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STARS AND STRIPES®

stripes.com

Volume 81 Edition 110 ©SS 2022

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2022

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

\$1.00

WAR IN UKRAINE

Zelenskyy courts allies to maintain momentum

By HANNA ARHIROVA
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — President Volodymyr Zelenskyy worked Thursday to add political momentum to Ukraine's recent military gains against Russia, while missile strikes that caused flooding near his hometown demonstrated Moscow's determination to reclaim the battlefield advantage.

A week after a Ukrainian counteroffensive caused Russian troops to retreat from a northeast region, Zelenskyy met with European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen during her third visit to Kyiv since Russia's Feb. 24 invasion. Von der Leyen publicly conveyed the wholehearted support of the 27-nation bloc and wore an outfit in Ukraine's national colors.

"It's absolutely vital and necessary to support Ukraine with the military equipment they need to defend themselves. And they have proven that they are able to do

SEE UKRAINE ON PAGE 8



LEO CORREA/AP

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy poses for a selfie with a police officer after attending a national flag-raising ceremony in the freed Izium, Ukraine, on Wednesday.



COREY DICKSTEIN/Stars and Stripes

Sections of Fort Benning's Olson Hall, known as the Cuartels barracks, are under renovation, as shown Tuesday. The historic barracks date to the 1920s. The Army expects to spend about \$125 million renovating 361,000 square feet of quarters during the next decade.

'We've got work to do'

Army secretary pledges more money for barracks, fears problems beyond Fort Bragg

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

FORT BENNING, Ga. — Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said she promises big boosts in barracks spending in the coming years, saying she fears soldiers across the service are living in substandard quarters.

The Army's top civilian on Tuesday made her first trip to Fort Benning, Ga., and said she did not yet know how large a funding increase would be needed to the service's roughly \$1 bil-



Wormuth

— known as Smoke Bomb Hill — where troops were living with relentless mold and an outdat-

ed, often nonworking heating and air conditioning system.

lion annual budget for barracks upkeep and renovations. What is clear, Wormuth noted, is more must be done considering the situation at Fort Bragg, N.C., where post leaders last month ordered hundreds of soldiers to relocate from barracks buildings

ed, often nonworking heating and air conditioning system.

"Our goal is to try to get to a point where we don't have any more Smoke Bomb Hill barracks — where we don't have a situation where there are barracks that we didn't realize were as bad as they were," Wormuth said after touring near-century-old barracks now undergoing renovations at Fort Benning. "I think with

SEE BARRACKS ON PAGE 6

BUSINESS/WEATHER

States approved for car-charging network plan

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — The Biden administration said Wednesday it has approved ambitious plans by 34 states and Puerto Rico to create a national electric vehicle charging network as the U.S. begins in earnest its transition away from gas-powered transportation.

The plans' approval means \$900 million can begin to flow to the states, which are tasked with using money from President Joe Biden's huge infrastructure law to form the network of chargers.

Federal officials said they will continue to review the plans not approved in this round.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Sept. 16)	\$0.98
Dollar buys (Sept. 16)	0.9745
British pound (Sept. 16)	\$1.12
Japanese yen (Sept. 16)	140.00
South Korean won (Sept. 16)	1359.00

South Korea (Won)	1397.62
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9573
Thailand (Baht)	36.86
Turkey (NewLira)	18.2625

(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
Britain (Pound)	1.1515
Canada (Dollar)	1.3174
China (Yuan)	6.9897
Denmark (Krone)	6.4355
Egypt (Pound)	19.4218
Euro	0.9999
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8486
Hungary (Forint)	408.08
Israel (Shekel)	3.4318
Japan (Yen)	143.28
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3089
Norway (Krone)	10.1148
Philippines (Peso)	57.32
Poland (Zloty)	4.72
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7586
Singapore (Dollar)	1.4072

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.50
Interest Rates Discount rate	3.00
Federal funds market rate	2.32
3-month bill	3.21
30-year bond	3.46

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	Japan	Guam	Singapore
Japan	..	\$4.619	..	\$5.099	\$3.769	..	\$4.629	\$5.109
Change in price	..	-3.0 cents	..	-5.0 cents	-6.0 cents	..	-3.0 cents	-5.0 cents
Okinawa	\$3.759	\$5.099	\$3.769	\$4.289	\$4.629	..
Change in price	-5.0 cents	-5.0 cents	-5.0 cents	-5.0 cents	-3.0 cents	..

For the week of Sept. 16-22

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



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL SLAVIN/Stars and Stripes

Military leaders from various countries participating in the U.S. Army-led African Land Forces Colloquium walk through the field Wednesday, at the Vilseck training area, where they watched soldiers from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment test for the Expert Infantryman Badge.

US Army gives African militaries look at their training in Germany

By MICHAEL SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

VILSECK, Germany — High-ranking military leaders from Africa joined over 350 U.S. soldiers on Vilseck's training grounds this week, as the Army fulfilled its part in a broader strategy that calls for deepening ties on the continent.

Service members from six African nations, six European allies and Brazil were on hand Wednesday and will stay through Friday for the African Land Forces Colloquium, a newer gathering that coincides with the long-running annual African Land Forces Summit.

A goal was to give a smaller group of African countries a closer look at U.S. training, and particularly how it delegates responsibility to its enlisted force.

"A key hallmark of Western militaries is the use of the non-commissioned officer," said Lt. Col. Michael Weisman, a spokesman for the Southern European Task Force, Africa. "What we saw here today was training completely run by noncommissioned officers."

Among the sea of uncommon camouflage patterns on this Bavarian range were those of Chad, Egypt, Gambia, Niger, Tanzania and Uganda. Also in attendance were allied officers from France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

On Wednesday, the group watched 2nd Cavalry Regiment soldiers trudge through the mud, carry simulated casualties around obstacles and throw practice grenades as they worked to earn the Expert Infantryman Badge.

The eyes and ears of the mili-



A soldier with the 2nd Cavalry Regiment drags a simulated casualty as part of the Expert Infantryman Badge testing Wednesday at the Vilseck training area.

tary leaders and their interpreters were intently focused on the tasks, while the NCOs were kept busy all morning fielding questions about the training.

"I hope that everyone tells the challenges they are encountering in their countries," said Tanzanian Maj. Gen. Anthony Sibuti. "Those challenges can be discussed and hopefully a solution can be found."

Sibuti said his country faces terrorism threats and budget constraints, which is a common refrain among African nations faced with battles against al-Qaida affiliates and other networks.

The group later was scheduled to head to Hohenfels to see the 173rd Airborne Brigade and 13 other allied nations conclude Exercise Saber Junction. Attendees also will see the technology and weapons systems that U.S. contractors have to offer.

The African Land Forces Summit hosts 40 African nations and has been held annually for 12 years, but this is only the second running of the colloquium.

Army Maj. Gen. Todd Wasmund, the SETAF-AF commander, said the colloquium aims to host new countries every year and broaden the discussions.

This event comes amid a U.S. strategy unveiled in August that seeks to forge closer relations with sub-Saharan African nations, as Russia and China each seek to expand their inroads.

The varied aims of the new U.S. strategy include countering authoritarian regimes, encouraging government transparency and backing a civil society that empowers women, young people and other marginalized groups.

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Honea takes on role of Navy's new master chief

By JUAN KING
Stars and Stripes

James Honea became the new master chief petty officer of the Navy during a recent ceremony in Maryland presided over by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday.

Honea, installed Sept. 8 at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, takes over as the Navy's chief enlisted sailor and adviser to Gilday from Master Chief Petty Officer Russell Smith, who retired after his term ended under allegations of misconduct.

Honea "brings the exact kind of professional experience we need for this immense responsibility," Gilday said during the ceremony. "I've said it before: He's got saltwater running through his veins."

Now the 16th master chief petty officer of the Navy, Honea, with 35 years in the service, was formerly the senior enlisted leader for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. He completed the Command Master Chief Course and the Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education Keystone Course at National Defense University; he is married to Evelyn Honea, according to the Navy.

"When I was selected for MCPON, I thought heavily on what my tenure means and what I could bring to you all," Honea said, according to a Sept. 10 Navy news release. "I'm glad I chose to be challenged by this adventure and I'm proud of what it has brought me."

Honea began his naval career in 1987 as a boatswain's mate, serving at various sea assignments, including the USS Bonhomme Richard, an amphibious assault ship that was decommissioned and scrapped last year after a major on-board fire at Naval Base San Diego in July 2020.

He advanced through the ranks, and as a command master chief served on the USS Gridley, a destroyer homeported at Everett, Wash., and then the USS New Orleans, an amphibious dock ship homeported at Sasebo Naval Base, Japan. His resume also includes several shore-based commands as a command master chief.

His priorities as the Navy's top enlisted leader are laid out in a Navy document, MCPON 16 Priorities, issued Tuesday. They include "warfighting competency, professional and character development, and quality of life," the document states.

"We must ensure our principles, basic standards of technical com-

petency development, and expertise align to the Chief of Naval Operations' navigation plan," Honea said in the release.

Honea is stepping into a position overshadowed by allegations of misconduct against his two predecessors.

Master Chief Petty Officer Steven Giordano, who spent almost two years in the job prior to Smith, retired in 2018 after a Naval Inspector General's report found he created a "toxic leadership environment" and belittled his subordinates, according to a Stars and Stripes report on June 22, 2018.

Smith, who took over four years ago, also came under IG scrutiny for unspecified allegations against him, according to reports in February from the Navy Times and USNI News, which cited unidentified Defense Department officials.

The Navy found nothing in the allegations that would prevent Smith from retiring honorably, Navy spokeswoman Lt. Alyson Hands told Military.com Sept. 12.

In late April, Smith reportedly made insensitive remarks during an all-hands call on the aircraft carrier USS George Washington, during which he allegedly said that sailors should "lower their standards" to get through the ship's maintenance period.

Smith denied the accusations. "Frankly, as you probably are aware, there was quite a bit of social media furor over a non-statement that I didn't make," he told lawmakers during a House appropriations subcommittee hearing May 18.

The George Washington has been in dry dock since August 2017 in Newport News, Va. The IG launched separate investigations into a number of suicides among the crew and low morale attributed to subpar living conditions during the overhaul.

Sailors were offered the opportunity to move off the ship shortly after. The ship's maintenance is expected through March 2023.

During the ceremony Sept. 8 ceremony, Gilday acknowledged Smith's leadership and accomplished Navy career.

"Thank you for everything you have done over these past four years," he said. "Our Navy and our Navy family are much stronger than it was four years ago."



Honea

MILITARY

USFK coronavirus cases drop to 3-month low

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Cases of COVID-19 among U.S. military personnel in South Korea have dipped to a three-month low as overall cases in the country also declined.

U.S. Forces Korea reported 51 new infections over the seven-day period ending Tuesday, according to an update on its official website.

The command, which is responsible for the roughly 28,500 service members and civilian employees in South Korea, reported 120 new cases the previous week.

The most recent weekly tally is the second-lowest recorded since January, when USFK began reporting its positive cases over a seven-day period; the command counted 50 new infections June 14-20.

USFK reported a record high of 1,599 positive cases Jan. 4-10.

The new Moderna and Pfizer bivalent vaccine booster shots are expected to arrive in South Korea for military personnel by the end of this month, Dr. Timothy Batig, an Army lieutenant colonel attached to the 65th Medical Brigade out of Camp Humphreys, said on Sept. 8.

“Once we can get this and we can get people boosted with the bivalent, then we should see fewer cases of the omicron [variant],” he told Stars and Stripes.

USFK rescinded a host of social-distancing restrictions starting in June but still requires personnel to adhere to local regulations, such as mandatory mask wear on public transportation.

Since Sept. 3, proof of a negative PCR test for COVID-19 is no longer required prior to traveling to



STANLEY JAMES/U.S. ARMY

Community members attend a fair Wednesday at Camp Humphreys, South Korea. U.S. Forces Korea reported a drop in cases of COVID-19 among U.S. military personnel in South Korea.

South Korea, although the test is required upon arrival.

South Korea counted 71,471 new daily cases on Wednesday, down from 93,981 on Tuesday and 72,646 on Sept. 8, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency.

The nation's caseload has slowly declined after brief upswings from waves of the BA.5 omicron subvariant.

Health agencies, including the KDCA, warned last week of a potential surge of new cases as millions of South Koreans traveled in the country during a four-day holiday in observance of Chuseok, the autumn harvest holiday. South Korea reported a peak of 621,328 new daily cases in March. About 24.2 million people have been infected since the beginning of the

pandemic in 2020.

Despite the decreased caseload, health authorities are warning people not to get complacent due to a potential surge of influenza cases.

“The number of people with seasonal influenza, which has not been prevalent for the past two years since the COVID-19 pandemic, is steadily growing at present,” KDCA commissioner Peck Kyong Ran said during a news briefing Thursday.

Peck predicted that influenza cases are “highly likely to be prevalent this year” and that the medical community will be focusing on providing screening and treatment for both infectious diseases.

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S. Korea honors its vets who served abroad

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The South Korean Cabinet has approved a measure to designate a day honoring South Korean service members who served abroad, including those sent on United Nations peacekeeping missions.

If President Yoon Suk Yeoul signs the measure, as expected, May 29 will become Overseas Deployed Warrior Day in South Korea, a day to remember those who “deployed abroad and greatly contributed to permanent world peace and co-prosperity of mankind,” according to a Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs press release.

Overseas Deployed Warrior Day would fall on the same day as the International Day of U.N. Peacekeepers, which pays “tribute to the uniformed and civilian personnel’s invaluable contribution” to the international organization, according to the U.N.’s website.

Since 1948, roughly 4,200 U.N. peacekeepers have died while in service, and 135 died in 2021.

Over 500 Korean troops are deployed to Lebanon, South Sudan and the Gulf of Aden in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations and anti-piracy missions, according to the U.N.

By 1973, South Korea had sent more than 300,000 troops to Vietnam during the conflict there, second only to the number sent by the United States. South Korea’s contribution was “disproportionate to the country’s population, not to mention its prosperity,” according to the National Library of Medicine journal in 2017.

South Korean forces also played a role in the global war on terrorism.

In 2004, South Korea became the third-largest supplier of manpower to the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq when it deployed roughly 3,000 troops, nearly half of whom were marines and special forces personnel, according to a Heritage Foundation report that year.



NORTHERN TERRITORY SUPREME COURT

Australian nightclub bouncer Hayden Robert Bruce Summers, 34, was found guilty of “unlawfully causing serious harm” by a jury in the Northern Territory Supreme Court, on Sept. 2.

Bouncer convicted in 2021 attack on US Marine in Australia

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

A nightclub bouncer who knocked a U.S. Marine to the ground during a street confrontation last year in Darwin, Australia, has been convicted of causing serious harm, according to a local court official.

The Marine’s injuries led to a “significant amount of time” in a hospital and then in rehabilitation after having part of his skull removed, Australia’s state broadcaster, the ABC reported Sept. 2.

Hayden Robert Bruce Summers, 34, was found guilty of “unlawfully causing serious harm” on Sept. 2 by a jury in the Northern Territory Supreme Court, court spokesman Xavier La Canna told Stars and Stripes in an email Wednesday.

Closed-circuit TV footage of the altercation provided by the court shows Summers and the Marine, identified by ABC as Glen Thomason, outside Darwin’s Monsoons nightclub early on April 11, 2021.

Darwin is home to a Marine rotational force that spends six months each year on training missions during the southern hemisphere winter. This year’s rotation includes 2,200 Marines.

In the video, the Marine appears agitated as he talks to the security guard and swings an arm across the bouncer’s face. Moments later, Summers strikes Thomason in the head, causing him to fall to ground.

The bouncer then rolls the unconscious Marine into a recovery position on his side.

Summers had pleaded not guilty, according to the broadcaster.

However, Crown prosecutor Ian Rowbottom told the jury that the bouncer’s actions were unreasonable and that he failed to explore options such as moving



NORTHERN TERRITORY SUPREME COURT

Summers, right, is seen in closed-circuit TV footage standing over a U.S. Marine after a street confrontation last year.

back, asking for help or pushing the Marine away, ABC reported.

A summary of evidence presented to the court showed some witnesses heard Thomason saying, “I could kill you; I’m a Marine,” or words to that effect, the broadcaster reported.

Summers told the court he was trying to de-escalate the situation and had told Thomason to “calm down.” He told the court he feared the Marine was about to punch him because of his hand gestures and a “death stare,” ABC reported.

However, the jury found the bouncer guilty of causing serious harm. The case returns to court for sentencing Oct. 4, La Canna said in his email.

Defense barrister Peter Maley, in an email to Stars and Stripes on Wednesday, declined comment until after his client is sentenced.

Marine Capt. Joseph Dipietro, a spokesman for Marine Rotational Force — Darwin, did not provide information about the injured Marine.

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PACIFIC

Yokota Air Base dismisses contamination claim

By JOSEPH DITZLER

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Authorities at this airlift hub in western Tokyo dismissed as false a claim circulating on social media that the base's water supply may be tainted by chromium VI, or hexavalent chromium, a carcinogen.

The 374th Civil Engineer Squadron, responding Tuesday on a Facebook discussion about the chromium report, said the water at Yokota Air Base is safe to drink and no chromium was detected in the 2021 water quality survey.

"Chromium was considered non-detectable and did not make the list of contaminants. Our water is safe to drink," said the squadron's message. Separately, it said: "Chromium isn't listed. Because it's not detected."

The report of chromium contamination, first posted to the Air Force amn/nco/snco Facebook page on Aug. 24, is not true, a spokesman for the 374th Airlift Wing told Stars and Stripes by phone Sept. 7.

"There is a system in place to prevent the very concern that the

"Chromium was considered non-detectable and did not make the list of contaminants. Our water is safe to drink."

374th Civil Engineer Squadron individual has brought up," said 1st Lt. Danny Rangel. He said the aircraft maintenance division, the alleged source of contamination at Yokota, "did due diligence" and discounted the contamination claim.

On Wednesday, Rangel provided a statement from the wing, that read, in part: "Yokota Air Base continues to conduct operations with careful consideration for the safety of our members, our surrounding community, and our environment."

"With the intent of strengthening public understanding of our water systems," the statement continued, "the installation publishes an annual drinking water

quality report, which summarizes the quality of water delivered by Yokota Air Base."

The initial anonymous post on Air Force amn/nco/snco on Aug. 24 described how power sanding the exteriors of C-130J Super Hercules, the 374th's workhorse airlifters, over the past 10 years released hexavalent chromium into the air, after which it found its way into the soil and groundwater. Undated photographs and an undated, four-second video accompanying the post shows airmen in protective suits, on a lift, spraying a Super Hercules at Yokota while a cloud billows from the plane.

"Since 2012, there has been a memorandum in place that authorizes Yokota Air Base to perform sanding operations of Chromium (VI) compounds in an outdoors environment," the post said. "Mind that the base location has not only our service members located throughout, but also the foreign nationals have homes and families in the immediate surrounding area."

Hexavalent chromium causes cancer and targets the respiratory system, kidneys, liver, skin and

eyes, according to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration website. It's used as an anti-corrosive agent in paint and other surface coatings.

Stars and Stripes contacted the poster through the Air Force amn/nco/snco Facebook page, but that person did not respond to questions about the alleged chromium contamination.

A second post on amn/nco/snco page Aug. 26 stated: "They told us that the Chrome VI levels have quadrupled in the last 6 years in Yokota's water supply and if it reaches a certain point they will shut off all the water to the base. They told us they won't fix it until it's too late. Apparently [civil engineering] is going to the Japanese Government for a soil sample to be taken where we have been sanding."

The North Kanto Defense Bureau, an arm of the Japan Ministry of Defense, on Aug. 31, and the Japan Ministry of the Environment on Sept. 1 told Stars and Stripes they have no record of a request to take soil samples at Yokota.

"If there's high levels, the group will have to pay for all damages for

contamination," the Aug. 26 post continued. "Bio says Chrome VI doesn't leave the 50ft cordon but how is it that the levels are so high now? Everyone has been turning a blind eye to this and nothing will be changed until the levels get too high."

That post stimulated discussion on the Yokota Community page on Facebook, an online forum where base residents air community issues.

"Any news on the water quality issues that were reported recently?" commenter Felisa Leppo posted Monday. "Anyone know where we can get whole house filtering systems for base housing? Or at minimum RO for the kitchen and shower/bath filtration that can handle the chromeVI?"

That post generated more than 40 comments. The civil engineer squadron responded with its comments and a link to the 2021 water quality report, which contains no reference to chromium in the water supply.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.
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MILITARY

Barracks: Leaders putting more focus on living conditions

FROM PAGE 1

an inventory of barracks as large and as old, in some cases, [as the Army has] I couldn't look you in the eye and say, 'No, there's nothing else like [Smoke Bomb Hill] out there.'"

Wormuth and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, the service's top enlisted soldier, toured Fort Benning's historic Olson Hall quarters, known as the Cuartels, during their stop at the southwest Georgia training post for the annual Army Maneuver Warfighter Conference. The senior leaders said they came away impressed with the renovation efforts at the barracks, which date to the 1920s and have for years housed Army noncommissioned officers attending advanced schooling at the installation.

Fort Benning began the Cuartels renovation project about two years ago and just recently completed the first of seven sections of the building to allow soldiers to begin moving into the upgraded quarters. That first section cost some \$31 million, and Benning officials expect to spend about \$30 million on the second. The full renovation, which should be completed in about a decade, is estimated to cost about \$125 million, according to Amy Vaughn, resident engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Savannah District, which is leading the effort.

The upgrades include complete renovations of the building's antiquated heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, its plumbing and its electrical systems, according to Derick Wolf, the chief of engineering for Fort Benning's public works department. It also includes modern upgrades such as large bathrooms with walk-in showers, efficient toilets and LED lighting.

"I'm really proud of this. This is really cool," Grinston said over the background sounds of hammers and power tools after viewing the upgraded quarters and rooms in a section that has yet to be completed. "We've got to keep pushing on it and making sure we're renovating barracks like this."

'It takes leadership'

It was Grinston's own inspection of Fort Bragg's Smoke Bomb Hill barracks in late July that led installation leaders to order their near-immediate closure of 17 buildings — setting off the ongoing effort to relocate the nearly 1,200 soldiers living in subpar conditions. The 1970s-era barracks already had been planned for demolition or renovation in the coming years, but after Grinston found the quarters were hot, moldy and, in some cases, in disrepair, Bragg leaders determined they must close all the buildings as soon as



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, center, tours newly renovated barracks rooms at Fort Benning's Olson Hall, known as the Cuartels barracks, during a visit to the installation Tuesday.

possible.

The Army quickly moved some \$115 million in its current budget to pay to demolish 12 of the barracks buildings and rapidly refurbish three others within about one year. Two of the Smoke Bomb Hill buildings already had been funded for some \$30 million in renovations, which are expected to be completed within the next three years, Bragg officials said last week. The other three renovations will cost some \$75 million and are planned to be completed within 12 months after contracts are awarded at the end of this month, officials said.

Wormuth said the rapid decision to shutter the Smoke Bomb Hill barracks and find the money to address the problem even before the next budget cycle showed her and other top service leaders' commitment to "do what's necessary in the year of execution to take care of our soldiers" when "health and safety problems" come to light. She has long publicly stated soldiers' quality of life is her top priority.

But it should not take the Army's top officials flying in from their Pentagon offices for installation leaders to realize soldiers are living in poor conditions in aging barracks, Grinston said.

Army leaders at every level — from the smallest units to those in charge of the service's largest organizations — must listen to soldiers when they speak about their living conditions and take it upon themselves to visit barracks and other on-post quarters, the sergeant major of the Army said. They cannot simply rely on the most recent inspection grades in the Army's internal systems to determine the state of barracks.

"So, if the system says this is the rating of that building, and you see something different, it takes leadership," Grinston said. "That



Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, right, toured barracks at Fort Benning, Ga., currently under renovation, during a visit Tuesday.

leader has to go, 'Hey, wait a minute, this isn't right.' They have got to connect the dots at the ground level."

Grinston said he recalled visiting Fort Benning's Cuartels barracks several years ago at the request of another noncommissioned officer living in them who had complained about the conditions. Within a few years, the service had marked the old quarters for the ongoing renovations.

Meeting 'the challenge'

Wormuth on Tuesday morning told a packed auditorium of Maneuver Warfighter Conference attendees, including hundreds of uniformed soldiers, she had met with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin the previous day to discuss the service's barracks issue.

"I think we have underinvested a little bit in housing, and so that is something that I am really, really focused on," the Army secretary told the crowd. "I want to make sure that our soldiers — that you all and that your families have quality housing to live in. ... And that's an area I think [in which] we've got work to do."

Barracks problems are not new

for the Army. Soldiers for decades have complained of mold and inadequate heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in their living spaces, even as Army leaders publicly pledged to do better.

At Fort Stewart, Ga., 3rd Infantry Division leaders Monday held a stand down for several units so soldiers could discuss moldy barracks with post leaders after troops raised the issue through official channels and via social media posts, officials at the base said.

Wormuth said such examples show how seriously she and other Army officials are taking the issue.

She pointed to myriad issues that have contributed to substandard housing and barracks. The Army is enormous, she said. It owns thousands of barracks buildings across the world. For example, Fort Bragg — the Army's most populous base — has some 129 barracks buildings.

With so many buildings, it is not a simple task for the Army to budget for all the maintenance needed in its barracks or ensure it has insight about the state of every single room the Army owns, Wor-

muth said.

But she added soldiers' living conditions probably have not been as high of a priority as they should have been for the service during two decades of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. More recently, the Pentagon has focused its top efforts on modernization, pouring hundreds of billions of dollars into new classes of weapons meant to prepare it for large-scale combat operations against rivals such as China or Russia.

Ultimately, Wormuth said new funding for improved quality-of-life issues, including better barracks has become a higher priority for service leaders.

"With everything that we were doing in the last 20 years, where the focus was so much downrange, you know, we probably were not paying as close attention to our own infrastructure, as we are right now," she said.

She fingered one other major problem impacting living spaces across much of the Army — global climate change. Wormuth and other Army leaders have said hotter, wetter weather has made it more difficult to combat mold and air condition problems in their barracks and other on-post housing.

At Fort Bragg, officials said part of the reason that the problems at the Smoke Bomb Hill barracks arose was a hotter-than-normal summer that led to mold growth at levels that they had not previously seen. The problems were exacerbated by taxing old HVAC systems, which would fail, leaving soldiers suffering in sweltering rooms.

"A lot of places — just like where we are today at Fort Benning — it's getting hotter, you're seeing more extreme weather, more rain makes it harder to deal with mold," Wormuth said. "I think that that has been a key part of the challenge."

Grinston agreed, adding Congress must also do its part to ensure the Army can pay for the improvements needed to ensure barracks are hardened against a warming climate. Congress has failed repeatedly in recent years to pass a Pentagon budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, which can impact when military officials can begin projects including construction and renovations.

"It really does take timely, adequate and predictable long-term funding," Grinston said. "And when you don't have that — when you don't know what [funding] is going to be exactly two years from now ... It's hard to go, 'Hey, we're going to renovate this level.' We don't have unlimited funds in the Department of the Army."

MILITARY

Ishee steps in to lead 6th Fleet in Naples

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — U.S. 6th Fleet said goodbye to a commanding officer Thursday who was credited with leading the service through operations in Europe and Africa during Russia's war on Ukraine, along with some unprecedented challenges over the last two years.

Vice Adm. Eugene Black III relinquished command of the fleet and Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO to Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee during a roughly hour-long ceremony at U.S. Naval Support Activity Naples.

Black, who assumed the command in July 2020, now will serve as deputy chief of naval operations for operations, plans and strategy in Washington, D.C., the Navy said.

Ishee most recently was director of global operations for U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.

A Georgia native who was commissioned in 1988, he previously served as director of maritime operations for U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, deputy commander of U.S. 6th Fleet and commander of Submarine Group 8, among other assignments.

Adm. Stuart Munsch, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples, lauded Black for his moxie and acumen in deterring Russian aggression and defending NATO.

He coordinated a visible maritime presence in the 6th Fleet area of responsibility, including the Mediterranean and Black seas,



KAILA PETERS/U.S. Navy

Vice Adm. Gene Black, right, salutes Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee, incoming commander of U.S. 6th Fleet, at U.S. Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy, on Thursday.

and strengthened partnerships with African countries to counter Russian and Chinese activity on the continent, Munsch said.

Black also made history in transferring authority of some U.S. naval forces to NATO three times, as a way of "demonstrating our resolve to defend every inch of allied territory," Munsch said.

"In summary, Gene made sure we were all in this together and that we all stood together against our adversaries," Munsch said.

Black said he was proud of the ingenuity and dedication of commanders and sailors alike in tackling a multitude of challenges, such as assisting Afghanistan refugees, ensuring the well-being of personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic and deterring Russia from further aggression, as the Kremlin mounted the full-scale attack on Ukraine that began Feb. 24. While he will miss task force commanders, international peers and others, it's the service mem-

bers who are hardest to leave, he said.

"Most of all I will miss the sailors and Marines standing the watch on our ships, submarines and operation centers ... making sure if the orders come, the missiles fly, the guns shoot, the aircraft launch, the torpedoes run true and the Marines get ashore," Black said.

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New legislation allows Coast Guard to step up in Arctic region

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Coast Guard will step up operations in the increasingly contested Arctic region, crack down on illegal fishing and forced labor, and improve oil spill response under legislation approved Wednesday by a Senate committee wary of competition from Russia and China.

Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation said the Coast Guard's mission is growing in importance as melting ice in the Arctic creates a new frontier for economic and navigational opportunities.

Russia and China are developing a robust military presence in the region, with Russia boasting the largest icebreaker fleet in the world and China planning to build the largest icebreaker.

To meet that emerging threat, lawmakers want to authorize \$841 million for a third Polar Security Cutter icebreaker ship for the Coast Guard and \$20 million to establish an Arctic Security Cutter program office, which will begin work on the next generation of medium icebreakers.

"We are not just discussing the Arctic theoretically but making real investments," said Sen. Dan



MATTHEW ABBAN/U.S. Coast Guard

The USCG Cutter Bear transits out of Torngat National Park, Canada, on Aug. 9.

Sullivan, R-Alaska, a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve and a member of the committee.

Members of the service, or "Coasties," are also expected to see more options for child care, better access to affordable housing and expanded medical care and education opportunities as they fulfill a mission to safeguard ports and waterways and secure the maritime economy, according to the Coast Guard Authorization Act for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

The bill would authorize \$14.94 billion for the service for fiscal 2023, which begins Oct. 1. It would amount to a 21.5% budget increase from fiscal 2021.

The Senate Committee on Com-

merce, Science and Transportation overwhelmingly advanced the legislation on Wednesday.

"In my view, the Coast Guard often gets overlooked on many issues — funding, support, retirement ... I'm glad to say that this bill makes good strides in a couple areas that will bring the Coast Guard up to what the other services in the military have," Sullivan said.

The Coast Guard is the only military branch that falls outside the jurisdiction of the Defense Department and instead operates in peacetime under the Department of Homeland Security. During times of war, it can be transferred to the Navy by order of the president or Congress.

Lawmakers said they also are prioritizing efforts to end illegal fishing and forced labor on the high seas, acts largely committed by China.

The bill calls for new enforcement and coordination to catch illegal fishermen and provides new training for Coast Guard personnel to identify instances of oppressive child labor in the international fishing industry.

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Student loan forgiveness still available for service members

Stars and Stripes

Service members and Defense Department civilians with student loans have until Oct. 31 to benefit from a temporary expansion of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, which makes it easier for more borrowers to have the debt forgiven.

The program erases the remaining balance on federal direct loans after 120 qualifying monthly payments, according to a DOD memo circulated this week. It's designed for people working full-time in public service, including the military and the federal government.

The U.S. Department of Education temporarily expanded the program's eligibility criteria in October 2021, but the application period for those extended benefits expires in a few weeks.

Borrowers may get credit for previous repayments on federal student loans, such as Perkins and National Defense Student Loans, as long as they consolidate those loans into a federal direct loan.

Also, payments that were less than the amount due or a few days late count if made on or prior to Oct. 21, 2021, among other changes.

To get the benefit, borrowers must submit a form and consolidate nondirect federal student loans by Oct. 31. Anyone who previously applied for the program and was denied because of the loan type should try again, according to the memo.

For more information on how to qualify and complete the waiver, go to <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/pslf-limited-waiver>.

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EUROPE

Medic: Russians tortured Ukrainian detainees

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A life-saving Ukrainian volunteer medic captured by Russian forces during their deadly siege of the port city of Mariupol told U.S. lawmakers Thursday how Russians routinely tortured her and others, killing many detainees, in her most detailed public account of her months in captivity.

