

MOVIES: Vince Vaughn kills in 'Freaky' **Page 16**

GAMES: Sackboy is missing a story **Page 19**

FOOTBALL: Fiery coach fuels Indiana turnaround **Page 24**

EUROPE
& PACIFIC

WEEKEND

EDITION

MUSIC

Gentle giant
Chris Stapleton a
complicated
character

Page 28

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Dems: Inhofe blocking efforts to rename Army bases that honor Confederates

BY STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Oklahoma Republican Jim Inhofe, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, is attempting to block efforts to rename 10 Army bases that honor Confederate generals, causing a slowdown of negotiations on Capitol Hill to approve the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, two staffers for Senate Democrats said Wednesday.



INHOFE

“Chairman Inhofe’s 11th-hour demand at the behest of outgoing President [Donald] Trump threatens troop pay raises and billions in funding for new military equipment in order to continue glorifying Confederate soldiers at U.S. military bases,” said a Democratic aide, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The issue of renaming Army bases hit a boiling point during the summer amid nationwide protests over racial inequality and police brutality. It picked up momentum when senior military leaders such as then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy backed the idea. The Senate and House then passed versions of the NDAA, which sets funding and policy priorities for the Pentagon each year, each with a provision to rename the bases.

Now a committee of House members and senators are negotiating a compromise version of the bill to send to the president to sign into law. However, Trump has threatened to veto the bill over

precise number has not been announced. The drawdown is slated to finish by Jan. 15, days before President-elect Joe Biden’s inauguration. It comes after an abrupt post-election purge of top military officials: Acting defense secretary Christopher Miller made Tuesday’s announcement just eight days after Trump ousted his predecessor, Mark Esper.

SEE BASES ON PAGE 7



MUSADEQ SADEQ/AP

U.S. soldiers stand guard near the site where Afghans receive food donations provided by U.S. soldiers in Kabul in 2009.

Can Trump end ‘endless wars’ before leaving office?

BY ADAM TAYLOR
The Washington Post

President Donald Trump has begun his final battle against the open-ended U.S. conflicts he calls “endless wars.” The Pentagon announced this week that it would halve the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan to 2,500, while the number in Iraq would fall from 3,000 to 2,500. U.S. troops will also depart from Somalia, although the

precise number has not been announced.

The drawdown is slated to finish by Jan. 15, days before President-elect Joe Biden’s inauguration. It comes after an abrupt post-election purge of top military officials: Acting defense secretary Christopher Miller made Tuesday’s announcement just eight days after Trump ousted his predecessor, Mark Esper.

Trump’s decision hardly came

as a shock. From the time of his candidacy in the 2016 presidential election, Trump has railed against America’s military commitments abroad. His rhetoric earned him unlikely allies among the leftists and libertarians who long argued that overreach and inertia had entrenched a global military presence that offered little benefit to Americans and even less to the countries where they fought.

Supporters of this vision wel-

comed Trump’s last-minute decision to pull troops out. “There is little reason to wait for some more perfect moment in the future,” William Ruger, Trump’s nominee to be U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, and Rajan Menon of the City College of New York wrote in an editorial for *The Washington Post*. “Moving with all due haste has the added advantage of making it

SEE BATTLE ON PAGE 6

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel					
Germany	\$2.386	\$2.807	\$3.058	\$2.716	Azores	..	..	\$2.958	..
Change in price	+1.5 cents	+1.5 cents	+1.2 cents	+5.8 cents	Change in price	..	..	+1.2 cents	..
Netherlands	..	\$3.236	\$3.456	\$3.227	Belgium	..	\$2.377	\$2.621	\$2.423
Change in price	..	+1.2 cents	+11.6 cents	+1.2 cents	Change in price	..	No change	No change	No change
U.K.	..	\$2.706	\$2.957	\$2.615	Turkey	..	..	\$2.843	\$3.354*
Change in price	..	+1.5 cents	+1.2 cents	+5.8 cents	Change in price	..	..	+1.2 cents	No change

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel					
Japan	\$2.849	\$2.509	South Korea	..	..	\$2.189	..
Change in price	+1.0 cents	+6.0 cents	Change in price	..	..	+1.0 cents	..
Okinawa	..	\$2.599	\$2.849	\$2.509	Guam	..	\$2.189	\$2.609	\$2.859
Change in price	..	+2.0 cents	+1.0 cents	+6.0 cents	Change in price	..	+2.0 cents	+2.0 cents	+1.0 cents

