set that Lewis found herself wondering if the unrelenting positivity was too good to be true. So one day during filming, Lewis decided to tackle the topic head-on, asking Bayer: "You're not going to, like, turn? This is real, right?"

With understated amusement, Bayer recalls her retort: "Next season, just wait — I'll be a big b——."

"Which is impossible for her to become," Lewis says, cackling with laughter. "At that moment, I knew everything was going to be just fine."

"I Love That for You," which premiered May 1 and streams new episodes every Friday, stars Bayer as a novice home shopping channel host who saves her job by lying that her childhood cancer has returned. Shannon portrays the network's longest-serving saleswoman — a recent divorcée navigating an identity crisis — while Lewis plays their foul-mouthed, no-nonsense boss.

Co-created by Bayer and former "SNL" writer Jeremy Beiler, the series sells itself as a moral dilemma by way

of workplace sitcom. And there's an autobiographical element, as well: The premise is loosely inspired by Bayer's own bout with leukemia as a teenager, which required nearly a year of aggressive treatment.

When it comes to that kind of public introspection, Bayer has company among her cast. Lewis opened up in her 2017 book, "The Mother of Black Hollywood," discussing her past sex addiction and decadeslong battle with bipolar disorder. In "Hello, Molly!," Shannon's recently released memoir, the 57-year-old reflects on the deaths of her mother, sister and cousin in a 1969 car

"We have all been through a lot. For me, even off-screen, just to see how these women navigate their lives and how they treat everyone, it's such a lesson."

Vanessa Bayer
Joanna Gold in "I Love That for You"

accident with her intoxicated father at the wheel.

As Lewis points out, "All three of us come from great tragedy."

"I was thinking about that," Shannon says. "We're all kind of telling our stories."

"We have all been through a lot," Bayer adds. "For me, even off-screen, just to see how these women navigate their lives and how they treat everyone, it's such a lesson."

The actresses' convening paths were charted in the summer of 2017, shortly after the Emmy-nominated Bayer finished her seven seasons at "SNL," when she

and Beiler met for brunch and stumbled upon their mutual fascination with home shopping channels. As the duo decided to team up on a TV pitch, developed the idea and considered how to flesh out the protagonist, they ended up incorporating Bayer's long-held desire to write about her real-life cancer diagnosis — specifically, the ways she used her illness as an excuse to show up late for classes, turn down a date for homecoming and guilt-trip her way to other privileges.

"I felt like it would always be fun to do something exploring the fact that when I was sick, I really capitalized on the perks of it," Bayer says. "Something that helped me get through it was the humor and the fun of just trying to get what I could from it."

Bayer acknowledges there's plenty of her in Joanna Gold, the "I Love That for You" character she plays with an eager-to-please grin and endearingly anxious energy — even if her on-screen counterpart embellishes those tics and traits.

"It is some of the awkwardness and, especially from when I was a little bit younger, this [idea of] playing catch-up in becoming an adult," explains Bayer, who booked recurring gigs on "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" and "Will & Grace" after leaving "SNL" but is tackling her first lead role on screen.

As Jackie Stilton, the home shopping star who takes Joanna under her wing, Shannon shares her character's mentorlike impulses but not so much her hyper-feminine style sense, which comes complete with leather pants, an immaculate manicure and the ever-present jingle of excessive jewelry.

"The script is so well-written, it just jumps off the page," says Shannon, whose recent credits include the heralded series "The Other Two" and "The White Lotus." "It really reminded me of character-driven comedies that I love, like 'Broadcast News' and 'Tootsie.' It had love and comedy and it was fantastic, and I just said, 'I have to be in this.'"

WEEKEND: TELEVISION

BY ROBERT LLOYD

Los Angeles Times

With “Star Trek: Strange New Worlds,” now available on Paramount+, the franchise goes once again into the past, with a series you can consider, in quantum fashion, both as a spinoff from “Star Trek: Discovery” and a belated order for the original series’ rejected pre-Shatner pilot, “The Cage,” which starred Jeffrey Hunter as starship Enterprise Captain Christopher Pike and Leonard Nimoy as Spock. When “Star Trek” repurposed that footage into the two-part “The Menagerie,” it made Pike canon, and established that he and Spock were crewmates before James T. Kirk ever entered the picture.

Before it jumped 1,000 years into the future, “Discovery” brought back Pike, played by Anson Mount, as an interim captain in its second season, along with Ethan Peck as a younger Spock and Rebecca Romijn as Una Chin-Riley, a.k.a. Number One (a character from “The Cage,” played by Majel Barrett, not picked up for the series). And here they are, back home on the Enterprise, with some other familiar, less familiar and unfamiliar shipmates.

Characters with roots in the old show include Nyota Uhura (Celia Rose Gooding), still a cadet, not yet a lieutenant, but a “prodigy” who speaks 37 languages (like Nichelle Nichols’ Uhura, she sings, and does that thing where she puts her hand to her ear when she’s at her post); nurse Christine Chapel (Jess Bush), originally played by Barrett, a recurring “Star Trek” character; and Dr. M’Benga (Babs Olusanmokin), a guest character now getting a regular gig. New are Christina Chong as tough-cookie security officer La’an Noonien-Singh (as in top villain Khan Noonien-Singh, a relation); Melissa Navia as pilot Erica Ortega; and Bruce Horak as Hemmer, an Aenar Andorian and the new chief engineer. He has antennae. A “Kirk” is also mentioned, about a quarter of the way through the pilot, creating an expectation.

As our story opens, Pike is hanging out — almost hiding out — on Earth. We meet him thickly bearded, hair beautifully unkempt, snow all around his plush Montana lodge while the Enterprise is in dry dock, avoiding answering his communicator and watching the thematically resonant 1950s science fiction classic “The Day The Earth Stood Still” on his 23rd century flat-screen television. Something is eating him: Viewers familiar with “The Menagerie” will recognize that the strange reflections Pike sees of himself represent a vision of his future, and it’s not one he likes to contemplate. It’s the



Paramount+ photos

Ethan Peck stars as Spock and Anson Mount as Pike in Paramount+’s “Star Trek: Strange New Worlds.”

New show, same spirit

How the latest ‘Star Trek’ spinoff, ‘Strange New Worlds’ on Paramount+, resurrects the Buck Rogers brio of the original



Peck as Spock and Mount as Pike in “Star Trek: Strange New Worlds.” The Enterprise crew will focus less on relationships than on taking care of business: working on other planets’ problems.

opposite of a tragic backstory — a tragic forestry.

Number One has gone missing on a first-contact mission, so Pike loses the beard, puts some product in his hair and gets back into his swivel chair. Spock is fetched back from Vulcan and a deadpan rendezvous with T’Pring (Gia

Sandhu), his very long-term fiancée, but not before they get a hot scene to add to the very short list of Spock hot scenes.

What “Strange New Worlds” brings back is some of the Buck Rogers brio of the original series, on whose opening theme it plays a minor-key variation. Like all

seem to be what will mainly occupy the crew of the new old Enterprise. There is an old-fashioned emphasis on taking care of business, of working on other planets’ problems — without bending rule No. 1, not to interfere with their destiny, past breaking.

Not least, “Strange New Worlds” prioritizes the mutually bemused interplanetary quasi-bromance between a human captain and his half-human, half-Vulcan science officer. There is enough of William Shatner’s puckishness in Mount that one may easily forget that this is the Pike and Spock Show, and not the Kirk and Spock Show.

Peck catches the essence of Nimoy’s Spock, inhabiting the character rather than imitating the actor. Mount more or less ignores Hunter’s midcentury-masculine Pike — indeed, dark premonitions notwithstanding, he might be the chilliest of all “Star Trek” captains. He’s a pourer of drinks, a griller of ribs, a teller of stories in which he is the butt of the joke. And Romijn, who has her own chummy relationship with Pike, makes Number One feel like a person with more weight and canonical influence than the character was ever allowed to have.

The franchise always means to be funny, even at its self-referential expense (“Why is it always an alley?” wonders Pike, beamed down into an alley), and “Strange New Worlds” might need a little time on this account, as characters get to the point where a raised eyebrow can serve as a kicker. Meanwhile, the series is most amusing when Mount, who appears to be enjoying himself, delivers some throwaway aside, like “I love this job” or “I like this plan,” or squeaking out a sheepish “Hi” when beaming in to interrupt a high-level diplomatic summit.

It is in the “Star Trek” way of things to get a little cornball, a little goofball, a little silly. This is more feature than bug. Earnestness has the edge over sense; science, if you want to call it that — it often amounts to magic here — just serves the drama, the philosophy and the themes. The real mission of the Enterprise and every other ship in the franchise fleet is to spread understanding and justice to the stars, while perhaps learning a thing or two about human limitations in the process.

“Prejudices kept people from helping each other for centuries, with no scientific justification,” Dr. M’Benga will say. “After we met our new neighbors in the galaxy, we have new bigotries.”

“Negotiation, debate — these are the tools to build a lasting peace,” Pike will optimistically declare after he lands in the middle of that alien summit. But, of course, they are talking to us.

pre-streaming “Star Trek” series, it’s episodic in nature, rather than serial, with problems that can be established and overcome in an hour — “Complicated problems solved in no time” is a “Star Trek” trademark. The plots, reflective of contemporary social issues — “shades of Old Earth,” says Pike, set down on a planet riven by competing factions, in case you’re slow off the mark — feel close enough in spirit, even the letter, to the original series to call this almost an homage. There are alien temples and libraries, inspirational speeches, an ever-popular infection story. In time-honored tradition, the least expendable officers go on the most dangerous missions. And based on the three episodes available for review, there is seemingly little interest in soap-operatic shipboard relationships, unlike, say, the teary love fest that is “Discovery.”

That isn’t to say some characters don’t get a little backstory, or a secret to keep and reveal when the time comes. But dealing with personal trauma, gaining closure, resolving their own issues do not

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

A better flight just a stretch away

Fitness professionals offer helpful tips for keeping pain, stiffness and tightness at bay during long trips on planes

By NATALIE B. COMPTON
The Washington Post

As much as you might want to curl up and go to sleep during a long flight, the secret to surviving flying economy is the exact opposite. It's exercise. Like, in-your-seat exercise.

Before you take your rage straight to the comments, hear us out: This isn't about getting jacked or losing weight through an in-flight workout.

"It's really about doing stuff that can keep your body mobile, keep your circulation going and keep you from getting super, super stiff," personal trainer Ashley Borden said.

I didn't realize exercising on a plane was something people did until taking a China Eastern flight years ago. During a long-haul flight, a video popped up on our entertainment screens encouraging stretching and moving around. It felt good, plus it took the edge off the mid-flight doldrums.

To combat the toll a flight takes on your body — particularly a long-haul one — experts agree some physical activity can address some of the tightness, bloating and ache that makes us miserable.

The goal is not to work up a major sweat. Instead, your focus should be to stay as active as you can, keep your blood flowing and support your alignment so you can get through the flight with less pain and more energy.

Use the aisle

It's tempting to go into hibernation mode on a flight, but "getting up and getting some steps in can be very help-

ful," said Harley Pasternak, a celebrity trainer.

"It'll get the blood moving, help with anxiety and possibly reduce your chance of getting deep-vein thrombosis," he said. If you are able to choose your seat, pick the aisle to make getting up and out easier on you and your neighbors.

Trainer and running coach Melissa Kendter walks the aisle and takes time to stretch near the lavatory (if travelers aren't crowding the area).

"I will often do body-weight stretches where I bring my hands over my head and elongate my body, squat down and open up my hips or do some rotational movements," Kendter said. "Quad stretches are also beneficial to elongate your quads and hip flexors from the prolonged sitting."

Focus on your posture

Plane seats are forever shrinking and uncomfortable, but the way we sit in them doesn't make the situation any better.

"People don't realize how bad posture can affect how they feel for the first few days of their trip," said trainer Chris Perrin, co-owner of Cut Seven gym in Washington. "Even if you don't have chronic low-back pain, you can feel low-back pain for days for sitting with bad posture."

Whenever you realize you're slouching, Perrin recommends a chest lift by pulling your shoulders down and back.

"Think about putting your shoulder blades in your back pockets," he said. Then lift your chest up, making sure your core is engaged to avoid letting your ribs flare.

"It essentially aligns your spine, making a straight line from the back of the head to the tailbone," Perrin said.

Pasternak recommended shoulder circles for posture rehab. Start by lifting them both as high as they'll go, pull them backward, then drop them down to complete the motion. His other posture move is to bend your elbows at 90 degrees with your palms up and rotate your upper arms.

Engage your glutes

A byproduct of being sedentary during long flights is "your hip flexors are tight the entire time, which puts your glutes to sleep," Perrin said. That hip-flexor tightness ends up causing pain in the lower back, so you want to avoid it by keeping your glutes moving.

Perrin's subtle in-seat way to do that is to have one leg bent at a 90-degree angle and the other slightly bent with your heel flexed. Drive weight into the slightly bent leg, which will squeeze the glute and release the hip. Hold for 30 seconds, then switch sides.

"It wakes up the glute and that will lessen the amount of restriction people feel through their hip flexor," he said. For long flights, he does a round of these plus chest lifts every two to three hours.

Borden keeps her glutes activated by bringing along a BackJoy Posture Plus Blue seat, which creates an active sitting position and corrects the position of the pelvis. Borden hooks it to her backpack for flights and "you can get up from a plane and you do not have back pain," she said.

Try some in-seat yoga

Kelly DiNardo, owner of Past Tense yoga studio in Washington, encourages travelers to stretch in their seats to target pain.

For craned necks and hunched backs, try a seated spinal twist:

- Start with both feet flat on the floor, then place your left hand on the outside of your right thigh.

- Next, rest your right hand on the right armrest or back of the seat (while being conscientious of your neighbors) and twist toward the right.

- Hold for five to 10 breaths, then switch sides.

To open up your hips, try a seated pigeon pose:

- Cross your right ankle over your left thigh just above the knee.

- Actively press your right knee toward the floor.

- Hold for five to 10 breaths, then switch sides.

Another hip-flexor move: lean back in your seat and hug one knee into the chest. Hold that position for five to 10 breaths, then switch.

"You can point and flex the foot or circle the ankle around while you hold this for some bonus joint mobility work," DiNardo said.

You can also treat yourself to a neck massage. Start by dropping your ear to your right shoulder, then take two fingers to the top of your neck behind your left ear.

"Find the little valley that runs down your neck — technically the sternocleidomastoid muscle," DiNardo said. Gently apply pressure, pausing to massage any area that feels tight, and repeat on the other side.

Pack for in-flight wellness

Travel and fitness professionals both swear by the power of hydration for saving everything from your skin to your sleep during a flight. Pack your own bottle so you don't have to rely on the beverage cart's occasional tiny cups of water.

Borden also travels with a ROLLGA De-Puffing Kit, an 8-piece set she designed with the company. While the foam roller can take up space in your carry-on, some key components are small and helpful for rolling out the bottom of your feet. (A lacrosse ball will also work for rolling out your feet and neck, Borden said.)

A foot rub is more impactful than it sounds.

"You have a fascial band that wraps around your entire body, and this fascial band becomes loosened when you roll out your feet," Borden said. As a result, you will feel less tight in your calves, hamstring and back.