Yuliia Paievka, detained in Mariupol in March and held by Russian and pro-Russian forces for three months, spoke to lawmakers with the Helsinki Commission, a government agency created in part to promote compliance with human rights inter-

nationally.

Known to Ukrainians by the nickname Taira, Paievka became a popular figure in her home country. Her care of the wounded during the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war received global attention after her bodycam footage was provided to The Associated Press.

“Do you know why we do this to you?” a Russian asked Paievka as he tortured her, she recounted to the commission. She told the panel her answer to him: “Be-

cause you can.”

A 7-year-old boy died in her lap because she had none of the medical gear she needed to treat him, she said.

Russian captors made Ukrainian prisoners remove their clothes before the Russians set to bloodying and tormenting them, she said. Prisoners lingered in pain, screaming, for weeks before dying.

“Then in this torment of hell, the only things they feel before death is abuse and additional pain,” she said.

Paievka had been one of thousands of Ukrainians believed to have been taken prisoner by Russian forces. Mariupol’s mayor

said that 10,000 people from his city alone disappeared during what was the monthslong Russian siege of that city. It fell to Russians in April, with the city all but destroyed by Russian bombardment, and with countless dead.

The Geneva Conventions single out medics, both military and civilian, for protection “in all circumstances.” Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., co-chair of the Helsinki Commission, underscored that the conditions she described for civilian and military detainees violated international law. Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., called Russian President Vladimir Putin a war criminal.

Before she was captured, Paievka had recorded more than 256 gigabytes of harrowing bodycam footage showing her team’s efforts to save the wounded in the besieged city. She got the footage to Associated Press journalists, the last international team in Mariupol, on a tiny data card.

Paievka previously had declined to speak to journalists about conditions in detention, only describing it broadly as hell. She swallowed heavily at times Thursday while testifying slowly in a mix of Ukrainian and halting English.

“It’s very unpleasant” to speak of what happened there, she said.



Paievka

Ukraine: Zelenskyy urges more sanctions on Russia

FROM PAGE 1

this, if they are well equipped,” she said.

Yet highlighting the breadth of the nearly 7-month-old war, air raid sirens blared several times in the Ukrainian capital during von der Leyen’s meeting with Zelenskyy, showing the fear and damage Russian troops could still inflict.

Ukrainian officials said Russian missile strikes on a reservoir dam near Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy’s birthplace and the largest city in central Ukraine, sent water raging through some streets. Over 100 homes flooded, and efforts were underway to prevent more spillage.

Russian military bloggers charged the attack was intended to flood areas downstream where Ukrainian forces made inroads as part of their counteroffensive.

The attack so close to his roots angered Zelenskyy, who said the strikes had no military value.

“In fact, hitting hundreds of thousands of ordinary civilians is another reason why Russia will lose,” he said.

But the president, who said Ukrainian forces had recaptured almost 400 Russian-occupied settle-

ments in less than a week, remained in a buoyant mood and shrugged off a traffic collision the previous night that left him with no major injuries

On a day when political optics stood out, the Ukrainian leader’s snug, warm meeting with the president of the European Commission contrasted with a formal encounter between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping at a regional security summit in Uzbekistan.

The European Parliament completed the drawn-out process of approving a 5 billion-euro preferential loan to Ukraine, the key part of a 9 billion-euro aid package to offset the cost of war.

Zelenskyy said more assistance cannot come quickly enough. He insisted that the West needed to impose more sanctions on the Kremlin and to provide more weapons for his frontline soldiers to use.

Zelenskyy said that the only way to guarantee the security of Ukrainians is to “close the sky” over the country with air defense systems provided by Western allies.

Germany, the EU’s economic powerhouse, announced Thursday that it would send two addi-



EVGENIY MALOLETKA/AP

Ukrainian paratroopers drive a vehicle with the Ukrainian flag on the pantone bridge across Siverskiy-Donets river in the recently retaken area of Izium, Ukraine, on Wednesday.

tional MARS II multiple launch rocket systems to Ukraine, as well as 50 DINGO armored vehicles.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock was pressuring Chancellor Olaf Scholz to decide whether to supply advanced tanks to Ukraine soon, while its counteroffensive gained traction.

“In the decisive phase that Ukraine currently finds itself, I also don’t believe that it’s a decision which can be delayed for long,” Baerbock said.

Having little with which to repay his Western partners, Zelenskyy said von der Leyen’s name

would be engraved on a plaque in a square near Ukraine’s parliament that is called “Walk of the Brave.”

“Here are the names of those leaders of Europe and the world who supported our state and were on our side against the aggression,” he said.

In Uzbekistan’s ancient city of Samarkand, Putin sought to break through his international isolation and further cement his ties with Xi in a geopolitical alliance increasingly seen as potent counterweight to the Western powers.

Putin and Xi met one-on-one on

the sidelines of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security alliance created as a counterweight to U.S. influence. In opening remarks, the Russian leader painted the war as a litmus test for those seeking to stand up to Washington and its NATO allies.

“Attempts to create a unipolar world have recently taken an absolutely ugly shape. They are absolutely unacceptable for the vast majority of countries on the globe,” the Russian president said in opening remarks. His fiery rhetoric contrasted with the more subdued comments of Xi.

German official urges swift call on Ukraine tanks delivery

Associated Press

BERLIN — Germany’s foreign minister is putting pressure on Chancellor Olaf Scholz to decide soon whether to supply Ukraine with advanced tanks as it seeks to reclaim more of its captured territory from Russia.

Kyiv has said it would like to get German Leopard-2 tanks, but Berlin has so far rebuffed

that request while delivering other weaponry, such as howitzers and self-propelled anti-aircraft weapons.

In an interview with daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung published Thursday, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said a decision on delivering modern battle tanks to Ukraine could only be taken jointly by

Germany’s governing three-party coalition and its international partners.

“But in the decisive phase that Ukraine currently finds itself, I also don’t believe that it’s a decision which can be delayed for long,” she was quoted as saying.

Economy Minister Robert Habeck, a fellow member of the Greens party, said Thursday

that he expected Germany to deliver more of “the right weapons” to Ukraine soon.

The far-right Alternative for Germany party, which is not in government and has close ties to Moscow, warned, meanwhile, against providing tanks to Ukraine.

“The Ukraine war is not our war,” said its co-leader, Tino

Chrupalla. He called instead for Germany to open the Nord Stream 2 pipeline so the country can import gas from Russia.

Meanwhile, Germany’s defense minister announced Thursday that her country would send two additional MARS II multiple launch rocket systems to Ukraine, as well as 50 DINGO armored vehicles.

NATION

Biden: Tentative railway deal set, averting strike

By **JOSH BOAK**
AND **ZEKE MILLER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden said Thursday that a tentative railway labor agreement has been reached, averting a strike that could have been devastating to the economy before the pivotal midterm elections.

Railroads and union representatives had been in negotiations for 20 hours at the Labor Department on Wednesday to hammer out a deal, as there was a risk of a strike starting on Friday that could have shut down rail lines across the country.

Biden made a key phone call to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh at 9 p.m. as the talks were ongoing after Italian dinner had been brought in, according to a White House official insisting on anonymity. The president told the negotiators to consider the harm to families, farmers and businesses if

a shutdown occurred.

What resulted from the back and forth was a tentative agreement that will go to union members for a vote after a post-ratification cooling off period of several weeks.

“These rail workers will get better pay, improved working conditions, and peace of mind around their health care costs: all hard-earned,” Biden said. “The agreement is also a victory for railway companies who will be able to retain and recruit more workers for an industry that will continue to be part of the backbone of the American economy for decades to come.”

The threat of a shutdown had put Biden in a delicate spot politically. The Democratic president believes unions built the middle class, but he also knew a rail worker strike could damage the economy ahead of the midterms, when majorities in both chambers of



CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

An Amtrak passenger train departs Chicago in the early evening headed south Wednesday, in Chicago.

Congress, key governorships and scores of important state offices will be up for grabs.

That left him in an awkward position on Wednesday. He flew to Detroit, a stalwart of the labor movement, to espouse the virtues of unionization, while members of his administration went all-out to keep talks going in Washington between the railroads and unionized workers.

As the administration was trying to forge peace, United Auto Workers Local 598 member Ryan

Buchalski introduced Biden at the Detroit auto show on Wednesday as “the most union- and labor-friendly president in American history” and someone who was “kickin’ ass for the working class.” Buchalski harked back to the pivotal sitdown strikes by autoworkers in the 1930s.

In the speech that followed, Biden recognized that he wouldn’t be in the White House without the support of unions such as the UAW and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, saying auto-

workers “brung me to the dance.”

But without a deal among the 12 unions in talks back in Washington, Biden also knew that a stoppage might have begun as early as Friday that could halt shipments of food and fuel at a cost of \$2 billion a day.

By 5:05 a.m. Thursday, it was clear that the hard work across the government, unions and railway companies had paid off as Biden announced the deal, calling it “an important win for our economy and the American people.”

R. Kelly convicted of child porn, enticing young girls for sex

Associated Press

CHICAGO — A federal jury in Chicago convicted R. Kelly on Wednesday of producing child pornography and enticing girls for sex after a monthlong trial in his hometown, delivering another legal blow to the Grammy Award winning singer who was once one of the world’s biggest R&B stars.

Prosecutors won convictions on six of the 13 counts against him, with many of the convictions carrying long mandatory sentences. But the government lost the marquee count — that Kelly and his then-business manager successfully rigged his state child pornography trial in 2008.

Both of his co-defendants, including longtime business manager Derrel McDavid — who had told jurors that testimony from four Kelly accusers had led him to change his mind about Kelly’s believability — were acquitted of all charges.

The trial was, in ways, a do-over of Kelly’s 2008 child pornography trial, with a key video critical to both. Kelly, who shed tears of joy

when jurors acquitted him in 2008, gave a thumbs-up sign to spectators after Wednesday’s verdict but otherwise showed little emotion.

Before Kelly was returned to federal lockup, McDavid hugged Kelly, who rose from poverty on Chicago’s South Side to become a superstar.

Asked by reporters later outside court how Kelly felt after the verdict, his lead attorney, Jennifer Bonjean, said: “Mr. Kelly is used to bad news.”

“He’s still got many fights to fight,” she said. “But what he did say is that he had a sense of relief that this particular case was in the past now.”

The verdict comes months after a federal judge in New York sentenced Kelly to 30 years in prison in June for racketeering and sex trafficking. Based on that sentence, the 55-year-old won’t be eligible for release until he is around 80.

And two sexual misconduct trials still await Kelly — one in Minnesota and one in state court



R. Kelly

in Chicago.

After deliberating for 11 hours over two days, jurors convicted Kelly of three counts each of producing child pornography and enticement, while acquitting him of obstruction of justice, one count of production of child porn and three counts of receiving child porn.

Among the charges McDavid was acquitted of was conspiring with Kelly to rig the 2008 trial. Milton Brown, the other co-defendant, was acquitted of receiving child pornography.

Chicago-based U.S. Attorney John Lausch expressed satisfaction with the verdict. He told reporters that, when you add up the potential punishments on the six guilty counts, Kelly was staring at least 10 years and up to 90 in prison.

Officials probing if blast at Northeastern staged

Associated Press

BOSTON — Federal officials are examining whether the employee who reported an explosion at Northeastern University may have lied to investigators and staged the incident, law enforcement officials said Wednesday.

Investigators identified inconsistencies in the employee’s statement and became skeptical because his injuries did not match wounds typically consistent with an explosion, said one official.

The officials could not discuss details of the investigation publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The Northeastern staff member said late Tuesday the hard plastic case exploded on the campus in Boston, causing minor injuries, according to authorities.

In an interview with The Boston Globe, the employee denied staging the explosion, calling the event “very traumatic.”

“I did not stage this ... No way, shape or form ... they need to catch the guy that did this,” he told the newspaper. He didn’t immediately respond to an email Wednesday from The Associated Press.

The case contained a rambling note that railed against virtual re-

ality and also referenced Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, a law enforcement official said. No explosive materials were found and they do not believe the package was sent through the U.S. Postal Service, the official said.

The official described the case as a “Pelican-style” case. Pelican is a company that makes hard cases designed to protect sensitive equipment.

A spokesperson for the FBI office in Boston declined to comment Wednesday, saying the investigation is “still very active and fluid.”

The campus opened normally for classes and other activities Wednesday. Counseling and other support services were made available for students, faculty and staff.

The package delivered to Holmes Hall detonated just after 7 p.m. Tuesday when a staff member opened it, the university had said in a statement. The staff member, a 45-year-old man, was taken to the hospital with minor injuries to his hand, police said. No name was made public.

Boston’s bomb squad neutralized a second package near the city’s Museum of Fine Arts, which is near Northeastern’s campus.

NATION

Iranian citizens charged in broad hacking scheme

BY ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department said Wednesday that three Iranian citizens have been charged in the United States with ransomware attacks that targeted power companies, local governments and small businesses and nonprofits, including a domestic violence shelter.

The charges accuse the hacking suspects of targeting hundreds of entities in the U.S. and around the world, encrypting and stealing data from victim networks, and threatening to release it publicly or leave it encrypted unless exorbitant ransom payments were made. In some cases, the victims made those payments, the department said.

The Biden administration has tried to go after hackers who have held U.S. targets essentially hostage, often sanctioned or sheltered by adversaries. The threat gained particular prominence in May 2021 when a Russia-based hacker group was accused of conducting a ransomware attack on Georgia-based Colonial Pipeline, which disrupted gas supplies along the East Coast.

Iran-based hackers have also been a focus over the last year, with the FBI thwarting a planned cyberattack on a children's hospital in Boston that was to have been carried out by hackers sponsored by the Iranian government.

"The cyber threat facing our nation is growing more dangerous and complex every day," FBI Director Christopher Wray said in a statement accompanying the indictment unsealed Wednesday. "Today's announcement makes

clear the threat is both local and global. It's one we can't ignore and it's one we can't fight on our own, either."

The hackers named in Wednesday's indictment are not believed to have been working on behalf of the Iranian government but instead for their own financial gain, and some of the victims were even in Iran, according to a senior Justice Department official who briefed reporters on the case on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the department.

But the official said the activity, even if not directed by the Iranian government, exists because the regime permits hackers to largely operate with impunity.

In a related action Wednesday, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control sanctioned 10 individuals and two entities affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps who it says have been involved in malicious cyber activities, including ransomware. The Treasury Department identified the three defendants in the Justice Department case as employees of technology firms it says is affiliated with the Revolutionary Guard.

John Hultquist, vice president for threat intelligence at the cybersecurity firm Mandiant, said his team has been tracking the Iranian actors for some time and assessed they are contractors for the Revolutionary Guard who have been moonlighting as criminal hackers. He said they are especially dangerous because "any access they gain could be served up for espionage or disruptive purposes."



PHOTOS BY RAY EWING, VINEYARD GAZETTE/AP

Immigrants gather with their belongings outside St. Andrews Episcopal Church on Wednesday in Edgartown, Mass., on Martha's Vineyard.

Florida's DeSantis flies 2 planes of immigrants to Martha's Vineyard

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Wednesday flew two planes of immigrants to Martha's Vineyard, escalating a tactic by Republican governors to draw attention to what they consider to be the Biden administration's failed border policies.

Flights to the upscale island enclave in Massachusetts were part of an effort to "transport illegal immigrants to sanctuary destinations," said Taryn Fenske, DeSantis' communications director.

While DeSantis' office didn't elaborate on their legal status, many migrants who cross the border illegally from Mexico are temporarily shielded from deportation after being freed by U.S. authorities to pursue asylum in immigration court — as allowed under U.S. law and international treaty — or released on humanitarian parole.

Massachusetts' Gov. Charlie Baker, a Republican, said he was in touch with local officials and that short-term shelter was being provided.

State Rep. Dylan Fernandes, who represents Martha's Vineyard, tweeted: "Our island jumped into action putting together 50 beds, giving everyone a good meal, providing a play area for the children, making sure people have the healthcare and support they need. We are a community that comes together to support immigrants."

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott began busing thousands of



A woman holds a child as they are fed outside St. Andrews Episcopal Church.

migrants to Washington in April and recently added New York and Chicago as destinations. Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey has been busing migrants to Washington since May. Passengers must sign waivers that the free trips are voluntary.

DeSantis, who is mentioned as potential presidential candidate, appears to be taking the strategy to a new level by using planes and choosing Martha's Vineyard, whose harbor towns that are home to about 15,000 people are far less prepared than New York or Washington for large influxes of migrants.

Fewer Americans apply for jobless benefits again last week

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell again last week to a four-month low even as the Federal Reserve continues its aggressive interest rate cuts to bring inflation under control.

Applications for jobless aid for the week ending Sept. 10 fell by 5,000 to 213,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. That's the fewest since late May.

First-time applications generally reflect layoffs.

The four-week average for claims, which offsets some of the

weekly volatility, fell by 8,000 to 224,000.

The number of Americans collecting traditional unemployment benefits inched up by 2,000 for the week that ended Sept. 3, to 1.4 million.

Hiring in the U.S. in 2022 has been remarkably strong even in the midst of rising interest rates and weak economic growth. The Federal Reserve has aggressively raised interest rates in an effort to bring down inflation, which generally also slows job growth.

Earlier this month, the Labor Department reported that em-

ployers added still-strong 315,000 jobs in August, though less than the average 487,000 a month over the past year. The unemployment rate ticked up to 3.7%, its highest level since February, but for a healthy reason: Hundreds of thousands of people returned to the job market, and some didn't find work right away, so the government's count of unemployed people rose.

The U.S. economy has been a mixed bag this year. Economic growth has declined in the first half of 2022, which, by some informal definitions, signals a recession.

But businesses remain desper-

ate to find workers, posting more than 11 million job openings in July, meaning there are almost two job vacancies for every unemployed American.

Inflation continues to be the biggest obstacle for a healthy U.S. economy. The rise in consumer prices slowed modestly the past couple months, largely due to falling gas prices. But overall, prices for food and other essentials remain elevated enough that the Federal Reserve has indicated it will keep raising its benchmark interest rate until prices come back down to normal levels.

Most economists expect the Fed to raise its benchmark borrowing rate by three-quarters of a point when it meets next week.

The Fed has already raised its short-term interest rate four times this year and Chairman Jerome Powell has said that the central bank will likely need to keep interest rates high enough to slow the economy "for some time" in order to tame the worst inflation in 40 years. Powell has acknowledged the increases will hurt U.S. households and businesses, but also said the pain would be worse if inflation remained at current levels.

NATION

Progress reported in wildfire

Associated Press
FORESTHILL, Calif. — Firefighters prevented flames from entering a Northern California mountain town and reported major progress Thursday against the week-old blaze that's become the largest in the state so far this year.

Conditions at the Mosquito Fire about 110 miles northeast of San Francisco were "looking a whole heck of a lot better," according to fire spokesman Scott McLean.

Crews on the ground built up containment lines while water-dropping helicopters knocked down hotspots after the fire roared back to life on Tuesday, burning an unknown number of structures near Foresthill.

Evacuation orders remained for

some 11,000 residents because of the unpredictable nature of the winds, McLean said.

The Mosquito Fire was 20% contained after destroying at least 64 homes and other buildings. The 100-square-mile blaze on Wednesday surpassed the size of the previous largest conflagration in 2022 — the McKinney Fire — although this season has seen a fraction of last year's wildfire activity so far.

In Southern California, dogs aided the hunt for a person missing in a heavily damaged area of the San Bernardino Mountains where thunderstorms unleashed rocks, trees and earth that washed away cars, buried homes and affected 3,000 residents in two remote communities.



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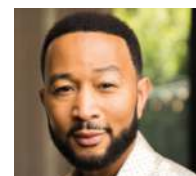
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WEEKEND



John Legend still proving himself
Music, Page 28



Getting physical

Viola Davis channels her warrior spirit for 'The Woman King'

Page 15

Viola Davis stars in "The Woman King."
SONY PICTURES/AP

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY

Electric vehicle cost rollbacks

GM latest manufacturer to present cheaper SUV model despite rising battery expense

By TOM KRISHER
Associated Press

Even though battery costs are rising, auto companies are rolling out more affordable electric vehicles that should widen their appeal to a larger group of buyers.

The latest came last week from General Motors, a Chevrolet Equinox small SUV with a starting price somewhere around \$30,000 and a range-per-charge of 250 miles. You can get range of 300 miles if you pay more.

GM won't release the exact price of the Equinox EV until closer to the date it goes on sale, about this time next year. But the SUV is at the low end of Edmunds.com's list of prices for electric vehicles sold in the U.S., where the average cost of an EV is around \$65,000.

Hitting a price around \$30,000 and a range per charge close to 300 miles is key to getting mainstream buyers to switch away from gasoline vehicles, industry analysts say.

"You're kind of at that sweet spot," said Ivan Drury, director of insights for Edmunds.com. "You're basically at the price point that everyone is clamoring for."

Auto industry analysts say that if the Equinox makes efficient

use of interior space with plenty of cargo and passenger room, and if it is styled similar to current gas-powered small SUVs, it should be a hit in the most popular segment of the U.S. auto market. About 20% of all new vehicles sold in the U.S. are compact SUVs.

"It's a perfect vehicle for a lot of different users, whether it's a small family, maybe an empty nester," said Jeff Schuster, president of global forecasting for LMC Automotive, a Detroit-area consulting firm. "You've got space to haul things, but it's easy to drive."

A \$30,000 EV that checks all of the boxes is just a little above the price of a comparable small gas-powered SUV. The Toyota RAV4, the top seller in the segment and the top-selling vehicle in the U.S. that isn't a pickup, starts at just over \$28,000.

Until the past few years, electric vehicles were either expensive and aimed at affluent luxury buyers, or cheaper but with limited travel ranges. For example, a base version of Tesla's Model 3, the lowest-price model from the top-selling EV brand in the U.S., starts at more than \$48,000. A larger Tesla Model X SUV starts at over \$120,000.

The only EVs with starting prices under \$30,000 (including



PHOTOS BY PAUL SANCYA/AP

General Motors is preparing to roll out a \$30,000 Chevy Equinox electric vehicle, but that price point might be challenging to achieve. Pictured: a 2024 Chevrolet Equinox EV 3LT exterior and interior (inset).

shipping) now are versions of the Nissan Leaf and Chevrolet Bolt. Both are smaller than a typical gas-powered compact SUV. The Mini Cooper Electric, Mazda MX30 and Hyundai Kona Electric are in the \$30,000s, according to Edmunds.

Kia's Niro EV, Hyundai's Ioniq 5, Ford's F-150 Lightning pickup, the Volkswagen ID.4, Kia EV6, Toyota b24x, Ford's Mustang Mach E, Audi's Q4 e-tron, the Subaru Solterra, Polestar 2, and Tesla Model 3 all have starting prices in the \$40,000s.

GM may find it difficult to keep the Equinox price around \$30,000, largely because minerals such as lithium, copper, cobalt and nickel that are key components of batteries have been rising fast. There's a finite num-

ber of mines and increasing demand as nearly all automakers introduce new EVs.

Drury says that even if GM is able to keep the Equinox starting price around \$30,000, demand likely will be high enough so the company builds mainly higher-priced versions. And some dealers have been marking up EVs beyond the automaker's sticker price due to high demand. In the first half of the year, U.S. EV sales rose 68% from the same period a year ago, to nearly 313,000.

Some EVs could get a whole lot cheaper in the U.S., too, with federal tax credits starting next year of up to \$7,500 that are part of the Inflation Reduction Act. But meeting federal requirements may be difficult.

The vehicles and batteries have to be assembled in North America, and the new law phases in requirements that battery minerals and parts have to come from the continent. Most minerals such as lithium, a key battery ingredient, are now imported from China and other countries.

The Equinox checks the North American assembly box. It will be made in Mexico. The company won't say where the battery will be made, but GM has announced three joint-venture battery factories in the U.S.

The Equinox EV, Majoros said, is longer, wider and a bit shorter than the gas versions of the same vehicle. GM used new interior packaging methods to create comparable passenger and cargo space to the gas Equinox, he said.

Bladeless tower fan cools room, cleans air

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Westinghouse's new 3-in-1 Bladeless Tower fan, Air Purifier & UV Sterilization shows how far creative and innovative freestanding fan systems have come, and they even save you some money. The new vertical fan works as just that, a fan to help cool a room and keep it clean.

The tower fan has a modern-looking 32-inch vertical design, just short of a 10-pound weight. After unpacking it from the shipping box, the only setup entails putting in the included HEPA filter, plugging in the AC adapter and unpacking the wireless remote control. The filter is easy to install; twist the top cover, drop it in and turn it back on.

Once it's going, the lower the speed, the quieter the fan's energy-saving 35-watt motor. A power button is on the bottom of the cylinder-shaped main compartment (which also houses the filter). Press the button once to turn it on, then toggle through the touch-sensitive button controls to change the speed.

Nine levels (1 is low up to 9 for high) of cooling air fan speeds are available, each with a higher level of fan/motor noise. Westinghouse lists it as under 55 decibels in sound, so it never gets deafening, even on the highest speed.

Westinghouse lists the fan's coverage area as up to 300 square feet. Using it at level 4 worked perfectly for my average-size office, along with activating the oscillation function for an 80-degree coverage. Once I got over level 6, the air was blowing too much for my liking, and the sound did increase.

The vertical design makes transporting and relocating the Westinghouse's Bladeless Tower fan easy since the top doubles as a carrying handle. Its footprint isn't limited; an upright design enables it to be tucked in a corner or placed right in front of you.

Air flowers out of the air ducts on the air outlet. The oscillation features are activated by pushing a button on the included remote. Still, the air can be angled by turning the entire appliance or angling the

air outlet handle 30 degrees forward or back, giving you complete control of the direction you want the air flowing.

The remote runs off of a single CR2025 coin battery and has controls for power, increasing or decreasing the fan speed, oscillation, turbo setting and a UV button. One press of the turbo button puts it into the maximum level, and another press takes it back to your original setting. A toggle button takes you to an eight-hour timer/sleep mode, with choices by the hour.

The 360-degree UV light sterilization filter removes and kills harmful particles, including bacteria, mold, pet hair, smoke, dust and some viruses. The removable filter will need changing after 720 hours (30 days of continuous use), and the fan has a sound alert and displays when you hit that time. It's recommended to clean the air ducts, inlets and outlets with a soft brush.

Aside from how well it works, two other things came to mind: 1) There's no app needed, and 2) Fingers can't touch the



WESTINGHOUSE/TNS

The Westinghouse 3-in-1 Bladeless Tower fan has nine levels of cooling speeds and covers an area of up to 300 square feet.

blades since there are none. Another safety feature is an automatic power off with a 45-degree tipping activation.

Online: amazon.com; currently on sale for \$279.99, available in white or black, \$34.76 for a single replacement filter

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Preparing to be a warrior

Davis said making 'Woman King' the culmination of a struggle



Sony Pictures Entertainment

Viola Davis stars in "The Woman King," set in 1820s West Africa. Davis said she felt proud of her body, "Not just for the way that it looked but for the way it serviced me."

By JAKE COYLE

The Associated Press

When Viola Davis, sculpted and hardened from months of training, first stood in the full garb of the Agojie warrior women, with her bare feet in the African sand, it was the culmination of not just the yearslong push to make "The Woman King," but of a lifelong battle.

"It was sort of metaphoric to not just everything I had done to prepare for this role but everything that I had done as a Black woman to prepare for this moment," Davis says. "Which is to be a warrior."

"The Woman King," which opens in theaters this weekend, is a \$50 million action epic, set in 1820s West Africa, about the all-female army of the Kingdom of Dahomey. Made largely by women and featuring an almost completely Black cast, it's powerfully unlike anything Hollywood has ever produced. And just as much as "The Woman King" dramatizes the fierce fighting of the Agojie, the film represents its own struggle.

"Fighting for actors. Fighting for the director. You have to fight for the writer," Davis, also a producer, said in an interview at the Toronto International Film Festival. "Years and years and years go by and you're still fighting. You're fighting for the budget. You're fighting for even the commercial aspects of the story. You're fighting for your hair. Fight. Fight. Fight."

"Whenever you're doing anything new, it requires the warrior spirit," Davis says. "What I feel now is: It was worth it."

"The Woman King," directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood ("The Old Guard," "Love & Basketball"), began as an idea seven years ago, after a trip to Africa by Maria Bello, the producer and actor. Enamored by the history of the Agojie, she brought the concept to producer Cathy Schulman, the producer of the Oscar-winning "Crash" and the former head of Women in Film.

Schulman knew the film could be a potent portrait of female strength, but she didn't anticipate that, following the overturning of Roe v. Wade, it might serve as a rallying cry at a time when many consider women's rights under siege.

"There couldn't be a more important time for a movie about female courage, about sisterhood, about the complexity of the female experience, not to mention the physicality of our bodies," Schulman says.

But the producers and Davis, who was attached early

on, found it difficult to convince executives and financiers to bankroll "The Woman King" at a budget large enough to provide it the scale it deserved.

"Braveheart," "Gladiator," "Last of the Mohicans." I love those movies," Prince-Bythewood says. "Now, here was our chance to tell our story in this genre."

"The Woman King," a rousing emotional wallop that seamlessly fuses interior drama with action spectacle, was met with universal acclaim at its Toronto premiere as a crowd-pleaser of another kind. But the Hollywood calculus for what might appeal to a broad audience has traditionally really meant "Will white people watch it?"

"Black people did not have to love 'Thelma & Louise' for 'Thelma & Louise' to get made," Davis says.

"White people have to love 'The Woman King' for 'The Woman King' to get made — according to Hollywood."

A pivotal moment came when "Black Panther" was released. Ryan Coogler's film featured a fictionalization of the Agojie, the Dora Milaje, and its massive worldwide box-office take (\$1.3 billion) was a wake-up call to the industry.

"We would not have been able to do 'Woman King' without 'Black Panther,'" Davis says. "I'm eternally grateful to 'Black Panther.'"

To ready for the shoot in South Africa, Davis and fellow cast members Thuso Mbedu, Lashana Lynch and Sheila Atim underwent a grueling monthslong regimen of weight lifting and fight training. The actors later performed their own stunts in the film. Davis, who at 57 refers to herself as "the O.G. warrior" among her younger castmates, says she felt proud of her body. "Not just for the way that it looked but for the way it serviced me."

Lynch, the British actor of "No Time to Die," would later be astonished watching herself in the film.

"I find it hard to believe that that was really me," Lynch says. "It really taught me a lot about just what women come with. We have so much to be able to push through pain and birthing children and push against the world's pressures."

"The Woman King," penned by Dana Stevens, shot by Polly Morgan and edited by Terilyn Shropshir, was

crewed by Prince-Bythewood with women and people of color in most department-head positions.

"It breathes such a more pleasant set," Schulman says. "Lack of drama. More attitude of the work first. Less hierarchy. I just haven't seen any job a woman can't do. That was all a fallacy."

Lynch, visibly moved by her experience making "Woman King," for the first time witnessed an Africa-set action drama staged outside of the white male gaze.

"The Woman King" will be its own blueprint that I hope filmmakers and heads of studios can take as an example," Lynch says.

Some have been skeptical of how "The Woman King" tackles history. Last month, the 1619 Project author Nikole Hannah-Jones wrote on Twitter that "it will be interesting to see how a movie that seems to glorify the all-female military unit of the Dahomey deals with the fact that this kingdom derived its wealth from capturing Africans for the trans-Atlantic slave trade."

The Agojie were indeed a brutal and bloodthirsty army that participated in slave raids. "The Woman King," like most historical epics, takes some artistic license. But the slave trade is a central component to its narrative. Schulman says the 1820s were chosen from the 1600-1904 history of the Dahomey kingdom specifically for the backdrop of conflict with the mightier Oyo empire, along with pressure from European colonizers for captives.

"The Woman King" could make history of its own by blazing a new path for the film industry. The Sony Pictures release hopes to enliven movie theaters after a prolonged late-summer lull at the box office.

"I feel that the film is eventized," Schulman says. "My anticipation is that we're ready for this film. We just don't know how ready we truly are."

Davis, for her part, feels like she's been ready all her life. She has taken to calling "The Woman King" her "magnum opus" because her production company produced it, because she fought so hard for it.

"This was a hard-won battle," Davis says. "And I won it. I feel like I won the battle."

It's an accomplishment that sends Davis back to her initial dreams of show business as a young girl growing up poor in Rhode Island. Before encountering the reality of the film industry, her movie dreams were limitless.