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For the week of Nov. 20-26

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

Euro costs (Nov. 20) \$1.15
Dollar buys (Nov. 20) 0.8238
British pound (Nov. 20) \$1.29
Japanese yen (Nov. 20) 101.00
South Korean won (Nov. 20) 1082.00

Commercial rates

Bahrain (Dinar) 0.3771
British pound \$1.3221
Canada (Dollar) 1.3094
China (Yuan) 6.5846
Denmark (Krone) 6.2985
Egypt (Pound) 15.6210
Euro \$1.1832/0.8452
Hong Kong (Dollar) 7.7537
Hungary (Forint) 304.55
Israel (Shekel) 3.3478
Japan (Yen) 103.99
Kuwait (Dinar) 0.3058
Norway (Krone) 9.0357
Philippines (Peso) 48.34
Poland (Zloty) 3.78
Saudi Arabia (Riyal) 3.7506

Singapore (Dollar) 1.3458
South Korea (Won) 1116.07
Switzerland (Franc) 0.9127
Thailand (Baht) 30.40
Turkey (Lira) 7.5418

(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 non-local currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

Interest Rates

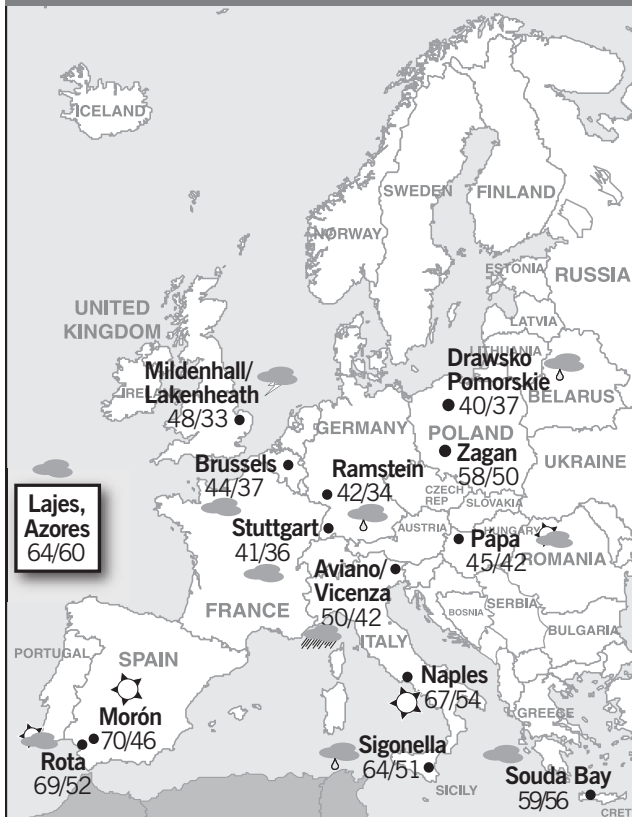
Prime rate 3.25
Interest Rates Discount rate 0.25
Federal funds market rate 0.09

WEATHER OUTLOOK

SATURDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



SATURDAY IN EUROPE



SUNDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

TODAY IN STRIPES

- American Roundup 38
- Classified 36
- Comics 40-41
- Crossword 18
- Faces 35
- Opinion 39
- Sports 42-48

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EUROPE

KRISTI KIMMEL

CustomerService@stripes.com

+49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
DSN: 314.583.9111

MIDDLE EAST

KRISTI KIMMEL

CustomerService@stripes.com

+49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
DSN: 314.583.9111

PACIFIC

ICHIRO KATAYANAGI

PacificAdvertising@stripes.com

ADVERTISING

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

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MILITARY

McCarthy on assaults: 'We must do better'

By ROSE L. THAYER

Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy announced Wednesday that the findings of an investigation into the disappearance and death of Spc. Vanessa Guillen at Fort Hood will be released Dec. 8, stating the Army "must do better" when it comes to sexual assault and harassment among soldiers.

"Leaders, regardless of rank, are accountable for what happens in their units and must have the courage to speak up and intervene when they recognize actions that bring harm to our soldiers and to the integrity of our institution. If we do not have the trust of America — nothing else matters," McCarthy said in a video posted online late Wednesday afternoon.