WEEKEND: FAMILY



The weight of body image

How parents can stop passing their own issues with food onto their kids

BY CONNIE CHANG

Special to *The Washington Post*

Gisela Sandoval was on a shopping trip with her mother and 10-year-old daughter, watching as her daughter tried on a dress and struck a pose.

Then her mother spoke up: “Please suck your belly in.”

Sandoval panicked. In a flash, “I saw 40 years of my life go through my head,” she says.

Her mother’s constant admonishments to hide her belly as a child left a deep groove on her psyche.

“I have huge issues with my belly,” says Sandoval, a mother of three who lives in Palo Alto, Calif. “I always think I have one, no matter what weight I am.”

In front of her three children, Sandoval is careful when talking about food and bodies. But as a psychiatrist for children and adolescents, she wonders how many of the hang-ups she inherited she’s unintentionally passed on.

When it comes to how we think of food and our bodies, early experiences often set the tone. Many parents grew up with the clean-plate club or the diet du jour, and they have sought to change the script. But while our understanding of nutrition and psychology has improved, the world we inhabit is more image-conscious than ever, leaving parents to battle negative body image for themselves and their kids.

Jill Castle, a pediatric nutritionist and author of “Parenting Food,” is sympathetic.

“It’s never been more challenging for parents to raise their kids to not only be healthy eaters, but also to have good self-esteem and positive body image,” Castle says.

Sara Gonzalez never had problems with weight until recently, when a liver illness and back injury caused her to gain. In response, her doctor put her on a diet. As the mother of two teenage girls, “I started to worry: How do you try to lose weight and not have your children worry that they have to lose weight too?” Gonzalez says.

It’s a frequent topic of conversation among her parent friends: Is there a right way to discuss food, health and body image with kids? Or is any discussion potentially harmful?

Experts say parents can break with the dysfunction around food they grew up with and avoid passing it down to their kids, though it isn’t easy.

Castle stresses the importance of “developing a family culture that’s open and appreciates all bodies,

appreciates all foods.” Don’t demonize any specific food — it’s a recipe for shame. A better tact, Castle says, is to talk about food in a more descriptive and informative way.

For older children, Neha Chaudhary, chief medical officer of BeMe and a child psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital, suggests arming them with information on how food fuels them and de-emphasizing its effect on their looks.

“I see a lot of teens in my practice who are more open to eating a balanced diet when they understand why it’s important for their mind and body, and when the thought of eating isn’t wrought with guilt or shame,” Chaudhary said in an email.

At the same time, says Vikas Duvvuri, a psychiatrist and eating disorder specialist in San Mateo, Calif., the food-as-fuel narrative can be unfair and overly simplistic. Humans also eat for pleasure — and food plays a strong role in culture, traditions and memories. “So one of the key interventions is to eat together as a family,” which pays all sorts of dividends, from lower rates of truancy to decreased risks of substance abuse.

It’s easy to see why parents might feel they can’t say anything right given how loaded the language is around weight and food, Duvvuri says. “But it’s important to be able to have authentic conversations, as opposed to having to hold back every other word that comes into your head.” That openness in communication sets the stage for a supportive environment your children can rely on as they grow and change.

And sometimes we’ll slip and say something we probably shouldn’t, like “I feel so bad in this pair of pants,” says Sandoval, the psychiatrist from Palo Alto. “But it’s okay to acknowledge it and model self-compassion and say, ‘Gosh, sometimes I’m not very nice to myself, but I’m so lucky to have this functioning pair of legs and I should be kinder to myself.’”

Navigating food and body image issues can be tricky, especially if you’re processing your own past traumas. But Castle offers some hope: You don’t have to have all the answers to help your children, and you don’t need to forge ahead alone.

Help, whether it’s through therapy or speaking with a registered dietitian, can put you on the path to a healthier relationship with food for yourself and your family.

“The dream is that they’ll be oblivious to this: They’ll live the way they want; they’ll eat the way they want,” Gonzalez says of her daughters. “But I think I’m still trying to figure this out.”

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



At-risk military teens portend at-risk future

Our children are in trouble. Why aren’t parents panicking? Why isn’t this a top story in the media? Why is there so much apparent apathy for an issue that is crucial to our future?

In October 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Adolescent and Child Psychiatry and the Children’s Hospital Association issued a joint statement declaring a National State of Emergency in children’s mental health due to dramatic increases in childhood mental health disorders, mental-health related emergency room visits and suicide attempts. “We are caring for young people with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families and their communities,” the statement read, calling for immediate action to solve the crisis.

If teens at large are experiencing dramatic increases in mental health problems, what about military teenagers? Does their unpredictable mobile lifestyle with frequent deployments and disruptions put them at even greater risk?

The answer is a resounding yes, according to the 2022 Military Teen Experience Survey (MTES) conducted by the National Military Family Association (NMFA) and Bloom: Empowering the Military Teen. “Military kids look just like any other kid, so you don’t realize what’s happening in their homes and the weight of the responsibilities that they’re carrying. We learned that weight is heavier than we knew,” said Besa Pinchotti, NMFA’s CEO.

The 2022 MTES shows 37% of military teens reported having thoughts of harming themselves or others, and over 90% have “at risk” mental well-being in low to moderate ranges. The report states that the 28% of military teens who scored in the lowest mental well-being range reported having trouble thinking clearly and making decisions. “They also rarely felt optimistic, did not often feel relaxed and felt disconnected from others,” common experiences associated with depressive symptoms, according to the survey report.

Factors associated with lower mental well-being included being an older teenager, having dual military parents, changing schools more frequently, experiencing more deployments and separations and having thoughts of self-harm.

Sadly, 46% of military teens also reported having food insecurities due to military families’ unique financial challenges, compared to only 11% of U.S. households that experience food insecurities.

“Military teens told us they often don’t feel seen or heard,” the 2022 MTES report states. Although “the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY2021) National Defense Authorization Act included a mental health scheduling pilot to help service members and families access the care they need,” they say much more needs to be done by Congress and DOD, including building robust mental health provider networks that accept TRI-CARE, decreased copays for mental health care and removing barriers for military spouses to enter the mental health field.

Although only 11% of all U.S. teenagers claim that they’ll join the military one day, and although only .7% of Americans actually do, the 2022 MTES showed that more than four times as many military teenagers intend to serve, and many plan to enlist right after high school. With 90% of military teenagers at risk for mental health issues, it is frightening that we might fill the future ranks with military legacies with a history of psychological struggles.

Pinchotti says NMFA and Bloom won’t stop shedding light on these issues. “This isn’t a one and done scenario ... We are committed to learning more about our teens’ experiences and working with policy makers for long-term solutions to support our teens of today and, for nearly half of them, the force of tomorrow.”

Read more at themeatandpotatoesoflife.com, and in Lisa’s book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

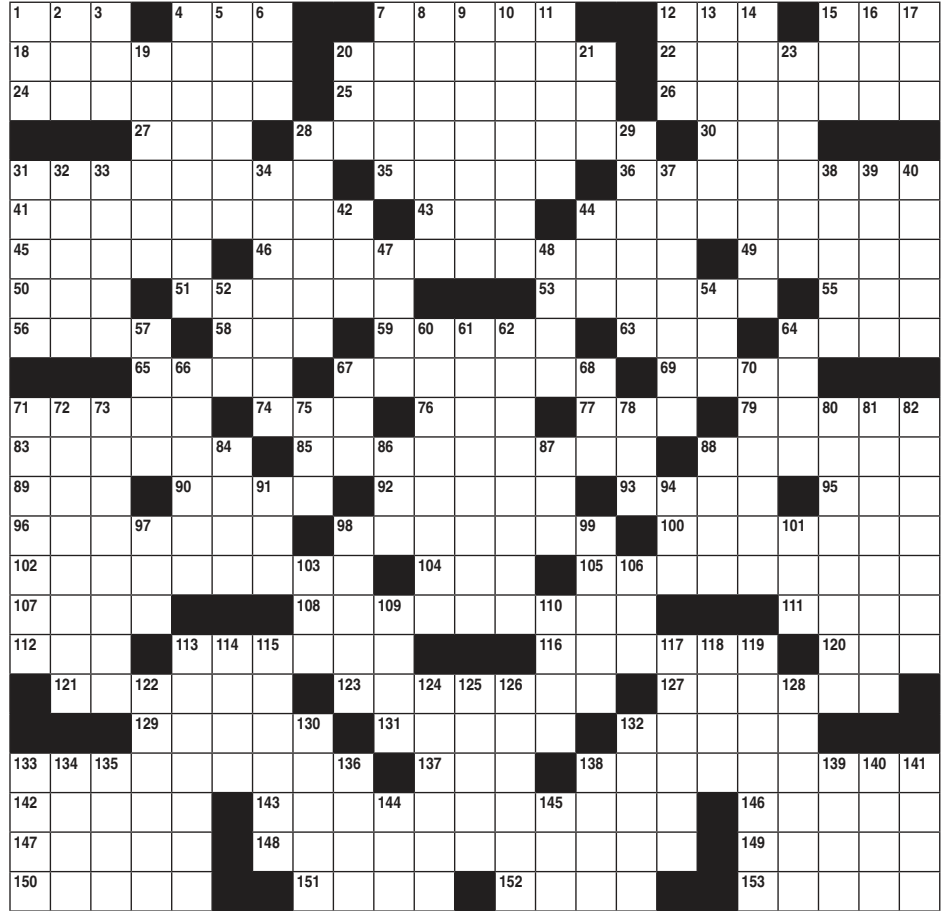
BLANK EXPRESSIONS

BY BRANDON KOPPY / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Brandon Koppy works for a digital ad agency in Austin, Texas. His daughters are 2 and 4 years old — which he calls “black-hole ages” that seem to consume all his time. This puzzle started with a general idea and a title (above). Once he decided on the puzzle’s “meta” answer, he was off and running. After you’ve finished solving, look for an appropriate bonus phrase. — W.S.

ACROSS

- 1 You say it when you “get it”
- 4 Cell connection inits.
- 7 Dope
- 12 Sorta
- 15 Writing tip
- 18 Film critic with a cameo in 1978’s “Superman”
- 20 Safe bets
- 22 “Levitating” singer, 2020
- 24 Stuffed up, in a way
- 25 Northern New Jersey town
- 26 Literally, “father of many”
- 27 2020 No. 1 hit for Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion
- 28 Longtime cooking show hosted by Alton Brown
- 30 They may be classified
- 31 Resident of the second-largest U.S. city
- 35 Like some bulls
- 36 Dangerous part of a tour
- 41 Fan of the album “Aoxomoxoa,” say
- 43 Dress (up)
- 44 Flings without strings
- 45 Yogurt-based Indian drink
- 46 The Blue Marble
- 49 “Ditto!”
- 50 Part of “fwiw”
- 51 Sit in stir
- 53 Good people to ask for directions
- 55 Grok
- 56 Clothing store sign
- 58 Owed
- 59 Parts of many skyscrapers
- 63 Med. care option
- 64 South ____
- 65 Wilson of film
- 67 Loud and clear, as a call to action
- 69 First name among billionaires
- 71 Demean
- 74 Woolly ma’am
- 76 Chats over Twitter, for short
- 77 ____ al-Fitr (holiday)
- 79 Lump sum?
- 83 Hawaiian home parts
- 85 Grabbed the reins
- 88 The barber of Seville
- 89 Singer Grande, to fans
- 90 Diverse ecosystem
- 92 Christine of “The Blacklist”
- 93 French 101 verb
- 95 Mustangs’ sch.
- 96 Back tracks?
- 98 Made bubbly
- 100 Not stop talking about
- 102 Supreme Court appointee before Thurgood Marshall
- 104 “Dios ____!”
- 105 Firm
- 107 Pin points?
- 108 Spacecraft’s reflective attachment
- 111 Ominous
- 112 Flexible spade, say
- 113 Like werewolves
- 116 Hairsplitter
- 120 Late actor Eisenberg
- 121 In which belts are worn
- 123 Ideal beta tester
- 127 Gives a boost, informally
- 129 Roger ____, first film critic to win a Pulitzer for criticism
- 131 Boots
- 132 Algebra I calculation
- 133 Worries
- 137 Calendar mo.
- 138 Captain’s log entry, maybe
- 142 Quinceañera feature
- 143 2013 Bong Joon Ho thriller
- 146 Hear out, say
- 147 N.Y.C. mayor after de Blasio
- 148 Alien’s line of communication?
- 149 Speedy travel option
- 150 Precept
- 151 John, abroad
- 152 Young ‘uns
- 153 Cares for
- 17 Superhero comics sound
- 19 Ties another knot
- 20 Bay Area airport code
- 21 Tennis division
- 23 Victor ____, role in “Casablanca”
- 28 Professional saver?
- 29 Fad accessory of the 1980s
- 31 It comes off the top of one’s head
- 32 “Cool beans!”
- 33 Verbose
- 34 The eighth of eight
- 37 Feeling bad, in a way
- 38 “August: ____ County” (Tracy Letts play)
- 39 Site of Hercules’ first labor
- 40 Ramps up or down?
- 42 Leave it to beavers
- 44 ____-Magnon
- 47 Author Gaiman
- 48 Plus
- 52 Pablo Neruda wrote one “to a large tuna in the market”
- 54 Has online?
- 57 Slugger with 609 homers
- 60 Bit of cosmic justice
- 61 Unlikely feature for competitive swimmers
- 62 Some trattoria offerings
- 64 All tucked in
- 66 Eccentric
- 67 Top dog, for short
- 68 Wedding-notice word
- 70 Basket-weaving materials
- 71 Home of Gulf State Park
- 72 Behind-the-counter helper
- 73 Licorice-flavored quaff
- 75 “____ With Marc Maron” (popular podcast)
- 78 Rage
- 80 Main connection?
- 81 Some antique furniture
- 82 Like 100 vis-à-vis 99, say
- 84 The Trojan priestess Cassandra, e.g.
- 86 Two-syllable cheer
- 87 Contest
- 88 Softened expletive on “Battlestar Galactica”
- 91 Cutesy ending with most
- 94 Marijuana compound, for short
- 97 Some coding statements
- 98 United
- 99 Having less vermouth, say
- 101 Air or Ear ender, in tech
- 103 “____ live and breathe!”
- 106 No longer funny
- 109 Jay with jokes
- 110 Does the same as
- 113 Blood typing, e.g.
- 114 Runnin’ ____ (N.C.A.A. basketball team)
- 115 In and of itself
- 117 Shining brightly
- 118 Former Jordanian queen
- 119 Formal accessory
- 122 Text file in a software package
- 124 Inundate, as with work
- 125 Runner Bolt
- 126 Like some parking
- 128 Attract while exploiting someone’s weakness
- 130 Shades
- 132 Cuts off the flow of
- 133 “P.D.Q.” in the O.R.
- 134 Way off the mark
- 135 Flair
- 136 Imbibe, old-style
- 138 Scrooge McDuck, for one
- 139 Last word of the New Testament
- 140 “All ____ . . .”
- 141 Chapters in history
- 144 “Hunh?”
- 145 P



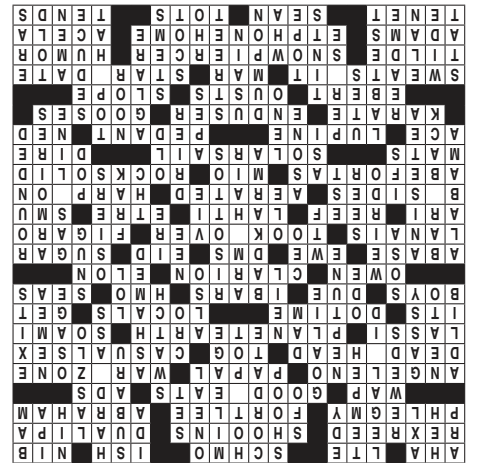
GUNSTON STREET



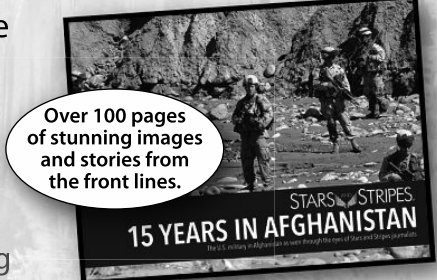
“Gunston Street” is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE

The empty squares can be filled with the letters of SPACE OUT, reading top to bottom, to complete the new words and phrases.