"This movie affirms that it's possible," Davis says. "That there are no limitations to my dreams. That, actually, I was right."



Prince-Bythewood

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

A different kind of womanhood

Davis, costars in action epic 'The Woman King' confidently embrace conventions of male genre

By ANN HORNADAY
The Washington Post

From the moment she appears on the screen — rising up from tall grasses while leading an all-female army — Viola Davis owns “The Woman King,” a movie every bit as majestic and monumental as its title implies.

Davis plays Nanisca, the ferocious, forbidding general of the Agojie, the legendary women’s fighting force that helped defend the West African kingdom of Dahomey. Set in 1823, “The Woman King” spins a fictional tale rooted in the real-life “Dahomey Amazons” who were among the most feared warriors of the era. In this stirring tale, written by Maria Bello and Dana Stevens, Nanisca fights not only external foes — the Oyo Empire intent on destroying the reign of Dahomey’s King Ghezo (John Boyega) — but her own country’s involvement in the transatlantic trade of enslaved people, which its supporters see as a way for Africans to benefit from commerce but which she sees as a “dark circle,” entrapping her

people in cycles of violence, oppression and self-hatred.

Whether Nanisca’s dilemma is literally true to life is beside the point in “The Woman King,” which takes its rousing action-and-adventure cues from such classics as “Braveheart,” “Gladiator” and the spectacular sword-and-sandal pictures of the 1950s, and elaborates on imaginative universes already primed by the likes of “Black Panther,” “Wonder Woman” and, more recently, “The Northman.” In the hands of director Gina Prince-Bythewood, the combination is a winning one: “The Woman King” pulses with energy, tightly coiled intensity and Shakespearean filial drama, given added potency by Davis, who imbues Nanisca with the gravitas and unflinching focus that have become her signatures.

Part of what makes Nanisca such an appealing heroine is that, for all her strength and finesse, she isn’t perfect: As “The Woman King” opens, she returns to Dahomey with another victory under her belt (and some captive women to train as new soldiers), but she’s showing signs of wear: her muscles aching, her body



Sony Pictures Entertainment

Viola Davis and Lashana Lynch, right, play warriors seeking recruits for their force in “The Woman King.”

scarred, her eyes made weary of seeing too much war. Once returned to the barracks of the Agojie — a cross between a nunnery and boot camp — she seeks counsel from her most trusted lieutenant, Izogie (Lashana Lynch) while keeping an eye on a recruit, an orphan named Mawi, played by Thuso Mbedu with self-possessed aplomb every bit as impressive as the actress with whom she shares her most important scenes.

Those sequences bristle with psychological undercurrents that give “The Woman King” its depth and sometimes startling emotional oomph. But Prince-Bythewood — fresh off the success of 2020’s tush-kicking “The

Old Guard” — proves similarly confident with action scenes in which swords and scythes fly with primal abandon. (It bears noting that in “The Woman King,” rated PG-13, blood is more often heard spurting and dripping than seen in sanguinary detail.)

Dressed in beautiful armor composed of leather and cowrie shells (the arresting costumes are by Gersha Phillips), with Polly Morgan’s cinematography emphasizing the strength of their physiques over their eroticism, Davis and her costars present a bracing image of womanhood that concedes nothing to conventional notions of beauty or what passes for femininity on-screen.

The sight of this accomplished ensemble unapologetically embracing the conventions of a traditionally male genre — and deploying those conventions with such confidence and brio — might be the biggest thrill to hit the big screen this year since Tom Cruise climbed into his old Grumman F-14.

With its action, adventure, mythic conflict and semi-fantastical storytelling, “The Woman King” proves to be an opulent addition to a form of filmmaking that has long been searching for a refresh.

“The Woman King” is rated PG-13 for sequences of strong violence, some disturbing material, mature thematic elements, brief strong language and partial nudity. Running time: 146 minutes. Now playing in select AAFES theaters.

‘See How They Run’ an Agatha Christie-adjacent whodunit

By MICHAEL O’SULLIVAN
The Washington Post

While fans of the murder mystery genre count the weeks until the release of “Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery,” the eagerly anticipated sequel to 2019’s twisty, sharply funny “Knives Out,” they can take the edge off their appetite with “See How They Run.”

Starring Sam Rockwell and Saoirse Ronan as a pair of odd-couple Scotland Yard officers investigating a theater-world murder in 1950s London, this larky meta-whodunit both subverts and pays homage to “The Mousetrap,” Agatha Christie’s famously long-running play. After opening in London’s West End in 1952, “Mousetrap” has been running continuously — except for a pandemic-induced break — for more than 28,000 performances.

The popular show has, almost as infamously, never been made into a movie. Hold that thought. It figures somewhat prominently here, and for reasons other than the fact that you can’t stream it on Amazon before watching “See How They Run.” Though after seeing the new movie, you may want to.

As “See How They Run” gets underway, the “Mousetrap” cast and crew — which, in a nod to verisimilitude, includes characters based on “Mousetrap” stars Richard Attenborough (Harris Dickinson) and his wife, Sheila Sim (Pearl Chanda) — are celebrating the show’s 100th performance. An obnoxious but entirely fictional Hollywood director named Leo Köpernick (Adrien Brody) is in town to discuss a film adaptation with the British movie producer John Woolf (Reece Shearsmith) and would-be screenwriter Mervyn Cocker-Norris (David Oyelowo),



Searchlight Pictures

Sam Rockwell, left, and Saoirse Ronan play Scotland Yard officers in “See How They Run.”

when Leo turns up dead. Woolf, like several other characters in “Run,” is based on a real person; Cocker-Norris, whom Oyelowo renders with an amusingly priggish persnickety-ness, is not.

“Life imitates art,” reads a headline in a newspaper. But in some ways, “See How They Run” is a case of art imitating life. In reality, death isn’t why the play was never adapted for the screen; there’s a far more fascinating explanation, which I’ll leave for “See How They Run” director Tom George and writer Mark Chappell to reveal, in one of the film’s deliciously ironic twists.

Called onto the case are Rockwell’s jaded, slightly boozy Inspector Stoppard and Ronan’s aptly named Con-

stable Stalker, a dogged if untested police rookie who writes down everything she observes in her notebook — including this advice from the more experienced Stoppard: “Do not jump to conclusions.” Stoppard’s name echoes the playwright Tom Stoppard, whose one-act play “The Real Inspector Hound,” like this film, parodies the clichés of a “Mousetrap”-style stage mystery.

To that end, “Run” includes several suspects, all of whom have legitimate motives to do Leo in, including creative differences and secrets they’d rather keep hidden. It helps that this victim was widely disliked. It also helps the multilayered nature of this very loosely fact-adjacent film that the backstory of “The Mousetrap” itself is loosely based on true events. That’s another thought to hold in the back of your mind while watching the film, which is, true to form, larded with flashbacks and the occasional on-screen title detailing the passage of time.

And yet “do not jump to conclusions” is pretty good advice for audiences, too, as the red herrings pile up in “See How They Run.” The colorful characters of Stoppard and Stalker loom large here, as detectives so often do — Hercule Poirot, Jane Marple — in such fare. But even larger is the shadow cast by Christie’s 1952 play, which provides a fun backdrop, if one rendered irreverently, for this diverting puzzle within a puzzle.

“It’s just like one of [Christie’s] confections!” observes one character with seeming delight, as the film heads toward its antic climax. Maybe not just like, but close enough.

“See How They Run” is rated PG-13 for some violence, bloody images and a sexual reference. Running time: 98 minutes. Now playing in select AAFES theaters.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Remaking an icon

De Armas: 'Blonde' explores Marilyn Monroe's pain and trauma, 'the real woman underneath'

BY LINDSEY BAHR

Associated Press

Andrew Dominik had been trying to make a movie about Marilyn Monroe for more than a decade.

The film wouldn't be a biopic, but an experiential portrait delving into the psyche of Marilyn Monroe and Norma Jeane. It kept falling apart, but the New Zealand native couldn't let it go. Then he found Ana de Armas, and, he said, the movie came alive.

"It was like love at first sight," Dominik said last week, before the world premiere of the film at the Venice International Film Festival. "When the right person walks through the door, you know it."

The nearly three-hour epic is based on a work of biographical fiction by Joyce Carol Oates and examines the public and private life of the Hollywood icon from her troubled childhood as Norma Jeane to her global stardom as Marilyn Monroe and various relationships along the way, from her mother (Julianne Nicholson) to her marriages to Joe DiMaggio (Bobby Cannavale) and Arthur Miller (Adrien Brody).

"I wasn't very aware of Marilyn. I was familiar with some of her movies, but for me it was a huge discovery and learning process," de Armas said. "We wanted to honor her in the re-creations where she was Marilyn, but I also had a lot of room to create the real woman underneath that character. It was about understanding and empathizing and connecting with her and her pain and her trauma."

She added: "If you put aside the movie star she is, she's just a woman, just like me. Same age. It was a project (for which) I knew I had to let myself open and go to places I knew were going to be uncomfortable and dark and vulnerable."

Filming began on Aug. 4, the

day Monroe died in 1962 at her home in Los Angeles at age 36. The timing was an accident and just the result of some delays. But it also was one of many times the filmmaker and his cast felt a somewhat mystical connection to the subject of their film. Though the story takes many liberties with the facts of her life with the intent of getting to the truth, the production did use real locations like the apartment she and her mother lived in when she was a child and the house she died in.

"It took on elements of being like a séance," Dominik said.

De Armas agreed that "there was something in the air" being in the same places Monroe had lived.

"I wasn't in character all the time. But I felt that. I was living that. I felt that heaviness and that weight in my shoulders. And I felt that sadness," de Armas said. "She was all I thought about. She was all I dreamed about. She was all I talked about ... It was beautiful."

"Blonde" has been hotly anticipated for some time: for taking on a figure like Monroe in an experimental way and for its rating, the first ever NC-17 movie that Netflix has made, a designation set by the Motion Picture Association that forbids those younger than 17 from watching the film in the theater. There's also curiosity

around de Armas' performance. The Cuba-born actor worked with a dialect coach for a year to prepare.

"Storytelling that is as brave as this is essential," her co-star Brody said.

And for him, de Armas did more than just play the role. She channeled the person.

"The first day of filming, I went home with this sense of awe that I had the privilege of actually working with Marilyn Monroe," Brody said. "It's very rare that I can say that someone transported me to another time and place."

For de Armas, it was about the challenge.

"I did this movie to push myself ... to make other people change their opinion about me," she said, through some tears. "This movie changed my life."

"Blonde" opens in select theaters Friday before becoming available on Netflix on Sept. 23. It's one of many Oscar hopefuls launching in Venice, and it is also up for the festival's awards on Saturday.

"It was a project (for which) I knew I had to let myself open and go to places I knew were going to be uncomfortable and dark and vulnerable."

Ana de Armas
on her semi-biographical film "Blonde"

Ana de Armas promotes the film "Blonde" Sept. 8 in Venice, Italy.

DOMENICO STINELLIS/AP



WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



A fresh coat of paint

Splatoon 3 improves on already successful formula

BY JONATHAN ELKER

The Washington Post

Splatoon 3 doesn't change the formula too much from the previous games. That's OK, because if you're familiar with it, you already know the formula is golden.

Instead of playing like a traditional online multiplayer shooter that pits players against one other, Splatoon puts players in teams of four and crowns the winning team based off of which team has more paint on the field. It leads to a unique, intriguing balancing act where

players constantly have to weigh whether it makes sense to attempt to shoot an opponent to temporarily remove them from the battlefield, or instead concentrate on laying down more paint.

What you'll notice right away if you're a fan of the series is that

the game's main mode, Turf War, plays very similarly to the previous two titles. This is the game's bread and butter, the PVP mode users will play most often. Splatoon 3 also offers three other modes: a single player mode, which offers light platforming and boss battles as in the Super Mario series; a co-op mode that is an extension of the second game's Salmon Run; and Anarchy Battles, a ranked mode that offers four different game rulesets and is accessible once a player hits Level 10 (or if a player has Splatoon 2 data on their Switch).

Understanding how to play the game and navigating its many modes can be a struggle if you're a new player. As a relative newcomer, it took me a moment to realize that the Single Player mode is called "The Crater" in the menu, and that the co-op mode can be found under the



Nintendo photos

Splatoon 3 offers four modes: Turf War, single player, co-op and Anarchy Battles.

"Grizzco" option. But it's easy to understand where to go and how things work within the modes with a little exploration and experimentation. And once you do, you're in for a treat.

As previously mentioned, the main mode, Turf War, is largely the same from the past games. You attack your opponents with paint, and to refill your gun, you hold onto a button to enter Squid Form, which allows your character to quickly swim through paint you've already laid on the battlefield. The cool thing about Squid Form is that you can travel with it horizontally or vertically, wherever your team's paint color is splattered on the environment. So it's easy to see why things can get complicated quickly — your opponent can prevent you from entering the much more mobile Squid Form by simply shooting their paint on top of yours.

The battles are extremely fast-paced, three-minute romps that never feel over-long. Various maps like Mahi-Mahi Resort and Inkblot Art Academy make a return, with subtle aesthetic changes fans will be sure to notice.

There are also multiple new movement options, like the Squid Surge, which lets

players climb walls quickly, and the Squid Roll, which you can perform by flicking the control stick to quickly change direction. These movement options feel smooth, and they force your opponents to be precise with their aim. New weapons also appear in Turf War, like the new Splatana Wiper, which is a hilarious approximation of a katana that, in reality, is just a windshield wiper.

The different weapon classes are the key to what makes Splatoon so fun. Each weapon has three qualities — how it normally fires, a secondary grenade ability you can use after you absorb a certain amount of paint (it's indicated by a white line on the ink meter that appears once you enter squid form), and a special attack you can unleash after hitting the highest threshold of paint on the field, indicated by a meter in the top right corner. Experimenting with the different weapons is key, as they not only offer different playstyles for downing opponents, but different methodologies for filling the field with paint. The Paint Roller's lack of range, for example, is made up for by its ability to move and paint the battlefield simultaneously.

Salmon Run Next Wave is the sequel to the co-op mode in Splatoon 2. In that game, the co-op mode was only available for short periods, but in Splatoon 3, the mode is available to players 24/7. That's a great thing, because Salmon Run could be an entire game in its own right.

The mode features three waves of enemies, and your goal is to collect Salmon Eggs, which get dropped by boss enemies known as Boss Salmonids. At the end of each game, players receive a certain amount of points, called Grizzco points, that they can exchange for various items in-mode, like cosmetics. This provides a welcome break from the PVP chaos of Turf War.

Then there's Anarchy Battle, a ranked mode that features four gameplay styles. The first is Clam Blitz, in which players race each other across maps to collect clams. Splat Zones is essentially Turf War but only within certain sections of the map. Tower Control is a King-of-the-Hill-style challenge with a hill that moves. Finally, there's Rainmaker, where players must escort a giant golden cannon deep within enemy territory to claim victory.

Splatoon 3's creativity also shines outside of the game modes themselves. The "menu" is actually a hub world called Splatville, and it's populated by avatars of other players. You can examine these players to see their gun and gear load-outs, then order them for yourself from a character named Murch. To access different modes, you navigate the city and enter the buildings that house each mode. You can also access the modes by opening the pause menu, which contain Easter eggs hidden throughout the city.

Splatoon 3 doesn't drastically change the formula because it really doesn't need to. Its modes are varied and offer truly different experiences that would shine on their own. If you're a newcomer looking to break into the series, you may be a little lost at first, but stick with it. It's an inky mess well worth your time.

Platform: Nintendo Switch

Online: splatoon.nintendo.com

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Finding 'back doors' on today's Continent

A fundamental part of enjoying travel in Europe is finding places that I call "back doors." When I first started traveling, back doors to me were Europe's undiscovered corners and untrampled towns that had, for various reasons, missed the modern parade (like Dingle, on Ireland's western edge, or Portugal's Salema, tucked away on the southern coast). But now, with more sophisticated travelers — and more travelers overall — worthwhile places rarely go undiscovered. And certain destinations that I've long raved about now suffer from congestion.

So how, in today's Europe, do I still find back doors? These days, my approach is less about discovering the undiscovered and more about using thoughtful travel to get beyond tourist traps, sidestep crowds, broaden perspectives and experience a part of Europe that most travelers miss. Here are some ways you can still do that.

Create a balanced itinerary. Many travelers go to crowded, touristy places — then complain about the crowds. Take Salzburg. I love this city, but it's overrun with tourists. Rather than complain about all the people, I celebrate them while enjoying its elegant beauty, Mozart sights, and Sound of Music scenery ... then get on a train and go two hours south to Hallstatt.

This beautiful little village doesn't have Salzburg's sightseeing, but it offers a break from the bustle.

Stay overnight. Many popular destinations have a tourist rush hour (generally, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.), when everybody floods in from nearby cities, cruise ships and tour buses.



Rick Steves

To enjoy these places without the crowds, spend the night. Even more so than Hallstatt, the historic Spanish city of Toledo, on a high rocky perch just south of Madrid, is mobbed with day-trippers. But after they leave, locals push away the postcard racks and come out for their paseo — and the real Toledo emerges.

Find lesser-visited alternatives. Many travel dreams are created by the tourism industry, which tend to pump up the clichés of each country. For Germany, it's castles, beer and the Rhine River. This area, while pretty, also has lots of traffic, train noise, commercialism and bus tourism. But nearby, you can have a similar and quieter experience along the Mosel River. The misty Mosel is what some visitors hope the Rhine will be — peaceful, sleepy, romantic villages slipped between



DOMINIC ARIZONA BONUCELLI/Rick Steves' Europe

Austria's lakeside Hallstatt is a peaceful alternative to the tourist hustle of Salzburg.

steep vineyards and the river.

Visit secondary sights. Many travelers miss worthwhile, less-known attractions. While every tourist in Paris descends on the Louvre and Orsay, places like the Rodin Museum, with a spectacular sculpture garden, or the Cluny Museum, with its mysterious "Lady and the Unicorn" tapestries, are positively peaceful.

See today's Europe. In big cities, it's worth leaving the old town to visit the revamped business districts, such as London's Canary Wharf or Paris' La Defense.

Lately, I've been enjoying the less glamorous second cities, such as Antwerp (Belgium), Marseille (France), Liverpool (England) and Hamburg (Germany). A lot of

money and effort are being put into revitalizing these once-depressed, former Industrial Age powers, giving them an energy that you don't find in other cities.

Join the locals. Visit the weekly market and buy fruit from the farmer. Attend an evensong service in England. Go to a sporting event — soccer in Spain or hurling in Ireland. Join the old retired French guys in a game of petanque. Visit a Budapest thermal bath.

Europe may be crowded, but it provides endless joy if you know where to find those offbeat, back-door nooks.

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.

Fun, floats await at these seasonal European parades

Love a parade? You're not alone, particularly in Europe. Religious holidays, significant dates in history or the crops of the season provide inspiration for countless displays of costumed marchers, decked-out floats, brass bands and other entertainers. Here are just a few such events sure to add a splash of color to the autumn season.

Tiel, Netherlands: The term "corso" refers to a parade made up of floats decorated with flowers of the season or other organic matter. Each float is brought to life through the efforts of volunteers, and the floats compete against one another to be named most beautiful by a jury.

Of the some 30 corsos staged throughout the Netherlands, the event held in Tiel stands out for its use of fruits and vegetables as the decor in its floats. The chance to see this unique display comes on Sept. 17, with separate parades at 1:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Entry tickets cost 8 euro. Online: fruitcorso.nl

Munich, Germany: Bavaria's most famous party, the Oktoberfest, always starts at noon on a late September Saturday, when the mayor taps open the first keg and proclaims "O' zapft is!" The day following this opening ceremony is no less traditional, and so, on Sept. 18, Munich's residents and visitors alike will once again take to the streets to witness the "Trachten- und Schützenzug," or Costume and Riflemen's parade.

Starting at 10 a.m., a parade made up of roughly 9,000 participants clad in traditional costumes will make its way through downtown Munich to the Theresienwiese, or Wiesn, the grounds where Oktoberfest takes place. Elegant carriages holding local VIPs and horse-drawn brewers' wagons are part of the colorful procession first staged in 1835 in honor of the silver wedding anniversary of King Ludwig I and Therese of Bavaria.

The 4-mile-long procession sets off from the Max II



Thomas Niedermuller

Harnessed goats make their way through the streets of Stuttgart, Germany, during the Cannstatter Volksfest. This year's event takes place Sept. 25.

monument on Maximilianstraße. Pay for grandstand seating, or watch from the road for free. Online: tinyurl.com/523jrvrb

Stuttgart, Germany: Just like its larger cousin, the Cannstatter Volksfest kicks off festivities with a historical parade. From 11 a.m. on Sept. 25, a 2-mile-long procession of lavishly decorated horse-drawn brewery wagons, groups in traditional costume, bands, historical militias, farm animals and others will make its way through the narrow streets of Bad Cannstatt and on to the Wasen, the site of beery celebrations through Oct. 9. Entry to the parade and festival is free. Online: tinyurl.com/4yhwe7ky

Neuchâtel, Switzerland: The Fête des Vendanges, or Grape Harvest Festival, attracts hundreds of thousands of wine lovers to this French-speaking part of the country. From Sept. 23-25, visitors will sample various whites and reds, including the region's specialties of Oeil de Perdrix,

Pinot Noir and Chasselas. A highlight of festivities is always Sunday's floral procession, in which some 55 floats bedecked with carnations, dahlias and other blooms makes its way through town. A festival bracelet for 10 Swiss Francs (about \$10.25) entitles its wearer to a standing-room parade-viewing spot and serves as the means of payment for food and drink. The procession gets underway at 3 p.m. Online: fete-des-vendanges.ch

Barcelona, Spain: Each year, the city bids farewell to its long hot summer with large-scale celebrations known as La Mercè, set for Sept. 23-26 in 2022. The festival, held in honor of the patron saint Mare de Deu de la Mercè, brings action to the streets in the form of human-pyramid building displays and the staging of Correfocs, fire runs in which spark-emitting dragons and firework-hurling devils interact with the crowds. Protective eyewear and clothing is a must. The Gigantes parade, in which huge effigies of kings, queens and other noble figures are paraded through the streets, is popular with the younger set. Online: barcelona.cat/lamerce/en

Karlstejn, Czech Republic: The looming Gothic Karlštejn Castle, founded in 1348 by Holy Roman Emperor-elect and King of Bohemia Charles IV, makes a majestic setting to a wine fest with plenty of historical touches, from medieval music to fire artists. On Sept. 24-25, costumed reenactors portraying King Charles IV and his entourage make their way through the site starting at 2:30 p.m. Online tickets cost 200 Czech Koruna (about \$8.15) for entry on Saturday and 150 Koruna on Sunday. Those under 15 enter free. Online: karlstejnskevinobrani.cz

Neustadt, Germany: The city of Neustadt along the German Wine Road hosts a wine fest that reaches its festive peak with the staging of the country's largest vintner's parade. At 1:30 p.m. on Oct. 9, festive floats, costumed marchers and marching bands take over. Admission is free. The wine festival itself runs Sept. 23 through Oct. 10. Online: tinyurl.com/5xt6vnpr

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY WILL HAWKES/For The Washington Post

The Löwenbräukeller beer garden in Stiglmaierplatz opened in 1883, when Munich was the “City of Beer and Art,” and later hosted Nazi meetings in World War II.

Lessons from Bavarian beer gardens

Drink local brews with the locals to get a sense of the customs, history and culture of the German state

BY WILL HAWKES
Special to The Washington Post

The young man at the beer garden in Munich has his hands full. In one, he holds a liter-size stoneware mug, foam spilling untidily over its rim; with the other, he’s carefully transferring a small, not entirely compliant child from a stroller to a long wooden bench. It’s just after 5 p.m., and this beer garden, Paulaner Am Nockherberg, is filling up. Chestnut trees cast shade over dozens of long, slim tables. Six middle-aged friends settle in a sun-dappled spot; a pensioner in a fedora and sports jacket browses the local newspaper, a glass of pale lager close at hand; and a couple, fresh from a jog, clutch plastic trays as they wait at the food hatch, behind a man with a huge pretzel hanging from one wrist.

When the warmer months arrive, Bavarians head for beer gardens. This is true across the state — including Franconia in the north and the Alps in the south — but there are local differences, too. Biergarten culture is fascinating and rich: There’s nowhere better to get a handle on local customs and conventions, what is changing and what is not.

SEE BAVARIA ON PAGE 21



Franconian beer gardens, such as the Eichhorn Keller, are small and homey.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Bavaria: Each southern region has a unique atmosphere

FROM PAGE 20

These are places where a distinctive Bavarian blend of permissiveness and prohibition is on display, where Bavaria comes to let it all hang out — up to a point. I've been in dozens over the past decade-plus, enjoying not only the world's best long drink but also my favorite pastime: people-watching. If you want to know Bavaria — its culture, history and people — I recommend that you start in a beer garden. Here's what I've learned:

Napoleon's decision

Is Franconia part of Bavaria? The map says so, and it has been, officially speaking, since Napoleon gave it to Bavaria in the early 19th century. But plenty of Franco-nians would demur, and a visit to a Franconian keller (a reference to the cellars underneath where lager was once aged) suggests they have a point.

The most obvious difference is the beer, which — not always, but often — is a touch opaque, varies in color from pale amber to dark brown and comes in half-liter steinkrugs. (A *seidla*, locals call them.) This is Kellerbier, an unfiltered, unpasteurized lager served softly carbonated. It's rustic, rich and full-flavored, a world away from the manicured pale beers of Munich.

Franconia's kellers operate on a homier scale, too: They're smaller, the beer portions are half-liters, prices are lower. Upper Franconia (Lower Franconia is wine country) has about 200 mostly small breweries, an echo of its hyper-fragmented geography (*kleinstaaterei*, or small-state-ery) during the Holy Roman Empire, when the region was divided along religious and aristocratic lines.

The exception that proves the rule is the Kellerwald, a forested hillside north of the town of Forchheim, with 23 kellers. But although it's large, it has a cozy feel.

The last time I visited, I chatted with a local family over a mug of kellerbier made by Neder, one of the town's four breweries. When we'd finished, the mother turned to her family and said, her head shaking in slight disbelief, "Ein Engländer in Forchheim!" You'd have thought I'd come from the moon, not a \$40 flight from London.

Backyards can be beer gardens

If you think Franconia is quaint, you should visit the Oberpfalz. (It's the region's German name, more elegant than its English counterpart, the "Upper Palatinate.") This is a sparsely populated region of forests and lakes, a place of dreamy landscapes and laid-back people, where, on a sunny day, you can imagine yourself in 1900.

That's partly because, for much of its postwar history, this was a border region, and, although the Cold War barrier to neighboring Bohemia fell more than 30 years ago, it still has a feel of having been slightly forgotten.

The brewing tradition, meanwhile, dates to the Middle Ages. Five towns have active communal brewhouses, available to those who own homes with brewing rights. (Invariably the old ones are close to the town center.) This is Zoigl, which also entails the serving of beer in people's homes — or, when the sun shines, their backyards. These are the most rustic beer gardens of all, open for a few days every month or so, patronized by locals. The beer is variable in quality, but the welcome is warm.

At Zoiglstube Lugert in Mitterteich, I was invited into the cellar, where co-owner Hans was fermenting a fresh batch of lager; at Fiedlschneider in Windischeschenbach, Jürgen Köllner laughed when I said I had come to try his beer. (I'm not sure why. It was delicious, bitter and spritz.)

There was a male choir singing at Fiedlschneider the night I was there, their voices soaring and swooping.

I asked Köllner whether this was normal.

"Oh, no," he told me. "They're from the north of Germany. They've been traveling around, and this is their final stop."

Always time for a few more gulps

Munich's beer gardens have a checkered history. The Löwenbräukeller in Stiglmaierplatz, for example, hosted Nazi meetings in the early years of the Second World



WILL HAWKES/For The Washington Post

A beer at the Augustiner-Keller, which is one of Munich's largest and oldest beer halls, dating back to 1812.

If you go

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Kellerwald

Address: Auf den Kellern, Forchheim, Germany

Online: bit.ly/kellerwald-germany

Twenty-three kellers, countless chestnut trees, dozens of beers: The Kellerwald is the apotheosis of Franconian beer culture. The only time all the kellers are open at once is during Annafest, typically an 11-day festival in late July when beer is served only in one-liter glasses. Try a different time during keller season (April to October) for calmer kellers and great value. One warning: Opening hours can be unreliable, so prepare to be flexible. Beer pours about \$4 per half-liter.

Löwenbräukeller

Address: Nymphenburger Strasse 2, Munich

Phone: 011-49-895-260-21

Online: loewenbraekeller.com/en

The biergarten runs alongside the main building, with most tables shaded by chestnut trees. A half-liter of Helles or Dunkel costs about \$5. There are two sections to the biergarten: You can choose self-service and bring your own food, or you can be served at the table. Open daily, 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Mains from about \$9.

Augustiner-Keller

Address: Arnulfstrasse 52, Munich

Phone: 011-49-89-594-393

Online: augustinerkeller.de

With 5,000 seats, the Augustiner-Keller is one of Munich's largest beer halls — and is widely cited as perhaps the oldest there, too, dating back to 1812. The beer served here is the brewery's export lager, Edelstoff, in one-liter pours. There's a section for those who prefer to be served at the table; expect to pay a little more for beer. Beer garden open daily, 11 a.m. until midnight. Mains from about \$9. Edelstoff pours about \$8.

Augustiner Bräu Salzburg

Address: Lindhofstrasse 7, Salzburg, Austria

Phone: 011-43-662-431-246

Online: augustinerbier.at

A short walk northwest of Salzburg's Old Town, Augustiner offers an Austrian twist on a classically Bavarian experience. Open Monday through Friday, 3 to 11 p.m., and Saturday, Sunday and public holidays, 2:30 to 11 p.m. Half-liter pours about \$3.50.

Will Hawkes

War, until a Royal Air Force bombing raid severely damaged half the building in 1944. Other beer halls and gardens, such as the Hofbräukeller in Wiener Platz, can tell similar stories.

This is not, though, the Löwenbräukeller's only history of note. It opened in 1883, when Munich was the "City of Beer and Art," a glorious moment of growth and cultural richness. Its appearance reflects that, even if its iconic stone lion, gazing moodily into the middle distance from its perch above the entrance, was added in 1911.

It is the place to come for Munich's cherished biergarten traditions. Dunkel, a delicious, toasty-licorice reminder of Munich's largely forgotten passion for dark lagers, is listed alongside its paler, more popular cousin Helles; you can bring your own food; staff are dressed in full Bavarian garb; and a good meal finishes with a Schnitt.

This is a small pour of beer — perhaps two or three gulps — served as the last glass before heading off. Earlier this year, I saw a group of pensioners finish a long lunch at Löwenbräukeller — pork knuckle and bratwurst — with a round of Schnitts. The perfect option for when you're not quite ready for the fun to be over.

What's old is new — and fashionable

You couldn't call Augustiner a cult brewery, given it typically pumps out more than 39 million gallons a year, and its flagship pale lager, Lagerbier Hell, is cherished not only in Munich, but also in Berlin and London. But if the crowd at the Augustiner-Keller on a warm May evening is anything to go by, it's definitely got something.

Is it the taste? The Edelstoff (a stronger "export" pale lager, 5.6% alcohol compared with Lagerbier Hell's 5.2) is very nice, but the beers made at Hofbräu are equally good.

Is it the history? Augustiner is Munich's oldest brewery, founded in 1812, which can't hurt.

Perhaps it's Augustiner's reputation for eschewing marketing, although given that the brewery's logo is plastered all over Munich — on beer halls, pubs, restaurants and the brown bottles that are the overwhelming street beer of choice here — I'm not sure.

I suspect it has much to do with the brewery's independence; of Munich's six major producers, it's the last not to be owned by a multinational company or, as in Hofbräu's case, the state government.

At the Augustiner-Keller, the young woman pouring Edelstoff from a wooden barrel into glass after glass is a frenzy of calm effort; of the 5,000 seats available, only a handful are unfilled. Glasses crash together; laughter fills the air. It's alive with youthful vim, but there are limits.

"No stag or hen nights allowed in the Augustiner-Keller," a sign close to the northern entrance reads, in German and English.

Salzburg is Bavarian, beer-wise

Compared with Franconia, Salzburg would seem to be a clear-cut case: It's definitely in Austria.

But in terms of beer, it's as Bavarian as they come. The city has a huge and historic brewery, Stiegl, pumping out superb Helles; a wheat-beer brewery, Die Weisse; and delicious Pils brewed by the nearby Trumer.