The secretary also said Army senior leaders have the final report from the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee and they are reviewing its findings and recommendations. McCarthy created the committee, which is made up of five civilians, to inves-



Department of Defense

Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy released a video message Wednesday to address recent media reports about the Army's program to prevent and respond to sexual assault and harassment.

tigate the command climate and culture of Fort Hood, following Guillen's death in April on the central Texas base.

Guillen, 20, was killed by another soldier with a hammer in an arms room. Her body was later moved off base and buried alongside a river in Bell County. The search for Guillen lasted more than two months, and during that

time the soldier's family revealed she faced sexual harassment at Fort Hood but she was too afraid to report it to her chain of command.

Guillen's case brought national attention to Fort Hood and led McCarthy to confirm in August that the base had more instances of sexual assault and harassment than other bases, as well as other

violent felony crimes such as homicide.

Nearly 30 soldiers have died this year while assigned to Fort Hood. Five soldiers, including Guillen, died by homicide, which is more than double the previous four years, according to the Army.

The investigation was intended to get to the root cause of the violence.

"My preliminary review of the report, recent cases and recent media coverage, have hardened my belief that the Army's [Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention] program hasn't achieved its mandate to eliminate sexual assaults and sexual harassment by creating a climate that respects the dignity of every member of the Army family," McCarthy said. "It is clear we have significant work to do to regain our soldiers' trust in our [SHARP] program."

When the findings of the committee's report are released in December, it will include the Army's action plan to address the recommendations, he said.

The secretary's comments follow the release of a CBS News investigation this week that found reported sexual assaults have doubled in the military while the number of courts-martial and convictions for the charge have gone down.

The first two parts of the four-part series featured the stories of two soldiers who died by suicide after being sexually assaulted multiple times and then faced retaliation and isolation for reporting them. The families of the deceased women spoke to CBS News and said they felt the Army had failed them.

"I am deeply saddened and concerned by the recent news reports of how sexual assault and sexual harassment have plagued our force and brought harm to our soldiers," McCarthy said. "This topic has captivated the attention of America and our Army leaders and it is abundantly clear — we must do better."

thayer.rose@stripes.com
Twitter: @Rose_Lori

Special ops leader to report to acting defense secretary

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller on Wednesday ordered the Pentagon's top civilian overseeing the military's special operations community to report directly to him, effectively elevating U.S. Special Operations Command to the same level of the Pentagon's military departments.

The change makes the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict a service secretary-like position responsible for the oversight and advocacy of the military's special operations forces, said Miller, who is expected to serve in the Defense Department's top job only about two months.

Miller announced the move during a visit to the Army's special operations home at Fort Bragg, N.C., his first official visit as defense secretary since he took the job Nov. 9 as former Defense Secretary Mark Esper was fired by President Donald Trump via Twitter.

"This reform will immediately improve agility to the department and the command and will enable us to streamline the information flow, enhance decision-making and more adaptively and adeptly support our commanders and their superb soldiers, sailors, air-

men and Marines," Miller said in brief, prepared comments.

Miller said he would prefer to raise the top special operations civilian post to an undersecretary of defense title, but he also said he lacked the authority to do so. Before Wednesday, the person filling that role reported to the defense secretary through the undersecretary of defense for policy, the de facto No. 3 civilian in the Pentagon.

Ezra Cohen-Watnick, a former aide to Trump's first national security adviser Michael Flynn, is now filling the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict role on an acting basis. Miller briefly served in that position on a temporary basis earlier this year, as well.

The move on Wednesday aligns the Pentagon with the congressional intent for the top special operations civilian. In the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, lawmakers ordered the Pentagon to raise the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict to a service secretary-like job and report directly to the defense secretary "for issues impacting the readiness and organization of special operations forces, special operations-peculiar resources and equipment, and civilian personnel management."

Congress urged the Pentagon to speed up the elevation of the position in its fiscal year 2020 NDAA, the annual law that sets Pentagon policy and spending priorities. Esper told Congress last year that the Defense Department was making progress on the ordered changes.

Miller is a longtime veteran of the special operations community who retired from the Army in 2014 as a colonel. Miller, who was a Green Beret, spent much of his career in the Army's 5th Special Forces Group, commanding a company and a battalion. He fought in Afghanistan and Iraq as a Green Beret, participating in the initial invasions of those countries in 2001 and 2003, respectively.

The policy change comes one day after Miller announced the first major shift for the military under his watch — the hastened withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Miller announced Tuesday that the United States would remove about half its troops from Afghanistan and about 500 from Iraq by Jan. 15, just five days before President-elect Joe Biden is to be sworn into office. Biden will take over responsibility for those war efforts with 2,500 troops left in Afghanistan and 2,500 troops left in Iraq.