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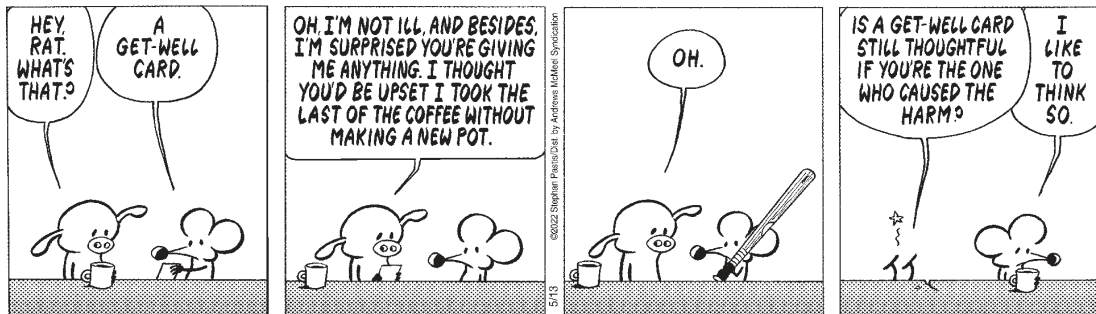
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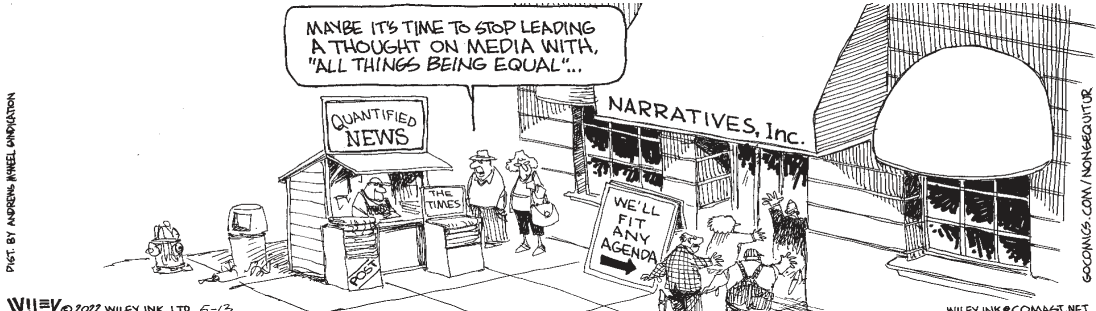
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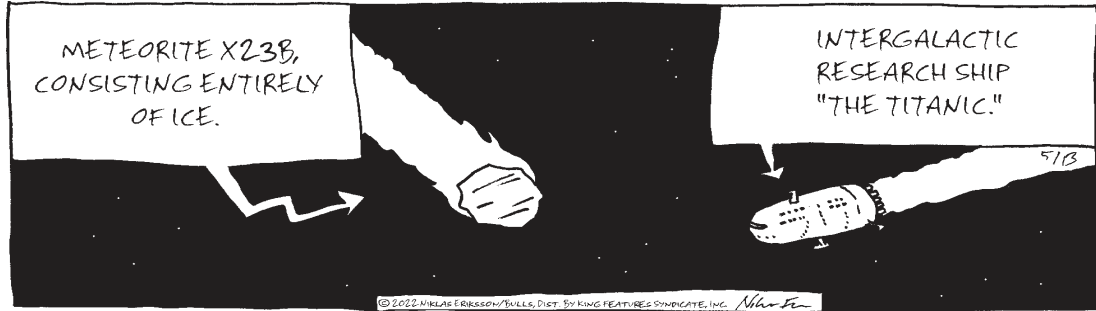
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Candorville



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		

ACROSS

- 1 Jazzy style
- 4 Pt. of a sentence
- 8 Wee songbird
- 12 Pub order
- 13 Baseball's Moises
- 14 Video-streaming brand
- 15 Custardy pastry
- 17 Warning sign
- 18 Willow
- 19 Author Fleming
- 21 — Moines
- 22 Urban bird
- 26 Strait-laced
- 29 Media mogul Turner
- 30 MLB stat
- 31 Low-calorie
- 32 Pickle holder
- 33 Pace
- 34 Rap sheet abbr.
- 35 In shape
- 36 Joins
- 37 Hotel Bible name
- 39 100 cts.
- 40 Ovum
- 41 Meghan and Harry's son
- 45 "The Kite Runner" boy
- 48 Noontime meal
- 50 Maxi's opposite
- 51 Diminutive suffix
- 52 Catchall abbr.
- 53 Jab

- 54 Future flower
- 55 "Viva — Vegas"

- 25 Minor quibbles
- 26 Dross
- 27 "Kon- —"
- 28 Slightly
- 29 Body art, for short
- 32 Commercial tunes
- 33 Ravine
- 35 Shore concealer
- 36 Coerced
- 38 Haunting
- 39 "Divine Comedy" author
- 42 Scoundrel
- 43 Greek vowel
- 44 Letter extras (Abbr.)
- 45 Rock concert booster
- 46 "O Sole —"
- 47 Squid squirt
- 49 Salt Lake athlete

DOWN

- 1 Proscribes
- 2 Norwegian saint
- 3 Muppet prawn
- 4 Like most pretzels
- 5 "— Gold" (Fonda film)
- 6 Scary cry
- 7 Gin flavoring
- 8 Incorrect
- 9 Computer acronym
- 10 Squeeze (out)
- 11 Convent VIP
- 16 Nostalgic song
- 20 Succor
- 23 Eventful periods
- 24 Theater award

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	L	M	S		P	H	E	W		P	E	W
L	I	I	I		A	B	L	E		A	G	O
M	E	T	E	O	R	O	I	D		R	O	W
A	V	E	R	S	E				G	L	A	S
					R	E		C	L	E	A	N
H	A	H	A		F	L	U		B	O	R	G
A	B	U			L	E	G			I	N	A
D	E	M	O		I	F	S		A	D	A	M
					A	D	E	P	T		A	M
N	I	N	E	S				G	R	A	P	P
A	B	O			T	R	A	P	E	Z	O	I
P	E	I			E	D	N	A		O	R	E
E	T	D			E	A	T	S		N	E	T

5-13

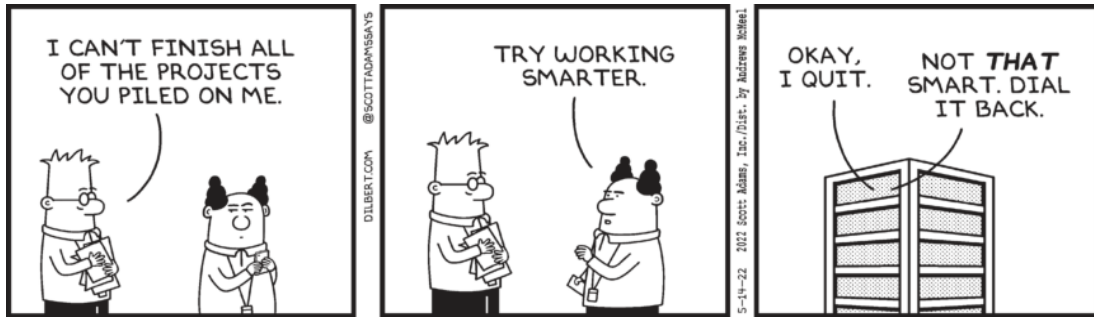
CRYPTOQUIP

GWEKX UINFX JXWEI IV DX
 M X C Y V C J X G V E Y F V V C U
 I V M M X G O S I R Q X C N F S B R I O V V G
 K V Q X C S E B U : D W F U W E V Q W.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE MINISTER UNITED YOUNG COUPLES IN WEDLOCK NONSTOP ALL WEEK LONG. IT WAS A MARRY-ATHON.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals O

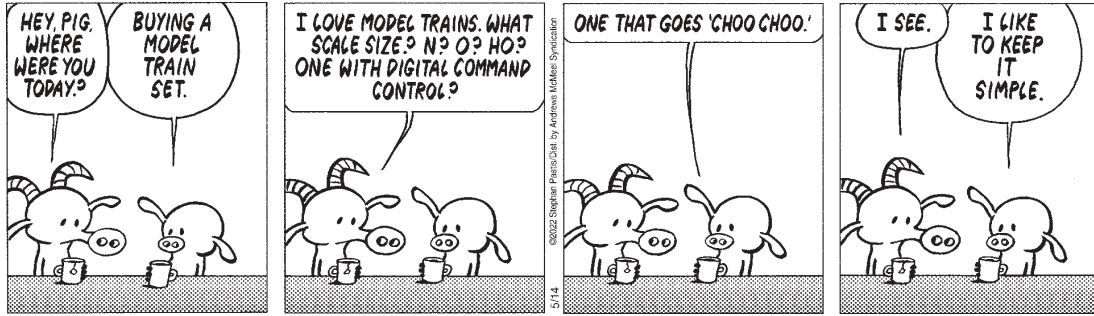
Frazz



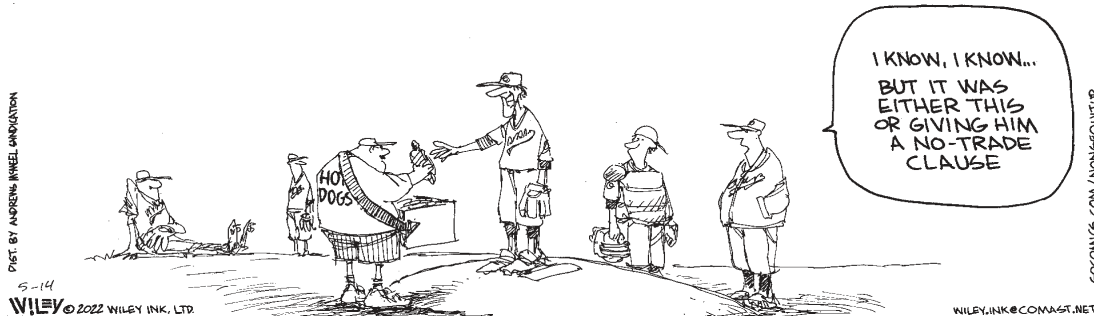
Dilbert



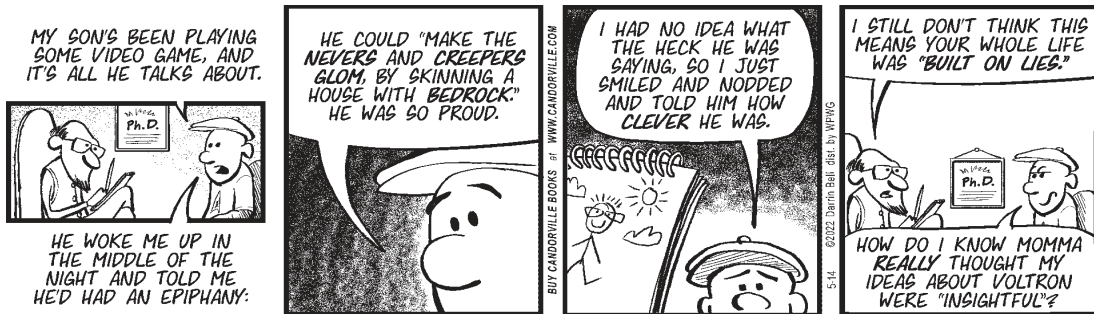
Pearls Before Swine



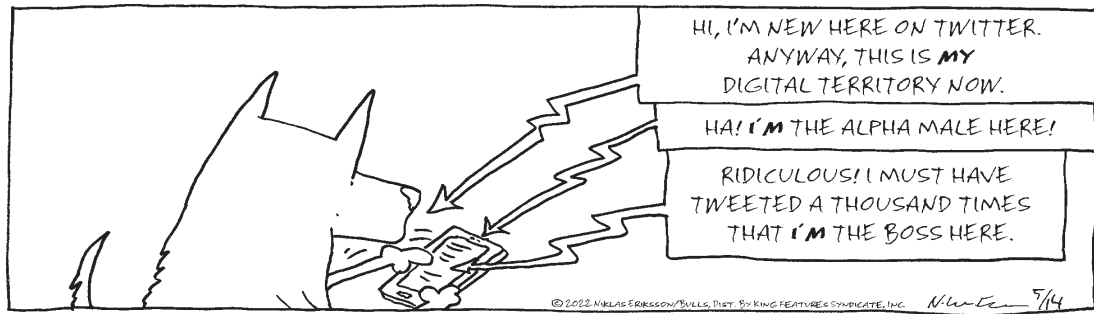
Non Sequitur



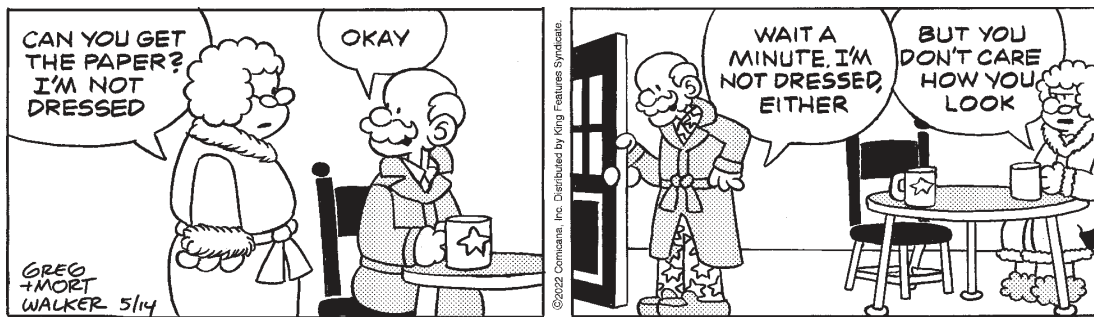
Candorville



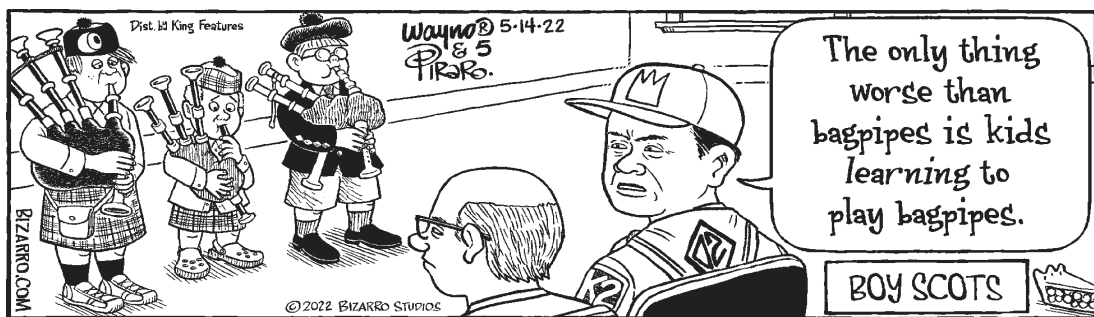
Carpe Diem



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 Stubborn pack
- 6 Minsk and Pinsk, e.g.
- 12 Japanese emperor
- 13 Delphi figure
- 14 Full assembly
- 15 Minimum
- 16 RSVP enclosure
- 17 "NFL Live" channel
- 19 Some coll. degrees
- 20 Appease
- 22 Actress Mendes
- 24 Billboards
- 27 True bargain
- 29 Lawyer (Abbr.)
- 32 "I'm not lying"
- 35 "Star Wars" royal
- 36 Waffle brand
- 37 Scale note
- 38 Patient's need, briefly
- 40 Sparkling Italian wine
- 42 SUV maker
- 44 Lounge
- 46 "JAG" spinoff
- 50 B vitamin
- 52 Printer's line
- 54 Risky
- 55 Like a wet umbrella
- 56 Artery inserts
- 57 Sports figures?