The jewel in the crown, though, is Augustiner (which is unrelated to its Munich namesake). This may be the best beer garden of them all. Here, the chestnut canopy seems thicker and more verdant, while circular green tables make an elegant change from the norm. The food stalls have offerings such as radishes and huge hunks of roast pork. On a summer afternoon before the crowds arrive, it's utterly serene, a reflection of Salzburg's wedding-cake grace.

The beer itself is a masterpiece of toasty balance, with a pouring ritual to match: First you pick a stoneware mug from a shelf — liter or half-liter — before rinsing it for cleanliness and temperature. You then pay for your beer and get a ticket, which you take to a server, who fills the mug.

It sounds like a hassle, but it's actually quite fun — uniquely Bavarian fun, albeit not quite in Bavaria.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

A seaside feast for the senses

Boardwalk Café has flavorful fish, a view of where it came from

BY KYLE ALVAREZ
Stars and Stripes

My wife and I grew up on the beaches of Miami and whenever we get a little homesick and miss the saltwater air, we venture down to the English port town of Felixstowe.

The Felixstowe Pier is a lovely location that has a tasty restaurant right by the water called the Boardwalk Café Bar. Being that we wanted to make the hourlong trip from RAF Mildenhall to take in the beachside view, it seemed the perfect place to grab some lunch and enjoy the sounds of the ocean.

We have two kids who enjoyed being outside in the fresh air and my daughter loved pointing out all the boats that she saw passing by as we walked up to the restaurant.

The Boardwalk, while serving a standard English menu of sandwiches, burgers and fish, really delivers on making the meals very delicious and full of flavor — making it a solid recommendation if you happen to be in the area.

We knew we wanted to sit outside and chose a table on the pier facing the ocean. It was a beautiful sunny day but cloudy enough for the sun not to be overbearing.

I ordered the beer-battered cod. It's a variation on the English fish and chips and, boy, was it tasty. Frying the fish in beer batter made it lighter and fluffier than the staple fish and chips I commonly find at other places. I ordered sweet potato fries and some peas to round out the meal



The beer-battered fish rests on a bed of sweet potato fries near a side of peas at the Boardwalk Café Bar.



Boardwalk Café Bar

Address: Felixstowe Pier, UnderCliff Road West, Felixstowe, IP11 2AB, United Kingdom

Prices: Main dishes mostly from 13 to 16 pounds; lighter dishes for 8 pounds.

Hours: Bar is open Mon.-Wed. 9:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m.; Thurs. 9:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; Fri. 9:30 a.m.-midnight; Sat. 9 a.m.-midnight; Sun. 9 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Food service is open Mon.-Wed. 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thurs. and Friday 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat. and Sun. 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

Information: Telephone: (44) 01394 288029; Online: theboardwalkcafe-bar.co.uk



The Boardwalk Café Bar is located on the Felixstowe Pier in Felixstowe, England, an hourlong trip from RAF Mildenhall.

and it all hit the spot.

My wife ordered the grated hard goat cheese open-face sandwich on sourdough bread, which she enjoyed. Neither of us said a

word for five minutes, which says something about how good the food was. My 4-year-old daughter had the kids mac and cheese and my 1-year-old son



An open-face sandwich with a side salad and potato chips.



The chicken tenders from The Boardwalk's children's menu.



The kids' mac and cheese comes with a small salad.

munched on some fried chicken tenders with peas and fries.

"Why is the mac and cheese so good here?," asked my daughter with enthusiasm as she took a big bite of food. A good indicator she was enjoying herself, I'd say. My son can't talk yet, but he kept reaching for food until he was full. Safe to say the Boardwalk Café has the approval of the Alvarez kids, which doesn't happen at every place we go. It is usually a hit with one of them, but rarely both.

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'Blue Zones' around world offer clues to healthy diet and long life

BY NANCY CLANTON

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

There are five "Blue Zones" around the world, and the people who live in them are 10 times likelier than Americans to reach age 100. The name comes from blue circles researchers drew on the map when identifying them.

"According to research published in *Nutrients* in May 2018, people living in these regions also enjoy lower rates of chronic disease than those living elsewhere, and their diet is believed to be a major component of why," *Everyday Health* wrote.

Blue Zone diets are based on local and regional offerings while limiting processed foods, added

sugars, meat and dairy, and focusing more on plant-based meals. While residents of the five areas tend to live longer and be healthier, *Everyday Health* reports, each place is different.

Okinawa, Japan: Older Okinawans rely on gardens, which not only provide fresh produce but also exercise and stress relief.

Sardinia, Italy: Sardinians limit meat consumption to Sundays and special events. The rest of the time they eat whole grains, beans, vegetables and fruit. They also indulge in a glass or two of red wine each day.

Nicoya, Costa Rica: Nicoya residents tend to eat a light dinner earlier than Americans do. In

addition, older residents eat a lot of squash, corn and beans.

Ikaria, Greece: Residents of Ikaria subscribe to the Mediterranean diet, which was deemed the best diet of 2022. As Greek Orthodox Christians, fasts are part of their religious practices.

Loma Linda, Calif.: Loma Linda is home to a community of Seventh-day Adventists. Its longest living residents are vegetarians or pescatarians who eat little sugar, salt and refined grains.

Blue Zone diets aren't just about what you eat, however. They're also about how you eat.

"One of the principles is to eat until you're satisfied rather than completely full," registered diet-

itian Samantha Cassetty, co-author of "Sugar Shock," told *Everyday Health*.

According to a 2016 study published in the *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*, experts believe nine traits are responsible for the health and longevity of Blue Zone residents, and three of those pertain to diet.

■ **The 80% rule:** In Blue Zones, people tend to stop eating when they're 80% full. They also have their bigger meals early and lighter fare later in the day.

■ **Plant slant:** Blue Zone residents focus on fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains. They tend to avoid meat or eat it only on special occasions.

■ **Wine at 5:** Although the research on the health benefits of even moderate amounts of alcohol is controversial, most people living in Blue Zones enjoy one to two glasses of wine daily.

Although Blue Zone diets are more about healthy living than losing weight, they are based on whole foods, which "tend to have fewer calories than processed forms of carbohydrates, protein or fats," Dr. Selvi Rajagopal, an internal medicine and obesity specialist with Johns Hopkins, told *Everyday Health*. "So (this diet) tends to help people maintain a healthier weight because overall, calorically, they're not taking in as much."

STARS *at* Sea



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CELESTYAL CRUISES

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Palembang for just a few bucks

Islam and golf coexist at the nearly 100-year-old course in Indonesia

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

If a loudspeaker that suddenly blares “Allahu akbar” will interrupt your swing, you may find the oldest golf course on Sumatra a challenge.

Palembang Golf Club — also known as Kenten Hill — is an 18-hole, par-72 public course in the second largest city on Sumatra, the third largest of Indonesia’s islands.

The 173-acre course dates to the Dutch colonial era. It opened in 1926 and was originally run by the Stanvac Oil Co.

A round here will cost you the equivalent of about \$20 for green fees. It’s mandatory to hire a caddy with a cart who will want a \$20 tip. You can rent some mismatched, half-decent clubs for another \$20.

The venue’s 6,324 yards of fairways lead to spacious, sculpted greens. They don’t play very fast, but that’s understandable in a place deluged by monsoon rains.

Large bunkers and water hazards make every hole interesting. Streams and ponds on the course are filled with brown water that guarantees wayward shots won’t be retrieved by players unless they’re willing to dive in and swim around in the murk.

Quite a few locals do that for a living. You’ll occasionally see their shoes and clothes spread out on the edge of fairways while they forage. You can buy a bag of about nine recycled balls at the clubhouse for the equivalent of a few dollars.

You’ll also find folks fishing for actual fish in the streams.

On the QT

Directions: About a 30-minute drive from central Palembang. Jalan AKBP Cek Agus, 8 Ilir, Ilir Timur II, 8 Ilir, Kec. Ilir Tim. II, Kota Palembang, Sumatera Selatan 30163, Indonesia.

Times: Opens at 6 a.m. daily.

Cost: A round costs about \$60, including green fees, clubs and caddy.

Food: A cafe in the onsite clubhouse serves local food and cold drinks.

Information: +62 711-714-620

Seth Robson

There’s a mosque right next to the 15th green and 16th tee box. Nearly nine in 10 people in the country of 275 million citizens are Muslim.

The Islamic call to prayer that echoes periodically from the mosque’s loudspeakers is a reminder for foreign visitors that they’re not on their home course.

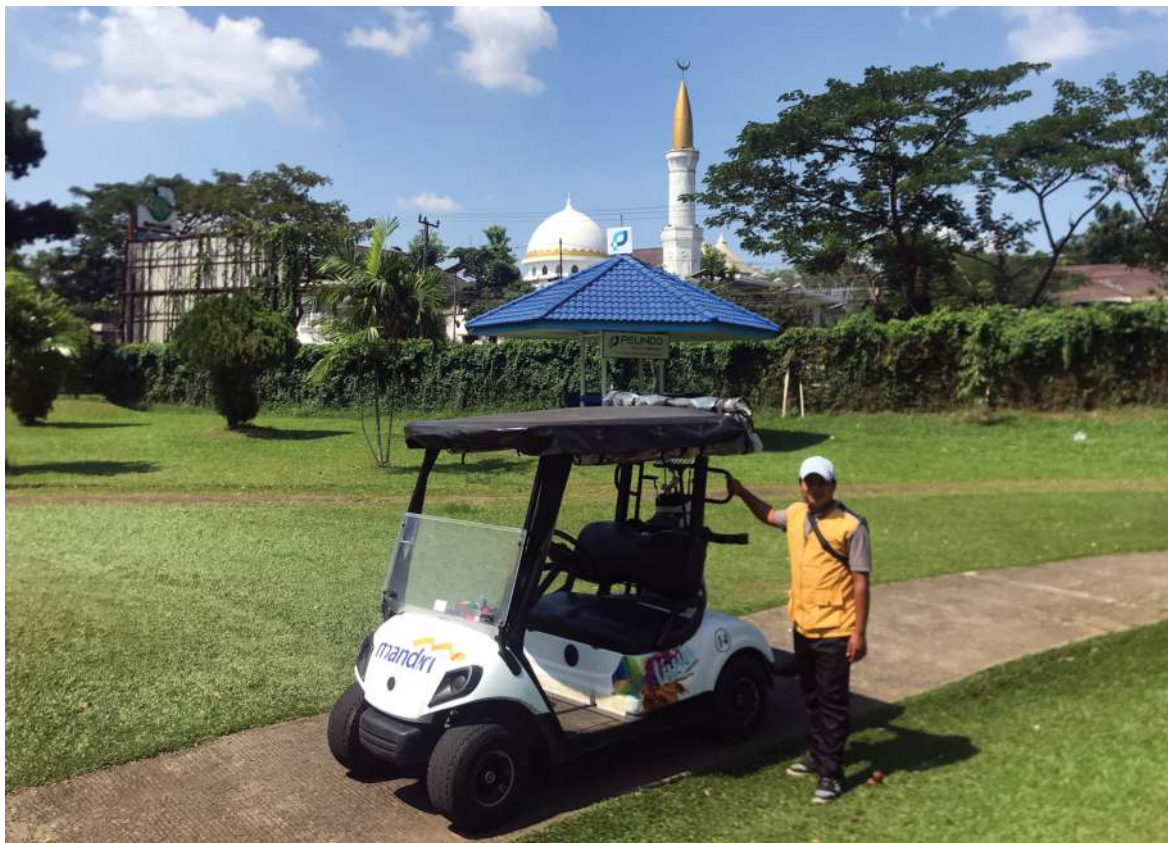
If you’ve spent time with the U.S. military in Iraq, you might have had a similar feeling hitting golf balls at a makeshift on-base Morale, Welfare and Recreation driving range.

Saddam Hussein’s palaces would have made excellent clubhouses if anyone had bothered to build golf courses next to them.

Palembang Golf Club has its own driving range as well as a large clubhouse with a restaurant, pro shop and changing rooms.

Most of the staff and members don’t speak English, but they’re happy to welcome visitors.

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Palembang Golf Club is an 18-hole, par-72 public course in the second largest city on Sumatra, the third largest of Indonesia’s islands. The club’s 6,324 yards of fairways lead to spacious, sculpted greens. They don’t play very fast, but that’s understandable in a place deluged by monsoon rains.

Left: Locals sell snacks and drinks on the course.

PHOTOS BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

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WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Rub elbows with Mario and Luigi at 8 Bit Café

Retro consoles, '80s-themed drinks await at central Tokyo hangout

BY KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

Among the flashy neon lights of Tokyo's Shinjuku district lies a café where guests can play 1980s video games while they sip on video-game-themed drinks.

8 Bit Café is near a slew of restaurants and can be quite hard to find. Thankfully, smartphone maps make life much easier for people trying to find it.

Guests have to take the stairs, which are in a steep and narrow staircase that leads to the fifth floor and the 8-bit world.

Inside they will find retro 1980s-themed game consoles and figurines. Mario, Luigi and Yoshi from the Super Mario franchise are on top of a mirror in the bar.

I sat at the arcade table, which has the 1982 game Xevious, a shooter developed by Namco. The player controls a flying attack craft, the Solvalou, to destroy the Xevious forces who are plotting to take over Earth. It cost

50 yen to play.

Gamers can also play Pico Park, an action puzzle game made for two to eight players on a large Nintendo Game Boy. I played with my friend on battle mode, in which players compete to see who can jump the highest; or a region battle, where players hit a ball into the opposing player's territory to claim that territory; a jump battle, where players dodge incoming cannon balls; or a stopwatch battle, where players compete to see who is fastest on the button.

My friend won almost all the battles, but it was still a fun game to play on an easy gaming system.

8 Bit Café can hold around 30 people. If it becomes too crowded, guests may have to share their table with fellow patrons.

The cover charge to sit at the bar is 500 yen, or about \$3.75. Guests also must order at least one drink every 1½ hours. The menu is offered in English.



The drinks are quite affordable compared to the area bars; cocktails range from 600 to 700 yen. The café also offers quick snacks for 500 yen, including pickled vegetables and mixed nuts. Dessert foods for 500 yen include cheesecake, chocolate walnut cake, custard pudding and vanilla ice cream with rum or Bailey's.

A huge video-themed cocktail menu includes the Galactica Magnum, named after the Galactica franchise; the Princess Peach Temptation, named after the Super Mario character; the Ra's Mirror, named after a Dragan Quest item; and the Donkey Kong.

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PHOTOS BY KELLY AGEE/Stars and Stripes

Mario, Luigi and Yoshi are among the many figurines watching over patrons at 8 Bit Café, a retro video game bar in Shinjuku, Tokyo.



Xevious is a tabletop arcade game you can play at 8 Bit Café in central Tokyo.

8 Bit Café

Location: 3-8-9 Shinjuku, 5F, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo (Q Building)
Directions: An 8-minute walk from Shinjuku Station via the Southeast Exit.

Hours: 7 p.m. to midnight, every day except Tuesdays.

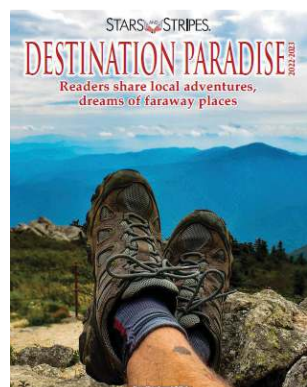
Prices: There's a 500-yen seating fee. Most drinks cost between 600 and 700 yen. Appetizers are 500 yen.

Dress: Casual
Information: Online: facebook.com/shinjyuku8bitcafe

Kelly Agee



Among the flashy neon lights of Tokyo's Shinjuku district lies 8 Bit Café, where guests can play 1980s video games while they sip on game-themed drinks.



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STARS AND STRIPES

WEEKEND: FOOD



SCOTT SUCHMAN/For The Washington Post

Pumpkin spice-flavored products are proliferating. “You are bound to run into something pumpkin-spiced — maybe pancakes or a seasonal drink,” says Melanie Zanoza Bartelme, who tracks food trends for market-research firm Mintel.

Pumpkin spice in everything nice

No longer just a trend, products flavored or scented with the autumn-inspired blend now an intrinsic part of the season

BY EMILY HEIL
The Washington Post

In late August, Starbucks began selling its seasonal pumpkin spice lattes, an annual event that has become the symbolic starting pistol of the crisp, floating-leaf, cable-knit autumn of our collective imagination. Never mind that, back in the right-side-up world, summer sweat was still rolling down our backs.

But something feels different this year as we peruse the aisles of the grocery store, already laden with an ever-expanding assortment of cookie dough and cocoa mixes and candles scented with clove and allspice. The vibe, it seems, has shifted for pumpkin spice. Or rather, it seems pumpkin spice is no longer a recognizable vibe. Instead, it's just inevitable. Like death, taxes and new Taylor Swift albums, pumpkin spice is now merely a part of the human condition.

Throw pumpkin spice into the pile of things that once served as cultural markers but now read as neutral: Denim and tattoos, for example, were once reserved for the counterculture, but now they're just as at home at the PTA as in the demi-monde. Punk music now sells minivans.

So goes it with pumpkin spice, which used to be seen as part of a lifestyle choice, a signifier of the flavor's most ardent acolytes: women (mostly white, mostly with flawless highlights) who loved brunch and cozy sweaters and pick-your-own apple orchards and painted signs in their kitchens reminding them to dream. Now pumpkin spice season arrives like any other meteorological phenomenon. It's here for everyone, like it or not.

“You are bound to run into something

pumpkin-spiced — maybe pancakes or a seasonal drink,” says Melanie Zanoza Bartelme, who tracks food trends for market-research firm Mintel. “You can't avoid it, so you don't have to be embarrassed about enjoying it. It's here — it's all around us.”

Emily Contois, an assistant professor at the University of Tulsa who studies food and media, likened the flavor's mainstreaming to that of Uggs, those fluffy-lined boots that make their wearers look like they have baked potatoes for feet. Ultra-trendy in the late 1990s and early aughts, they were soon written off by the fashion elite only to be ironically revived every so often. Now, they're just another brand.

“It was either, ‘Oh, that's a bubble that's going to burst,’ or ‘We're never wearing these again,’” she says. “But then these boots became part of our lives.”

Some cynics inevitably still scorn those who embrace #pumpkinspiceSZN with Instagram gusto, but along with the mockery on social media, there's another strain of thinking that seems borne of the near-universal slog of the last few years: Maybe just ... let it go? If a PSL isn't your thing, just order your regular latte. Or don't. Do you.

As one proponent of that attitude warned on Twitter on the day of Starbucks' PSL debut: “Y'ALL, listen to me. There will be NO pumpkin spice slander today. Today we are going to let people enjoy things!!!!”

“Who cares if someone is excited about a Taylor Swift album or a pumpkin spice latte?” another wrote. “Let people feel joy and leave them alone.”

It's not your imagination — pumpkin

spice products really are proliferating. They accounted for more than \$231 million in sales over the last year, according to NielsenIQ data, which is nearly 27% higher than that of the year before. This season, Oreo is offering a limited-time pumpkin spice flavor for the first time since 2017.

The flavor is especially concentrated in the breakfast category, which makes sense given its barista-borne origins. You can find it in cereals (including Special K, Frosted Mini-Wheats and Cheerios), baked goods (Thomas' bagels and English muffins and Pillsbury Grands) and yogurts (Chobani, Oui and Siggi's). Coffee creamers and cold brews abound. In my late-August, Washington-area shopping rounds, I didn't see any of the novelty products that marked the heyday of peak pumpkin spice. No Spam, for instance, or potato chips, which I took as a sign of the flavor's journey past trendiness.

No one bases their personality on preferring strawberry ice cream over chocolate, or ascribes a persona to those who do. So how did pumpkin spice assume its own spot on the list of flavors one can enjoy without making a big thing out of it? Let's go back for a moment to the olden days of 2003, when Starbucks introduced its seasonal latte spiked with the warming flavors of baking spices. As its popularity spread on then-nascent social media feeds, “pumpkin spice became the ultimate symbol of basicness,” as my colleague Maura Judkis noted in 2017. Eventually the basic Beckys of the world embraced it as their totem, celebrated on T-shirts and mugs with sayings like “Leggings, boots & pumpkin spice.”

Nearly two decades later, we're in

pumpkin spice's fourth wave, where one can order a pumpkin-spiced cold brew without a side of baggage or irony — thanks to those early pioneers, of course, but also thanks to the vagaries of human nature and the food marketers who understand it. It seems there was an opportunity for an early-fall flavor, lodged somewhere between the bright fruits of summer and the looming array of holiday tastes, from peppermint to gingerbread.

Nature — and capitalism — abhors a vacuum.

Having a flavor to gravitate to when summer is ending can be comforting, Bartelme says. “It's sort of compensation — pumpkin spice says, ‘Warm me up, hold me in your coffee arms and tell me everything is going to be OK.’”

Contois offers a grimmer explanation for that seasonal appeal. As climate change results in summers of record heat and violent storms, she notes, the idea of autumn that pumpkin spice's flavors conjure is ever more reassuring.

“We have these brutal summers that are uncomfortable and dangerous, and so we're yearning for the cool air and crunchy leaves,” she says. “That yearning is real.”

A more straightforward reason it has caught on? Well, pumpkin spice, with its blend of cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, ginger and allspice, is actually pretty good.

In short, it's perfectly acceptable to enjoy pumpkin spice as a bit of popular monoculture in these fractious times.

I'm not alone in that thought. Recently, Bartelme spotted a service station near her home offering “pumpkin spice oil changes,” and it made her smile. “We're all in on the joke now.”

WEEKEND: BOOKS

More than one path for military spouses

‘Sub Wife,’ ‘Dispatches from the Cowgirl’ show there is no single copy-and-paste version of a Navy wife

By **TERRI BARNES**
Special to Stars and Stripes

Military spouses have many common experiences, but they navigate them in uncommon and individual ways. Two new memoirs, “Sub Wife: A Memoir from the Homefront” by Samantha Otto Brown and “Dispatches from the Cowgirl: Through the Looking Glass with a Navy Diplomat’s Wife” by Julie Tully, beautifully illustrate the spectrum of military spouse life. Both authors are Navy wives, both married to submariners, yet the reader who expects their stories to be alike will be surprised and enlightened.

“Sub Wife” is an introspective and emotional journey that begins at a crisis point in the author’s first deployment (“underway” in submariner terms) as a military spouse. With sometimes painful honesty, Brown writes about coming to terms with her husband’s dedication to military service and the cost it exacts from each of them. She uses the imagery of water and waves to good effect, describing her childhood dreams of becoming a mermaid. An avid swimmer, Brown contrasts her love of being in the water with dark fears of losing her husband to the ocean or losing herself to the rising tide of his career.

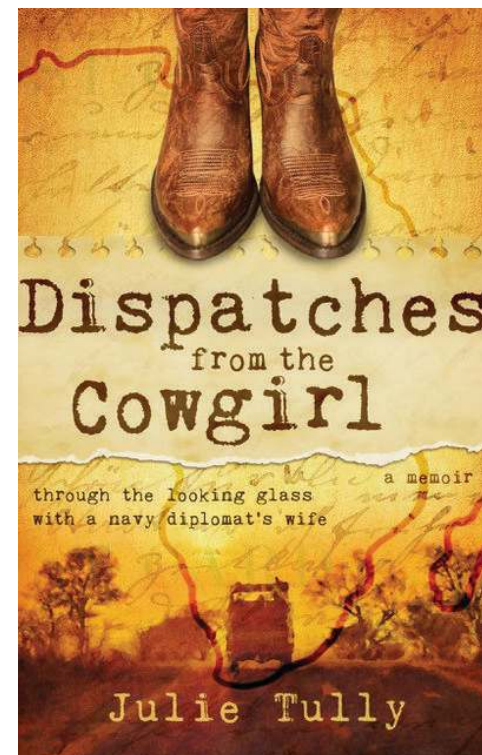
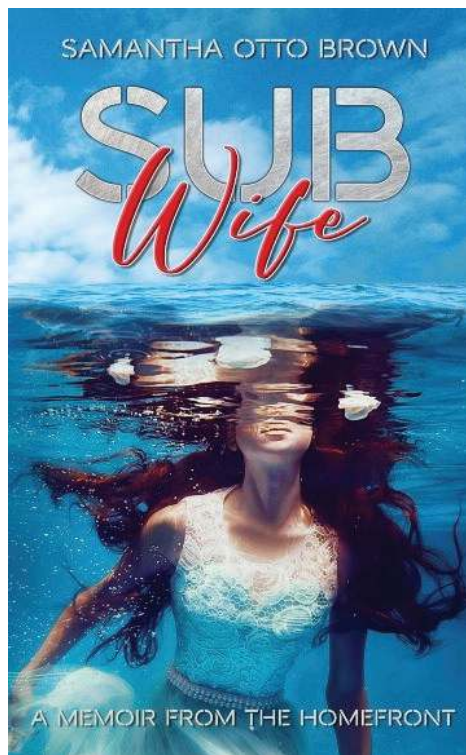
“Dispatches from the Cowgirl” is a different kind of journey, one anchored in

the geography of dry land. Part journal, part travelogue, Tully’s book follows her global transitions as the spouse of a submariner-turned-foreign service officer from California to Germany to Cameroon to Nigeria to Djibouti and then to Italy. The narrative begins with an explosion and keeps a compelling pace through new cultures, languages and environments. With her cowgirl boots planted in the strong roots of her family’s ranch in California, Tully reaches out to embrace the adventure of Africa, drawing vivid parallels between the people, food and landscapes she encounters at home and abroad.

“Sub Wife” traces an inward journey and how it shapes the author’s outward one, while “Dispatches from the Cowgirl” depicts an outward journey and how it reveals the author’s inward one.

An insightful chapter in “Sub Wife” centers on a social-media description of the supposed qualities of a dutiful military wife. Sent to Brown by a well-meaning relative, the message ended with a directive “Cut and paste if you’re a proud military wife.” Although Brown found she identified with portions of the description, her independent nature resisted the stereotype.

“If military life is a sea,” she writes, “you have to know how to swim if you hope to survive. There is more than one



way to swim, is there not? So why does the message remain that there is only one way to be a proud military spouse? Can’t I be proud without copying and pasting?”

In “Dispatches from the Cowgirl,” Tully poignantly expresses her feelings of being an outsider among other military spouses after several years of embassy life in Africa.

“I was dropped back into a world I no longer fit into,” she writes “I had been a Navy wife for almost two decades, but then realized I was no longer the wife our Navy and its community expected.”

As these memoirs reveal, there is no singular right way to live a military life, certainly no accurate cut-and-paste description of a military spouse. My military life is worlds away from both Brown’s and Tully’s, but I can learn from their stories. We can be strong individuals and also draw strength from one another’s perspec-

tives and wisdom.

Brown’s description of kinship among military spouses is lovely and apt: “The Navy did not seem to define them, only strung them together like pearls on a strand.”

Tully says her experiences in Africa taught her to be true to herself in her military life: “That amazing continent and our job there showed me that I could blaze a different path. It made me a different kind of military spouse — and I love this new version. Different is good. Different is great.”

Indeed, it is. These memoirs reveal the diversity, creativity and tenacity common to those living the uncommon life of a military spouse.

Terri Barnes is a military spouse, book editor and the author of Spouse Calls: Messages From a Military Life, based on her column in Stars and Stripes. Learn more online at terribarnes-author.com.

Famous horror heroines’ stories rewritten in ‘Reluctant Immortals’

By **JOSHUA AXELROD**
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

There was always something about the stories of Lucy Westenra and Bertha Mason that Gwendolyn Kiste felt were incomplete — and that’s putting it generously.

Lucy first appeared in Bram Stoker’s 1897 novel “Dracula” and is mostly defined by her two murders, first by Dracula when she was human and then by monster hunters after transforming into a vampire. Bertha is the deranged first wife of Edward Rochester who is locked in an attic in Charlotte Brontë’s 1847 novel “Jane Eyre.”

“I always felt that you don’t get to know nearly enough about Lucy and Bertha as characters,” the 38-year-old said. “It was always a question of who they were and who they might have been.”

Kiste was finally able to give those two characters the treatment she believes they deserved in “Reluctant Immortals,” her latest novel. In it, Lucy and Ber-

tha are transplanted to 1967 California as undead immortals still trying to break free from the men whose abuse has largely defined their stories.

Because the books in which Lucy and Bertha — whom Kiste refers to as “Bee” — are in the public domain, Kiste was able to create something entirely new also featuring plenty of other characters from “Dracula” and “Jane Eyre.”

“Especially in light of the #MeToo movement and reclaiming women’s voices and stories, it felt like a moment where we could discuss these characters from a different perspective and see them as having their narratives lost and reclaiming them,” Kiste said.

“A lot of female characters get pushed aside, even in modern stories. [I wanted] to take this moment ... and really look at these characters and say how and why did their voices get deleted, and what does that say about horror and society?”

Horror stories have always been a huge part of Kiste’s life. Her parents got married on Halloween, and her childhood in New Philadelphia, Ohio, was stuffed to the brim with Universal monster movies and the works of authors like Edgar Allan Poe and Ray Bradbury.

The Bram Stoker Award-winning author of “The Rust Maidens,” “And Her Smile Will Untether the Universe” and “Pretty Marys All in a Row” and her husband now reside on an old horse farm in Waynesburg, Pa.

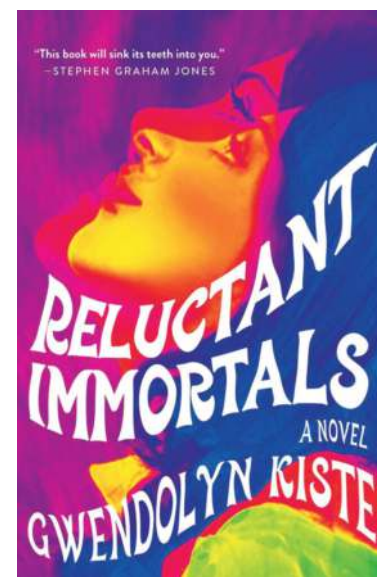
“Reluctant Immortals” started as a short story Kiste wrote called “The Eight People Who Murdered Me: Excerpt from Lucy Westenra’s Diary.” She wanted to keep writing about Lucy without just expanding the short story, so she began brainstorming other characters that might be fun to pair her with. Kiste settled on Bertha, who she believes has a “natural connection” with Lucy in terms of how underdeveloped they both were

in their original novels.

Kiste set “Reluctant Immortals” in the 1960s as “a nod to that era of horror,” particularly the Hammer flicks that included a new spin on “Dracula.” In addition to elevating Lucy and Bertha, Kiste wanted to remind fans of “Dracula” and “Jane Eyre” that their male protagonists may have been charming but were, in fact, pretty awful people. In Kiste’s estimation, what Rochester did to Bertha doesn’t get nearly enough scrutiny in modern literary criticism.

“It’s a pretty questionable, terrible decision to put your first wife in the attic,” she said.

Highlighting the “vein of toxicity” between Dracula and Rochester was fun for Kiste, as was crafting what turned out to essentially be a buddy road-trip thriller starring Lucy and Bertha. She enjoyed exploring how similar their traumas were and, at the same time, the many “differences in how they processed that.”



Kiste said her native Pittsburgh has been an inspiration over the years.

“I love living here because there is so much horror history here,” she said. “As a horror writer, it’s great. I just love being here and feeling like the horror is everywhere here — in a very good way.”

WEEKEND: MUSIC

EGOT without ego

John Legend talks about still proving his musical relevance

By JONATHAN LANDRUM JR.
Associated Press

John Legend may have multiple Grammys and have achieved the rare EGOT status, but the prolific singer still feels the need to prove himself.

That's one of the reasons Legend cut back on traveling early last year to devote more time toward the writing process of his self-titled eighth studio album, "Legend," which was released Sept. 9. It's the first double album project of Legend's extraordinary career, which achieved new heights in 2018 when he became the first Black man to win an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony Award.

After all his accolades, Legend still feels motivated to deliver fresh content about his joys of life, him being inspired by wife Chrissy Teigen and heartbreak after their pregnancy loss a couple years ago. His new album — executive produced by OneRepublic's Ryan Tedder — features guest appearances including Jazmine Sullivan, Jhené Aiko, Muni Long, JID, Ty Dolla \$ign and Rick Ross.

In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Legend spoke about his reluctance to make a double album, a potential EP with Ross, Las Vegas residency relevance and being nervously excited after Teigen announced she was pregnant last month.

Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: How does it feel to be pregnant again after the unfortunate loss of Jack in 2020?