The acting defense secretary said Wednesday that drawing down operations in those nations



JACKIE SANDERS/Office of the Secretary of Defense

Acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller briefs reporters at the Pentagon on Tuesday.

will allow special operations forces to refocus on their roles in a potential fight with a major power such as China or Russia.

"Right now we start the transition to provide greater civilian oversight of, and critically, advocacy for our special operators," Miller said. "This couldn't come at

a more critical moment in time, as we bring our nation's longest conflicts to a responsible end and prepare special operations forces for this new era of great-power competition."

dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

MILITARY

Forearm planks, rowing added to Navy fitness test

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy is changing its fitness test in the spring, adding the forearm plank to better assess a sailor's core strength and rowing as an alternative cardiovascular exercise, the service announced Wednesday.

"Feedback I've received from the fleet as I've traveled ... is, for the most part, sailors are excited and they're just ready to start," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Eric Anderson, who is with the Navy Physical Readiness Program at the 21st Century Sailor office based in Millington, Tenn.

The Navy is responding to feedback from sailors who asked for a test that better determined core strength and relates more to the work that they have to do on ships, Anderson said.

The updated events are the biggest change to the test since the stationary bike and the elliptical machine were added as cardio exercises in 2007, Anderson said. The elliptical machine was eliminated in 2018.

The Navy's Physical Readiness Test, or PRT, is typically conducted twice a year for sailors in a spring and fall cycle, or time frame, and involves three events: pushups, forearm planks replacing curlups and a cardio event,



ERIKA L. KUGLER/U.S. Navy

An instructor on March 10 explains the proper technique for a plank as part of a Navy Physical Readiness Test Evaluation Phase at Naval Station Norfolk, Va.

such as a run, swim or now the row exercise.

The fitness test cycles in 2020 were canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. In 2021, the Navy will only have one cycle for sailors to take the test, between March 15 and Sept. 15, according to the service. March will be the first time sailors will have to do the forearm plank and can choose the row event.

"I am excited about these changes coming to the Physical Readiness Test as I believe the plank is a better measure of core strength, it's easier on the back and I think it is safer in a [coronavirus] environment," Vice Adm. John Nowell, the chief of naval personnel, said

in a statement. "Additionally, the row is a great full-body exercise and it's easy to fit a rower onboard ships. These changes will challenge us to be better, stronger and a more fit Navy."

First mentioned in 2019 by former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson for the PRT, the forearm plank and row were then tested by 500 sailors at three locations: Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii, Naval Station Mayport in Florida and Naval Station Norfolk and Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story in Virginia. The tests helped determine what the appropriate standards needed to be for each event.

The test takers "were happy that a change was coming," Anderson said.

The forearm plank was chosen to replace the curlup because curlups also risk aggravating the lower back whereas the planks actually strengthen those muscles, Anderson said.

"When you're pulling on that line to moor the ship or carrying a box to put it in the storeroom, the stabilization of your core is where you're developing all that power from. So being able to do that and test that and make sure that our sailors have a strong core is going to help make us more ready and healthier," he said.

The addition of the 2,000-meter

row provides sailors another cardio option for the test, along with a 12-minute stationary bike ride, a 500- or 450-yard swim, and a 1.5-mile treadmill run. The row is a low-impact exercise that puts less stress on the legs and engages about 80% of the body's muscles, according to a Navy fact sheet on the PRT update.

For the forearm plank, sailors can use a mat or pad, but they have to be fully on the mat, not just placing their forearms on it. The time limit is based on age groups. For example, an 18-year-old has to hold a plank for 3 minutes and 40 seconds in order to receive 100 points, the highest score. Older sailors can receive 100 points with less time.

The 2,000-meter row is done on a rower machine, and the Navy is recommending sailors train on the machine prior to the test to understand how they need to pace themselves to pass.

"One thing we saw during the testing was they would get, say, 500 meters into the test and realize that this is not as easy as I thought it was going to be. And we don't want sailors failing just because they didn't know what to expect," Anderson said.

kenney.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @caitlinmkenney

Navy secretary seeks 1st Fleet revival in Western Pacific

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The United States should boost its military presence in the Indo-Pacific region with a new numbered fleet, possibly based in Singapore, according to the U.S. Navy's top civilian leader.

Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite on Tuesday called for the reactivation of the 1st Fleet to increase U.S. power in a region where it is being challenged by a rapidly growing Chinese military machine, USNI News reported that day.

"We want to stand up a new numbered fleet. And we want to put that numbered fleet in the crossroads between the Indian and the Pacific oceans, and we're

really going to have an [INDOPACOM] footprint," Braithwaite told the Naval Submarine League's annual symposium, according to the magazine.

The 7th Fleet, based at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, is the only U.S. fleet in the region. It includes the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group, which is supported at times by ships from the San Diego-based 3rd Fleet.

Seventh Fleet is the Navy's largest deployed fleet with 50-70 ships and submarines, 150 aircraft and approximately 20,000 sailors assigned to it. Its almost 48 million-square-mile operations area stretches from the International Date Line in the central Pacific to the India/Pakistan

border and from the Kuril Islands in the north to the Antarctic in the south.

But the Navy can't just rely on 7th Fleet to cover that area, Braithwaite said.

Its ships deploy frequently for missions such as freedom-of-navigation patrols in the South China Sea, where China has built military bases on artificial islands in disputed waters.

Meanwhile, China's navy has been growing rapidly. In September, Beijing sent both of its aircraft carriers to sea as construction on a third continued.

"We have to look to our other allies and partners like Singapore, like India, and actually put a numbered fleet where it would

be extremely relevant if, God forbid, we were to ever to get in any kind of a dust-up," Braithwaite said.

A new fleet could provide a much more formidable deterrent, he said.

"So we're going to create the First Fleet, and we're going to put it, if not Singapore right out of the chocks, we're going to look to make it more expeditionary-oriented and move it across the Pacific until it is where our allies and partners see that it could best assist them as well as assist us," he said.

The 1st Fleet previously existed from just after World War II to the early 1970s.

Singapore is already home to

1,000 U.S. service members, civilians and their families serving with Task Force 73 and Command Logistics Group Western Pacific, teams that arm, fuel, feed and support 7th Fleet operations in the region and support U.S. littoral combat ships stationed there since 2013.

From both a geographical and infrastructural standpoint, Singapore would be a good place for a new fleet given its location, port facilities and potential to develop support capabilities, according to Ian Chong, an associate professor of political science at the National University of Singapore.

robson.seth@stripes.com
Twitter: @SethRobson1

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MILITARY

VA seeks more data on toxin exposure

BY STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Department of Veterans Affairs official on Wednesday drew the ire of some House lawmakers during a hearing over the agency's continued resistance to providing health care to more service members and veterans for toxic exposure, stating more data is needed to conclude exposure leads to illnesses such as cancer.

"More scientific investigation is needed to enable VA and [the Defense Department] to perform a reliable assessment of the possible or known long-term adverse health effects," said Dr. Patricia Hastings, chief consultant for post-deployment health services at the VA.

But recently declassified Defense Department documents show the Pentagon knew troops were exposed to multiple toxins and hazards that have led to hundreds of cancer cases and dozens of dead veterans after deploying to the Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, known as K2, in Uzbekistan in the early days of the war on terror.

Some lawmakers responded harshly to the VA's stance during the hearing of the House Oversight and Reform Committee's subpanel on national security.

"The VA's continued denial has left hundreds, if not thousands, of K2 veterans ineligible for certain preventative health programs and unable to receive VA disability benefits in connection with their service at K2," said Rep. Stephen Lynch, D-Mass., chairman of the committee's subpanel. "This is an injustice that must be rectified, and [VA] Secretary [Robert] Wilkie has the authority to fix it by granting presumptive status to K2 veterans today."

K2 is a former Soviet air base in southeastern Uzbekistan that shares a border with northern Afghanistan.

After the 9/11 attacks, U.S. forces established Camp Stronghold Freedom at K2, which was used to support combat missions from 2001 to 2005.

Veterans have described a toxic environment at the post, where pond water glowed green, black sludge oozed from the ground and the government posted massive white and yellow signs warning troops to keep out of certain areas



Tim Vining/U.S. Air Force

Troops file onto the aerial port flight at Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, in 2004. Declassified documents from the Defense Department show the Pentagon knew troops at the base known as K2 were exposed to multiple toxins that have led to cancer diagnoses.

due to chemical agents.

Lawmakers argued during the hearing that the VA isn't providing presumptive care, which it has the authority to do without approval from Congress or the White House.