DOWN

- 1 Actress Kunis
- 2 Luau strings
- 3 Highway divisions
- 4 Sch. URL ender
- 5 Former
- 6 Freebie
- 7 Peace goddess
- 8 Sailor
- 9 Cold therapies
- 10 "Frozen" snow queen
- 11 Match parts
- 12 AWOL pursuers
- 18 Mali neighbor
- 21 Atern
- 23 Dyeing vessel
- 24 Pac. counterpart
- 25 Dad on "Black-ish"

- 26 Traveler's need
- 28 Iditarod racers
- 30 Uncle (Sp.)
- 31 Designer monogram
- 33 Bando of baseball
- 34 Word of denial
- 39 Actor Montgomery
- 41 Agra's land
- 42 Wildebeests
- 43 Gum flavor
- 45 Till bills
- 47 LAPD rank
- 48 Ways to the WWW
- 49 Bashful
- 51 Beer container
- 53 "The A-Team" actor

Answer to Previous Puzzle

B	O	P		S	U	B	J		W	R	E	N
A	L	E		A	L	O	U		R	O	K	U
N	A	P	O	L	E	O	N		O	M	E	N
S	V	E	L	T	E		I	A	N			
			D	E	S		P	I	G	E	O	N
S	T	A	I	D		T	E	D		R	B	I
L	I	T	E		J	A	R		G	A	I	T
A	K	A		F	I	T		F	U	S	E	S
G	I	D	E	O	N		D	O	L			
			E	G	G		A	R	C	H	I	E
A	M	I	R		L	U	N	C	H	E	O	N
M	I	N	I		E	T	T	E		E	T	C
P	O	K	E		S	E	E	D		L	A	S

5-14

CRYPTOQUIP

K E K M Q K G E J M G X U K I J H T K W B
 H I O H M K I F O H K M G K M R X E H
 T K W H N Q, R K U B M G F B G K G T B

"BT R N B P X R B P V X."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DANCE STYLE MEANT TO BE PERFORMED ON FLOORS TOPPED WITH VERY LIGHT WOOD COVERINGS: Balsa Nova.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals E

STARS AND STRIPES.

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What don't we know about the war in Ukraine?

BY DANIEL W. DREZNER

Special to *The Washington Post*

In thinking about the evolution of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Lawrence Freedman's Substack has been invaluable. His latest assessment is blunt about Russia's failures on the battlefield: "The second phase of the war has been underway for a month now and the Russians have made few gains. ... The Russians have amassed whatever forces they can muster for this latest push, with little left in reserve, and it does not appear to be sufficient." This matches the assessments of other experts on the Russian military. Moscow's ability to pursue offensive actions appears to be waning by the day.

Freedman said something else about Putin's Victory Day speech that is worth noting, however — that in delivering such a muted set of war aims, Putin offered "a definition of victory that might be in reach. So long as the Donbas is spared punitive action, Crimea is defended and Ukraine abandons thoughts of nuclear weapons then Russia will have succeeded. Putin described an imaginary threat for which he therefore might accept an imaginary solution."

Russia has paid an enormous price for its ambitions in Ukraine. It is worth remembering, however, that if the war ended tomorrow with the current battle lines frozen in place, the Russian Federation would control most of Ukraine's Black Sea coast. The parallels to Stalin's 1939 invasion of Finland come to mind. The Soviet Union suffered horrible losses during the first phase of that winter war, but in the end it still gained control over more than 10% of Finland — territory it controls to this day.

One of the arenas where Ukraine is routing Russia is the information war. A lot of attention has been paid to Russian casualties and very little has been said about Ukrainian casualties. There are lots of videos showing successful attacks on Russian units, but the only ones showing Russian attacks are those that stress the loss of innocent civilians. There are plenty of recordings demonstrating abysmal Russian morale, but we have heard little about Ukrainian weariness.

None of this is to say that the information environment has distorted the state of the conflict beyond all recognition. Relative to pre-war expectations, Russia has underperformed and Ukraine has overperformed. The polling in Ukraine strongly supports the narrative of a country united in resisting Russia; on the other hand, I cannot count the number of times Russia has claimed to capture all of Mariupol without, you know, it actually happening.

What I am saying is that because Ukraine has been so effective in the information space, Kyiv has obscured some known unknowns that need to be puzzled out when considering the next phase of this conflict.

For one thing, can Ukraine go on the offensive beyond the north? There is no denying that Ukraine had great success counterattacking to gain territory near Kyiv. They are succeeding around Kharkiv as well. But as Margarita Konaev and Polina Beliakova note in *Foreign Affairs*, other parts of the country will require a different strategy: "To win in Donbas, they will likely have to shift to a more conventional fight on open ground, where they may be more vulnerable. ... In open terrain, especially if the Ukrainians want to move

from a defensive posture, regain lost territory, and expel Russian soldiers from the Donbas region, they will need serious reinforcements."

Then there is the south. The Russians continue to control Kherson and are threatening to annex it through a bogus referendum. The humanitarian situation in that region grows more dire by the day.

Finally, what happens to Ukraine after the war ends, or at least after the battle lines stabilize? As Anna Reid notes in *Foreign Affairs*, Ukraine has demonstrated extraordinary resiliency during this war, but questions remain about its future:

"Security will be paramount: even in the most optimistic scenarios, Ukrainians recognize that they will likely face a future of continued conflict in the east, perhaps lasting for years to come. The country will also need to address the loss not only of much of its economy, but also of more than five million of its citizens who have fled the country and will have to be persuaded that there is something to return to. At the same time, it will take exceptional effort for the Ukrainian government not relapse into corruption, even as it pleads for tens of billions of dollars in desperately needed reconstruction money. And it remains unclear just what status the country will have in the West when all is said and done."

Russia's decision to invade its sovereign neighbor has proven to be ill-fated. My question is whether, in the end, Russia will still walk away with territorial gains compared to 2014 and Ukraine will be able to recover.

Daniel W. Drezner is a professor of international politics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

It's time to build a global pro-democracy movement

BY YORDANOS EYOEL

AND HAHRIE HAN

The Fulcrum

Democracy does not disappear by accident. Instead, all over the world, we are witnessing deliberate attempts by antidemocratic actors to weaken civil society, cripple the rule of law and activate social fragmentation. From weaponizing fear to rewriting history to exploiting religion, today's autocrats and their supporters leverage the same playbook. At the heart of that playbook is a multipronged attack on civil society. In 2021, among the 33 autocratizing countries, repression of civil society worsened in 22.

If a diminished civil society is the foundation of autocracy, a robust and inclusive civil society is the bedrock of democracy. Civil society serves as an intermediary between the state and the individual, composed of organizations such as schools and universities, non-profit and advocacy groups, professional associations, churches and cultural institutions. Civil society is the connective tissue that holds any society together. It is no accident that antidemocratic actors start there.

Despite the centrality of civil society to the authoritarian playbook, efforts to strengthen democracy too often underinvest in civil society — even though it is our best line of defense.

Civil society organizations in both democracies and autocratic regimes are hamstrung by limited resources and lack of coordination. Even in the U.S., with the world's most sophisticated philanthropic culture, civil society organizations defending and strengthening de-

mocracy are grossly underfunded compared to organizations working on education, health or poverty alleviation. For instance in 2020, U.S. philanthropists spent \$71 billion on education whereas decadelong philanthropic funding of democracy organizations totaled about \$14 billion. This pattern of overinvesting in issue areas and underinvesting in governance is also reflected in how the U.S. government has allocated its funding globally. For example, in Africa, the U.S. government spends 70% of its funds (\$5.4 billion) on health initiatives and only 4% (\$312.4 million) on democracy, human rights and governance.

Because civil society is inherently decentralized, sometimes it can be hard to know how to strategically invest in it. Investments in civil society may not seem as significant as sweeping institutional and policy reforms, such as H.R. 1 in the United States. Or, because civil life involves the messy work of bringing people together, efforts to strengthen it may seem unpredictable relative to individually targeted psychological interventions, such as traditional or social media ads to incentivize action.

It doesn't have to be so. We can and must develop a strategic approach to shoring up and inoculating civil society against attempts to weaken it. The first part of the solution to protect and strengthen democracy is to prioritize funding democracy issues and organizations. The second is to invest these resources strategically in civil society. We propose two immediate priorities:

Build civic resilience: In the U.S. and internationally, there is an overinvestment in short-term outcomes, in pursuit of a silver bullet electoral or policy win (the 2020 U.S. elec-

tions cost a whopping \$14 billion). While leadership and structural reforms are important to strengthening democracy, we also need civil society organizations that cultivate a shared commitment to democratic values and build resilience among individuals and communities to advance those values. Funding for civil society organizations that are tirelessly building the culture of democracy and social cohesion should be prioritized alongside those working on structural reforms.

Facilitate transnational pro-democracy coordination: Today, pro-democracy organizations are siloed, lacking the level of transnational coordination and playbook sharing that their autocratic counterparts artfully orchestrate. We need to create forums such as the upcoming virtual Global Democracy Champions Summit to weave global networks and elevate the aspirations, leadership and innovations of pro-democracy organizations, activists, academics and philanthropists.

From journalists to think tanks to Ukrainian freedom fighters, there is outcry for resources and innovation to defend liberal democracy. In the same way philanthropic institutions, governments and multilateral institutions galvanized in response to COVID-19, this is the moment to rise in global solidarity for democracy. Philanthropy, in particular, has a historic role to play by making bold investments in civil society organizations addressing both short-term crises as well as long-term civic infrastructure building efforts.

Yordanos Eyoel is the founder of Keseb and a visiting fellow at the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University. Hahrie Han is the inaugural director of the institute and a professor of political science at Johns Hopkins.

SCOREBOARD/TENNIS

TENNIS

Italian Open

Wednesday
At Foro Italico
Rome
Purse: Euro 5,415,410
Surface: Red clay
Men's Singles
Round of 32

Alexander Zverev (2), Germany, def. Sebastian Baez, Argentina, 7-6 (6), 6-3.
Rafael Nadal (3), Spain, def. John Isner, United States, 6-3, 6-1.
Karen Khachanov, Russia, def. Pablo Carreno Busta (15), Spain, 6-4, 2-6, 6-1.
Alex de Minaur, Australia, def. Tommy Paul, United States, 7-5, 6-4.
Stefanos Tsitsipas (4), Greece, def. Grigor Dimitrov, Bulgaria, 6-3, 5-7, 7-6 (4).
Marcos Giron, United States, def. Diego Schwartzman (12), Argentina, 6-1, 7-6 (4).
Jenson Brooksby, United States, def. David Goffin, Belgium, 6-0, 7-6 (1).
Stan Wawrinka, Switzerland, def. Laslo Djere, Serbia, 7-6 (8), 3-6, 6-4.
Jannik Sinner (10), Italy, def. Fabio Fognini, Italy, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.
Marin Cilic, Croatia, def. Cameron Norrie (9), Britain, 5-7, 6-2, 6-1.

Women's Singles

Round of 32
Aryna Sabalenka (3), Belarus, def. Zhang Shuai, China, 6-2, 6-0.
Petra Martic, Croatia, def. Anett Kontaveit (5), Estonia, 6-2, 6-3.
Elena Rybakina, Kazakhstan, def. Lauren Davis, United States, 6-4, 6-3.
Amanda Anisimova, United States, def. Belinda Bencic (12), Switzerland, 7-6 (5), 6-1.
Jil Teichmann, Switzerland, def. Karolina Pliskova (6), Czech Republic, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.
Jessica Pegula (13), United States, def. Anhelina Kalinina, Ukraine, walkover.
Coco Gauff (15), United States, def. Madison Brengle, United States, 6-2, 6-4.
Victoria Azarenka (16), Belarus, def. Maria Camila Osorio Serrano, Colombia, 6-2, 6-4.
Maria Sakkari (4), Greece, def. Ekaterina Alexandrova, Russia, 6-3, 6-2.
Iga Swiatek (1), Poland, def. Elena-Gabriela Ruse, Romania, 6-3, 6-0.
Bianca Andreescu, Canada, def. Nuria

Parrizas Diaz, Spain, 6-3, 7-6 (4).
Ons Jabeur (9), Tunisia, def. Ajla Tomljanovic, Australia, 7-5, 6-2.
Daria Kasatkina, Russia, def. Leylah Annie Fernandez, Canada, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (2).
Yulia Putintseva, Kazakhstan, def. Garbine Muguruza (8), Spain, 3-6, 7-6 (4), 6-1.
Paula Badosa (2), Spain, def. Aleksandra Sasnovich, Belarus, 6-2, 6-1.
Danielle Collins (7), United States, def. Simona Halep, Romania, 7-6 (1), 6-3.

Men's Doubles

Round of 32
Gonzalo Escobar, Ecuador, and Ariel Behar, Uruguay, def. Michael Venus, New Zealand, and Jamie Murray (6), Britain, 6-7 (2), 6-3, 10-5.
Wesley Koolhof, Netherlands, and Neal Skupski (7), Britain, def. Jean-Julien Rojer, Netherlands, and Marcelo Arevalo-Gonzalez, El Salvador, 6-4, 7-6 (4).
Matthew Ebdon and Max Purcell, Australia, def. Nikoloz Basilashvili, Georgia, and Alexander Bublik, Kazakhstan, 6-4, 6-1.

Harri Heliövaara, Finland, and Lloyd Glasspool, Britain, def. Rajeev Ram, United States, and Joe Salisbury (1), Britain, 7-6 (5), 6-3.
Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (5), Colombia, def. Reilly Opelka and Tommy Paul, United States, 6-3, 6-3.