Legend: We're excited. I think whenever you lose a pregnancy, your optimism is a little more guarded the next time. But we feel good. We feel excited, and we can't wait to welcome our baby into the world. You know, we have so much fun being parents together and our kids bring so much light into our lives. We're looking forward to another one doing the same thing.

Chrissy talked about being nervous before making the announcement on social media. How did you both navigate everything?

She was going to start to be visibly pregnant. Either you tell people or you just stay in the house and try to hide for quite a long time, which seemed like an untenable way to go. We felt like we should tell people at some point. It's tough to figure out when the right time is, but sooner or later, people are going to start to see it. We felt like we wanted to control the narrative

and tell people when we were ready to.

What made you want to do a double album?

I've never done a double album before, and I was always reluctant because it's a lot of material for a fan to digest. But these are separate albums, with different moods.

A lot of this album is joyful, celebratory, fun, and sexy. But particularly on the second disc, we talk a little bit more about what it feels like to struggle and try to come back from a struggle, what it feels like to deal with challenges and how you make it through that together. Some of those songs are written as songs of comfort, as we were dealing with some tough circumstances in our lives.

For this album, how did Chrissy inspire your music?

Quite a few of the songs are inspired by Chrissy. But also, I want them to be songs that you can dedicate to the women in your lives. Whenever I'm writing songs

SEE LEGEND ON PAGE 29

John Legend poses for a portrait on Aug. 15 in West Hollywood, Calif., to promote his latest double album, "Legend."

WILLY SANJUAN, INVISION/AP

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Legend: Artist still motivated by collaboration, new achievements**FROM PAGE 28**

that are inspired by my own life and my own love and my own family, I want it to feel like you can find a way to apply that to your own life. I think particularly when I'm seeing the miracle of pregnancy and childbirth and all those things and knowing how difficult it is for someone carrying a pregnancy, you must marvel at the women in our lives and give them the honor that they're due.

How was it working with Ryan Tedder as your executive producer?

Both of us grew up in the church, and both of us grew up with that as our foundation. But he's more in the pop rock world and I've been more obviously in the soul and hip-hop world with a little bit of pop. I think because we're different, our skills and our sensibilities complement each other well. I'm dealing with a certain palette and a certain set of references, and he is, too. When we bring it together, it's an interesting chemistry and it works well.

How important is collaboration for you?

It's been a part of my music life since the beginning. It was always about collaboration. A lot of it was with hip-hop artists, particularly with Rick Ross. I made more songs with him — either him featured on my project or me featured on his — than any other artists. We're different, but we sync up very well. The kind of beats that we both like. That soulful kind of lush soundscape that we like. We even talked about doing an EP together or something like that. But if you put all the songs together that we've done, it would be pretty much a whole album by now.

You, Usher, Bruno Mars and other big artists have had a residency in Las Vegas. How has the perception of Vegas changed for major acts over the years?

I think people used to look at it as kind of like this is your swan song. This is your retirement residency. But I think of late you really see a lot of artists still in their prime doing it. Some of my favorite artists like Usher, Bruno, Anderson .Paak and so many great kinds of younger artists, but still with enough repertoire to sustain the show are doing it. I think it's a great way in the middle of our careers to say we're so grateful for everything that has come before us. We're going to celebrate that. But also, I've been previewing songs from the new album as well. It's like looking back but also previewing what's to come.

After achieving EGOT status, what keeps you driven?

I don't think about awards as accomplishments I'm trying to achieve. I think about every album and every project that I make that I must prove myself to my fans. I have to prove myself to the world every single time, so I don't take anything for granted. I don't rest on my previous accomplishments. I must prove myself with the music with the creativity and the product that we give people. If we don't do that, then I'll just be kind of a forgotten artist. A has been. I want to keep proving myself to them every single time.



Molly Matalon

Waxahatchee's Katie Crutchfield (above) stripped down her sound on her acclaimed 2020 album "Saint Cloud," and continues in that vein in Plains, her new project with singer-songwriter Jess Williamson.

How Waxahatchee's Katie Crutchfield embraced her roots in country music

By CHARLIE VARGAS

The Orange County Register

Singer-songwriter Katie Crutchfield has gone from punk rocker to indie artist, but the next step in her musical metamorphosis involved embracing a part of herself that she'd previously shied away from: her Southern country roots.

"In my 20s — when I was super punk, underground and wanted to be as avant-garde as humanly possible — I didn't want that to be a part of my story," Crutchfield said during a recent phone interview. "It's been really freeing to circle back and be really honest about how at the very foundation of my music, this is what's there."

Crutchfield, who performs under the moniker Waxahatchee, named after a creek from her childhood home in Alabama, will be embarking on a tour next month with her new country project Plains, which also features singer-songwriter Jess Williamson.

"At a Waxahatchee show, I go into it as a place for folks to have a lot of feelings and have a good time," she said. "With Plains, I want people to come out and have a good time. We're going to play covers, some Waxahatchee songs, some Jess Williamson songs and the entire Plains record. It'll just be a very fun evening."

Simplifying the sound

Crutchfield released "Saint Cloud" in 2020, an album that provokes imagery of a warm, scenic country hillside with lilacs, Memphis ember skylines and old Ford pickup trucks. It is driven by clean acoustic guitar licks that celebrate the basic foundations of music that exist without

being saturated by distortion effects. The calmness and yearning of the album serve as an insight into what a simple life in the country might be like, in contrast to the loud noises of big cities.

Part of that was inspired by the Detroit band Bonny Doon, whom Crutchfield toured with in 2018. She said hearing the band play her old songs and trusting them with her new material set the path for how she wanted "Saint Cloud" to sound.

Life experiences, such as getting sober, rebuilding her relationship with herself, taking some time away from touring and moving to Kansas City, Kan., with her partner and fellow musician Kevin Morby, all naturally laid the groundwork for the themes of the finished album.

"I feel like I just relaxed a bit and got to know myself in a deeper way," she said.

With previous albums, Crutchfield said she would try harder to create an aesthetic and guide the listener to an established genre, whether rock or indie, but Brad Cook, producer and collaborator for "Saint Cloud," helped steer her in another direction.

"I think the intention with 'Saint Cloud' and with Waxahatchee in general from this point forward is not to try to be anything and just write the songs," she explained. "We tried to go in and just let the song tell us what it is."

The album was a success and well received by fans and critics alike, with Rolling Stone putting it in the top 10 albums of 2020 and Pitchfork declaring it the second best album of that year. Crutchfield said she felt good about having her work reaffirmed with this success while returning to her roots. She said without "Saint

Cloud," she doesn't think the Plains project would exist.

A new frontier

Williamson and Crutchfield first met at a social mixer that her partner Morby and she hosted for each of their friends to attend. Crutchfield said that the pair clicked immediately and became fast friends based on their mutual interests.

"I grew up on country music," Crutchfield said. "All my earliest memories of music are all '90s country radio like Trisha Yearwood, Alan Jackson, Loretta Lynn and George Jones."

Williamson and Crutchfield exchanged albums that they both released during the pandemic. They were fans of each other's work, which sparked the idea for the collaboration that would become Plains.

"Jess and I thought it would be really fun to release a record that leaned all the way into the country aesthetic," Crutchfield said.

The new record, "I Walked With You a Ways," is set to be released on Oct. 14. It sounds like something you'd listen to on a porch overlooking vast open plains while watching the sunset. It's also a nod to some of the genre's biggest stars like Dolly Parton, The Chicks, The Judds, Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson.

Crutchfield said that although she's tired from touring, she's grateful for how things have turned out and ready for whatever is next.

"I'm very excited and don't want to give too much away, but I'm deep into writing the next Waxahatchee album," she said. "I think in hindsight, I'm going to feel so happy with how everything has gone."

WEEKEND: TELEVISION

Fish out of water

Amer's 'Mo' a love letter to his Palestinian heritage, experience as a refugee in Houston

By GARY GERARD HAMILTON
Associated Press

Up-and-coming comedian Mo Amer was opening for Dave Chappelle in 2014 when the more established comedian made a suggestion: Amer should make a short film to introduce his act.

"I started thinking about the short film. I put it together; I was obsessed. And then I wrote it out and then all my friends were like, 'This is genius, bro. You need to save this for a TV series.' And I was like, 'Word? TV series?' Since then, I've just been kind of accumulating all these stories from my mother, my family ... my history, my refugee experience in America, the fish-out-of-water element."

Amer's true family history serves as the foundation of his new Netflix dramedy, "Mo." He describes the series as a love letter to his Palestinian heritage and his hometown.

"Although it's a refugee story, an immigrant Palestinian story, it's also a love letter to Houston. It's also like an everyman struggle (story) — people who are working paycheck to paycheck, they're trying to take care of family, people that are dealing with addiction," said the 41-year-old. "It has all these layers to it."

The debut season, comprised of eight half-hour episodes, was created by Amer and Emmy-nominated actor Ramy Youssef, Amer's good friend and former roommate. "Mo," along with shows like Youssef's critically acclaimed "Ramy," is part of a growing — but still extremely underrepresented — movement in Hollywood bringing Muslim and Middle Eastern stories to the masses.

The series follows Mo Najjar (played by Amer) as his family, including his mother (Farah Bsieso) and brother (Omar Elba) navigate through life in the Houston area in ways many immigrants in America are forced to: seeking employment without citizenship and therefore working odd, under-the-table jobs, as well as maneuvering an often unforgiving health care system and trying to assimilate into society.

Similar to the storyline, Amer's own parents were originally from Palestine before fleeing to Kuwait. Amer was born there, but the Gulf War forced them to leave and eventually settle in Texas. Learning about his family history and their struggles through conversations with his mother, Amer helped create a

blueprint. However, he also learned hard, previously unknown truths, including how his father was tortured in Kuwait.

In the series, flashbacks give context, and some are pivotal to both the show and his real life; episode seven opens with his mother cleverly hiding money as the family prepares to escape Kuwait.

"My mom started just crying when she saw it. She was just like, 'Wow, I can't believe you re-created this like that.' She's like, 'How did you even remember the house, the colors, the things on the walls?'" Amer recalled proudly. "I can't forget that."

Houston is known for many things: space exploration, its world-renowned medical center and its slowed down hip-hop music known as screwed music; what America's fourth largest city is not known for is a film and TV industry. However, Amer was adamant about shooting there, aiming to raise the show's authenticity factor. Aside from a couple of major films shot in Houston in the early '90s, it hasn't been a destination for moviemakers.

Local talent throughout Texas was hired for production, and there are a few notable guest appearances, including rising Houston-based rapper Tobe Nwigwe, who plays Najjar's best friend, and cameos from well-known Texas-flag bearers Paul Wall and Bun B of the legendary southern duo, UGK.

"It just really was shocking to me there's never been a narrative sitcom, native series filmed out of Houston, which is absurd to me knowing what Houston has to offer," he explained. "Everything is deliberate from the music choice ... to the attire, to the accents, to the feel, the picture, the cinematography. There's nothing that we didn't think really about."

"Mo" has become one of 2022's buzzworthy and binge-worthy shows, attracting viewers from all backgrounds and a deep respect from many Middle Eastern Americans. But he emphasizes the show has been a long time in the making.

"Netflix drops everything all at the same day and it's just like, 'BOOM! Here it is.' But those episodes are many, many years of really thinking this through," he said.

"You hope it resonates in that way, and it's such a relief when it does. It's like, 'They get it. I didn't screw this up.'"



CHRIS PIZZELLO, INVISION/AP

Comedian Mohammed Amer poses for a photo Aug. 31 in Los Angeles to promote his Netflix series "Mo."

WEEKEND: TELEVISION

By BETHONIE BUTLER

The Washington Post

In the well-reviewed debut season of “This Fool,” there’s a scene in which protagonist Julio (played by series co-creator Chris Estrada) sees a stranger stealing his family’s recyclable cans from their backyard. He yells at the man to stop.

His mom turns them in for money, Julio says. “We’re poor. We need those cans!”

“You’re not poor; you’re broke. There’s a difference,” the man says, before posing what seems like a no-brainer question: “You ever been late on your utility bills?”

“Yeah,” Julio says, “all the time.”

“Well, I’ve never been late on my utility bills,” the man says. “You know why? Because I don’t have a ... house to live in because I’m poor. I wish I was broke enough to even have a bill. Must be nice.” The exchange sufficiently guilted Julio into not only letting the man take his own family’s cans, but also helping him to take cans from a neighbor. Classic Julio.

“This Fool” is loosely based on comedian Estrada’s stand-up and his upbringing as a first-generation Mexican American in Inglewood, Calif., and South Central Los Angeles.

The Hulu series, set in the latter, is anchored by the return of Julio’s cousin Luis (Frankie Quinones), a former gang member who has just been released from an eight-year prison bid. It’s a setup that influences several storylines, including Luis’s participation in a rehabilitation program called Hugs Not Thugs, which happens to be where Julio works.

Conspicuously one of few series that center on Latinos, “This Fool” has arrived amid a recent resurgence of working-class sitcoms. “Los Botes” (“The Cans”) is a standout episode that reflects the subtle themes that make “This Fool” a singular show — even as it evokes other smart slice-of-life comedies (“Atlanta,” “Ramy”) and gives nods to other pop-culture efforts (the cult-favorite 1993 crime drama “Blood In, Blood Out” and the 2007 psychological thriller “Funny Games” among them).

“I wanted to show nuances in class,” Estrada said in a phone interview. “I think people who may be upper-middle-class or rich may view the world as a binary. It’s either you’re poor or you’re rich in this country. And the truth is that there’s working-class people who might be house-poor or are surviving paycheck to paycheck. They’re not necessarily on-the-street poor.”

“This Fool” offers a rare authentic depiction of South Central, mining comedy from the coexistence of African Americans and Latinos. (One elevator



Hulu

Chris Estrada plays Julio in Hulu’s “This Fool.” The series is loosely based on his stand-up and upbringing.

Not poor, yet not rich

Star, co-creator of ‘This Fool’ says the sitcom aims to depict the nuances of class and race in South Los Angeles accurately

pitch for the show was like if “Friday” was made by the Coen brothers.)

In one episode, Luis bumps into a former rival, Davonte (Hassan Johnson), who challenges him to a fight. Luis recruits Chef Percy (Jamar Malachi Neighbors), one of the cupcake-baking former gang members in Hugs Not Thugs, to help him and Julio in the brawl. When Percy, who is Black, learns who their target is, he is stunned. “Wait, there’s a Hispanic dude out there named Davonte?” he asks.

“No,” Luis says. “He’s Black.” “I’m not gonna help two Mexicans beat up a Black dude,” Percy says. “I’ll still roll with you, but when we fight, I’m going to have to fight on his side.”

“The truth is that there’s working-class people who might be house-poor or are surviving paycheck to paycheck. They’re not necessarily on-the-street poor.”

Chris Estrada
“This Fool” star, co-creator,
writer and executive producer

“Okay,” Luis says. “I can respect that.”

Luis and Davonte agree to let bygones be bygones, especially since their go-to allies have both died. In an ironic twist, the gang members were killed not by gun violence but in car accidents related to texting and driving. “An epidemic,” Luis laments.

The goal, Estrada said, is to “show that these two groups live together and sometimes they get along exceptionally well and sometimes they don’t.”

“I don’t have a message about it,” he added. “I’m not trying to convince anyone of anything, but I just wanted to portray it honestly and comedically in a way that felt authentic to somebody who might come from that world.”

Estrada mined more personal parts of his world for the series, too, on which he is also a writer and executive producer. Julio’s mother Esperanza (Laura Patalano) speaks Spanish exclusively, one of several cues the character takes from Estrada’s own mother, who worked as a janitor and would often bring home household essentials and other supplies from the office. In “This Fool,” Esperanza does the same, bringing home scratchy rolls of toilet paper because she refuses to buy softer brands — or allow anyone else to — when there is a free option available. It’s a rule that angers the family, including abuelita Maria (Julia Vera), who shares her contraband single rolls with Luis on the condition that he take her to McDonald’s.

But the series doesn’t shy away from potentially more uncomfortable realities: “Los Botes” opens with Esperanza quietly cleaning in a corporate office building where mostly white employees ignore her completely as she does her job.

“I think especially working-class Latinos — people expect them to fade into the background, and so I wanted to show that,” Estrada said. But again, “it’s not a message. It’s portraying something accurately.”

The show, like life, gets surreal sometimes. One memorable scene plays off the running joke that Esperanza loves Ronald Reagan — a Republican, she’s shocked to discover — because of the amnesty granted to illegal immigrants during the 40th president’s administration. Reagan appears to Esperanza in a vaguely sexual dream in which the former actor confesses (in confident, if Anglicized, Spanish) to destabilizing Central America and that he “may have had a hand in creating the crack epidemic.” (The episode’s final credits run over a Reagan diss song by Canadian punk band D.O.A.)

And while the crew behind “This Fool,” created by Pat Bishop, Jake Weisman and Matt Ingebretson of Comedy Central’s “Corporate” — one of the few TV credits Estrada had before this breakout role — generally likes to stick to the script, they were not afraid of experimentation. Executive producer Fred Armisen, who attended meetings with the creators in support of the project as they pitched it to networks, appears as a guest star alongside Eliza Coupe in the penultimate episode.

“We feel very confident in our writing,” Estrada said of himself and the showrunners. “But we also understand that we have Armisen and Coupe, who are incredibly talented and funny, and it would be a shame to not let them improvise.” They did a few takes of the script as written and a few that were more off the cuff. The final scene was “a mix of both,” Estrada said. “It was having our cake and eating it, too.”

The show, while boisterous in its comedy and high jinks, succeeds just as much in its quiet observations about everyday life. Julio struggles with codependency in both his family and his on-off relationship with his high school sweetheart Maggie (Michelle Ortiz). In crafting his protagonist, Estrada was inspired by director Charles Burnett’s 1978 drama “Killer of Sheep,” which depicts working-class African Americans in the South LA neighborhood of Watts.

Julio is “not a villain or a bad guy by any means,” Estrada said. “But he’s also not a perfect guy and he’s a little existential and depressed and he’s kind of stuck in life.”

“I thought that would be such a cool way to depict the character,” he added. “You never get to see a dude from, for lack of a better word, the ‘hood, be existential or depressed.”

Julio makes some really bad decisions, but the show doesn’t judge him or other characters.

“I wanted to make sure that we didn’t create a show that felt like a morality play,” Estrada said. “The last thing I ever want to do is justify my existence to anyone.”

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Dangers of being an active couch potato

New study highlights the importance of light activity, finds sitting all day can negate the benefits of a workout

By **GRETCHEN REYNOLDS**
The Washington Post

Are you an active couch potato? Take this two-question quiz to find out:

Did you work out for 30 minutes today?

Did you spend the rest of the day staring at your computer and then settle in front of the television at night?

If you answered yes to both questions, then you meet the definition of what scientists call “an active couch potato.” It means that, despite your commitment to exercise, you could be at risk for a variety of health problems, according to a sweeping new study of how people move — or don’t move — throughout the day.

The study, which involved more than 3,700 men and women in Finland, found that many dutifully exercised for a half-hour, but then sat, almost nonstop, for another 10, 11 or even 12 hours a day. These were the study’s active couch potatoes, and their blood sugar, cholesterol and body fat all were elevated.

But the study found, too, that men and women who got up and moved around even a little more often, whether by strolling gently or fitting in more exercise, were substantially healthier than the active couch potatoes.

The results tell us that a single 30-minute, daily workout “might not be enough” to alleviate the downsides of prolonged sitting, said Vahid Farrahi, a postdoctoral scientist at the University of Oulu and lead author of the new study.

In other words, if we exercise but also sit for the rest of the day, it’s almost as if we had not worked out at all.

The good news is that a few simple steps

— literal and otherwise — should safeguard us from becoming an active sofa spud.

The perils of being sedentary

The World Health Organization and other experts advise us to work out moderately for a minimum of 30 minutes most days of the week. A brisk walk counts as moderate exercise.

Substantial scientific evidence shows this half-hour of exertion buoys our health, spirits and life span. The problem is how we spend the remaining 23½ hours a day.

“It’s only in the last five years or so that we’ve begun to understand that physical activity isn’t the whole story,” said Raija Korpelainen, a professor of health exercise at the University of Oulu in Finland and co-author of the new study.

In the past, most research examined sitting and exercise separately, and tended to ignore or downplay light activities such as ambling to the mailbox or fetching another cup of coffee.

So, for the new study, which was published in July in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, Korpelainen and her co-authors turned to a large trove of data about almost every child born in Northern Finland decades ago. As they grew, researchers tracked their lives and health and, after the group became adults, asked 3,702 of them to wear a scientific-grade activity tracker for at least a week.

The researchers could see, in six-second increments, whether someone was sitting, lightly strolling or formally exercising throughout the day. Because the trackers were measuring movement, standing counted as inactivity, like sitting. With that

data, they characterized people, rather bluntly, by how they moved.

The active couch potatoes, who accounted for almost a third of the group, sat the most, lounging for more than 10 hours a day. They met recommended exercise guidelines — getting about 30 daily minutes of moderate exercise. But after that, they rarely got up, accumulating fewer than 220 minutes a day of light movement.

Another group likewise worked out for 30 minutes and sat for long hours. But, in between, they rose often and strolled about. Compared with the active couch potatoes, they spent about 40% more time — nearly an extra 90 minutes each day — in what the researchers call “light activity.”

A third group sat, uninterrupted, for up to 10 hours, but also amassed about an hour of exercise most days.

The final group, which the researchers rightly dubbed “the movers,” did just that, exercising about an hour most days, while also moving lightly for about two hours more than the active couch potato group.

When the researchers cross-checked these groups against people’s current health data, the active couch potatoes had the worst blood sugar control, body fat percentage and cholesterol profiles.

The other groups were all better off and to about the same extent, with relatively improved blood sugar control and cholesterol levels and about 8% less body fat than the active couch potatoes, even when the researchers controlled for income, smoking, sleep habits and other factors.

Move just a little more

The lesson from the research is that in

addition to a brisk workout, we need to move lightly and often, cleaning, taking the stairs, strolling the halls or otherwise not remaining still. The sweet spot in this study involved about 80 or 90 extra minutes of light activity, “but any additional movement should be beneficial,” Farrahi said.

You can also try to squeeze in a little more exercise. In this study, people benefited if they doubled their workouts to 60 minutes, total. But, again, “do what you can,” Korpelainen said. Just adding an extra 10 or 15 minutes to a daily walk will matter, she said, even if you do not quite manage an hour of exercise.

“The goal is to be sitting less,” said Matthew Buman, a professor at Arizona State University in Tempe, who studies movement and metabolism but was not part of the new study. “We can each decide how best to get there.”

This study has limitations. It only looks at people’s lives at one point in time. It also involved Finns, most of them Caucasians and all somewhat active, who may not be representative of the rest of us, and did not include a completely sedentary comparison group.

Even so, “it should nudge us to think about how we spend our time,” Buman said, and perhaps reconfigure our lives and spaces so we move more. “Try putting the printer and recycling bins in another room,” he suggested, “so you have to get up and walk there.”

“I like to remind myself to go over and just look out the window often,” Farrahi said. “The solutions don’t have to be intimidating,” he continued. “Keep it simple. Try to move more, however you can, whenever you can and in ways that you enjoy.”



WEEKEND: FAMILY



EL JOHNSON/AP

El Johnson, right, with her girlfriend, Sara Goodie, in Austin, Texas, on Aug. 15. Johnson has decided not to bear children, though she hasn't ruled out adoption.

Parenthood's not for me

Millennials, Gen Z say climate change, finances reasons not to have kids

BY LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

At 24, El Johnson has made up her mind that she won't bear children, though she and her girlfriend haven't ruled out adoption.

The graduate student who works in legal services in Austin, Texas, has a list of reasons for not wanting to give birth: the climate crisis and a genetic health condition among them.

"I don't think it's responsible to bring children into this world," Johnson said. "There are already kids who need homes. I don't know what kind of world it's going to be in 20, 30, 40 years."

She's so sure, in fact, that she'll soon have her tubes removed. It's a precautionary decision sealed by the fall of *Roe v. Wade* and by tight restrictions on abortion services in her state and around the country.

Other women interviewed also cited climate change, along with overwhelming student debt coupled with inflation, as reasons they'll never be parents. Some younger men, too, are opting out and more are seeking vasectomies.

Whatever the motivation, they play a role in dramatically low birth rates in the U.S.

The U.S. birth rate fell 4% in 2020, the largest single-year decrease in nearly 50 years, according to a government report. The government noted a 1% uptick in U.S. births last year, but the number of babies born was still lower than the number born before the coronavirus pandemic: about 86,000 fewer than in 2019.

Walter and Kyah King live in suburban Las Vegas. Walter, 29, a sports data scientist, and Kyah, 28, a college career counselor, have been together nearly 10 years, the last four as a married couple. The realization that they didn't want to have kids came on slowly for both of them.

"It was in our early 20s when the switch sort of flipped," Kyah said. "We had moved to California and we were really just starting our adult lives. I think we talked about having three kids at one point. But just with the economy and the state of the world and just thinking about the logistics of bringing children into the world. That's really when we started to have our doubts."

Finances are top of mind. Before taxes, the two earn about \$160,000 combined, with about \$120,000 in student loan debt for Kyah and about \$5,000 left for Walter. The couple said they wouldn't be able to buy

a house and shoulder the costs of even one child without major sacrifices they're not willing to make.

But for Kyah, the decision goes well beyond money. "I think we would be great parents, but the thought of going into our health system to give birth is really scary. Black women, black mothers, are not valued in the same way that white mothers are," said Kyah, who is Black.

When Kyah's IUD expires, Walter said he'll consider a vasectomy, a procedure that went on the rise among men under 30 during the pandemic.

Jordan Davidson interviewed more than 300 people for a book out in December titled, "So When Are You Having Kids?" The pandemic, she said, led many to delay childbirth among those contemplating children at all.

"These timelines that people created for themselves of, I want to accomplish X by three years from now, changed. People weren't necessarily willing to move the goalposts and say, OK, I'm going to forgo these accomplishments and do this differently," she said. "People still want to travel. They still want to go to graduate school. They still want to meet certain financial benchmarks."

Fears about climate change have cemented the idea of living without children for many, Davidson said.

"Now with increased wildfires, droughts, heat waves, all of a sudden it is becoming real that, OK, this is happening during my time, and what is this going to look like during the time that my children are alive?" she said.

In New York City, 23-year-old Emily Shapiro, a copywriter for a pharmaceutical ad agency, earns \$60,000 a year, lives at home as she saves money and has never wanted children.

"They're sticky. I could never imagine picking up a kid that's covered in ice cream. I'm a bit of a germaphobe. I don't want to change a diaper. If I did have one, I wouldn't want them until they're in, like, sixth grade. I also think the physical Earth isn't doing so great so it would be unfair," she said.

Among those Jordan interviewed, concerns over the environment were far more prevalent among the younger group. Questions of affordability, she said, troubled both millennials and members of Generation Z.

"There is a lot of fear around having children who would be worse off than they viewed themselves during their childhoods," Davidson said.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Colleges, here's what the bill-paying parents want

It's that time of year again, so listen up, hallowed halls. Take note, institutions of higher learning. Lend me your ears, foundations of educational excellence.

You may think you know it all, but even the snottiest universities could use a few words of sage advice from the parents of prospective applicants. I'll admit, we search for glasses that are perched on our heads, forget to defrost the pork chops and wander around trying to remember why we came upstairs, but take heed: Parents are experts when it comes to what makes a good college visit.

Having put three offspring through college while a military family, my Navy-veteran husband and I are intimately familiar with that frazzled state of parenthood marked by financial panic, misplaced dreams and rapid debt accumulation. But our strong parental instinct drove us to blindly ignore our Chapter 11 premonitions, and encourage our children to pursue their educational goals, whether they required public (please, yes!) or private (GULP!) educational institutions.

During all those memorable college visits with our children, I endured many information sessions and campus tours at countless schools. We learned a lot on our college visit odysseys, and feel it is our duty to pass these tips on to college admissions officials across the nation.

1. Free stuff. That's right, we're not too proud to admit that we like getting stuff for free. Pens, key chains, lanyards, water bottles, whatever. We've driven a gazillion miles, stayed overnight in questionable motels, and were pushed like cattle through breakfast buffet lines where "food" is a generous description. So yeah, a couple of free pens might be nice. And if you really want to make an impression, why not print us up some cool T-shirts and shoot them at us through air cannons like they do at football games?

2. Walk backwards. I know it's gimmicky, but we like it when student tour guides walk backwards for the entire campus tour. It keeps us entertained like the daredevil routine at the circus. Will he trip over that curb? Will that branch snag in her hair? Why not work in few uneven sidewalk pavers or an open manhole cover to add a touch of suspense? Oh, what fun!

3. Potty breaks. Parents of our learned age have a plethora of bladder control quirks, so provide plenty of breaks to use the facilities. These are especially important if you generously offered refreshments (we do like free stuff, mind you) and don't want parents exposing themselves on the quad to "water the shrubs."

4. Point out the elephant in the room. By "charming college town," did you mean that strip mall across the street with the pawnshop and the e-cigarette emporium? Was that the Hells Angels that just drove by the student union? Even if your bubbly tour guide acted like we were walking the streets of Mayberry, we noticed every sketchy-looking corner, and now can't stop envisioning our daughter wandering into "Tanya's Tattoo & Piercing Parlor" or being mugged by that unsavory character on his way back from the methadone clinic. So yeah, let's talk about it.

5. Get to the point. We may spend the entire day wandering your dappled walkways and ogling your columned architecture, but make no mistake about it — we really just want a school that will make our kid happy and won't break the bank. So don't bother going on and on about collaborative research, evolving identities and transformative enlightenment. Let's go over financial aid, and I'm not talking loans.

A note to the Ivy Leagues: Don't be so stuck up. We have every right to tour your campus, even if we know you'll never let our kids in. It's kind of like going to the zoo, except that all the animals are way smarter than we are. Besides, we're only here because your school was on our way home, and we thought it would be cool to add another pen to our collection.