Women's Doubles

Round of 16
Kevin Krawietz and Andreas Mies (8), Germany, def. Lorenzo Sonego and Luca Nardi, Italy, 6-3, 6-3.
Nikola Pietrangeli and Mate Pavic (3), Croatia, def. Grigor Dimitrov, Bulgaria, and Hubert Hurkacz, Poland, 7-5, 7-5.

Women's Doubles

Round of 16
Demi Schuur, Netherlands, and Desirae Krawczyk (3), United States, def. Nicole Melichar-Martinez, United States, and Ellen Perez, Australia, 5-7, 7-6 (5), 10-7.
Andreja Klepac, Slovenia, and Alexa Guarachi (4), Chile, def. Han Xinyun, China, and Kaitlyn Christian, United States, 6-0, 6-3.
Zhang Shuai, China, and Storm Sanders (1), Australia, def. Makoto Ninomiya and Eri Hozumi, Japan, 6-3, 6-2.
Gabriela Dabrowski, Canada, and Giulia Onolof, Mexico, def. Ekaterina Alexandrova, Russia, and Anna Danilina, Kazakhstan, 7-5, 3-6, 10-7.

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	5	1	4	19	15	8
New York	5	2	3	18	16	8
CF Montréal	5	3	2	17	20	19
Orlando City	5	4	2	17	13	15
Cincinnati	5	5	1	16	14	17
NYCFC	4	3	2	14	19	10
Atlanta	4	4	2	14	15	14
Charlotte FC	4	6	1	13	10	13
Columbus	3	3	4	13	15	11
D.C. United	4	5	0	12	12	13
New England	3	5	2	11	16	18
Toronto FC	3	6	2	11	16	22
Inter Miami CF	3	6	1	10	9	19
Chicago	2	4	4	10	7	11

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LAFC	7	1	2	23	23	10
Austin FC	6	2	2	20	22	9
LA Galaxy	6	3	1	19	11	7
FC Dallas	5	1	4	19	16	7
Real Salt Lake	4	3	4	16	10	15
Nashville	4	3	3	15	11	10
Minnesota	4	4	2	14	11	9
Houston	3	4	3	12	12	13
Colorado	3	4	3	12	11	12
Portland	2	3	6	12	11	16
San Jose	2	5	3	9	16	23
Sporting KC	2	6	3	9	8	16
Seattle	2	5	1	7	9	13
Vancouver	2	6	1	7	7	17

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

Saturday's games

Orlando City at Toronto FC
Los Angeles FC at Colorado
CF Montréal at Charlotte FC
Columbus at New York City FC
San Jose at Vancouver
New York at Philadelphia
Cincinnati at Chicago
D.C. United at Miami
Nashville at Houston
Austin FC at Real Salt Lake
Sporting Kansas City at Portland
FC Dallas at LA Galaxy

Sunday's games

New England at Atlanta
Minnesota at Seattle

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
SD Wave FC	2	0	0	6	5	0
Portland	1	0	0	3	3	0
Chicago	1	0	0	3	2	1
Washington	1	0	0	3	2	1
Houston	1	1	0	3	2	1
Angel City FC	1	1	0	3	2	2
Gotham FC	1	1	0	3	3	4
Orlando	1	1	0	3	1	3
OL Reign	0	1	1	1	3	4
Louisville	0	1	1	1	3	4
North Carolina	0	1	0	0	1	2
Kansas City	0	2	0	0	0	5

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

Friday's game

OL Reign at Portland

Saturday's games

Kansas City at Orlando
North Carolina at Gotham FC
Houston at Louisville

Sunday's games

Chicago at San Diego Wave FC
Angel City FC at Washington

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	3	0	1.000	—
Atlanta	2	0	1.000	½
Chicago	1	1	.500	1½
New York	1	1	.500	1½
Indiana	1	2	.333	2
Connecticut	0	1	.000	2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	2	1	.667	—
Las Vegas	2	1	.667	—
Phoenix	1	1	.500	½
Seattle	1	2	.333	1
Minnesota	0	3	.000	2
Dallas	0	1	.000	1

Wednesday's games

Atlanta 77, Los Angeles 75
Chicago 83, New York 50
Phoenix 97, Seattle 77

Thursday's games

No games scheduled.

Friday's games

Dallas at Washington
Indiana at New York
Las Vegas at Atlanta



SETH WENIG/AP

Ukraine's Elina Svitolina says Russian and Belarussian players should speak up about whether they are against the war and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and no longer stay silent.

Svitolina criticizes silence of players

Wants them to make stance on war known

By JEROME PUGMIRE

Associated Press

PARIS — Ukrainian tennis player Elina Svitolina wants Russian and Belarussian players to say whether they oppose the war in her nation.

“For us, for Ukrainians, it’s very important that they speak out, that they choose which side they take. We want to know, we want to feel safe about that. Because if they don’t say their opinion on this, we don’t know if they support their government, if they support the action of the army,” Svitolina told The Associated Press on Wednesday. “Because in Russia and Belarus sport is a big propaganda.”

In an interview with the AP, Svitolina also addressed mental health and feeling overwhelmed by the anguish of war.

Mental strain led to the former third-ranked Ukrainian’s decision to take a break from tennis. She said the stress also accentuated ongoing back problems.

“For me it’s been a really rough couple of months mentally to hold everything on my shoulders. That’s why it was a better decision to take my time to really settle down,” she said. “To be on top of the game you have to be 100% mentally and physically fit. For me it was not the case.”

The Wimbledon tournament, which starts on June 27, has barred players from Russia and Belarus because of the war. The French Open, starting on May 22, is allowing them to compete as neutral players. For Svitolina, it’s more about breaking silence.

“I feel like they need to speak up about their position, this is very important. Doesn’t matter if it’s in a Grand Slam or (another) tour-

ament,” she said. “I think every Russian and Belarussian athlete should take their position, so that we know that there is no bad people among us.”

Svitolina was asked if any Russian and Belarussian players personally told her they are against the war.

“Very few. This is very sad because many athletes from different countries came up to us and showed us their support,” Svitolina said. “That’s why it really hurts us and we don’t understand why exactly they (Russian and Belarussian players) didn’t.”

The war is now in its 11th week. Kyiv has bogged down opposing troops but Russia has pummeled the port of Odesa.

“For the past few days there have been shootings, explosions going on in Odesa, my hometown. Mentally it’s draining,” Svitolina said. “I cannot even imagine what people are going through back in Ukraine, what my family’s going through.”

Although Ukraine is resisting a better-armed Russian military, millions of Ukrainians have fled the war-torn country.

“The first week was the toughest week of my life,” Svitolina said. “I was so worried about all the people in Ukraine, about my family, what will be next. Every minute there was some new information.”

The 27-year-old Svitolina, who is married to French tennis player Gael Monfils, will miss the French Open, where she reached the quarterfinals three times. She did not say if she will play at Wimbledon, where she reached the semifinals in 2019.

But given what Ukraine’s going through, tennis is not her focus.

DEALS

Wednesday's transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball

American League

CHICAGO WHITE SOX — Reinstated OF Yermir Mercedes from his rehab assignment and optioned him to Charlotte (IL). Assigned OF Andrew Vaughn to Charlotte for a rehab assignment.

DETROIT TIGERS — Designated RHP Drew Hutchison for assignment. Recalled LHP Joey Wentz from Toledo (IL). Assigned RHP Alex Faedo to Toledo.

MINNESOTA TWINS — Placed LHP Danny Coulombe on the 15-day IL. Transferred RHP Jhon Romero to the 60-day IL from the 10-day IL. Selected the contract of RHP Yennier Cano from St. Paul (IL).

NEW YORK YANKEES — Optioned RHP Ron Marinaccio to Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (IL).

OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Optioned RHP Adrian Martinez to Las Vegas (PCL).

SEATTLE MARINERS — Acquired RHP Prelander Berroa from San Francisco in exchange for INF Donovan Walton who will report to Sacramento (PCL).

TEXAS RANGERS — Recalled LHP Kolby Allard from Round Rock (PCL). Optioned OF Zach Reks to Round Rock.

National League

CHICAGO CUBS — Placed LHP Sean Newcomb on the 10-day IL, retroactive to May 8. Recalled RHP Mark Leiter Jr. from Iowa (IL).

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Selected the contract of RHP Ryan Peplot. Designated LHP Robbie Erlin for assignment.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Recalled LHP Bailey Falter from Lehigh Valley (IL). Optioned OF Matt Vierling to Lehigh Valley.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Optioned RHP Beau Sulser to Indianapolis (IL). Selected the contract of LHP Cam Alldred from Indianapolis.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Recalled RHP Jake Walsh from Memphis (IL). Optioned RHP Kodi Whitely to Memphis.

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Announced INF Evan Longoria returned from his rehabilitation assignment and was reinstated from the 10-day IL. Placed LHP Jake McGee on the 15-day IL. Designated INF Mike Ford for assignment.

FOOTBALL

National Football League

ATLANTA FALCONS — Named Antrean Allen, Holman Copeland, Ryan Davis, Harry Douglas, Mickey Grace and Deron Wilson as participants in the Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship.

BALTIMORE RAVENS — Waived DT Xavier Kelly.

CAROLINA PANTHERS — Waived DE Azur Kamara.

CHICAGO BEARS — Signed QB Nathan Peterman. Waived TE Jesper Horsted and QB Ryan Willis. Claim TE Rysen John off waivers from N.Y. Giants.

CLEVELAND BROWNS — Named Israel Woolfork (Miami, Ohio) as a participant in the Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship.

DENVER BRONCOS — Signed C Luke Watzenberg, DE Nik Bonitto and DB Faion Hicks to four-year contracts.

DETROIT LIONS — Waived QB Steven Montez.

GREEN BAY PACKERS — Named John Shaw (assistant strength coach, University of Arizona), Akeem Dent (former NFL

player), Chuka Ndulue (defensive line, New Mexico State), Jayden Everett (running backs, Tulsa), DP Eyman (analyst, University of Mississippi), Noah Pauley (wide receivers, North Dakota State), Julian Campenni (defensive run game coordinator/defensive line, Bowling Green), Terrell Rouse (co-defensive coordinator/secondary coach, William Patterson University), Buddha Williams (defensive line, Colorado State), Qamar Acres (offensive line, Nichols College), T.J. Graham (former NFL player) and Craig Stutzmann (offensive coordinator/quarterbacks, Dixie State) as participants in the Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellowship. Claimed TE Eli Wolf off waivers from Indianapolis. Waived WR Chris Blair.

HOUSTON TEXANS — Signed S Jalen Pitre to a four-year contract. Signed DL Jerry Hughes.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — Waived OL Jared Hocker. Claimed OL Wes Martin of waivers from N.Y. Giants. OLB Rashod Berry of waivers from Detroit. Waived K Matthew Wright.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Agreed to terms with G Jamaree Salyer on a four-year contract.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Signed TE Nick Muse and S Lewis Cine to four-year contracts.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — Signed DL Sam Roberts. Claimed TE Matt Sokol of waivers from Detroit.

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — Waived RB Josh Adams and DT Braxton Hoyett.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Placed CB Isaiah Johnson on injured reserve after he cleared waivers.

HOCKEY

National Hockey League

BUFFALO SABRES — Signed F Aleksandr Kisakov to a three-year, entry-level contract.

DALLAS STARS — Recalled C Ty Dellandrea, Fs Oscar Backi, Rhett Gardner, Tanner Kero, Riley Damiani, Riley Tufta and Fredrik Karlstrom, Ds Joseph Cocconi, Jerard Rosburg, Ryan Shea and Alex Petrovich from Dallas (AHL).

EDMONTON OILERS — Signed F Carter Savoie to a three-year, entry-level contract. Recalled D Philip Broberg from Bakersfield (AHL).

NASHVILLE PREDATORS — Assigned F Luke Evangelista to Milwaukee (AHL) from London (OHL). Assigned G Tomas Vornacka to Florida (ECHL) from Milwaukee (AHL).

ST. LOUIS BLUES — Reassigned C Dakota Joshua and D Steve Santini to Springfield (AHL).

SOCCER

Major League Soccer

LA GALAXY — Signed LA Galaxy II D Owen Lambe to a short-term loan.

PORTLAND TIMBERS — Acquired \$160,000 in 2023 general allocation money (GAM) from D.C. United in exchange for a 2022 international roster slot.

REAL SALT LAKE — Signed Andrew Brody to a contract extension through 2024, with an option for 2025.

National Women's Soccer League

PORTLAND THORNS — Named Vytas Andriuskevicius an assistant coach.

COLLEGE

GEORGE WASHINGTON — Named Zak Boisvert assistant men’s basketball coach.

MLB

ROUNDUP

Yelich ties record with third cycle in Brewers' loss

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Christian Yelich bolted out of the box, sprinting around the bases and cruising into third standing up for his first triple of the season.

A very well-timed triple, too.

The Milwaukee Brewers star hit for a record-tying third cycle — amazingly, all of them against Cincinnati. Yelich accomplished the feat Wednesday in a 14-11 loss to the Reds.

“I’d definitely rather win the game,” Yelich said. “Weird things happen in baseball. Any time you can hit for a cycle, it’s pretty cool. I will try to enjoy it as much as possible.”

Yelich tripled during a six-run ninth inning rally. His teammates were well aware of the significance, and they stood on the top row of the dugout to applaud him.

Yelich became the sixth player in major league history to hit at least one home run, triple, double and single in the same game three times. He joined Trea Turner, Adrián Beltré, Babe Herman, Bob Meusel and John Reilly in accomplishing the feat.

Earlier, Yelich doubled in the first, hit a three-run homer in the third and singled in the fifth.

Late in the 2018 season, Yelich hit for the cycle twice in a span of three weeks against the Reds.

“A lot of things kind of have to happen to hit the cycle,” the former National League MVP said. “It is hard enough to get four hits in a major league game and to have the right kind, there’s an element of luck. It is still pretty cool.”

Tyler Stephenson drove in four runs with a pair of doubles and Colin Moran hit a three-run homer for Cincinnati. The Reds, with the worst record in the majors, won their second straight series by topping the NL Central leaders.

Yankees 5, Blue Jays 3: Gleyber Torres homered and drove in five runs, and host New York beat Toronto for its 15th win in 17 games.

DJ LeMahieu had two hits and scored twice for New York. Jameson Taillon (3-1) allowed two runs in 5½ innings, and Aroldis Chapman worked the ninth for his eighth save.

New York won its seventh straight series and improved to a major league-best 22-8, its best 30-game start since 2003. The Yan-

kees are 13-0 when scoring five runs or more.

Toronto has lost a season-high four straight and seven of nine. José Berríos (2-2) gave up five runs and five hits in 5½ innings, raising his ERA to 5.82.

Nationals 8, Mets 3: Juan Soto and Nelson Cruz homered and host Washington sent New York right-hander Tylor Megill to the earliest exit of his career.

Soto hit a two-run homer in the Nationals’ five-run first inning and Cruz hit his 453rd career longball, a three-run blast to left-center in the second that traveled an estimated 436 feet. Staked to a big lead, Aaron Sanchez (2-2) pitched to contact.

Megill (4-2) recorded four outs while allowing eight runs on eight hits with a walk and a hit batter, losing his second straight start as his ERA swelled from 2.43 to 4.41. Pete Alonso hit a two-run homer in the first for the NL East-leading Mets.

Athletics 9, Tigers 0: Zach Logue pitched seven sharp innings in his second major league start and visiting Oakland spoiled the debut of Joey Wentz by thumping Detroit.

Sean Murphy and Kevin Smith each drove in two while Christian Bethancourt supplied three hits, two runs scored and an RBI for the A’s.

Rays 4, Angels 2 (10): Vidal Bruján got an RBI double leading off the 10th inning for his first hit of the season, and visiting Tampa Bay rebounded from its no-hit loss with a win over Los Angeles.

The game was a 1-0 pitchers’ duel until the eighth, with Tampa Bay’s Shane Bieber barely outpitching Shohei Ohtani. McClanahan had a career high-tying 11 strikeouts in seven innings of three-hit ball.

Ohtani yielded two hits and two walks in six sharp innings for the Angels, striking out five on 92 pitches.

Pinch-hitter Taylor Ward hit a tying two-run homer in the eighth for the Angels.

Cubs 7, Padres 5: Alfonso Rivas hit a tiebreaking two-run single against his hometown team in the eighth inning, leading visiting Chicago to the victory over San Diego.

Rivas, who grew up in Tijuana and Chula Vista, came up with the bases loaded and singled to center



AARON DOSTER/AP

The Brewers’ Christian Yelich reacts at third base after he completed his third career cycle by hitting a triple during the ninth inning against the Cincinnati Reds on Wednesday. The Reds won 14-11.

off Luis Garcia (0-2).

One-time Padres pitcher Rowan Wick got a six-out save, striking out Manny Machado to end the eighth with a runner on second. It was his second save in as many chances.

Pirates 5, Dodgers 3: Daniel Vogelbach hit a go-ahead homer in the seventh inning, and host Pittsburgh took a series from Los Angeles for the first time in nearly five years.

Vogelbach lined a shot to the seats in right field off Daniel Hudson (1-2), putting the Pirates back in front after they squandered a three-run lead in the top of the inning.

Braves 5, Red Sox 3: Orlando Arcia hit a two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth inning to give host Atlanta a win over Boston.

Arcia lined his first homer of the season over the left-field wall off Ryan Brasier (0-1) with one out in the ninth for his third hit of the game. The homer drove in Ozzie Albies, who led off with a single to end an 0-for-10 slump.

Cardinals 10, Orioles 1: Juan Ypez homered and Miles Mikolas pitched seven strong innings, leading host St. Louis to a win over Baltimore.

Paul Goldschmidt drove in three runs for St. Louis, which snapped a three-game losing streak. Brendan Donovan added a two-run double to the Cards’ 11-hit attack, and Tommy Edman also drove in a pair of runs.

Marlins 11, Diamondbacks 3: Jacob Stallings hit a go-ahead single during visiting Miami’s eight-run ninth inning, and Jazz Chisholm Jr. followed with a three-run homer.

Miami controlled most of the game until the eighth, when pinch hitter Jordan Luplow connected for a tying two-run homer against Marlins reliever Steven Okert.

Phillies 4, Mariners 2: Rhys Hoskins homered for the third straight game and provided all of visiting Philadelphia’s offense with his second career grand slam.

Hoskins hit solo homers in each of the first two games and provided the big blow with his first grand slam since March 28, 2019, against Atlanta.

Royals 8, Rangers 2: Local high school star Bobby Witt Jr. hit a two-run double and had his first three-RBI game in the majors, Whit Merrifield homered for the first time since August and visiting Kansas City beat Texas to snap a three-game losing streak.

Emmanuel Rivera padded a three-run Royals lead in the ninth inning, clearing the bases with a two-out, pinch-hit triple.

Giants 7, Rockies 1: Brandon Crawford homered, and host San Francisco earned its 10th straight win over Colorado.

Crawford drove in three runs and scored twice as the Giants extended their overall winning streak to five.

Scoreboard

American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	22	8	.733	—
Tampa Bay	19	13	.594	4
Toronto	17	15	.531	6
Baltimore	13	18	.419	9½
Boston	11	20	.355	11½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	18	12	.600	—
Chicago	15	14	.517	2½
Cleveland	15	15	.500	3
Kansas City	10	18	.357	7
Detroit	9	22	.290	9½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	21	12	.636	—
Houston	19	11	.633	½
Seattle	14	18	.438	6½
Texas	12	17	.414	7
Oakland	13	19	.406	7½
National League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	21	11	.656	—
Atlanta	15	17	.469	6
Miami	14	17	.452	6½
Philadelphia	14	17	.452	6½
Washington	11	21	.344	10
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	20	12	.625	—
St. Louis	17	13	.567	2
Pittsburgh	13	17	.433	6
Chicago	11	19	.367	8
Cincinnati	7	24	.226	12½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	20	9	.690	—
San Diego	20	12	.625	1½
San Francisco	19	12	.613	2
Arizona	17	15	.531	4½
Colorado	16	15	.516	5
Wednesday’s games				
N.Y. Yankees 5, Toronto 3				
Philadelphia 4, Seattle 2				
Oakland 9, Detroit 0				
Tampa Bay 4, L.A. Angels 2, 10 innings				
Atlanta 5, Boston 3				
St. Louis 10, Baltimore 1				
Kansas City 8, Texas 2				
Cleveland at Chicago White Sox, ppd.				
Houston at Minnesota, susp.				
Pittsburgh 5, L.A. Dodgers 3				
Cincinnati 14, Milwaukee 11				
Miami 11, Arizona 3				
San Francisco 7, Colorado 1				
Chicago Cubs 7, San Diego 5				
Washington 8, N.Y. Mets 3				
Thursday’s games				
Houston at Minnesota				
Oakland at Detroit				
Baltimore at St. Louis				
Kansas City at Texas				
N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox				
N.Y. Mets at Washington				
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh				
Philadelphia at L.A. Dodgers				
Friday’s games				
Houston (Valdez 1-2) at Washington (Gray 4-2)				
Baltimore (Lyles 2-2) at Detroit (Rodriguez 0-2)				
Seattle (Gonzales 1-4) at N.Y. Mets (Bassitt 4-2)				
Toronto (Gausman 3-1) at Tampa Bay (Rasmussen 3-1)				
Boston (Pivetta 0-4) at Texas (Dunning 1-1)				
Cleveland (Civale 1-2) at Minnesota (Gray 0-1)				
N.Y. Yankees (Cole 2-0) at Chicago White Sox (Velasquez 2-2)				
Kansas City (Greinke 0-2) at Colorado (Freeland 1-3)				
L.A. Angels (TBD) at Oakland (Jefferies 1-5)				
Cincinnati (Mahle 1-4) at Pittsburgh (Keller 0-4)				
Milwaukee (Burnes 1-2) at Miami (López 4-1)				
San Diego (Darvish 3-1) at Atlanta (Fried 4-2)				
San Francisco (Webb 4-1) at St. Louis (Matz 3-2)				
Chicago Cubs (Smyly 1-3) at Arizona (Davies 1-1)				
Philadelphia (Gibson 3-1) at L.A. Dodgers (Kershaw 4-0)				
Saturday’s games				
L.A. Angels at Oakland				
Baltimore at Detroit				
Toronto at Tampa Bay				
Boston at Texas				
Houston at Washington				
Cleveland at Minnesota				
N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox				
Seattle at N.Y. Mets				
Kansas City at Colorado				
San Francisco at St. Louis				
San Diego at Atlanta				
Milwaukee at Miami				
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh				
Chicago Cubs at Arizona				
Philadelphia at L.A. Dodgers				

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Landscape changes with new transfer rule

Nation's top programs relying more on restocking rosters via the portal

By JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

Coach Bruce Pearl and Auburn lost two stars to the NBA from what he considered college basketball's best frontcourt.

So, the Tigers did what most college programs are doing: They turned to the transfer portal. Auburn filled the gaping voids left by likely first-round picks Jabari Smith and Walker Kessler with a former LSU commitment and then a key NCAA transfer portal pickup. Problem, presumably, solved.

"All of a sudden, the season's over and you're down two first-round picks on the front line," Pearl said.

It's one example among many in a new world of college basketball. Instead of being stuck picking up one of the few recruits remaining when top players exit early and sometimes unexpectedly, coaches can raid the transfer portal for a college veteran or four.

Today, one program's loss is another's gain.

Pearl counted on four transfers, including Kessler, and prized freshman Smith — the potential top NBA Draft pick — to earn the program's first No. 1 ranking and a regular-season Southeastern Conference championship last season. The Tigers went from 13-14 to 28-6.

Other teams are trying to fortify their rosters or spark similar rebounds with transfers to supplement the traditional high school signees.

Players had until May 1 to enter the portal to be immediately eligible in fall and winter sports, but some top names still haven't announced a destination.

Those include late entries like Kentucky's Keion Brooks, Baylor's Matthew Mayer and New Mexico State's Teddy Allen — presuming none of them opt to turn pro instead.

Florida's Keyontae Johnson, who hasn't played since collapsing on the court in December 2020, has also entered the portal hoping to make a comeback.

Among the notable moves in women's basketball, twins Haley and Hanna Cavinder, who both have large social media followings, have transferred from Fresno State to the Miami Hurricanes.

As easily as the portal can take away — it can give right back.

Among the biggest portal moves was SMU's high-scoring guard Kendrick Davis saying he was heading to Memphis, which lost one-time top recruit Emoni Bates to the portal. Bates hasn't an-

nounced a new school.

Iowa State landed Temple point guard Jeremiah Williams after losing Big 12 freshman of the year Tyrese Hunter to the portal.

Graduate transfer Emmitt Matthews returned to West Virginia, where he was a three-year starter, after one season at Washington. He has logged 98 starts at the two schools. The Mountaineers have landed three Division I transfers and two junior college players.

Texas Tech signed Texas forward Jaylon Tyson and Gardner-Webb guard D'Maurian Williams while receiving other commitments, giving the Red Raiders the top transfer class according to the 247Sports rankings.

Auburn hasn't been quite as busy in the transfer portal this off-season, but added two big offseason additions in former 5-star LSU commitment Yohan Traore and Morehead State transfer forward Johni Broome. Broome averaged 16.8 points, 10.5 rebounds and 3.9 blocked shots as a freshman.

Smith and Kessler declared for the draft after one season at Auburn. The Tigers lost to Miami in the second round of the NCAA Tournament after landing a No. 2 seed.

Meanwhile, coaches are still not sure who will be on their roster come next season.

"It's not changing. The portal's here for good. NIL's here for good," said ESPN analyst Seth



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Kansas guard Remy Martin, right, transferred in after four seasons at Arizona State, primarily coming off the bench, and made 4 of 6 three-pointers to finish with 14 points in the national championship game.

Greenberg, who spent two decades as a college head coach. "But the uncertainty of the spring and summer is also here for good, and it's not going to change.

"There's going to be constant movement of rosters all the way up to the middle of the summer. Whether it's good or not, it's not changing."

Arkansas made an early splash after relying heavily on several transfers for an Elite Eight run.

Razorbacks coach Eric Musselman has added Rhode Island brothers Makhi and Makhel

Mitchell, Missouri's Trevon Brazile and Arizona State's Jalen Graham to go along with a recruiting class already ranked second only to Duke in the 247Sports composite ratings with three 5-star prospects.

Transfers played leading or key supporting roles for a number of last season's top teams, and likely will in 2022-23 as well.

No team felt the transfer portal's sting quite like LSU, which appeared poised to lose every scholarship player from last season to either the portal or the NBA Draft. LSU fired coach Will Wade and has NCAA sanctions potentially looming. New coach Matt McMahon kept some key players and recruits in the fold and brought in transfers, too.

The national champion Jayhawks added a key piece last May 17. Two-time All-Pac 12 guard Remy Martin transferred after four seasons at Arizona State. He mostly served as a key reserve but made 4 of 6 three-pointers and scored 14 in the championship game.

Kansas coach Bill Self still thinks the Power 5 programs need to build rosters with high school recruits, placing an emphasis on the early signing period in November. Top freshmen aren't nearly as readily available to plug unexpected holes in the spring.

"But what the transfer portal does, it allows you not to take a step back whenever you have unexpected things happen during the season," Self said during the Jayhawks' run to the national title.

National runner-up North Carolina got a huge boost with the arrival of forward Brady Manek, a four-year starter at Oklahoma. Manek averaged 15.1 points and

6.1 rebounds and shot 40% from three-point range.

Greenberg cites players like Manek, Martin and Kentucky's Kellan Grady (from Davidson) as transfers who proved good fits with their new teams.

"When you go into the portal as a coach, you need to find guys that fit your core beliefs and your non-negotiables," the ESPN analyst said. "You've got to find guys that you feel are winning players. And you've got to find guys that fit your needs and also (understand that) winning is more important than anything else.

"The guys that went into the portal and were about winning ended up doing well."

This offseason, UConn has lost four players to the transfer portal and two more — guards R.J. Cole and Tyrese Martin — opted to turn pro rather than return for their extra COVID-19 year.

"It's almost like a different type of sport in terms of your program and how you've got to adapt and be agile," UConn coach Dan Hurley said. "It's something, obviously, that we've got to adjust to."

Overall, Pearl feels like the portal is good for the players and college sports. After all, he's made plenty of stops in his own career before landing a new eight-year, \$50 million contract from Auburn in January.

"I don't like that there are three-and-a-half players per team in the portal," Pearl said. "I'd rather teach them to fight than flee, but that's OK. I transferred several times in my career."

Now, it's also about business for the players, too.



BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

Auburn head coach Bruce Pearl turned to the transfer portal to fill two huge gaps in his frontcourt after Jabari Smith and Walker Kessler declared for the NBA Draft.

NHL PLAYOFFS

First week of playoffs: Fast starts and blowouts

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
AND JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

Turns out a two-goal lead is the safest lead in the first round of the NHL playoffs.

A three-goal lead? Insurmountable. Fall behind at all in a game? Well, good luck.

The first week of the NHL playoffs has been a stark contrast to the regular season that was full of multigoal comebacks and furious finishes. The team that scores first won an astonishing 26 of the first 32 postseason games. Only three teams have erased a deficit of more than a goal and won, only one of which was in the first four games of a series. And 17 games have been decided by two or more goals (excluding empty-netters).

And there have been plenty of those, too.

"In the first period, you can turn it off, which is somewhat unfortunate and somewhat unexpected," back-to-back Stanley Cup-winning Tampa Bay coach Jon Cooper said. "This is an aberration for me because, to me, in a sport that has the greatest two months of playoff action that any sport can deliver, this has probably been one of the more underwhelming playoffs we've seen."

Underwhelming perhaps game to game, with just three going to overtime through Monday and just two others decided by one goal at the final horn of the third period. But six of eight series were tied at 2 through four games — matching the most in league history in a single round.

An increase in penalty calls and power-play goals combined with the quality of teams involved has contributed to an uneven start to the playoffs following a regular season that featured 42% of games resulting in a comeback win of some sort. Every team but the Philadelphia Flyers rallied from two-goal deficits, while teams overcame three-goal margins 19 times.