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

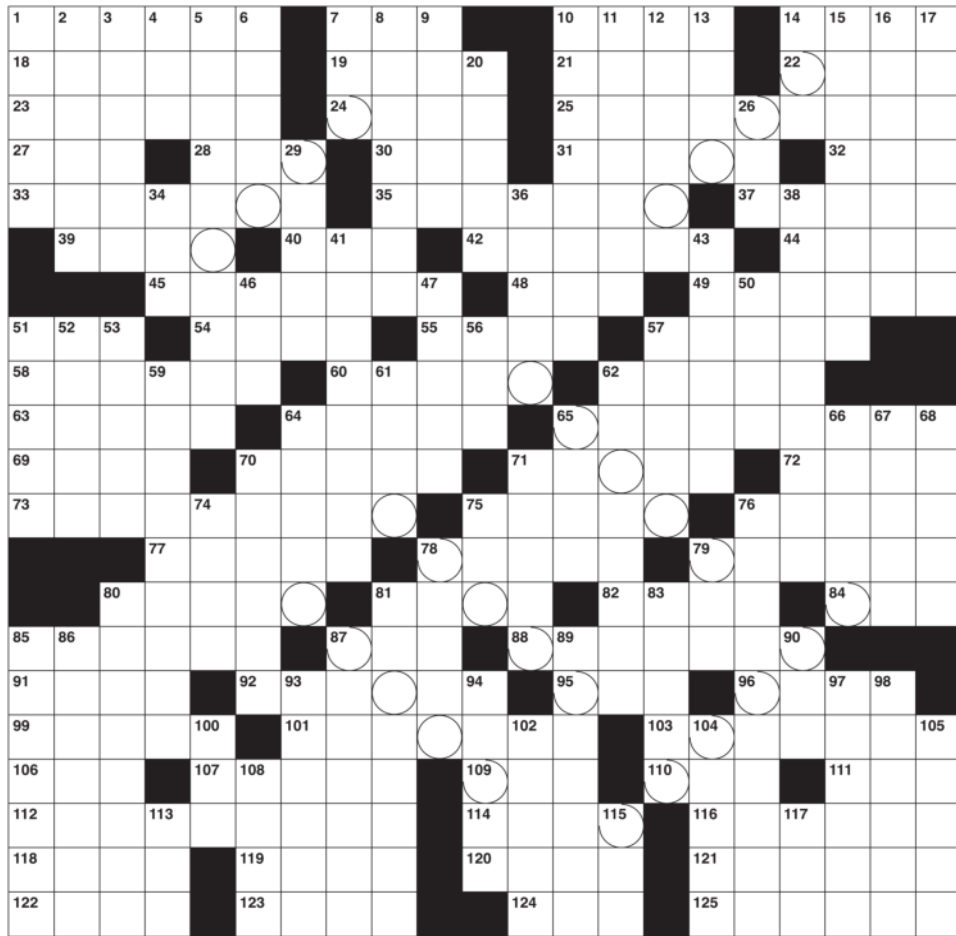
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

UPS AND DOWNS

BY TRACY GRAY / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Tracy Gray lives in Hunt Valley, Md. She and her husband have owned and operated a lawn-and-landscaping business for the past 33 years. She got the idea for this puzzle last Christmas while riding an escalator, up and down, at her local mall, proving again that ideas can come from anywhere if you're alert to them. This is Tracy's 33rd puzzle (and ninth Sunday) for the paper. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Exfoliants
 - 7 Footfaraw
 - 10 Cookout chuckouts
 - 14 Thickener used in desserts
 - 18 Like favorite radio stations, perhaps
 - 19 Calico calls
 - 21 Memo starter
 - 22 N.F.L. Hall-of-Famer Yale ____
 - 23 Backpacker's snack
 - 24 Big huff?
 - 25 Have an outside presence
 - 27 "I didn't need to know that!"
 - 28 What a net might attach to
 - 30 Flying Cloud of old autodom
 - 31 Jazz clarinetist Shaw
 - 32 Soaring shot
 - 33 Some Six Nations members
 - 35 *Mount Everest scaler
 - 37 Hogs
 - 39 *Went out of control
 - 40 A.M.A. members: Abbr.
 - 42 Marketing experiment comparing two variants
 - 44 Some red marks
 - 45 Big lugs
 - 48 Say "Whomever did this," say
 - 49 Alice who wrote "The Color Purple"
 - 51 Org. with a sizable registry
 - 54 Yellow jacket, for one
 - 55 Syrup brand since 1902
 - 57 Word before Roger or Rancher
 - 58 To a profound degree
 - 60 *"Cinderella" meanie
 - 62 Field trip conveyances
 - 63 Middle van Pelt child in "Peanuts"
 - 64 Use Tinder, say
 - 65 Airs
 - 69 Big exporter of pistachios
 - 70 Features of some bygone muscle cars
 - 71 Give an elbow bump to, say
 - 72 Free of fizz
 - 73 *Lateral-breaking pitches
 - 75 Skulk
 - 76 Maker of the world's first quartz watch
 - 77 Javanese dyeing technique
 - 78 Potala Palace city
 - 79 One of seven represented in the Pleiades
 - 80 *Glide down from above
 - 81 Sleigh driver's need
 - 82 Sound of an ungraceful landing
 - 84 ____ card
 - 85 Fashion house whose logo is two interlocking C's
 - 87 Like the Carolina Reaper pepper
 - 88 Visionary
 - 91 Title for Baltimore
 - 92 Crow language family
 - 95 Sounds of hesitation
 - 96 da-DUM
 - 99 On pins and needles
 - 101 Homebrewer's sugar
 - 103 Cartoonish villains
 - 106 "Little ol' me?"
 - 107 Woodard of "Clemency"
 - 109 Article in Aachen
 - 110 "Where ignorance is bliss, ____ folly to be wise": Thomas Gray
 - 111 "Eh . . . I'll pass"
 - 112 It's a banger in Germany
 - 114 *Portrayer of Scrooge in 1951's "A Christmas Carol"
 - 116 Surgical seam
 - 118 Unagi and anago, for two
 - 119 What parallel lines never do
 - 120 It beats scissors
 - 121 Passionate
 - 122 Secretary, e.g.
 - 123 ____ Noël
 - 124 Place to wallow
 - 125 Butterfly garden bloomers
- DOWN**
- 1 Places
 - 2 "Mad Money" host Jim
 - 3 Eye part with rods and cones
 - 4 Kind of port
 - 5 Boot-camp exercises performed on all fours
 - 6 Narrow groove
 - 7 One for the roadie
 - 8 Most beloved
 - 9 Dominated, informally
 - 10 Pico de gallo herb
 - 11 Not yet in stock
 - 12 Soup bases
 - 13 Highway heavyweight
 - 14 ____ mode
 - 15 Like toum or agliata sauce
 - 16 Forest between Champagne and Lorraine
 - 17 Cousin of kvass
 - 20 Plant pore
 - 26 "____ Miz"
 - 29 Early computer acronym
 - 34 O.E.D. part: Abbr.
 - 36 Some rideshares
 - 38 They may be hidden behind paintings
 - 41 Knot-tying and lashing, to a sailor
 - 43 Like some short tennis matches
 - 46 Install, as sod
 - 47 Record-player annoyances
 - 50 Actor Guinness
 - 51 Improvised comment
 - 52 "Colette" actress Knightley
 - 53 Comedian Wyatt of "Problem Areas"
 - 56 Porter, for one
 - 57 Derby cocktail
 - 59 Bad Brains and Bikini Kill, for two
 - 61 Mucky-mucks
 - 62 Colorful bird named for its diet
 - 64 Not easily moved
 - 65 Ocho menos cinco
 - 66 Buttonholes, basically
 - 67 Actor/activist George
 - 68 Seattle's W.N.B.A. team
 - 70 Absolutely wrecks
 - 71 K
 - 74 Reason to do a "stupid human trick"
 - 75 X
 - 76 Tangential topics
 - 78 Allow to access
 - 79 "I am," in Latin
 - 80 Incomplete dentures
 - 81 Ball game that all players might lose
 - 83 Lacks
 - 85 Place to wear muck boots
 - 86 One roasted or toasted
 - 87 More raspy
 - 89 Dramatize, as a historical event
 - 90 Teller, maybe
 - 93 "That time is fine for me"
 - 94 Lack of musicality
 - 97 Teeny-tiny
 - 98 Word after ring or water
 - 100 Side-to-side movement
 - 102 Pastoral skyline features
 - 104 Tyler of "Whose Line Is It Anyway?"
 - 105 Places for hoses and hoes
 - 108 Oatmeal glob
 - 113 Juddy sound
 - 115 Jupiter's realm, in myth
 - 117 Pic on a pec, say



- 57 Derby cocktail
- 59 Bad Brains and Bikini Kill, for two
- 61 Mucky-mucks
- 62 Colorful bird named for its diet
- 64 Not easily moved
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- 117 Pic on a pec, say

GUNSTON STREET



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RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



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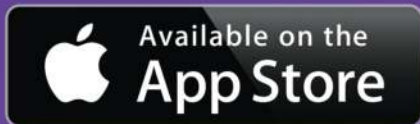
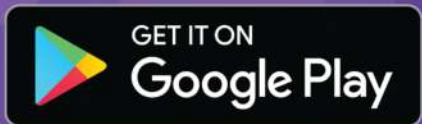
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Circulation	Kevin Miller miller.kevin@stripes.com +49(0)631.3615.9136 DSN: 314.583.9136	Kevin Miller miller.kevin@stripes.com +49(0)631.3615.9136 DSN: 314.583.9136	Mari Mori CustomerHelp@stripes.com +81(3) 6385.7333 DSN 315.227.7333
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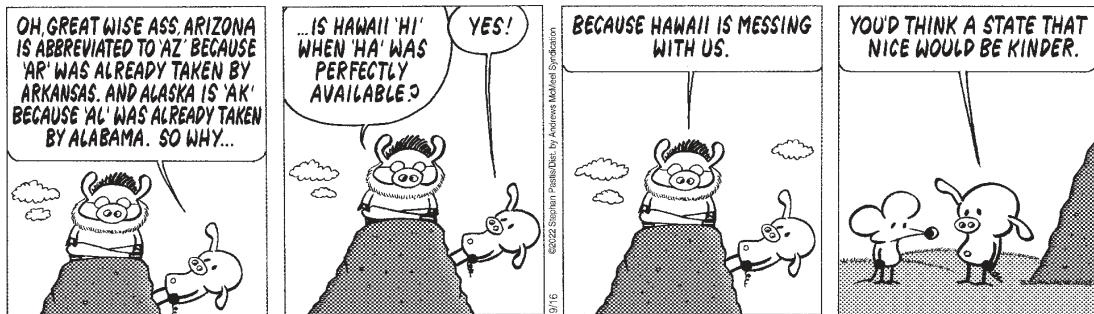
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



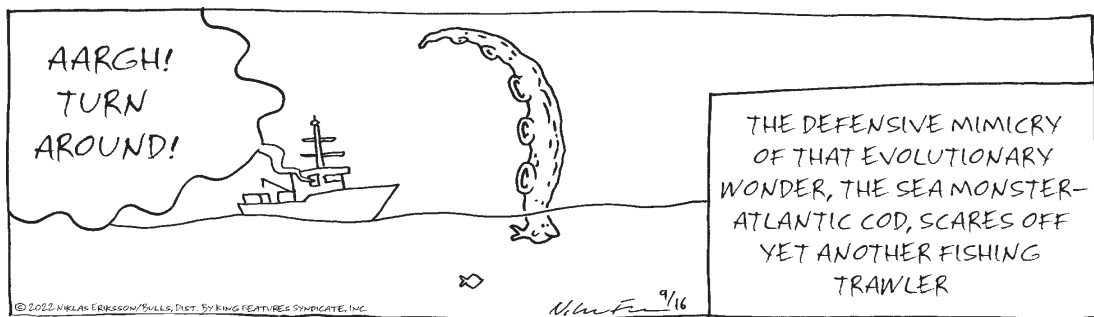
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	
12				13				14					
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						45				46		47	
48	49	50	51									52	
53								54					55
56								57					58

ACROSS

- 1 Poke
- 4 Sneaky chuckle
- 7 Niagara sight
- 12 Dos preceder
- 13 X-ray's cousin
- 14 "— Gold" (Fonda film)
- 15 Rx writers
- 16 Salad dressing order
- 187, on older phones
- 19 Capital of South Korea
- 20 Salty waters
- 22 Soon-to-be grads
- 23 Desist
- 27 Drench
- 29 "Constant Craving" singer
- 31 Places in the heart
- 34 Indian yogurt dish
- 35 Wards off
- 37 However
- 38 Corridor
- 39 Expert
- 41 Foundered
- 45 "Peachy!"
- 47 Cravat
- 48 Tangential topic
- 52 Eggs
- 53 Zodiac ram
- 54 Khan title
- 55 Rent out
- 56 "Live at the Acropolis" performer

- 57 "Way cool!"
- 58 Vegas opener?

DOWN

- 1 Checker moves
- 2 Tennis great Agassi
- 3 — nova with teeth
- 4 Med. plan options
- 5 Papa Hemingway
- 6 — -miss
- 7 Tank filler
- 8 Gore and Green
- 9 Floral necklace
- 10 Guided
- 11 Compass dir.
- 17 Corn cover
- 21 Marble cake pattern
- 23 Bed boards
- 24 — chi
- 25 Toronto's prov.
- 26 Links org.
- 28 Have lunch
- 30 Actress Joanne
- 31 Sound of relief
- 32 FDR project
- 33 Seminary subj.
- 36 Tools
- 37 Whale variety
- 40 Activist Chavez
- 42 Coral island
- 43 Skin care brand
- 44 "Endymion" poet
- 45 Spanish ayes
- 46 Pencil filler
- 48 Utter
- 49 Glass of public radio
- 50 Cacophony
- 51 Still, in verse

Answer to Previous Puzzle

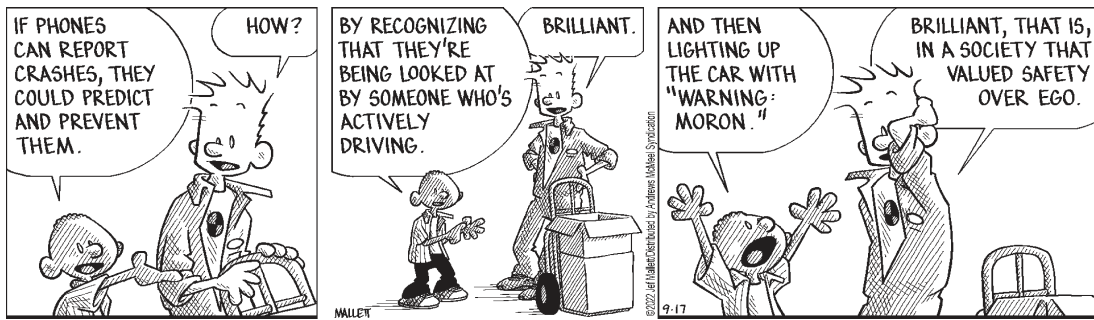
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A	L	E	C	L	O	L	E	I	R	E	
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9-16

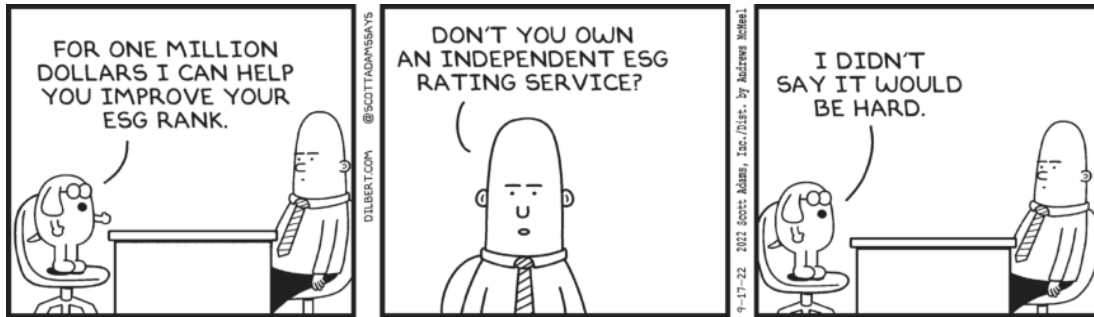
CRYPTOQUIP

X U C M R B W H X B W H F G J
 P R N X F H C G G S R J X M B C Z O F
 S R Z G F - W Z C H M I R C I S F G , J S F M
 X J H C G U X B P F W X M G J C O F G .
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THIS MATTER IS SO PERSONAL THAT I HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD MY DEAREST PALS. IT'S NO BUDDY'S BUSINESS.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals W

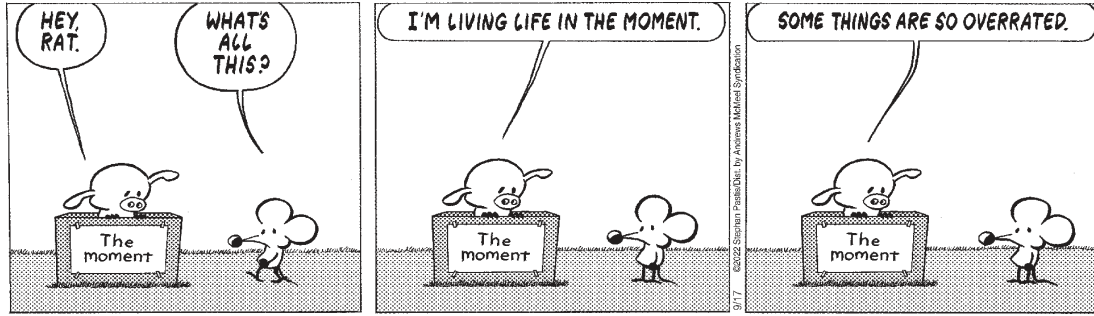
Frazz



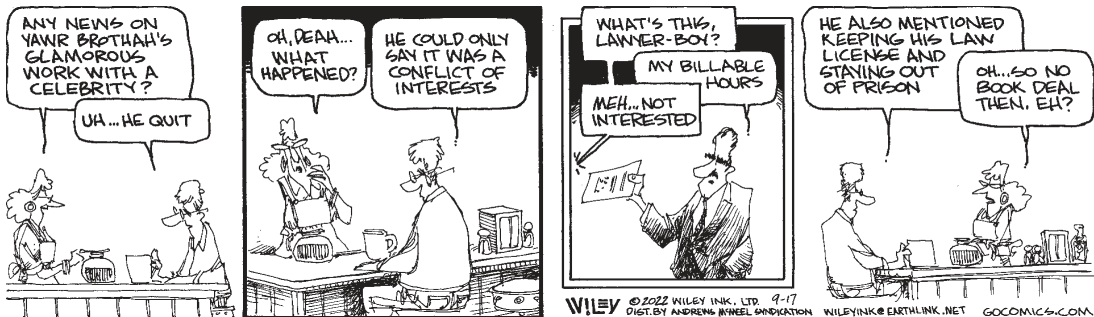
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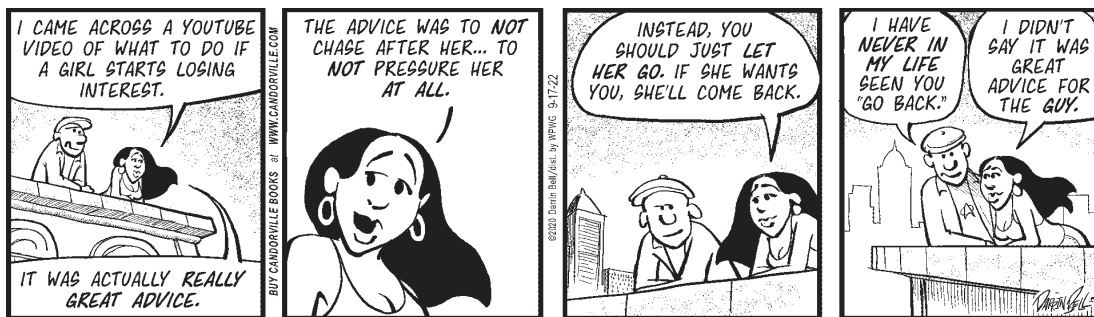
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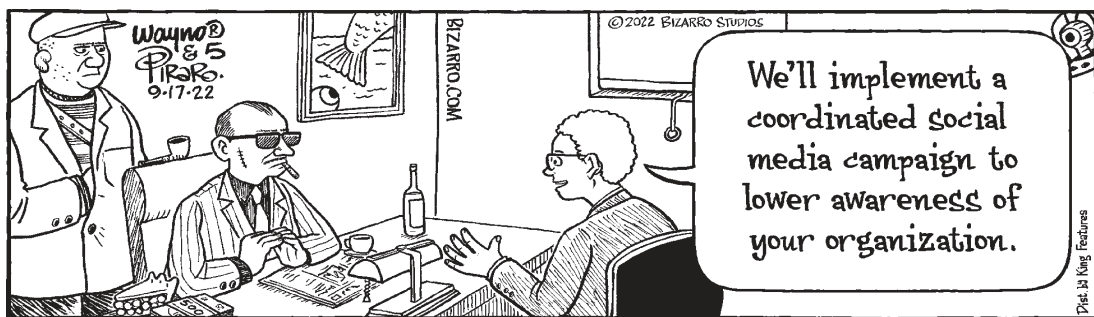
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Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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			36				37					
38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45						46				47		
48						49				50		
51						52				53		

ACROSS

- 1 Pitcher's pride
- 4 Country great McEntire
- 8 Chew (on)
- 12 Singer Rawls
- 13 Holiday lead-ins
- 14 Peregrinate
- 15 Belief
- 16 Tide variety
- 17 Currier's partner
- 18 Dick Tracy's sweetie
- 21 Method
- 22 Gear tooth
- 23 Daisy part
- 26 "Incidentally," in a text
- 27 Lass
- 30 Crooned
- 31 Hosp. areas
- 32 Pizzazz
- 33 Boy king
- 34 Coach
- 35 Used a stopwatch
- 36 "Exodus" hero
- 37 007 creator Fleming
- 38 Classic Hank Williams song
- 45 Dutch cheese
- 46 Ovid's 53
- 47 "A pox upon thee!"
- 48 Jeansmaker Strauss

- 49 Harrow rival
- 50 Mimic
- 51 Future atty.'s exam
- 52 Big rig
- 53 Scarlet

- 23 Calif. clock setting
- 24 Water (Fr.)
- 25 Blaster's need
- 26 Bikini top
- 27 Tiara jewel
- 28 Enzyme suffix
- 29 British "Inc."

DOWN

- 1 Landed
- 2 Valentine flower
- 3 Fall bloomers
- 4 Tourist's car
- 5 Without exception
- 6 Suitor
- 7 Features
- 8 "Peer Gynt Suite" composer
- 9 Bright star
- 10 Say it's so
- 11 Compass point
- 19 Booty
- 20 Explanation
- 31 Baltimore baseballers
- 32 Fan publication
- 34 Rainbow
- 35 Sesame paste
- 36 Fess up
- 37 Figure of speech
- 38 Prison room
- 39 Praiseful pieces
- 40 Volcanic flow
- 41 Low-calorie
- 42 Miles away
- 43 Ready for harvest
- 44 Ticked (off)

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

9-17

CRYPTOQUIP

AKRROV VTQDVSJ FHLJDSX KJ
 GIKFI VUVSXCHRX OHUVQ
 RSKUKJP IKPI-VJR PVSATJ FTSQ:
 TLRK TSTCKT.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF AN OLD WILD WEST MOVIE WAS SHOT IN LARGE HORSE-DRAWN COACHES, THEN IT WAS FILMED IN STAGES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals G

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DeSantis is the only Republican who can beat Trump

BY HENRY OLSEN

Special to The Washington Post

New Hampshire's Republican primary on Tuesday confirmed the trend we have seen all year: the narrow dominance of populist, MAGA elements within the GOP. That demonstrates that only one Republican could deny Donald Trump the party's 2024 presidential nomination: Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Granite State voters had a variety of options to choose from, with strong, establishment-backed conservatives running in races for the state's Senate seat and both House seats. In all three cases, Republicans chose the Trumpiest candidate. None had the former president's blessing, but all nonetheless carried his implicit imprimatur as they faithfully imitated his angry style and embraced his views on issues from immigration to election denialism. The verdict, as disappointing as it is to the party establishment, merely echoes similar decisions by voters across the nation.

At first blush, this might be depressing for Republicans who think it's time to move on from Trump. It doesn't seem to matter if the person backed by the old guard can spend millions of her own dollars, as Arizona's gubernatorial hopeful Karrin Taylor Robson did. Prior statewide office doesn't seem to help, as former Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch discovered in her bid for governor. Even prior service in the Trump administration doesn't automatically confer the MAGA mantle, as New Hampshire congressional candidate Matt Mowers found Tuesday night. Not every ultra-Trump candidate has won, but enough have that the party's drift is unmistakable.

Still, this does not mean Trump's renomination is assured. The party's voters seem willing to entertain someone else, so long as that person has a similar populist emphasis and pugnacious style. That's what recent data from the Republican polling firm Echelon Insights suggests. Echelon's August poll found that despite sky-high approval ratings, only 65% of GOP and GOP-leaning voters want Trump to run again. Trump's support drops the deeper one digs. Only 59% say they would definitely or probably back Trump in a primary if he did run, and he would win only 46% in a contested primary that included DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence. In fact, 44% say they would vote for DeSantis, Pence or one of two noted Trump critics, Rep. Liz Cheney and Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan. That's effectively a tie, before any of Trump's potential opponents have even started to campaign against him.

That might confound experts if they haven't been following the intra-GOP factions closely. Party voters now say 48 to 41 that they are likelier to be "party-first Republicans" than "Trump-first Republicans." Party-first Republicans hold much more negative views of Trump than the other cohort, and they are even more likely to oppose him in a hypothetical matchup. Trump gets 77% of Trump-first Republicans' support in a hypothetical race with DeSantis and others, but only 30% among party-firsters. And 57% of party-firsters already oppose Trump's renomination.

This is encouraging news that shows the GOP might not be solely loyal to the "mayor of Mar-a-Lago." The data also show why DeSantis is likely the only person who can dethrone

Trump.

DeSantis is the only potential opponent who has substantial support from both the "party-first" and "Trump-first" wings of the party (he receives 13% of Trump-firsters and 33% of party-firsters). His strength with Trump-first Republicans becomes more obvious after removing Trump from the mix entirely. DeSantis receives 41% in a 2024 field without Trump, leading his closest competitors by 30 points. He does about as well among Trump-firsters (47%) as with party-firsters (41%). Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, by contrast, does much better with Trumpists, while Pence breaks double digits only with party-firsters. Eleven percent of party-firsters prefer Cheney, Hogan, Utah Sen. Mitt Romney or former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley; only 2% of Trump-firsters agree.

It's not hard to figure out why DeSantis has such credibility among the Trumpy set. His pugnacious style in responding to media criticism endears him to those who want a fighter. His willingness to talk about culture war topics such as critical race theory or "woke corporations" is music to the ears of many populists. And his other positions — pro-life, pro-tax cut, traditional foreign policy views — make party-firsters like him, too.

Republicans revere the American Founding and surely recall the Revolutionary War adage: United we stand, divided we fall. DeSantis' unique ability to unite the party's warring wings points a way to end the GOP civil war and take the fight home to the Democrats.

Henry Olsen is a Washington Post columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

For most Christians, God's hand on America is a comfort

BY GARY ABERNATHY

The Washington Post

I grew up attending a small country church where, every Sunday morning, the 75 or so regular attendees heard Bible-based sermons with a heavy emphasis on the danger of veering from the straight and narrow and landing in eternal damnation in a fiery hell. It was fun.

Occasionally woven into the dogma were reminders of the Christian underpinnings of the United States — complete with spiritually based quotes from the Founding Fathers asking God's guidance and blessings on the new nation. In the 1960s and early '70s, such teachings were markedly apolitical. There were no rantings or ravings declaring one political party good or evil. There was simply a comforting belief that we lived in a nation formed and guided by God, and no one need lift a finger to ensure that situation. It simply was.

But in the wake of Roe v. Wade and other perceived attacks on that Old-Time Religion by an increasingly liberal world, Christianity had by the 1980s become politically weaponized, with "Christian soldiers" mostly aligning with the GOP. That war rages today.

Looking back, politicizing conservative Christianity was a mistake, even if well-intentioned. It's natural for Christianity to exist in a state of tension within an inclusive democracy. Consider Jesus' Great Commission to "go and make disciples of all nations," which includes, of course, this nation. By Scripture, Christians are not encouraged to just live and let live. But our Constitution says otherwise.

Walking that tightrope is a challenge. For instance, Christians often struggle with how much to be involved with, or live apart from,

the world. As parents, do you run for school board or try in other ways to influence the public school system? Or do you retreat within your walls and home-school your children? Either choice is ripe for criticism. But at the end of the day, the Christian belief that this short life is a mere prelude to the eternal one makes spending so much effort on influencing our temporal governments seem odd.

What will not change is the sincere belief held by millions of Christians (and others) that the United States has a special spiritual purpose. Such a purpose as carried out by Black churches and ministers during the civil rights era of the 1950s and '60s is regarded as crucial to the movement's success. But when defined today as "Christian nationalism," church involvement in political affairs is said to be dangerous. For many white Republicans, who are typically identified as the movement's drivers, the recent focus on Christian nationalism is the latest way to call their very existence a threat, close on the heels of accusations of racism, fascism and being "MAGA Republicans," defined in changing ways but always negatively, by President Joe Biden.

Consider an onslaught of similar headlines in recent weeks: the Daily Beast, Aug. 14, "I'm a Cradle Catholic. I Don't Want Christian Nationalism in My Church"; Rolling Stone, Sept. 1, "Meet the Apostle of Right-Wing Christian Nationalism"; The Washington Post, Sept. 1, "Americans are growing more accepting of Christian nationalism"; PBS, Sept. 7, "Former Trump adviser Michael Flynn 'at the center' of new movement based on conspiracies and Christian nationalism." Gathering no moss, Rolling Stone followed up last week with video that showed the Pennsylvania GOP's candi-

date for governor, Doug Mastriano, praying a week before the incursion at the U.S. Capitol that national leaders would "on the sixth of January ... rise up with boldness," along with other supplications deemed troubling. The self-identification of Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., as a Christian nationalist also bothers critics. But what is asked in prayer or otherwise invoked of heaven should never disturb anyone. God often answers, "No."

An individual's personal belief system, whether based on religion or other guiding principles, informs their political actions. That will never change. But because Christianity is and will long be the predominant religion in the United States, it is important that Christians constantly remind themselves not to impose their beliefs on others by weight of law or strength of numbers.

But whether in times of war or natural disaster, from 9/11 to the disturbing Capitol incursion on Jan. 6, 2021, the belief that God has his hand on our nation is a reassuring thought for millions of Americans — not a weapon to incite "violent and undemocratic strains," as the authors of an analysis in The Washington Post suggested. When discussing Christian nationalism, nuance is in short supply. It's one thing to hold the misguided belief that Christianity should have a government-sanctioned presence in society. It's quite another to be comforted by the thought that the U.S. plays a special role in God's plan. As for the latter, believers should reassure themselves that God's will for America will be fulfilled — with no legislative assistance required.

Gary Abernathy, a contributing columnist for The Washington Post, is a freelance writer based in the Cincinnati region.