"Good teams know how to close out games," Boston coach Bruce Cassidy said Tuesday. "In the regular season, you're just not as dialed in and you have some teams that just don't do it that often. This time of the year, guys know what needs to be done: You've got to manage the puck at the blue line, you have to be willing to get in the shooting lane, you might have to take a punch in the head. I think it's just what you do in the playoffs."

With the notable exception of the rough-and-tumble Dallas-Calgary series that more closely resembles old-school playoff hockey, goals are not hard to come by. Scoring is even up compared with the regular sea-

"Good teams know how to close out games."

Bruce Cassidy
Boston Bruins coach

son: 6.5 goals per game compared with 6.2, which was the highest since the salary cap era began in 2005.

How goals are being scored is drastically different, however.

Almost a quarter of all goals have come on the power play, up from 19% in the regular season. The league reported 78% of goals during the season came at even-strength — tied for the second-highest since the expansion era began in 1967 — compared with just 62% in the playoffs.

Asked why so many games have been lopsided, Pittsburgh defenseman Kris Letang said: "We see a lot more power plays in the postseason than we used to in previous ones. Maybe that's one of the factors."

The 8.22 power plays per game is a significant increase from the average of 6.39 over the past five playoffs and the 5.78 during the regular season. That's a direct result of more minor penalties being called: More than 10 per game, up from under 6.5 during the season.

That has made a strong power play and penalty kill even more important than it typically is this time of year.

Take Colorado, for example. The Avalanche scored a playoff-leading seven power-play goals on 16 chances on the way to sweeping the

Nashville Predators and becoming the first team to move on to the second round.

They are the exception so far. Even though the combined score of games has been 156-54, empty-net goals have inflated the margins and made a lot of close games look like they got out of hand.

"You can throw the scores out," Minnesota coach Dean Evason said midway through his team's series against rival St. Louis. "Every game has been close. There's been a separation once the end of the game is finished, but I can tell you from our end of the games that we've won, they've been tight right to the end."

The extra eyeballs on hockey back that up. Turner Sports said ratings are up nearly 50% from last year and 2019 and ESPN reported a 27% increase in viewership from the first round in 2021.

"I've been mentally drained because it's been so emotional," said Turner Sports analyst Anson Carter, who played 698 NHL games from 1996-2007. "The emotional roller coaster has been unbelievable."

The roller coaster has not included a lot of comebacks, though. Known for being the "Comeback Cats" during the season, the Presidents' Trophy-winning Florida Panthers have done it twice, including in Wednesday's Game 5, when they rallied from a 3-0 hole.

Falling behind just isn't a recipe for success in the first round, which could be explained by all eight teams in the Eastern Conference putting up 100-point seasons and most of the West being even.

"The elite teams are playing now," Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "Tougher to come back."



Maple Leafs center Auston Matthews, right, celebrates his goal against the Lightning with Mitchell Marner during the third period of Game 5, the only game in the series decided by fewer than two goals.



LARRY MACDOUGAL / AP

Flames left wing Andrew Mangiapane, left, and Jacob Markstrom celebrate after beating the Stars in Game 5 on Wednesday.

Flames use 3-goal third to top Stars

Associated Press

CALGARY, Alberta — Mikael Backlund, Andrew Mangiapane and Trevor Lewis all scored in the third period, leading the Calgary Flames to a 3-1 victory over the Dallas Stars on Wednesday night to take a 3-2 lead in their first-round playoff series.

Jacob Markstrom made 20 saves for the Flames, who can win the series Friday in Dallas. If necessary, Game 7 would be back in Calgary on Sunday.

"It feels a lot better than if we were down, but we know it's going to be a really hard game," Backlund said. "Of course, we feel confident and excited going there. It's a big game."

Jason Robertson scored the lone goal for Dallas, and Jake Oettinger stopped 29 shots.

Robertson, who had a team-leading 41 goals in the regular season, scored his first of the playoffs at 13:21 of the second period to put the Stars ahead 1-0. He drove in from the boards and wristed a shot that deflected off Markstrom's glove and then off defenseman Noah Hanifin into Calgary's net.

But the line of Backlund, Mangiapane and Blake Coleman struck in the third.

"We knew they were going to come hard," Robertson said. "We tried to minimize their speed to the neutral zone and we didn't and it cost us."

Mangiapane circled out from behind the goal line and centered the puck for Backlund's redirect by Oettinger to make it 1-1 at 6:49 of the third.

"I haven't scored much down the stretch here," Backlund said. "It felt really good to put the puck in the net and such a big goal as well."

The Flames took the lead when Backlund was in the neutral zone and fed a backhand pass to Mangiapane at the Stars' blue line. Mangiapane took three strides in and beat Oettinger's glove with a high shot at 13:20.

"It was loud," Mangiapane said of the Saddledome crowd. "It was

great even when Backs scored. You could hear the building erupt. I think the fans were waiting for a goal. Our whole team just fed off that energy from the fans."

Lewis sealed it with an empty-netter with 58 seconds left.

Neither team scored on their two power-play chances and are 2-for-19 in the series.

"We're going to look at some stuff from this game and get ready for the next game and it's not over yet," Dallas' Roope Hintz said.

Scoreboard

First round

(Best-of-seven; x-if necessary)
EASTERN CONFERENCE

Carolina 3, Boston 2

Carolina 5, Boston 1
Carolina 5, Boston 2
Boston 4, Carolina 2
Boston 5, Carolina 2
Carolina 5, Boston 1

Thursday: at Boston
x-Saturday: at Carolina
Pittsburgh 3, N.Y. Rangers 2

Pittsburgh 4, N.Y. Rangers 3, 3OT
N.Y. Rangers 5, Pittsburgh 2
Pittsburgh 7, N.Y. Rangers 4
Pittsburgh 7, N.Y. Rangers 2

Wednesday: N.Y. Rangers 5, Pittsburgh 3
Friday: at Pittsburgh
x-Sunday: at N.Y. Rangers
Toronto 3, Tampa Bay 2

Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 0
Tampa Bay 5, Toronto 3
Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 2
Tampa Bay 7, Toronto 3
Toronto 4, Tampa Bay 3

Thursday: at Tampa Bay
x-Saturday: at Toronto
Florida 3, Washington 2

Washington 4, Florida 2
Florida 5, Washington 1
Washington 6, Florida 1
Florida 3, Washington 2, OT

Wednesday: Florida 5, Washington 3
Friday: at Washington
x-Sunday: at Florida
WESTERN CONFERENCE

Calgary 3, Dallas 2

Calgary 1, Dallas 0
Dallas 2, Calgary 0
Dallas 4, Calgary 2
Calgary 4, Dallas 1

Wednesday: Calgary 3, Dallas 2
Friday: at Dallas
x-Sunday: at Calgary
Los Angeles 3, Edmonton 2

Los Angeles 4, Edmonton 3
Edmonton 6, Los Angeles 0
Edmonton 8, Los Angeles 2
Los Angeles 4, Edmonton 0
Los Angeles 5, Edmonton 4, OT

Thursday: at Los Angeles
x-Saturday: at Edmonton
Colorado 4, Nashville 0

Colorado 7, Nashville 2
Colorado 2, Nashville 1, OT
Colorado 7, Nashville 3
Colorado 5, Nashville 3

St. Louis 3, Minnesota 2

St. Louis 4, Minnesota 0
Minnesota 6, St. Louis 2
Minnesota 5, St. Louis 1
St. Louis 5, Minnesota 2
St. Louis 5, Minnesota 2

Thursday: at St. Louis
x-Saturday: at Minnesota

NHL PLAYOFFS

Comeback Cats do it again, top Caps

BY TIM REYNOLDS

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Carter Verhaeghe was brought to the Florida Panthers for big postseason moments.

Like this one.

Verhaeghe set a Panthers franchise playoff record with a five-point night — two goals, three assists — and the Comeback Cats pulled off another rally, this one obviously the most important of their season. Florida erased a 3-0 deficit to beat the Washington Capitals 5-3 on Wednesday night, taking a 3-2 lead in the teams' Eastern Conference first-round series.

"Things are going pretty well right now for me," said Verhaeghe, who helped Tampa Bay win a Stanley Cup in 2020. "And the team. We're up 3-2, we have two chances to win one game, things are looking pretty good."

Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 30 shots for Florida. Patric Hornqvist, Claude Giroux and Sam Reinhart also scored for the Panthers, and Aleksander Barkov had two assists.

T.J. Oshie scored twice for Washington, which also got a goal from Justin Schultz and two assists from Evgeny Kuznetsov. Ilya Samsonov stopped 33 shots.

"Giving up a three-goal lead, I don't know how many times we've done that this year," Oshie said.

The answer would be twice.

Both times at Florida.

Verhaeghe broke the Panthers' playoff scoring record that Ray Sheppard set on a four-point night

back on April 22, 1996 — which remains the last, and only, season in which the Panthers won a playoff series.

They can change that Friday, when Game 6 is played in Washington. Game 7, if necessary, would be back at Florida on Sunday.

"We didn't start the way we wanted to ... then we started to play the right way," Barkov said.

Verhaeghe gave the Panthers the lead to stay at 3:04 of the third, after a pair of marvelous plays at both ends. He created a turnover deep in the zone, sent the puck to Barkov and then went into a full sprint for about 100 feet of ice to find a spot to receive the return pass.

Barkov put it on his stick, Verhaeghe put it into the net, and Florida led 4-3. Bobrovsky slammed the door from there, Giroux scored the insurance goal at 15:55, and the Comeback Cats had done it again.

"Felt like we gave that game away," Washington's Nicklas Backstrom said.

This was the season of the comeback for Florida, which had an NHL-best 29 come-from-behind wins during the regular season. The Panthers pulled off five wins after trailing by three goals, and rallied in the final moments of Game 4 to force overtime in Washington before winning early in the extra session and tying the series.

Florida's rally matched the largest in an NHL playoff game since April 19, 2011, when the San Jose Sharks erased a four-goal deficit to beat the Los Angeles Kings 6-5.



LYNNE SLADKY/AP

Panthers center Carter Verhaeghe scores against the Capitals' Ilya Samsonov during the third period of Game 5 of their first-round series on Wednesday. Verhaeghe set a Florida playoff record with a five points.

There had been three two-goal deficits in these playoffs entering Wednesday, but nobody had successfully dug out of a three-goal hole.

Until now.

Oshie opened the scoring at 7:09 of the first, doing what he probably does best — redirection. He set up in the slot, obstructing Bobrovsky as best he could, then changed the flight of a shot by John Carlson just enough to get it into the net for a 1-0 Washington lead.

It stayed that way until the sec-

ond, when two goals in a span of 1:25 looked to give Washington full control. Schultz found a crease within a maze of bodies in front of the net and blasted the puck through to make it 2-0, and Oshie finished off a pass from Kuznetsov on a 2-on-1 break to make it 3-0.

And that's when the Panthers did what they do best — rally.

"There's two games that were played," Washington coach Peter Laviolette said. "There was a game to push it to 3-0 where I liked everything we did. ... And then

there's a game that took place after that."

In a span of 7:51, Florida went from down three and in huge trouble to tied going into the third. Verhaeghe watched the puck come off the end boards and batted it in to get Florida on the scoreboard. Hornqvist went over Samsonov's glove on a breakaway, and the equalizer came from Reinhart. He picked up a loose puck at the edge of the crease and tapped it into the back of the net to make it 3-3 going into the third.

Chytil's goal helps Rangers stave off elimination

Penguins' Crosby leaves midway through second period of loss

BY VIN A. CHERWOOD

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Unhappy with the way they played in two bad losses on the road that pushed them to the brink of elimination, the New York Rangers bounced back with a needed win to keep their season going.

Filip Chytil scored the tiebreaking goal early in the third period and the New York Rangers beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 5-3 Wednesday night in Game 5 of their first-round playoff series.

Jacob Trouba and Alexis Lafrenière each had a goal and an assist, and Adam Fox and Ryan Lindgren also scored for the Rangers. Igor Shesterkin, torched for 10 goals over three periods in the previous two games, had 27 saves.

"We were not happy with what happened in Pittsburgh," Chytil said. "We just didn't play the whole season (the) way that we played, just (to) lose games like this in Pittsburgh. So we just had a good meeting, good practice yesterday and we just believed to-



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

The Rangers' Alexis Lafreniere, center, celebrates with Filip Chytil, left, and Jacob Trouba after scoring a goal during the second period of Game 5 on Wednesday.

day that we're gonna win and we're gonna go back to Pittsburgh."

Jake Guentzel had two goals and Kris Letang also scored for Pittsburgh, which leads the best-of-seven series 3-2. Evgeni Malkin had two assists and Louis Domingue finished with 29 saves.

Penguins star Sidney Crosby left with about seven minutes remaining in the sec-

ond period after taking a hard high hit from Trouba in the offensive zone minutes earlier. He did not return.

Pittsburgh coach Mike Sullivan said Crosby had an upper body injury and his status was being evaluated.

Game 6 is Friday in Pittsburgh, and a potential deciding Game 7 would be Sunday back at Madison Square Garden.

"We played a good 60 minutes," Lafrenière said. "We defended well and played a good all-around game. We did a good job of staying calm. We have to keep it going and win Game 6. We played a really good one when we needed it most."

The Rangers got their first power play of the night early in the third period and took advantage as Chytil got a pass from Lafrenière in the right circle, turned around and whipped a shot past Domingue to put the Rangers ahead 4-3 at 2:53.

Lindgren sealed the win with an empty-netter with 16 seconds left.

Letang extended the Penguins' lead to 2-0 at 7:58 of the second as he got a cross-ice pass from Malkin and fired a slap shot past Shesterkin on Pittsburgh's first shot on goal of the period.

The Rangers then took the lead as they

scored on three consecutive shots in a 2:42 span late in the second.

Fox got the Rangers on the scoreboard with 4:49 left as he got the puck inside the blue line, slowly skated up and fired a shot from the top of the right circle past Domingue's shoulder.

"Once we got that first goal, it was a big boost for our club," Rangers coach Gerard Gallant said. "I felt real confident about today. You've got to take it one game at a time. We were down three games to one. Today I felt real good about our team."

Lafrenière tied it 90 seconds later as he quickly fired a slap shot in front off a centering pass from Kaapo Kakko.

Trouba put the Rangers ahead another 1:12 later as he skated across the right circle and put a backhand from the middle through Domingue's skates.

"They pushed, we had a couple of extended D-zone shifts, and we didn't get it done defensively," Sullivan said. "We got an experienced group. We just got to keep playing the game. ... We didn't win the wall battles, we didn't get pucks out, and as a result we had four, five minutes of extended defensive zone play. We simply have to do a better job there."

AUTO RACING/NBA



MATT KELLEY/AP

Joey Logano peels off of pit road after his pit crew completes a pit stop during a NASCAR Cup Series race last weekend at Darlington Raceway in Darlington, S.C. Logano won the race to earn a spot in the playoff.

NASCAR Cup playoff grid has 10 berths locked up

By PETE IACOBELLI
Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — The NASCAR Cup Series playoff grid is filling up fast and the dwindling number of spots may lead to more of the aggressive driving that grabbed headlines over the weekend at Darlington Raceway.

Joey Logano sent leader William Byron into the wall on the next-to-last lap and went on to become the 10th different winner in the first 12 races of the season, locking up one of the 16 playoff spots with the victory.