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Schedule
Friday's games
EAST
 Merrimack (1-1) at Harvard (0-0)
SOUTH
 Florida St. (2-0) at Louisville (1-1)
FAR WEST
 Air Force (2-0) at Wyoming (2-1)
Saturday's games
EAST
 Villanova (2-0) at Army (0-2)
 Richmond (1-1) at Lehigh (1-1)
 Sacred Heart (1-1) at Morgan St. (0-2)
 Purdue (1-1) at Syracuse (2-0)
 Bryant (0-2) at Brown (0-0)
 Colgate (1-1) at Penn (0-0)
 Towson (2-0) at West Virginia (0-2)
 Georgetown (1-1) at Monmouth (NJ) (0-2)
 Delaware (2-0) at Rhode Island (2-0)
 Albany (NY) (0-2) at Fordham (2-0)
 Valparaiso (1-1) at Dartmouth (0-0)
 Rutgers (2-0) at Temple (1-1)
 Yale (0-0) at Holy Cross (2-0)
 Va. Lynchburg (0-1) at Delaware St. (1-1)
 Howard (0-3) vs. Morehouse (0-0) at East Rutherford, N.J.
 William & Mary (2-0) at Lafayette (1-1)
 Stony Brook (0-1) at Umass (0-2)
 St. Francis (Pa.) (0-2) at Wagner (0-2)
 Columbia (0-0) at Marist (0-1)
 NC Central (2-0) at New Hampshire (2-0)
 SMU (2-0) at Maryland (2-0)
 Maine (0-2) at Boston College (0-2)
SOUTH
 Wofford (0-2) at Virginia Tech (1-1)
 Youngstown St. (2-0) at Kentucky (2-0)
 Georgia (2-0) at South Carolina (1-1)
 Princeton (0-0) at Stetson (2-0)
 Buffalo (0-2) at Coastal Carolina (2-0)
 Cornell (0-0) at VMI (1-1)
 Grambling St. (1-1) at Jackson St. (2-0)
 Old Dominion (1-1) at Virginia (1-1)
 Hampton (2-0) at Norfolk St. (0-2)
 Austin Peay (2-1) at Alabama A&M (0-2)
 Georgia Southern (2-0) at UAB (1-1)
 Presbyterian (1-1) at W. Carolina (1-1)
 Troy (1-1) at Appalachian St. (1-1)
 Penn St. (2-0) at Auburn (2-0)
 Mississippi (2-0) at Georgia Tech (1-1)
 Louisiana-Monroe (1-1) at Alabama (2-0)
 Liberty (1-0) at Wake Forest (2-0)
 Gardner-Webb (1-1) at Elon (1-1)
 Charleston Southern (0-2) at E. Kentucky (1-1)
 Kentucky Christian (0-0) at Morehead St. (0-2)
 Mississippi St. (2-0) at LSU (1-1)
 Campbell (1-1) at East Carolina (1-1)
 NC A&T (0-2) at Duke (2-0)
 The Citadel (1-1) at Mercer (1-1)
 North Alabama (1-1) at Chattanooga (2-0)
 Akron (1-1) at Tennessee (2-0)
 St. Andrews (0-0) at Davidson (1-1)
 Samford (1-1) at Tennessee Tech (1-1)
 Northwestern St. (0-2) at Southern Miss. (0-1)
 CCSU (0-2) at SE Louisiana (0-2)
 Arkansas St. (1-1) at Memphis (1-1)
 Texas Tech (2-0) at NC State (2-0)
 Charlotte (0-3) at Georgia St. (0-2)
 Tennessee St. (0-2) at Middle Tennessee (1-1)
 Delta St. (0-0) at MVSU (0-2)
 Furman (1-1) at ETSU (1-1)
 UCF (1-1) at FAU (2-1)
 South Florida (1-1) at Florida (1-1)
 Louisiana Tech (1-1) at Clemson (2-0)
 Alcorn St. (0-2) at McNeese St. (0-2)
MIDWEST
 Uconn (1-2) at Michigan (2-0)
 Miami (Ohio) (1-1) at Cincinnati (1-1)
 Oklahoma (2-0) at Nebraska (1-2)
 Abilene Christian (2-0) at Missouri (1-1)
 LIU Brooklyn (0-2) at Kent St. (0-2)
 W. Kentucky (2-0) at Indiana (2-0)
 S. Illinois (2-0) at Northwestern (1-1)
 Montana (2-0) at Indiana St. (1-1)
 Kentucky St. (0-0) at Dayton (1-1)
 Bucknell (0-2) at Cent. Michigan (0-2)
 Murray St. (0-2) at Ball St. (0-2)
 Ohio (1-1) at Iowa St. (2-0)
 Cal Poly (1-1) at South Dakota (0-2)
 California (2-0) at Notre Dame (0-2)
 Nicholls (0-2) at SE Missouri (1-1)
 Tulane (2-0) at Kansas St. (2-0)
 Colorado (0-2) at Minnesota (2-0)
 New Mexico St. (0-3) at Wisconsin (1-1)
 Vanderbilt (2-1) at N. Illinois (1-1)
 S. Utah (1-1) at W. Illinois (0-2)
 Marshall (2-0) at Bowling Green (0-2)
 Sacramento St. (1-0) at N. Iowa (0-2)
 Keiser (0-0) at Lindenwood (Mo.) (1-0)
 Butler (2-0) at S. Dakota St. (1-1)
 Toledo (2-0) at Ohio St. (2-0)
 E. Illinois (0-2) at Illinois St. (1-1)
 Nevada (2-1) at Iowa (1-1)
 Pittsburgh (1-1) at W. Michigan (1-1)
SOUTHWEST
 Texas State (1-1) at Baylor (1-1)
 Kansas (2-0) at Houston (1-1)
 Texas Southern (0-2) vs. Southern U. (1-1) at Arlington, Texas
 Jacksonville St. (3-0) at Tulsa (1-1)
 E. New Mexico (0-0) at Tarleton St. (1-1)
 N. Colorado (0-2) at Lamar (0-2)
 Incarnate Word (2-0) at Prairie View (1-1)
 Missouri St. (2-0) at Arkansas (2-0)
 Texas A&M Commerce (1-1) at Sam Houston St. (0-2)
 Ark.-Pine Bluff (2-0) at Oklahoma St. (2-0)
 Louisiana-Lafayette (2-0) at Rice (1-1)
 UTSA (1-1) at Texas (1-1)
 Miami (2-0) at Texas A&M (1-1)
FAR WEST
 South Alabama (2-0) at UCLA (2-0)
 Cent. Arkansas (0-2) at Idaho St. (0-2)
 North Texas (2-1) at UNLV (1-1)
 Drake (0-2) at Idaho (0-2)
 BYU (2-0) at Oregon (1-1)
 UT Martin (1-1) at Boise St. (1-1)
 North Dakota (1-1) at N. Arizona (1-1)
 Colorado St. (0-2) at Washington St. (2-0)
 Michigan St. (2-0) at Washington (2-0)
 Oregon St. (2-0) vs. Montana St. (2-0) at Portland, Ore.
 Utah Tech (1-1) at Weber St. (2-0)
 UTEP (1-2) at New Mexico (1-1)
 San Diego (1-1) at UC Davis (0-2)
 San Diego St. (1-1) at Utah (1-1)
 Fresno St. (1-1) at Southern Cal (2-0)
 N. Dakota St. (2-0) at Arizona (1-1)
 E. Michigan (1-1) at Arizona St. (1-1)
 Duquesne (1-2) at Hawaii (0-3)

PRO FOOTBALL

NFL
AMERICAN CONFERENCE
East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	1	0	0	1.000	31	10
Miami	1	0	0	1.000	20	7
N.Y. Jets	0	1	0	.000	9	24
New England	0	1	0	.000	7	20

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	0	0	1	.500	20	20
Indianapolis	0	0	1	.500	20	20
Jacksonville	0	1	0	.000	22	28
Tennessee	0	1	0	.000	20	21

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	1	0	0	1.000	24	9
Cleveland	1	0	0	1.000	26	24
Pittsburgh	1	0	0	1.000	23	20
Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000	20	23

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	1	0	0	1.000	44	21
L.A. Chargers	1	0	0	1.000	24	19
Denver	0	1	0	.000	16	17
Las Vegas	0	1	0	.000	19	24

NATIONAL CONFERENCE
East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	1	0	0	1.000	21	20
Philadelphia	1	0	0	1.000	38	35
Washington	1	0	0	1.000	28	22
Dallas	0	1	0	.000	3	19

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	1	0	0	1.000	27	26
Tampa Bay	1	0	0	1.000	19	3
Atlanta	0	1	0	.000	26	27
Carolina	0	1	0	.000	24	26

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Chicago	1	0	0	1.000	19	10
Minnesota	1	0	0	1.000	23	7
Detroit	0	1	0	.000	35	38
Green Bay	0	1	0	.000	7	23

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Seattle	1	0	0	1.000	17	16
Arizona	0	1	0	.000	21	44
L.A. Rams	0	1	0	.000	10	31
San Francisco	0	1	0	.000	10	19

Thursday's game
 L.A. Chargers at Kansas City
Sunday's games
 Carolina at N.Y. Giants
 Indianapolis at Jacksonville
 Miami at Baltimore
 N.Y. Jets at Cleveland
 New England at Pittsburgh
 Tampa Bay at New Orleans
 Washington at Detroit
 Atlanta at L.A. Rams
 Seattle at San Francisco
 Arizona at Las Vegas
 Cincinnati at Dallas
 Houston at Denver
 Chicago at Green Bay
Monday's games
 Tennessee at Buffalo
 Minnesota at Philadelphia
Thursday, Sept. 22
 Pittsburgh at Cleveland
NFL injury report
NEW YORK — The National Football League injury report, as provided by the league (OUT: Player will not play; DOUBTFUL: Player is unlikely to play; QUESTIONABLE: Player is not certain to play; DNP: did not practice; LIMITED: limited participation; FULL: Full participation):
Sunday
ARIZONA CARDINALS at LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — ARIZONA: DNP: OT Kelvin Beachum (non injury related-rest), TE Zach Ertz (calf), C Rodney Hudson (rest), WR Andy Isabella (back), WR Rondale Moore (hamstring), DB Jalen Thompson (toe), DE J.J. Watt (calf), LIMITED: CB Trayvon Mullen (toe), G Justin Pugh (neck), CB Marco Wilson (ankle). **LAS VEGAS:** DNP: RB Brandon Bolden (hamstring), C Andre James (concussion), S Tre'von Moehrig (hip), LB Denzel Perryman (ankle). FULL: CB Nate Hobbs (back).
ATLANTA FALCONS at LOS ANGELES RAMS — ATLANTA: DNP: RB Damien Williams (rib). FULL: WR Drake London (knee). **LOS ANGELES RAMS:** DNP: C Brian Alton (knee), WR Van Jefferson (knee), T Joe Noteboom (knee), LS Matthew Orzech (calf). LIMITED: OLB Leonard Floyd (knee).
CAROLINA PANTHERS at NEW YORK GIANTS — CAROLINA: DNP: DE Marquise Haynes (hip), RB Christian McCaffrey (NIR-resting player). LIMITED: LB Franke Luvu (shoulder), T Taylor Moton (knee), LB Grandon Smith (thigh). **NEW YORK GIANTS:** DNP: DB Nick McCloud (hamstring), DB Aaron Robinson (appendicitis), WR Wan'Dale Robinson (knee). LIMITED: OL Jon Feliciano (lower leg), DE Azeez Ojulari (calf), DB Jason Pinnock (shoulder), Kayvon Thibodeaux (knee). FULL: DB Dan Belton (clavicle).
CHICAGO BEARS at GREEN BAY PACKERS — CHICAGO: LIMITED: WR Velus Jones (hamstring), T Riley Reiff (shoulder). **GREEN BAY:** DNP: G Jon Runyan (concussion). LIMITED: T David Bakhtiari (knee), G Elgton Jenkins (knee), WR Allen Lazard (ankle). FULL: C Jake Hanson (shoulder), CB Keisean Nixon (shoulder), LB Quay Walker (shoulder).
CINCINNATI BENGALS at DALLAS COWBOYS — CINCINNATI: DNP: WR Trent Taylor (hamstring), DT Josh Tupou (shin). LIMITED: TE Devin Asiasi (quadricep), WR Tee Higgins (concussion). Full: G Alex Cappa (knee), CB Tre Flowers (ankle), DE Trey Hendrickson (back), TE Hayden Hurst (groin), G Cordell Volson (hip). **DALLAS:** DNP: DE Tarell Basham (thigh), S Jayron Kearse (knee), G Connor McGovern (ankle), QB Dak Prescott (right thumb).
HOUSTON TEXANS at DENVER BRONCOS — HOUSTON: DNP: C Justin Britt (NIR-personal matter), DT Maliek Collins (knee), DE Jerry Hughes (NIR-resting player). LIMITED: DE Rasheem Green (thigh), TE Brevin Jordan (ankle), CB Isaac Yiadom (abdomen). **DENVER:** DNP: LB Randy Gregory (shoulder/knee), WR K.J. Hamler (knee/hip), LB Josey Jewell (calf), C Quinn Meinerz (hamstring), DE DeShaun Williams (back). LIMITED: DB K'Waun Williams (wrist). FULL: T Billy Turner (knee).
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS at JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — INDIANAPOLIS: DNP: DT DeForest Buckner (hip), WR Alec Pierce (concussion). LIMITED: CB Kenny Moore (hip), WR Michael Pittman (quadricep). FULL: LB Shaquille Leonard (back). **JACKSONVILLE:** No injuries to report.
MIAMI DOLPHINS at BALTIMORE RAVENS — MIAMI: DNP: RB Salvon Ahmed (heel), T Terron Armstead (toe/NIR-resting player), TE Cethan Carter (concussion), LB Melvin Ingram (NIR-resting player), OL Austin Jackson (ankle), WR Cedrick Wilson Jr. (toe). LIMITED: TE Tanner Conner (knee), S Eric Rowe (pectoral). FULL: T Greg Little (ankle). **BALTIMORE:** DNP: DE Calais Campbell (NIR-resting player), OLB Justin Houston (NIR-resting player), FB Patrick Ricard (calf). LIMITED: DT Travis Jones (knee), CB Marcus Peters (knee), WR James Proche II (groin), T Ronnie Stanley (ankle), DB Brandon Stephens (quadricep). FULL: RB J.K. Dobbins (knee).
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS at PITTSBURGH STEELERS — NEW ENGLAND: DNP: LB Ja'Whaun (toe). LIMITED: S Joshua Bledsoe (groin), S Adrian Phillips (ribs), G Cole Strong (shoulder), CB Shaun Wade (ankle), RB Pierre Strong Jr. (shoulder). FULL: QB Mac Jones (back). **PITTSBURGH:** DNP: LB T.J. Watt (pectoral). LIMITED: OL Mason Cole (ankle), RB Najee Harris (foot), CB Levi Wallace (ankle). FULL: LB Rob Spillane (eye).
NEW YORK JETS at CLEVELAND BROWNS — NEW YORK JETS: DNP: T George Fant (knee), DE John Franklin-Myers (toe), S Jordan Whitehead (ankle). LIMITED: WR Braxton Berrios (heel), P Braden Mann (back), QB Zach Wilson (knee). **CLEVELAND:** DNP: WR Amari Cooper (NIR-resting player), WR Mike Woods (illness). LIMITED: T Jack Conklin (knee). FULL: T Christopher Hubbard (elbow), DE Isaiah Thomas (hand).
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS at SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — SEATTLE: DNP: G Gabe Jackson (nir-rest), S Jamal Adams (knee), CB Artie Burns (groin), DE Shelby Harris (back), S Quandre Diggs (knee). FULL: T Jake Curhan (elbow), G Damien Lewis (knee/ankle), RB Kenneth Walker III (hernia), LB Cody Barton (hip), S Ryan Neal (ankle), LB Uchenna Nwosu (ankle), CB Tariq Woolen (Neck). **SAN FRANCISCO:** DNP: OL Daniel Brunskill (hamstring), TE George Kittle (groin), T Trent Williams (nir-rest). LIMITED: LB Dre Greenlaw (elbow).
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS at NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — TAMPA BAY: DNP: QB Thom Brady (NIR-resting player), WR Russell Gage (hamstring), WR Chris Godwin (hamstring), WR Julio Jones (knee), CB Zion McCollum (hamstring), T Donovan Smith (elbow). LIMITED: WR Mike Evans (calf), RB WR Mike Evans (calf), RB Leonard Fournette (hamstring), WR Breshad Perriman (knee), T Tristan Wirfs (abdomen). **NEW ORLEANS:** DNP: CB Paulson Adebode (ankle). LIMITED: RB Mark Ingram (ankle), DE Cameron Jordan (hip), RB Alvin Kamara (rib), S Marcus Maye (ankle), WR Tre'Quan Smith (shoulder), CB Altonae Taylor (hip), T Calvin Throckmorton (illness), RB Dwayne Washington (hamstring), QB Jameis Winston (back), T Landon Young (hip).
WASHINGTON COMMANDERS at DETROIT LIONS — WASHINGTON: DNP: G Wes Schweitzer (hamstring). LIMITED: DT Jonathan Allen (groin), S Kamren Curl (thumb), LB Jamin Davis (not injury related - personal matter), G Trai Turner (quadricep). FULL: TE Cole Turner (hamstring). **DETROIT:** DNP: DE Michael Brockers (knee), T Taylor Decker (calf), G Tommy Kraemer (back), C Frank Ragnow (groin, foot), RB D'Andre Swift (ankle). LIMITED: G Jonah Jackson (finger), S Ifeatu Melifonwu (hamstring). FULL: LB Julian Okwara (hamstring).

PRO SOCCER

MLS
EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	18	4	9	63	68	22
CF Montréal	17	9	5	56	58	49
New York	14	9	8	50	47	37
NYCFC	13	11	7	46	51	39
Orlando City	12	12	6	42	36	46
Cincinnati	10	8	12	42	54	49
Columbus	9	7	14	41	40	35
Inter Miami CF	11	13	6	39	38	50
Atlanta	10	12	9	39	46	50
New England	9	11	11	38	44	47
Charlotte FC	11	17	2	35	35	46
Chicago	9	14	8	35	33	42
Toronto FC	9	15	7	34	49	57
D.C. United	7	18	6	27	32	62

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LAFC	19	8	4	61	61	35
Austin FC	16	9	6	54	63	45
FC Dallas	13	8	10	49	45	34
Nashville	12	9	10	46	49	38
Minnesota	13	12	6	45	45	45
Portland	11	8	12	45	50	47
Real Salt Lake	11	10	10	43	38	41
LA Galaxy	11	12	7	40	47	46
Seattle	12	15	3	39	43	40
Colorado	10	12	9	39	43	52
Vancouver	10	14	7	37	36	54
Sporting KC	9	15	7	34	36	51
Houston	9	16	6	33	39	49
San Jose	7	14	9	30	45	63

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.
Tuesday, Sept. 13
 CF Montréal 3, Chicago 2
 Miami 2, Columbus 1
 Los Angeles FC 1, Minnesota 1, tie
 Sporting Kansas City 3, D.C. United 0
 Houston 3, New England 1
Wednesday's games
 Atlanta 1, Orlando City 0
 Austin FC 3, Real Salt Lake 0
 Colorado 2, San Jose 1
 Vancouver 3, LA Galaxy 0
Saturday's games
 New York at New York City FC
 Philadelphia at Atlanta
 CF Montréal at New England
 Toronto FC at Orlando City
 Charlotte FC at Chicago
 Minnesota at Sporting Kansas City
 Cincinnati at Real Salt Lake
 Seattle at Vancouver
 FC Dallas at San Jose
 Colorado at LA Galaxy
Sunday's games
 Portland at Columbus
 Miami at D.C. United
 Houston at Los Angeles FC
Saturday, Sept. 24
 LA Galaxy at San Jose
NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	9	5	5	32	25	27
San Diego	9	6	4	31	29	19
Portland	8	3	7	31	39	20
Houston	8	5	6	30	32	24
Chicago	8	5	6	30	32	24
OL Reign	7	4	7	28	24	18
Angel City	7	6	5	26	20	20
North Carolina	7	7	4	25	39	31
Orlando	5	7	6	21	20	35
Washington	2	6	10	16	22	26
Louisville	2	8	8	14	17	31
Gotham FC	4	14	0	12	13	37

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.
Wednesday's games
 North Carolina 1, Angel City 0
 Chicago 4, Kansas City 0
Friday's game
 Orlando at Louisville
Saturday's games
 Gotham FC at Washington
 OL Reign at North Carolina
 Houston at Chicago
 Angel City at San Diego
Sunday's games
 Portland at Kansas City
Wednesday, Sept. 21
 OL Reign at Gotham FC
 North Carolina at Orlando
 Louisville at Portland
 Washington at Angel City
Saturday, Sept. 24
 Gotham FC at North Carolina
 OL Reign at Houston
Sunday, Sept. 25
 Chicago at Portland
 Washington at Kansas City
 San Diego at Orlando
 Louisville at Angel City

DEALS

Wednesday's transactions
BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION — Named Harry Marino assistant general counsel.
American League
BOSTON RED SOX — Traded 3B Nicholas Northcut to Cincinnati in exchange for a player to be named later. Activated INF Yu Chang. Designated RHP Jeurys Familia for assignment. Sent RF Jaylin Davis outright to Worcester (IL).
LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Placed SS Andrew Velazquez on the 10-day IL. Recalled 2B Michael Stefanic from Salt Lake (PCL).
NEW YORK YANKEES — Transferred the rehab assignment of LHP Zack Britton from Somerset (EL) to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL).
OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Reinstated OF Skye Bolt from the 10-day IL and sent him outright to Las Vegas (PCL). Sent RHP Domingo Tapia and OF Luis Barrera outright to Las Vegas.
TAMPA BAY RAYS — Optioned RHP Yonny Chirinos to Durham (IL).
TEXAS RANGERS — Sent RHP Kohei Arihara outright to Round Rock (PCL).
TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Optioned RHP Mitch White to Buffalo (IL).
National League
CHICAGO CUBS — Placed OF Rafael Ortega on the 60-day IL. Selected the contract of OF Jared Young from Iowa (IL).
CINCINNATI REDS — Released RHP T.J. Zeuch. Reinstated RHP Justin Dunn from the 15-day IL. Sent RHP Graham Ashcraft to Chattanooga (SL) on a rehab assignment. Optioned RHP Raynel Espinal to Louisville (IL). Returned RHP Kyle Dowdy to Louisville.
LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Recalled RHP Michael Grove from Oklahoma City (PCL). Optioned RHP Andre Jackson to Oklahoma City.
NEW YORK METS — Sent RHP Max Scherzer on a rehab assignment to Syracuse (IL).
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Claimed RHP Taylor Scott off waivers from San Diego. Recalled LHP Kent Emanuel from Lehigh Valley (IL).
PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Returned RHP Luis Ortiz to Indianapolis (IL).
BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
SACRAMENTO KINGS — Signed F KZ Okpala.
FOOTBALL
National Football League
ARIZONA CARDINALS — Signed WRs Jeff Cotton Jr. and JaVonta Payton and OL Koda Martin to the practice squad. Placed WR Victor Bolden Jr. and OL Rashaad Coward on the practice squad injured reserve.
BALTIMORE RAVENS — Signed CB T.J. Carrie to the practice squad. Placed CB Kyle Fuller and OT Ja'Wuan James on injured reserve. Promoted OLB Steven Means from the practice squad to the active roster.
BUFFALO BILLS — Signed DT Prince Emilio to the practice squad. Released WR Tanner Gentry from the practice squad.
CHICAGO BEARS — Signed OL Michael Schofield III. Placed OL Alex Leatherwood on the non-football injury (NFI) list.
CLEVELAND BROWNS — Re-signed CB Herb Miller to the practice squad.
DENVER BRONCOS — Placed S Justin Simmons on injured reserve. Promoted CB Essang Bassey from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed S Anthony Harris to the practice squad.
DETROIT LIONS — Promoted RB Justin Jackson from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed OL Kayode Awosika. Re0-signed T Darrin Paulo to the practice squad.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed S Mike Brown to the practice squad.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed Ks Chase McLaughlin and Lucas Havarisik to the practice squad. Released G Arlington Hambricht from the practice squad.
LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Promoted WR Keelan Cole from the practice squad to the active roster. Placed WR D.J. Turner on injured reserve. Signed C Billy Pierce and CB Nickell Robey-Coleman to the practice squad.
LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Signed DL Breiden Fehoko to the practice squad.
LOS ANGELES RAMS — Promoted G Jeremiah Kolone from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed G Oday Aboushi to the practice squad.

BOXING/SOCCER

Álvarez-Golovkin: different fighters for trilogy finale

BY GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Although four years are an eternity in sports, Canelo Álvarez still remembers every round of his two fights with Gennady Golovkin. He recalls every tactical decision and momentum shift during those now-distant meetings with arguably his greatest rival.

But as he prepares for their third meeting in Las Vegas, Álvarez doesn't plan to call on those memories very much. Four years to the weekend after they last met, Canelo doesn't think there's much to be gained from preparing to fight a boxing memory.

What's more, he believes Golovkin will scarcely recognize what he sees in the ring Saturday night.

"I think he's going to be surprised how much I've improved," Álvarez told The Associated Press near his home in San Diego. "My strength, my resistance, everything has improved. I think maybe he doesn't realize this is going to be a different fight. I've been working hard the whole time."

Golovkin feels much the same way about a matchup that could turn out to define the careers of two of the greatest boxers of their generation, particularly if Golovkin pulls an upset. They fought to a hotly disputed draw in 2017 and to an equally debatable majority-decision victory for Álvarez in 2018, but Golovkin said his power and tenacity have only grown in the interim — and he also expects to benefit from moving up to super middleweight.

"We're in different times now, and that's a lot of time since the last fight," Golovkin told the AP through an interpreter. "It's going to be very different. Not only just four

"I think maybe he doesn't realize this is going to be a different fight."

Canelo Álvarez

years, but we've lived through the pandemic, which was very tough. It's like an entire Olympic cycle, but even more."

Since they last met, both fighters' trainers say they've made fundamental changes to the ways they prepare and compete in their dangerous sport. The 40-year-old Golovkin (42-1-1, 37 KOs) has a new trainer and is bulking up to 168 pounds after 16 years as a middleweight, while Álvarez (57-2-2, 39 KOs) is newly humbled and motivated coming off a loss to light heavyweight Dmitry Bivol this year.

Their mutual dislike also appears to have grown, although Álvarez is more upfront than Golovkin about the personal animus between the rivals. Away from microphones, it seems clear they don't like each other any more than they did in 2018, when the entire promotion of the rematch proceeded under the cloud of Álvarez's positive test for a performance-enhancing substance and his subsequent suspension.

Álvarez took a break from his usual training routine late last month to visit House of Boxing in the working-class, sun-bleached Paradise Hills neighborhood of San Diego. Several miles away in an office park is Canelo's usual gym, where trainer Eddy Reynoso has paused training with most of his



ISAAC BREKKEN/AP

Canelo Álvarez lands a punch against Gennady Golovkin in the 12th round during a middleweight title bout on Sept. 15, 2018, in Las Vegas. Four years have passed since that tight rematch between Álvarez and Golovkin that marked the second fight in one of the best rivalries in boxing.

other fighters to focus solely on Álvarez.

"Canelo is better at everything since the last time he fought Triple G," Reynoso said through an interpreter. "I'm not being funny. He has improved with his conditioning, with his technique, with his toughness. He has more ways to beat you, and I'm not going to say what they are, but Triple G is probably not going to be ready for some of them."

Since the last time he fought Álvarez, Golovkin replaced Abel Sanchez — the American trainer who shepherded his rise to worldwide stardom — with Johnathon Banks, the former cruiserweight champion and Wladimir Klitschko's former trainer.

Banks said Golovkin's camp isn't studying film of the first two fights, not even the parts where Golovkin was clearly beating Álvarez.

"It's hard to look back at that, because we're so steady looking forward," Banks said. "No matter what you see in those

fights, you can't go backwards. Both fighters are significantly different from those two fights and the last time they saw each other. ... That's one good thing about Triple G — he always, always wants to learn. He wants to be better, and he wants to be more efficient. That's where I can contribute and show him ways to be more efficient, and he's always paying attention."

So Golovkin may attempt to press Álvarez even harder, while Álvarez may try to use his vaunted physicality more effectively at the higher weight. Both fighters say they'll try to avoid a wild brawl — but both believe they've spent the past four years building to this moment, and neither expects to hold anything back if technique alone isn't getting it done.

"Only one thing is pretty much the same from four years ago, and that's that (both) of these guys are absolutely unafraid of any challenge," Banks said. "They're the exact same guys in that respect."

Nike releases US World Cup jerseys some call bland

BY RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Nike released the United States' World Cup jerseys Thursday, including a mostly white design for home matches that was criticized in advance by a pair of American players and some fans.

The home jerseys have red and blue stripes on each sleeve, somewhat similar to the stripes down each side of the Americans' 2002 World Cup uniforms.

"We just as angry as y'all !!!" forward Tim Weah wrote last month after a version of the home jersey was posted online.

"Tried to tell them," midfielder Weston McKennie wrote.

The bright blue away jersey has an ice-dyeing technique somewhat akin to a tie-dye pattern.

More than 100 people signed a change.org online petition calling for different designs.

"I rate it in the middle," American midfielder Yunus Musah said during an Aug. 25 conference call, putting his right thumb sideways. "It's not there," he said with a thumbs up, then flipping to a thumbs down, "or there. It's the middle."

Donald Wine, a national board member of the American Outlaws supporters group, said he likely will purchase one of the new jerseys but hoped Nike and the U.S. Soccer Federation would take criticism into account in future designs. Wine said fans prefer a more distinctive look the team could become known for, such as Croatia's adoption of a checkerboard pattern.

As an example, Wine cited the red and white horizontal stripes of the 2012-13 U.S. jersey that became known as Waldo, after the character's attire in a children's book.

"The outcry is not necessarily over the design of the jersey, or at least lack of design on the home, but it's about the fact that I think a lot of people are looking for a jersey identity to call their own," Wine said. "I am one of those people who have been long in the team Waldo camp for it being a permanent national team jersey. I think in the end people just want a jersey identity and these don't do that."

Aaron Barnett, senior product director of Nike global football apparel, said Rolando Cruz, the apparel product line manager,

coordinated with the USSF on the design.

"We know that our products always will elicit response," Barnett said. "We've been doing products for multiple sports, not just soccer. And so we're going to have some athletes that are super-excited about it and some they're not excited about. And that's just the balance that you always have in the process."

The U.S. is back in the World Cup for this year's tournament in Qatar after failing to qualify for 2018. The Americans open Nov. 21 against Wales.

Barnett said most of the jersey manufacturing takes place in Asia. He said he did not know whether the workers who manufactured the kits were unionized.

Nike took over as the USSF

equipment supplier in 1995 from Adidas, which had provided uniforms since 1973. The USSF announced a longterm extension with Nike last November without specifying a length.

Nike released the jerseys of 12 of its 13 World Cup teams Thursday: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, France, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and South Korea. The company delayed announcing England's designs until Sept. 21 following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

Defending champion France has jerseys inspired by Toile de Jouy fabric that includes subtle prints of famous landmarks, such as the Arc de Triomphe, the Old Mill of Vernon, a Romanesque tower.

MLB

Scoreboard

American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	87	56	.608	—
Toronto	81	62	.566	6
Tampa Bay	79	63	.556	7½
Baltimore	75	67	.528	11½
Boston	69	74	.483	18
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	76	65	.539	—
Chicago	73	70	.510	4
Minnesota	71	70	.504	5
Kansas City	57	86	.399	20
Detroit	54	89	.378	23
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	93	50	.650	—
Seattle	80	62	.563	12½
Texas	62	81	.434	31
Los Angeles	61	82	.427	32
Oakland	52	91	.364	41
National League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	89	55	.618	—
Atlanta	88	55	.615	½
Philadelphia	80	62	.563	8
Miami	58	85	.406	30½
Washington	49	94	.343	39½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
St. Louis	84	59	.587	—
Milwaukee	76	67	.531	8
Chicago	61	82	.427	23
Cincinnati	56	86	.394	27½
Pittsburgh	55	88	.385	29
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Los Angeles	98	44	.690	—
San Diego	78	65	.545	20½
San Francisco	69	74	.483	29½
Arizona	67	75	.472	31
Colorado	62	81	.434	36½

x-clinched division

Wednesday's games
 Cleveland 5, L.A. Angels 3
 Houston 2, Detroit 1
 Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 1
 N.Y. Yankees 5, Boston 3
 Minnesota 4, Kansas City 0
 Oakland 8, Texas 7
 Pittsburgh 10, Cincinnati 4
 Colorado 3, Chicago White Sox 0
 San Francisco 4, Atlanta 1
 Seattle 6, San Diego 1
 Philadelphia 6, Miami 1
 Baltimore 6, Washington 2
 Chicago Cubs 6, N.Y. Mets 3
 St. Louis 4, Milwaukee 1
 Arizona 5, L.A. Dodgers 3, 10 innings

Thursday's games
 Chicago White Sox at Cleveland
 Tampa Bay at Toronto
 Oakland at Houston
 Kansas City at Minnesota
 Philadelphia at Miami
 Pittsburgh at N.Y. Mets
 Cincinnati at St. Louis
 San Diego at Arizona

Friday's games
 Baltimore (Voth 5-2) at Toronto (TBD)
 Chicago White Sox (Giolito 10-9) at Detroit (Manning 2-2)
 Kansas City (Heasley 3-8) at Boston (Wacha 11-1)
 Minnesota (TBD) at Cleveland (McKenzie 10-11)
 Texas (Pérez 11-6) at Tampa Bay (Kluber 10-8)
 Oakland (Martinez 4-4) at Houston (Verlander 16-3)
 Seattle (Ray 12-9) at L.A. Angels (Lorenzen 6-6)
 Colorado (Márquez 8-10) at Chicago Cubs (Stroman 3-7)
 Miami (Luzardo 3-7) at Washington (Espino 0-7)
 Pittsburgh (Keller 5-10) at N.Y. Mets (Walker 11-4)
 Philadelphia (Suárez 9-5) at Atlanta (Fried 13-6)
 N.Y. Yankees (Montas 5-12) at Milwaukee (Houser 6-9)
 Cincinnati (Dunn 1-3) at St. Louis (Flaherty 0-1)
 San Diego (Snell 6-9) at Arizona (Bumgarner 6-14)
 L.A. Dodgers (May 1-2) at San Francisco (Webb 13-8)

Saturday's games
 Minnesota at Cleveland (2)
 Baltimore at Toronto
 Kansas City at Boston
 Chicago White Sox at Detroit
 Texas at Tampa Bay
 Oakland at Houston
 Seattle at L.A. Angels
 Cincinnati at St. Louis (2)
 Colorado at Chicago Cubs
 Miami at Washington
 N.Y. Yankees at Milwaukee
 Pittsburgh at N.Y. Mets
 Philadelphia at Atlanta
 San Diego at Arizona
 L.A. Dodgers at San Francisco

Wainwright, Molina make history

Cardinals battery starts together for 325th time

BY STEVE OVERBEY
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — The cheers began for Adam Wainwright and Yadier Molina as they walked in from the bullpen before the game, the St. Louis fans standing to salute them for all they'd accomplished together.

After the final out of a 4-1 victory over Milwaukee on Wednesday night, it was time for the Cardinals to shower the record-making duo with a clubhouse celebration.

Wainwright and Molina started together for the 325th time, the most by a battery in major league history. The duo eclipsed the regular-season mark of 324 held by the Detroit Tigers pair of Mickey Lolich and Bill Freehan from 1963-1975.

"Great feeling to be on top of that list," Molina said. "And doing it with Waino, a great human being, it's just amazing."

Added Wainwright: "I don't think anyone will break that record."

Towels with the No. 325 were given out to fans as they entered Busch Stadium, and the ovations and tributes kept coming.

"The crowd was so awesome, making me get constant chills and tearing up," Wainwright said.

"Usually when I get to the dugout after warming up, I'm very



JOE PUETZ/AP

Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina, left, and pitcher Adam Wainwright walk in from the bullpen after warming up before Wednesday's game against the Milwaukee Brewers in St. Louis.

laser-focused on my approach to the first batter," he said. "But they were playing a video on the board and I thought, 'you know, they're probably not going to play any more cool videos while I'm pitching that I can really take in.' So, I might as well enjoy it for a minute."

Brewers leadoff man Christian Yelich got into the moment, too. The Milwaukee star stood absolutely still and made no attempt to

swing at Wainwright's first pitch, a called strike.

"They deserve that moment of respect," Yelich said. "It was cool to see history."

The ball was taken out of play, then Wainwright and Molina went to work at extending the Cardinals' lead in the NL Central.

Wainwright and Molina made their first start together on April 6, 2007, in Houston. Wainwright recorded a 4-2 win in that game — the

first of his 213 victories with Molina behind the plate.

The 40-year-old Molina, a perennial Glove Glover, has indicated he will retire at the end of this season. The 41-year-old Wainwright has yet to make a decision on his future.

Wainwright (11-9) gave up just one run in five innings despite allowing eight hits and walking two. He struck out three in a 98-pitch stint.

Number: Judge has likely already locked up the AL MVP

FROM PAGE 48

ing that. And in the context of this season and in this era, that's really something. And he certainly should have in any reasonable person's mind put the most valuable argument for this year to bed."

With his black matte Chandler model maple bat, Judge is hitting .310 with 123 RBIs — 12 more than anyone else.

Until the 1990s, baseball's great debate was whether Maris' 1961 season should count as the record because he played more games.

Ruth's 60 in 1927 stood as the standard for 34 years. Maris' mark lasted 37 until Mark McGwire hit 70 in 1998, part of an apparently juiced jolt that saw Sammy Sosa hit 66. McGwire followed with 65 the next year as Sosa hit 63. Power peaked in 2001, when Barry Bonds hit a previously unfathomable 73 and Sosa 64.

"Personally, I think that those records are tainted, and therefore I'm rooting very much for Judge," former baseball Commissioner Fay Vincent said. "I think he's absolutely clean. I don't think there's

any performance-enhancing drug involvement or taint with Judge. And so I think one of the reasons his performance is so illuminating and so compelling is that it's totally clean."

Since drug testing with penalties started in 2004, the highest total has been Giancarlo Stanton's 59 for Miami in 2017.

"Fans, writers, Hall of Fame voters, all those groups that matter are going to make their own judgments about how his accomplishments should be weighed against other players who may have been disclosed as using performance-enhancing drugs," current Commissioner Rob Manfred said. "They're going to place appropriate weight on those performances. I have found Judge's performance to be as compelling and captivating as any as I've ever seen."

Maris' legitimacy was debated because the American League schedule increased to 162 games in 1961 following expansion. With Maris at 35 homers, then-Commissioner Ford Frick decided that

July 17 that if anyone topped Ruth in more than 154 games "there would have to be some distinctive mark in the record books to show that Babe Ruth's record was set under a 154-game schedule."

That "distinctive mark" became known as an "asterisk" and it remained until Sept. 4, 1991, when a committee on statistical accuracy chaired by Vincent voted unanimously to recognize Maris as the record-holder.

At 30, Judge has an impeccable reputation in an era during which each player is tested for performance-enhancing drugs during spring training and is subject to random tests during the season and offseason.

McGwire admitted in 2010 he used steroids while breaking Maris' record. Bonds and Sosa maintain they never knowingly used banned substances.

"Nobody thought that when Hank Aaron hit 715 that he was a better home run hitter than Babe Ruth, but he had surpassed Ruth's record. No one thinks that Pete Rose in his time was a better hitter

than Ty Cobb, but he passed Cobb's record — authentically," Costas said. "People put the steroid stuff in a different category because it's obvious, it's a cluster of half a decade that this stuff happens. And it isn't just the three of them. You've got other guys hitting 50 homers or guys hitting 45 homers who previously hit 18. Everyone understands that, at least everyone who pays attention. And so if Judge winds up hitting 65, that's different than McGwire or Sosa hitting 65."

Changes in the sport mean players faced different conditions. Ruth started in the dead ball era, Maris played at the dawn of expansion, Judge faces pitchers throwing harder than ever before.

"It's a dead end, it seems to me, to keep comparing eras," Will said. "Ruth didn't play against African-Americans. Ruth didn't play night games and have transcontinental travel and all the rest. Judge is a lot bigger, then pitchers are a lot bigger. ... You judge people against what they do against their peers."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Herd rising

Marshall basks in storybook victory over Notre Dame, its 2nd against Top 10 team

By JOHN RABY
Associated Press

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. — The path to one of Marshall's greatest victories was forged through scooping up transfer portal talent, magic tricks, and a second-year coach's belief that a Sun Belt Conference team can be as good as any opponent, especially a storied giant like Notre Dame.

Fifteen games into his Marshall career, coach Charles Huff's Thundering Herd became the talk of college football with Saturday's 26-21 win over the 20½-point favorite Fighting Irish.

Droves of fans, some of them crying, greeted Marshall's team bus upon its return to campus in Huntington on Saturday night. Huff responded to 350 text messages. New Marshall President Brad Smith, a former CEO of software company Intuit, was congratulated by executives from across Silicon Valley.

It was Marshall's second victory over a Top 10 team. The other also came on the road, in 2013 against No. 6 Kansas State.

Gone was Notre Dame's streak of 80 weeks in The Associated Press poll and 42 consecutive wins over unranked opponents.

"Phenomenal weekend," Huff said. "Not only for our football team and our players, but for the state of West Virginia and this community, and everybody that bleeds green. I think it also gives



SHOLTEN SINGER, THE HERALD-DISPATCH/AP
Head coach Charles Huff, in his second year at Marshall, teaches his players to stay even-keeled against all opponents.

college football its shot, a boost, of energy. I think this is what college football is all about."

And it's still going. The local newspaper, The Herald-Dispatch, is busy selling reprints of Sunday's front page containing a photo with the headline, "Shocker in South Bend."

After a visit Monday from Gov. Jim Justice, a Marshall graduate, it was time to go back to work.

"We've obviously got to move on," quarterback Henry Colombi said. "But it's awesome to be able to reflect on what we did. Our community's still buzzing about it and I think it's going to be like that for a while, when you have a big win like that in school history. So I think it's awesome."

On Tuesday, there was more



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Marshall defensive lineman Owen Porter celebrates after a 26-21 victory over then-No. 8 Notre Dame on Saturday in South Bend, Ind. Marshall's only previous win over a Top 10 team was in 2013 at K-State.

electricity when running back Rasheen Ali returned to Marshall's practice. One of the nation's top freshmen a year ago when he rushed for 1,400 yards, Ali went on an undisclosed personal leave of absence from the team prior to the season.

It's uncertain whether Ali will play when Marshall (2-0) travels to Bowling Green (0-2) on Saturday. When he does, it will add to the load of concerns for opposing defenses. His replacement, Khamari Laborn, is ninth in the FBS with 265 yards, nearly matching his entire production when he was at Florida State.

Other transfers who have paid immediate dividends include Colombi, who played at Texas Tech

the past two years and is leading the nation in completion percentage at 85.1%.

Huff is in his first head coaching job and he's the first Black head football coach at Marshall. To know Huff is to understand that when he's not in business mode on the field, he's lighthearted. His laugh and smile are often and infectious. He celebrates great efforts by his players.

Huff was associate head coach and running backs coach under Nick Saban at Alabama. His hiring at Marshall in January 2021 came only a few weeks after the Crimson Tide routed Ohio State for the national championship.

After being hired, Huff visited a Huntington cemetery where a

memorial honors the victims of the worst disaster in U.S. sports history. That gave him an understanding of the community's unwavering commitment and passion for a football program that almost went away when a 1970 plane crash killed 75 players, coaches, supporters and the flight crew.

Huff teaches his players to stay even-keeled and prepare the same way no matter who the opponent. Asked how Marshall can guard against a potential letdown at Bowling Green, Huff's response was direct and simple.

"Is their field 100 yards by 53-and-a-third? Do they have goal posts?" Huff responded. "If they got those two things, we'll be all right."

Purdue opponents finding it difficult to keep up with Jones

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

Purdue receiver Charlie Jones makes it all look so easy.

The smooth transition from Iowa to Purdue, the perfect timing he's established with childhood friend Aidan O'Connell, the crisp routes, the tough catches, even the long, striding runs afterward.

It's taken the sixth-year receiver two weeks to create a home in coach Jeff Brohm's wide-open offense — while making life difficult for defenses.

"It wasn't like we were extremely smart and knowledgeable on the situation," Brohm said Monday, explaining how they wound up getting Jones this summer. "We had watched some quick video of Charlie and his punt returns. He was really good on special teams, but there wasn't a whole lot of video at receiver — a few catches here and there."

Having a chance to catch passes and break tackles was a big reason Jones joined the Boilermakers.



ALEX MARTIN/AP

Purdue WR Charlie Jones leads the Big Ten in receptions, receiving yards and TD catches.

At his previous two college stops, Buffalo and Iowa, he was primarily viewed as a return specialist. Jones' three-year receiving totals: 39 receptions, 718 yards, six touchdown catches.

Two games with the Boilermakers, and with O'Connell as the quarterback, has completely

changed Jones' reputation. He has 21 catches, 286 yards and a career-best four TD receptions in six quarters. Jones already has matched his reception total from all of last season and he's within reach of topping his 2021 total in yards receiving (323) on Saturday at Syracuse.

Jones leads the Big Ten in all three categories as well as yards per game (143.0) and he leads the Football Bowl Subdivision in receptions per game (10.5). He also ranks fourth nationally in receiving yards and is tied for third in TD receptions.

"I came here, obviously, for the offense, and I'm liking what I'm seeing so far, so hopefully get back to it this week and come out next week and execute in all phases," Jones said after scoring three times in Saturday's 56-0 rout of FCS school Indiana State. "Definitely, it was a good move (to transfer)."

Purdue might not have known exactly what it was getting in

Jones. But after losing one consensus All-America receiver, Rondale Moore, to the NFL in 2020 and another, David Bell, last spring, O'Connell convinced Brohm to take a chance on the late-deciding Jones, who entered the transfer portal May 25.

Jones announced he'd picked Purdue in early June.

The timing prevented Jones from participating in Purdue's spring practices and really doing much with his new teammates until summer camp. Yet O'Connell knew what he had in Jones because they played youth football and baseball together in northern Illinois, competed at high schools six miles apart and continued working out during the summers of their college careers.

The reunion couldn't have started any better.

In a season-opening loss to Penn State, O'Connell threw 19 of his 59 passes to Jones, who caught 12 balls for a school-record 153 yards in his Purdue debut. Jones also

caught a TD pass.

"He's a great player. We knew that when we brought him here and I'm very excited he got to show it today, a lot of dynamic play-making abilities," O'Connell said afterward. "It's fun to throw to him. He's a smart player, a good player, plays really hard. We have a lot of guys like that."

Jones quickly stood apart, though.

While the personal connection between O'Connell and Jones almost certainly sped up the acclimation process on and off the field, Jones' new coaches and teammates could envision how Jones would fit in an offense that lost Bell and his expected replacement, Milton Wright, to academic ineligibility.

Jones made an immediate impression.

"The first day of practice I knew Charlie was going to be something special," safety Cam Allen said. "He'll get on your toes quick. I'm glad to have that boy on our team."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



SAM CRAFT/AP

Appalachian State players, from left, Deshawn McKnight, Eli Wilson, KaRon White and Isaiah Helms celebrate an upset of Texas A&M. The Mountaineers are one of the North Carolina teams turning heads.

Sweet Carolina: NC teams generating an early buzz

BY STEVE REED
Associated Press

The basketball-crazed state of North Carolina has something other than college hoops to get excited about.

It turns out its football teams are pretty good, too.

For the first time ever, the state's "Big Four" Atlantic Coast Conference schools — North Carolina, North Carolina State, Wake Forest and Duke — have all started the season at least 2-0. They're a combined 9-0 with five road wins so far.

Then there's Appalachian State of the Sun Belt Conference. The Mountaineers are riding high after a 17-14 win at then-No. 6 Texas A&M on Saturday, another eye-catching upset coming 15 years after the former Championship Subdivision team stunned No. 5 Michigan at the Big House.

This year's win sent App State students racing onto King Street in the rain in Boone and jumping into Duck Pond on campus to celebrate.

"It was crazy seeing that on Twitter and Instagram," Mountaineers quarterback Chase Brice said. "I wanted to be there celebrating and enjoying that moment with the students. It's great to see that passion and love for our school. For us to be able to bring that back to Boone was pretty cool."

It also prompted ESPN's College GameDay to call an audible. Instead of going to College Station for Miami-Texas A&M, the show will make the trek up the mountain to Boone for the first time as the Mountaineers host Troy on Saturday.

"It's a very big win for our program," said coach Shawn Clark, who received more than 400 text messages after the Texas A&M win.

"And this is a great opportunity to show off Boone and the culture and tradition that we have."

The impact wasn't lost on N.C. State coach Dave Doeren, whose eldest son, Jacob, is an Appalachian State student.

"He was so excited during that game," Doeren said. "Really tremendous amount of respect and love for that staff, and the experience my son's had there as a student has been very, very positive. So (it's) great for Boone and that community."

The Mountaineers (1-1) have already had a crazy season. They lost at home to North Carolina 63-61 in arguably the wildest game of the season so far in front of a record crowd of 40,168 at Kidd Brewer Stadium. There were 62 points scored in the fourth quarter. It marked UNC's first trip to Boone.

In a game going on simultaneously, N.C. State needed a little luck to escape at East Carolina 21-20 in another emotional matchup that generated statewide buzz.

"Why we don't play these in-state football games every single year blows my mind," Clark said, calling the environment at Kidd Brewer Stadium "electric."

N.C. State (2-0) is ranked No. 16 in the AP Top 25, while Wake Forest (2-0) is 19th with Appalachian State and UNC lurking just outside the rankings.

Just last year, the Wolfpack and Demon Deacons met as ranked teams in a November matchup that largely determined the ACC's Atlantic Division race. They're at it again behind experienced quarterbacks, with preseason league player of the year Devin Leary at N.C. State and Sam Hartman at Wake Forest, which won 11 games

and reached last year's ACC title game.

At UNC, first-year starter Drake Maye is off to a fast start (930 yards, 11 TD throws) in replacing record-setting quarterback Sam Howell for a 3-0 team. Robert Griffin III, the 2011 Heisman Trophy winner, even listed Maye as one of five frontrunners to win this year's honor.

And Duke's Mike Elko is bringing excitement back to Durham in his first year as a head coach. He was entrusted with revitalizing a program that had seen its long run of success under David Cutcliffe fizzle in the past two seasons.

One of Elko's tasks has been meeting with student groups in an attempt to bring some of the rabid energy from the "Cameron Craziest" student section at men's basketball games to Wallace Wade Stadium on football Saturdays. The Blue Devils opened with a 30-0 win against Temple in front of more than 20,000 fans for their first shutout of a Bowl Subdivision opponent in nearly 33 years, followed by last weekend's win at Northwestern.

"I think as we try to sell what Duke football can become in the community, on campus, in the Durham area, I think every success we have is critical," Elko said "So to that respect for sure, 2-0 is not lost on me. I know that was a huge win from a momentum standpoint for our program."

If this keeps up, it could be a memorable season long before basketball tips off.

"It's great that guys are going on the road and getting the job done," Doeren said. "... I'm glad to see that the league is doing well on the road and the teams in the state are doing well on the road."

ADs urge reform, but not breakaway

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The athletic directors who lead the schools that play Division I college football at the highest level want the sport to continue to be governed by the NCAA — if that governance can be streamlined.

LEAD1, an association of Football Bowl Subdivision ADs, convened 105 of its 131 members Wednesday for a meeting that focused mostly on how best to govern major college football.

There has been some momentum in the past year to seriously explore breaking FBS away from the NCAA and creating another structure to run the biggest revenue generator in college sports.

For now, though, the preference is for reform within the current structure.

"At the end of the day, it was very clear that the status quo is not acceptable," said LEAD1 President and CEO Tom McMillen, the former Maryland basketball star and congressman. "And that there was a strong, very strong, preference for a model in the NCAA that is extremely streamlined and much less bureaucratic."

McMillen added: "And if that can't be accomplished, move it to the outside."

McMillen did not detail what a more efficient governing model for major college football would entail.

He said LEAD1 planned to gather ideas cultivated at Wednes-

day's meeting and share them with NCAA officials in a letter.

"We're a facilitator. We're not the decision-maker," McMillen said. "We recommend. That's really the extent of what we can do."

The NCAA is in the midst of what college sports leaders hope will be an overhaul of the way Division I is structured and governed.

The Division I Transformation Committee was formed last year and has been meeting regularly for months. It is led by Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey and Ohio athletic director Julie Cromer, who is also a member of LEAD1.

"Certainly the debate today has been helpful," Cromer said. "I think we'll use this feedback in our transformation committee work."

The Transformation Committee has already handed down proposals related to transfer rules and how NCAA enforcement operates as part of phase one of its work. A set of those proposals were approved last month.

Phase two is in progress, with membership requirements for schools, student-athlete benefits, access to championship events and revenue distribution at the core of the discussions.

"I think there exists some frustration with the lack of responsibility and the ability to be nimble and specific to our needs in football, within the current decision-making structure," Cromer said of the FBS ADs.

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TENNIS/NFL

Federer opts to retire at 41

Series of knee operations sidelined 20-time major winner over past year

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

Roger Federer is retiring from professional tennis at age 41 after a series of knee operations, closing a career in which he won 20 Grand Slam titles, finished five seasons ranked No. 1 and helped create a golden era of men's tennis with rivals Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic.

Federer posted what he called a "bittersweet decision" via social media on Thursday, less than a week after 23-time major champion Serena Williams played what is expected to be the last match of her career.

Combined, the exits by two of the greatest athletes in their sport's history represent a significant turning of the page.

"As many of you know, the past three years have presented me with challenges in the form of injuries and surgeries. I've worked hard to return to full competitive form," Federer wrote on Twitter. "But I also know my body's capacities and limits, and its message to me lately has been clear."

Federer has not competed since Wimbledon in July 2021, and so, in

that sense, his news is not all that surprising.

But he had appeared at an event marking the 100-year anniversary of Centre Court at the All England Club this July and said he hoped to come back to play there "one more time."

He also had said he would return to tournament action in his home country at the Swiss Indoors in October.

In Thursday's announcement, Federer said his farewell event will be the Laver Cup in London next week. That is a team event run by his management company.

Federer is married and he and his wife, Mirka — a tennis player, too; they met as athletes at an Olympics — have two sets of twins.

He leaves with a total of 103 tour-level titles on his substantial résumé and 1,251 wins in singles matches, both second only to Jimmy Connors in the Open era, which began in 1968. Federer's records include being the oldest No. 1 in ATP rankings history — he returned to the top spot at 36 in 2018 — and most consecutive weeks there (his total weeks mark



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/AP

Switzerland's Roger Federer hits a return to Poland's Hubert Hurkacz during their men's singles quarterfinal on July 7, 2021 at Wimbledon. Federer announced Thursday he is retiring from tennis.

was eclipsed by Djokovic).

When Federer won his first Grand Slam title at Wimbledon in 2003, the men's record for most was held by Pete Sampras, who had won his 14th at the U.S. Open the year before in what turned out to be the last match of the American's career.

Federer went on to blow way past that, ending up with 20 by winning eight championships at Wimbledon, six at the Australian Open, five at the U.S. Open and one at the French Open. His 2009 trophy at Roland Garros allowed Federer to complete a career Grand Slam.

His serving, forehand, footwork and attacking style will all be remembered. Also unforgettable were his matches against younger rivals Nadal, 36, and Djokovic, 35, who both equalled, then surpassed, Federer's Slam total and are still winning titles at the sport's four biggest tournaments.

Nadal now leads the count with 22, one ahead of Djokovic.

"I was lucky enough to play so many epic matches that I will never forget," Federer said in Thursday's announcement.

Addressing his "competitors on the court" — although not by name — he wrote: "We pushed

each other, and together we took tennis to new levels."

Federer's last match anywhere came on July 7, 2021, when he lost at Centre Court in the Wimbledon quarterfinals to Hubert Hurkacz 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-0.

Soon after, Federer had surgery to repair damage to his meniscus and cartilage in his right knee — his third operation on that knee in a span of 1½ years.

"Tennis has treated me more generously than I ever would have dreamed," Federer said Thursday, "and now I must recognize when it is time to end my competitive career."

Miami's blitz still a bad memory for Jackson, Ravens

By NOAH TRISTER
Associated Press

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — When Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens faced Miami in November, it was as discombobulated as they looked all season.

The culprit was the Dolphins' blitz-heavy defensive scheme — and that game is again on Baltimore's mind as the Ravens prepare to host Miami this weekend.

The Dolphins have a new coach, so they may not defend Jackson exactly the same way, but there's no denying the effectiveness of their approach last season. Miami won 22-10, becoming the first team in 52 games to hold Baltimore under 14 points. It ended up being the Ravens' lowest point total of the season.

"They just caught us off guard, really," Jackson said. "We haven't really went over defenses doing all-up Zero against us, like just all-up, flat-out Zero. I feel we have an answer for it this year. We watch film, watched a lot of film on those guys, because we don't want it to happen again."

Miami Dolphins (1-0)
at Baltimore Ravens (1-0)

AFN-Sports2
7 p.m. Sunday CET
2 a.m. Monday JKT

It wasn't just that Miami blitzed a lot — on 30 of Jackson's 50 dropbacks, according to Pro Football Focus. The aggressiveness of the Dolphins' Cover Zero scheme seemed to rattle the Ravens, who weren't able to make Miami pay with big plays.

Short completions did little to deter the Dolphins from sending extra pass rushers. Jackson, normally such a threat to run because of his elusiveness, was sacked four times and ran for only 39 yards on nine carries. At some point, even he can't escape if he's under too much pressure from too many people at once.

Watching Jackson and the Ravens adjust to the blitz could have been a fascinating subplot to the second half of last season, but he didn't have many chances. Because of injury and illness, he only played two full games out of Balti-



ADAM HUNGER/AP

Quarterback Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens were held under 14 points for the first time in 52 games during last November's 22-10 loss to the Miami Dolphins.

more's final eight.

The Ravens did have time during the offseason to work on countering Cover Zero.

"We'd have been negligent if we

hadn't worked on it," coach John Harbaugh said. "It's something we need to get a lot better at, and we studied it the whole offseason. We'll have a plan for it. Hope it works, because these guys are probably the best in the league at doing it."

Jackson was sharp in Baltimore's opener last weekend, throwing three touchdown passes in a 24-9 win over the New York Jets. Those TD strikes were 25 and 17 yards to Devin Duvernay, and 55 yards to Rashod Bateman.

"Maybe the first one to Devin, the fade route, out of the bunch would have a chance against a Zero blitz," Harbaugh said. "The one to Bateman would not. You wouldn't have enough time to get that off."

Injury updates

RB J.K. Dobbins (knee) was a full participant in practice Wednesday. He hasn't played in more than a season after going down in an exhibition game last year.

FB Patrick Ricard (calf) did not

practice, and CB Marcus Peters (knee), T Ronnie Stanley (ankle), DT Travis Jones (knee), WR James Proche (groin) and DB Brandon Stephens (quad) were limited.

The Ravens put T Ja'Wuan James (Achilles) and CB Kyle Fuller (knee) on injured reserve. They were both injured in the Week 1 road game against the Jets.

Earlier this week, Harbaugh cited the artificial turf the Jets play on as a factor in Fuller's injury, and he discussed it a bit more Wednesday.

"It was a turf field, it was matted down, it was packed down, it was a little tight," he said. "Maybe that's how it's supposed to be. I don't know, but that's what I saw. It was a little tough."

Focusing elsewhere

Jackson wasn't about to engage when reporters asked him about talks on a contract extension, which were paused at the start of the season.

"Respectfully, I'm really done talking about it," he said.

NFL



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

New York Giants running back Saquon Barkley celebrates his touchdown run during the second half against the Tennessee Titans on Sunday. Barkley had 194 yards from scrimmage.

Barkley just wants to keep winning

BY TOM CANAVAN
Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The only thing that seemingly matters to Saquon Barkley entering his fifth season with the New York Giants is winning.

The No. 2 overall pick in the 2018 draft seemingly didn't care he was selected as the NFC Offensive Player of the week after a win over Tennessee, or that he leads the NFL in rushing (164 yards) or total yards from scrimmage (194) after Week 1.

After four straight losing seasons — the Giants have had five in a row — Barkley had the rare feeling of seeing New York edge the Titans 21-20 for his first NFL season-opening win. He scored a touchdown and caught a 2-point shovel pass from Daniel Jones for the game-winning points with 66 seconds to play.

Barkley isn't concentrating on repeating his performance or even bettering it on Sunday when the Giants open at home against the Carolina Panthers.

"I'm just coming into work," Barkley said Wednesday after practice. "That's the only thing I can do. I already went back, watched film, wrote my notes."

Barkley was critical of himself for allowing a ball to be knocked out of his hands after a 33-yard run to the Titans 26 on the game-winning, fourth-quarter drive. The ball went out of bounds at the 11, giving the Giants possession at the point of the fumble.

"That could've hurt us instead of helping us," Barkley said. "I've got to be better in ball security, got to be better in pass pro."

Barkley, who missed almost all

**Carolina Panthers (0-1)
at New York Giants (1-0)**
AFN-Atlantic
7 p.m. Sunday CET
2 a.m. Monday JKT

of the 2020 season with an ACL injury and was limited to 593 yards last season, felt he left yards on the field. His long run last season was 41 yards. He had a 68-yarder against the Titans where he was clocked running nearly 21 mph.

"So that's my focus, just coming in see what I can do better and when the game comes execute the plays that I'm able to execute in," he said. "Every game might not be a 194-yard performance, but whatever I can do to help the team win, that's what I want to be able to do."

There are many who expect the Giants to have another big game on the ground. New York ran for a league-high 238 yards Sunday and the Panthers allowed Cleveland to gain 217 rushing.

Carolina missed 18 tackles overall, resulting in 190 yards after contact in its 26-24 loss to the Browns on a late 58-yard field goal.

Panthers coach Matt Rhule said Barkley looks as good as ever.

Defensive tackle Matt Ioannidis knows Barkley well.

"I have played against him a few times over the years in Washington so I would like to think I know what I'm up against," Ioannidis said. "He's obviously a talented back. And every team has one. So I think this is a good opportunity for our defense to go out there and shut down the run and set the tone for what the next 16 games can look like for us."

Rodgers agrees Packers need RBs more involved

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers said Wednesday that running backs A.J. Dillon and Aaron Jones need to get the ball more than they did in a season-opening defeat at Minnesota.

The reigning MVP suggested the Packers need to stick with the running game more than they did in the 23-7 loss to the Vikings. The Packers finished with 39 pass attempts and 18 carries.

"We maybe reacted to the score a little bit," Rodgers said. "And we were running the ball well, I think we ran it about 6 a clip, so we've just got to stick with the run, make sure we get our attempts where we want them to be because that means one of those guys is touching the ball probably."

Jones and Dillon are Rodgers' top playmakers now that two-time All-Pro receiver Davante Adams is with the Las Vegas Raiders.

Dillon had 10 carries for 45 yards and five catches for 46 yards at Minnesota. Jones had five carries for 49 yards plus three catches for 27 yards. Packers coach Matt LaFleur has emphasized the need to give them more opportunities.

"They're two of our better players. I think everybody recognizes that," LaFleur said. "And they're versatile. You can use them, whoever you want to put in the backfield, whether you put them both in the backfield, whether you put one at receiver, they provide us with some flexibility to do little different things from an offensive perspective."

The Packers must get more punch from their offense after posting their lowest scoring total since the 2021 season opener, which they lost 38-3 to the New Orleans Saints. They host the Chicago Bears (1-0) on Sunday night.

Packers wideouts caught a combined 12 passes for 120 yards at Minnesota. For comparison's sake, Adams caught 10 passes for 141 yards in the Raiders' season-opening 24-19 loss to the Los Angeles Chargers.

The Bears say any offense led by Rodgers remains dangerous even without Adams on the roster. The Packers are 23-5 against the Bears in games their four-time MVP has started. In one of the losses, Rodgers departed with an injury after the opening series.

"Aaron Rodgers is still Aaron Rodgers regardless (of) who he has," Bears defensive end Robert Quinn said. "He's bound to make something happen. I'm not in that locker room, but I'm sure because of his credentials, he tries to bring



ABBIE PARR/AP

Packers running back AJ Dillon, left, celebrates with quarterback Aaron Rodgers after scoring on a 2-yard touchdown run on Sunday.

**Chicago Bears (1-0)
at Green Bay Packers (0-1)**
AFN-Sports
Monday 2:15 a.m. CET
Monday 9:15 a.m. JKT

everyone up to his level regardless of if they're a first-rounder or undrafted. Again, I'm not in that locker room. But I think he's going to bring everyone up to his standards."

The dilemma for Rodgers is how to bring Green Bay's rookie receivers up to that standard.

"We've got to be patient with them," Rodgers said. "The most important thing we're going to be harping on is the preparation and the fundamentals and the little things. The jump happens when you don't become a robot anymore. You understand the 'why' and the 'what' — why are we doing what we're doing and what are we trying to accomplish? And it takes a while for anybody."

Romeo Doubs, the rookie fourth-round pick from Nevada, led Green Bay wideouts with four catches for 37 yards Sunday. Christian Watson, the second-round pick from North Dakota State, had two catches for 34 yards.

Allen Lazard, the Packers' top returning receiver, was limited in practice Wednesday. He missed the Vikings game with an ankle injury.

"Can't predict the future," Lazard said about his chances of playing. "Probably is probably the best answer I could give you."

Green Bay's top options at wide receiver are Lazard, Watson, Doubs and veterans Randall Cobb and Sammy Watkins. Amari Rodgers, the 2021 third-round pick from Clemson, didn't play a single snap on offense against the Vikings.

They Packers need to deal with whatever growing pains Watson and Doubs endure. That means trying to build their confidence as much as possible early on.

"We don't want to put them in a position where there's a high likelihood of maybe not getting it right," Rodgers said. "But we also want to let them, in the moment, feel the pressure and anxiety and the expectation of being in that moment and see how they respond because that's how we're going to know what kind of guys we've got."

Watson got that chance on the Packers' first play from scrimmage Sunday but dropped a likely 75-yard touchdown pass.

"It's a play that I know I can make, and I know I'm going to make a bunch of those down the road," Watson said. "My mentality is on to the next. Obviously next time it comes my way, I'll capitalize on that."

Rodgers is eager to see how well his young receivers capitalize on their chances the next few weeks.

"The most important thing for a jump to happen is not repeat the same mistake twice," Rodgers said. "These guys are going to make a lot of mistakes. The guys who don't repeat the same mistakes are going to get more opportunities."

SPORTS



Federer retires

20-time Grand Slam winner ends career at age 41 » **Tennis, Page 46**

MLB

61 or 73?

As Judge nears HR milestone, debate begins on which number means more

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

To some, Aaron Judge's season has a special sheen because he appears to be Mr. Clean.

They would consider Judge the record-holder if he surpasses Roger Maris' 61 homers, absent the steroids stain sticking to the tainted trio of Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa.

"To me, the holder of the record for home runs in a season is Roger Maris," author George Will said. "There's no hint of suspicion that we're seeing better baseball than better chemistry in the case of Judge. He's clean. He's not doing something that forces other players to jeopardize their health."

Bonds' 73 and other Steroids Era peaks are viewed by critics as phantoms, totals as inflated as the biceps of those bulked-up hitters.

Judge entered Thursday with 57 homers through the New York Yankees' 143 games, leaving 19 games to go. Judge towers over everyone else, and not just because he is 6-foot-7: Kyle Schwarber is second in homers with 37 for Philadelphia.

Judge has hit 23,448 feet of home runs this year — 4.44 miles — with an average distance of 411 feet, according to MLB Statcast.

"Judge is like Secretariat in the Belmont," broadcaster Bob Costas said, thinking back to the Triple Crown-winning 31-length victory in 1973. "He's percentages above everyone else. It's downplayed now — he's hitting .300, so he's a classic great player. The great players have power and average. Well, he's do-

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INSIDE

Cardinals' Wainwright, Molina make history by starting 325th game as battery
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Through 143 games, Yankees slugger Aaron Judge has 57 home runs. That leaves 19 games for him to surpass Roger Maris' 61 homers.

ADAM HUNGER/AP

Several North Carolina teams turn heads » College football, Page 45