"I did what I had to do," Logano said. "I had to win the race. It was very important to win and get into the playoffs."

Maybe more this season than ever before.

It is the second straight season 10 drivers have posted victories by the season's 12th race. But it is only the third time it's happened since NASCAR expanded the playoffs from 12 cars to 16 before the 2014 season.

NASCAR saves a spot for the regular season's points champion if he doesn't have a win.

"Yeah, it's something you think about," said Erik Jones, who is 16th in points after getting knocked out of Darlington in a 12-car wreck with 25 laps left.

"We're going to keep doing a good job with the points," Jones said. "But you see different guys winning and you want to be one of them to get in."

Scoreboard

NASCAR Cup Series winners Through May 9

1. William Byron	2
1. Ross Chastain	2
3. Alex Bowman	1
3. Chase Briscoe	1
3. Kyle Busch	1
3. Austin Cindric	1
3. Chase Elliott	1
3. Denny Hamlin	1
3. Kyle Larson	1
3. Joey Logano	1

A year ago, there were 14 drivers with wins who made the playoffs, tied for the most ever since the field expanded. The wild card this year is the Next Gen car, which has led to stronger, more competitive races and left even the most powerful programs scrambling to find an edge.

Logano's Team Penske crew chief, Paul Wolfe, said his Ford has had difficulty matching the speed of the Chevrolets and Toyotas, which had combined for nine of 12 wins this season until Darlington.

"It was good for us to show we had speed in qualifying and back it up in the race," Wolfe said. "So, yeah, it's going to be tough to win races because a lot of guys have speed right now."

Wolfe, however, doesn't see traditionally dominant programs like Hendrick Motorsports, Joe Gibbs Racing or Stewart-Haas Racing hitting on something and

watching racers like Kyle Larson, Kevin Harvick or Logano run off several victories the rest of the way.

Larson won 10 races in 2021 for Hendrick on the way to the championship. Kevin Harvick had eight wins for Stewart-Haas in 2020 in making the final eight.

This season, only Ross Chastain and Byron have multiple wins. Chastain took the checkered flag at the Circuit of the Americas and Talladega. Byron won at Atlanta and Martinsville.

"I expect (winning) to get tougher as we go and everyone figures the car out," Wolfe said.

Typical playoff participants and past Cup Series champions like Martin Truex Jr., Brad Keselowski and Harvick remain outside looking in with the regular season's halfway point ahead next week in Kansas.

That likely means harder racing and aggressive moves at the end like Logano's ram-and-run at Darlington. Logano said Byron got the lead on a final restart by knocking him into the wall. So when Logano closed in at the end, there was no doubt what the 2018 NASCAR champion would do.

Byron left and angry and bewildered. He dismissed Logano's contention of retribution, calling him a "moron" and an "idiot."

"I've been called a lot worse," Logano said, grinning from ear to ear after locking up a playoff spot for the 10th time in 11 seasons.

World's: NBA enjoys ripple effect overseas

FROM PAGE 48

Philadelphia coach Doc Rivers said. "Everybody else is good. It's a world game. It's no longer just 'us,' whatever us means. It's a world game and that's a good thing."

The ripple effect of international players extends well beyond the U.S.

For the basketball-mad countries of Serbia and Greece, the success of Jokic and Antetokounmpo means bragging rights. Antetokounmpo won back-to-back MVP awards (2018-19, 19-20), and now the pride of Sombor, Serbia, has matched him.

"We are a country of basketball. This is more proof that we are the best," said Marko Cosic, who trained a teenage Jokic as strength and conditioning coach at Belgrade club Mega. "It is not easy for a country like Serbia with 7 million people to compete with the rest of the world."

Cosic, now a professor at the University of Belgrade, said Jokic's style of play "is really poetry... he's an artist."

Across NBA Europe's social media channels, content featuring Antetokounmpo performs 100% better than the average post, according to the NBA. Jokic content does 10% better than average.

Subscriber growth for NBA League Pass shows a 17% increase in Serbia, 14% in Slovenia and 9% in Greece this season over last season. It was up 40% in Africa as a whole, though the NBA does not release its total number of subscribers.

The league has scheduled the Bucks and Atlanta Hawks to play two preseason matchups at Abu Dhabi in October, marking the NBA's first games in the United Arab Emirates and the Arabian Gulf.

It's impossible to overestimate the impact Antetokounmpo has

had on Greece, both as a player and a person. He was born to immigrant Nigerian parents and acquired a Greek passport shortly before being drafted in 2013.

"Giannis is a hero. He's a good image of Greece. He's an ambassador of Greece worldwide," said Vassilis Skountis, a broadcaster for NBA games on Cosmote TV.

In Greek sports media, there's soccer, basketball and Giannis.

Yes, Antetokounmpo basically is his own category of news. There's live coverage of games, no matter the hour in Greece, and analysis of his performances.

Parents love him, kids want to be like him.

"He's Greek, he's very spectacular, he's very strong, he dunks, he wins championships, he's playing with the national team," Skountis said. "The kids here in Greece, everybody wants to be like Giannis."

In Cameroon and around Africa, where soccer dominates, Embiid is a budding role model, as is Antetokounmpo.

"These kids coming from abroad ... they end up working twice as hard," said Joe Toumou, associate technical director at NBA Academy Africa. "When it's time to compete, you see the result of that hard work. That's why you see those three foreign guys at the top."

The NBA is helping develop the sport in Africa, opening an academy and partnering with FIBA to run a Champions League-style competition for club teams.

Rivers has seen it, and raves about it.

"I went over to Africa a couple years ago, to Dakar, and it's amazing. It really is," Rivers said. "The academy that the NBA runs in Africa is like no other."

AP basketball writer Tim Reynolds in Miami contributed to this report.



ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP

The NBA playoffs are loaded with international talent, including Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic, left, the 2019 rookie of the year and EuroLeague champion from Slovenia.

NBA PLAYOFFS



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

Milwaukee Bucks guard Jrue Holiday blocks a shot by Boston Celtics guard Marcus Smart in the final seconds of Game 5 of an Eastern Conference semifinal Wednesday night in Boston. The Bucks came back from a 14-point deficit in the fourth quarter to win 110-107.

Holiday, Bucks stop Celtics

Guard shuts down Boston's final two plays as Milwaukee takes 3-2 series lead

By JIMMY GOLEN
Associated Press

BOSTON — Giannis Antetokounmpo was having his best shooting night of the playoffs. Milwaukee dominated on the boards. And still the Bucks trailed Boston by 14 points in a game that could send the defending NBA champions to the brink of elimination.

Then Jrue Holiday showed the Defensive Player of the Year a thing or two about defense.

Bobby Portis put back Antetokounmpo's missed free throw with 15 seconds left, and Holiday snuffed Marcus Smart on Boston's final two possessions Wednesday night as Milwaukee erased a 14-point, fourth-quarter deficit to beat the Celtics 110-107 and take a 3-2 series lead.

"Obviously, in Boston you're down 14 in the fourth quarter, people would say everything's against us. But we come together," said Holiday, who also hit the tying three-pointer with 43 seconds left. "We live and die like that."

Antetokounmpo had 40 points and 11 rebounds, making 16 of 27 shots — including a long three-pointer to make it 105-102 with 1:40 to play. Holiday finished with 24 points, eight rebounds and eight

Scoreboard

Conference semifinals

(Best-of-seven)
x-if necessary

Eastern Conference

Milwaukee 3, Boston 2

Milwaukee 101, Boston 89
Boston 109, Milwaukee 86
Milwaukee 103, Boston 101
Boston 116, Milwaukee 108
Wednesday: Milwaukee 110, Boston 107
Friday, May 13: at Milwaukee, AFN-Sports, 1:40 a.m. Saturday CET; 8:40 a.m. Saturday JKT

x-Sunday, May 15: at Boston
Miami 3, Philadelphia 2

Miami 106, Philadelphia 92
Miami 119, Philadelphia 103
Philadelphia 99, Miami 79
Philadelphia 116, Miami 108

Tuesday: Miami 120, Philadelphia 85
Thursday: at Philadelphia, AFN-Sports, 1:10 a.m. Friday CET; 8:10 a.m. Friday JKT

x-Sunday, May 15: at Miami
Western Conference
Phoenix 3, Dallas 2

Phoenix 121, Dallas 114
Phoenix 129, Dallas 109
Dallas 103, Phoenix 94
Dallas 111, Phoenix 101
Phoenix 110, Dallas 80

Thursday: at Dallas, AFN-Sports, 3:30 a.m. Friday CET; 10:30 a.m. Friday JKT

x-Sunday, May 15: at Phoenix
Golden State 3, Memphis 2

Golden State 117, Memphis 116
Memphis 106, Golden State 101
Golden State 142, Memphis 112
Golden State 101, Memphis 98

Wednesday: Memphis 134, Golden State 95

x-Friday, May 13: at Golden State. AFN-Sports, 4 a.m. Saturday CET; 11 a.m. Saturday JKT

x-Sunday, May 15: at Memphis

assists and Portis added 14 points and 15 rebounds. The Bucks can advance to the Eastern Conference

finals with a victory in Game 6 at home Friday night.

Jayson Tatum scored 34 points and Jaylen Brown had 26 for the Celtics, who need a victory in Milwaukee to force a decisive seventh game back in Boston on Sunday.

The Celtics led 93-79 early in the fourth before the Bucks closed the gap, tying it at 105 with 43 seconds left on back-to-back threes from Antetokounmpo and Holiday. Tatum hit two free throws to give Boston back the lead.

Antetokounmpo went to the line with a chance to tie it and made the first, then Portis grabbed the rebound of the second and put it in off the backboard to give Milwaukee its first lead since early in the second quarter.

Smart drove to the basket but Holiday blocked him and came away with the ball, throwing it off the Celtics guard while falling out of bounds.

"Just a great instinctive play by Jrue," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "He's a winner. Jrue Holiday's a winner. You ask any player in this league or any coach in this league. He's a winner."

Pat Connaughton made two free throws with six seconds left, then Holiday stole the ball from Smart

on his desperation dash for a potential game-tying three-pointer. The Celtics committed eight of their 10 turnovers in the second half and gave up a 49-36 rebounding edge in all.

"If we box out we win that game," Smart said. "They're the defending champs. They made some championship plays. And now we've got to bounce back."

Milwaukee had 17 offensive rebounds to Boston's five, with Portis grabbing seven.

"Growing up as a kid, I really wasn't very skilled or really had one thing I really did well. I was always like a jack of all trades, did everything good but nothing great," Portis said. "My mom always told me as a kid just to be a garbage man. Being a garbage man is if you want scoring opportunities and you're not getting the ball passed to you, you go get the ball on the offensive glass. That's one thing my mom always taught me. Shoutout to my mom on that."

Jaylen Brown scored 16 points in the third — 12 in the last four minutes of the quarter, when Boston turned a 71-68 edge into a 12-point lead. It was 93-79 with 10:19 to play — Boston's biggest blown lead in the playoffs in more than 25 years.

Grizzlies stay alive with rout

By TERESA M. WALKER
Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — The Memphis Grizzlies fought off elimination with the highest-scoring performance in their franchise's post-season history.

And with All-Star guard Ja Morant cheering from the bench. Then Morant upped the ante by chanting "Grizz in seven!"

Jaren Jackson Jr., Desmond Bane and Tyus Jones each scored 21 points and the Grizzlies routed the Golden State Warriors 134-95 on Wednesday night to force a sixth game in their Western Conference semifinal.

"We've exceeded expectations ever since I've been here," Bane said. "It almost seems whenever someone thinks we can't do something, we end up doing it. So I never want to put a limit on this team on what we can do because anything's possible."

Dillon Brooks added 12 points for Memphis. Ziaire Williams and Brandon Clarke had 11 apiece and De'Anthony Melton 10. Steven Adams had 13 rebounds, six offensive as Memphis outscored Golden State 24-5 on second-chance points.

The Grizzlies never trailed, turning in their best performance of this series to pull within 3-2 even with Morant out a second straight game because of a bone bruise in his right knee. They improved to 4-11 when facing elimination.

Memphis scored 77 points in the first half, the most in franchise postseason history.

Game 6 is Friday night in San Francisco, where the Warriors have won five consecutive playoff games.

Klay Thompson led Golden State with 19 points, Jonathan Kuminga added 17 and Curry had 14.

The Warriors lost for the first time with assistant Mike Brown filling in for coach Steve Kerr, who missed his second straight game since testing positive for COVID before Game 4.



KAREN PULFER FOCHT/AP

Memphis' Dillon Brooks, right, and the Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry battle for the ball Wednesday night in Memphis, Tenn. The Grizzlies won 134-95.

SPORTS



Florida rallies to win Game 5

Verhaeghe's five-point night helps lead Panthers past Caps » **NHL playoffs, Page 45**

NBA

It's the world's game now

For the first time, international players go 1-2-3 in MVP voting

By **KEN MAGUIRE**
Associated Press

LONDON — Maybe it's the ce-vapi, or the souvlaki, or the mban-ga soup.

Whatever it is, there's no denying the tinge of international flavor when it comes to the NBA elite with Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic winning the league's MVP award Wednesday for a second straight season.



Antetokounmpo

Jokic made it four straight MVPs for foreign-born players. This marks the first time international players have won the award in four consecutive seasons. Canada's Steve Nash went back-to-back for Phoenix in 2005 and 2006, followed by Germany's Dirk Nowitzki for Dallas in 2007.

The Serbian big man beat out two-time MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo of Greece and the reigning champion Milwaukee Bucks and Philadelphia center Joel Embiid of Cameroon to mark another first — never before have the top three in MVP voting all been internationals.

Jokic got 65 first-place votes and 875 points from the panel of writers and broadcasters. Embiid was second with 26 first-place votes and 706 points; Antetokounmpo was third, with nine

DID YOU KNOW?

This marks the first time international players have won the MVP award in four consecutive seasons. Canada's Steve Nash went back-to-back for Phoenix in 2005 and 2006, followed by Germany's Dirk Nowitzki for Dallas in 2007.

SOURCE: Associated Press

first-place votes and 595 points.

The 27-year-old Jokic averaged 27.1 points, 13.8 rebounds and 7.9 assists on a team that was missing two max players in Jamal Murray (ACL) and Michael Porter Jr. (back) and won 48 games. The do-it-all center nicknamed "Joker" created a new category, too, in becoming the first NBA player to eclipse 2,000 points, 1,000 rebounds and 500 assists in a season.

"It was a real emotional moment for me," Jokic said. "Amazing."

The NBA playoffs are loaded with international talent, including Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic, the 2019 rookie of the year and EuroLeague champion from Slovenia.

The influx of international talent was former Commissioner David Stern's vision. He saw the NBA as a global entity and insisted the league be a driving force in growing the game internationally.

"It's David Stern's dream," Phi-

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MARK J. TERRILL, ABOVE, AND DAVID DERMER, LEFT/AP

Above: Serbian center Nikola Jokic, right, won his second straight MVP award Wednesday after averaging 27.1 points, 13.8 rebounds and 7.9 assists this season for the Denver Nuggets. Left: Cameroonian center Joel Embiid, right, finished second in the MVP voting and has helped lead the Philadelphia 76ers to the Eastern Conference semifinals.



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