Lawmakers agreed conclusive research is needed, but the evidence is increasing that young veterans got sick after deploying to K2.

And it isn't just K2. Thousands of veterans have been exposed to burn pits all over the world, most notably Iraq and Afghanistan, and VA has denied nearly 78% of those claims as well.

Former service members who spent time at K2 testified on Capitol Hill in February that they were aware of at least 400 individuals diagnosed with cancers who served at the base.

They said at least 30 have died.

VA officials remain unconvinced and said the issue needs more science to back up veterans' claims for health care and disability compensation.

Hastings said the agency is still studying the K2 mission and how it might have impacted the health of troops serving there.

She said the study will take about 12-18 months to complete.

She added the study is being conducted with a "very small staff."

"Good science takes time ... it will take some time," she said.

Hastings also noted the Defense Department made efforts to reduce health risks at K2.

But lawmakers said they are losing patience with the VA, which took decades to provide care for victims of Agent Orange exposure during the Vietnam War.

Lawmakers said they fear toxic exposure is the post-9/11 genera-

tion's Agent Orange and questioned who would criticize opening up presumptive care.

"The downside is maybe one of these veterans got cancer from somewhere else and they'd be covered, I'd absorb that risk," Lynch said.

"If that's the downside for the government here, embrace it. ... Don't deny them all for the misplaced concern a couple of veterans with cancer might get the treatment that might not be connected to service at K2."

beynon.steven@stripes.com
Twitter: @StevenBeynon

Army to review 'bad paper' discharges

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — As part of a lawsuit settlement reached Tuesday, the U.S. Army would be required to review and potentially upgrade thousands of other-than-honorable discharges dating back to April 2011.

The agreement is pending approval by the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut. It orders the Army Discharge Review Board to reconsider thousands of cases in which the board denied upgrades, despite evidence that veterans were struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or military sexual trauma when they separated from the military.

Andrew DeGuglielmo, an attorney in the case, said the agreement would provide "durable, long-standing relief" to veterans who were denied upgrades and those who will apply for upgrades in the future.

"This lawsuit has challenged decades-long, systemic deficiencies in the Army Discharge Review Board," DeGuglielmo said Wednesday. "I'm confident this settlement will make the discharge upgrade process more accessible, just and fair for Army veterans who endure the invisible wounds of service."

The Defense Department instituted a policy in 2017 to give "liberal consideration" to veterans looking to upgrade other-than-honorable discharges, or "bad paper," in situations where a ser-

vice-related medical disorder could have led to misconduct. Plaintiffs in the lawsuit argued that the Army Discharge Review Board ignored the policy and denied warranted upgrades.

The wrongful discharges go back even further, according to the Government Accountability Office. The GAO has reported that the Pentagon didn't consistently apply previous policies going back to 2011 that required discharge review boards to take mental health issues into consideration.

"Bad paper" discharges disqualify veterans from receiving certain health and education benefits, as well as preferential hiring and tax breaks.

The 2017 lawsuit was filed by Steve Kennedy and Alicia Carson, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who were denied discharge upgrades despite diagnoses of mental health conditions. They were represented by the Yale Law School Veterans Legal Services Clinic. In addition to reviewing cases going back to 2011, the settlement requires the Army to send individual notices to veterans who were denied discharge upgrades from Oct. 7, 2001, to April 16, 2011. These veterans will be given information about what to include in their applications for upgrades and how the process works, and be allowed to participate in their review board hearings over the phone.

wentling.nikki@stripes.com
Twitter: @nikkiwentling

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MILITARY

Program will no longer bring Afghans to US

By PHILIP W. WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan air force personnel will no longer receive training in the United States on flying and maintaining their A-29 Super Tucano turbo-prop attack aircraft, the Air Force said.

For the past five years, Afghan students have been trained by instructors from the 81st Fighter Squadron at Moody Air Force Base, Ga. The program graduated its final class on Nov. 13th, the Air Force said in a statement Tuesday.

All future A-29 training will be conducted in Afghanistan by local instructors, it said.

"Today is the beginning of a new chapter in our partnership," Kelli Seybolt, deputy undersecretary of the Air Force for international affairs, said in the statement. "We are committed to the continued support of this program in order to strengthen independent Afghan

capabilities and achieve sustained peace."

More than 30 pilots and 70 maintenance technicians have graduated since the program at Moody began in 2015. It was scheduled to end in 2018 but was extended through this year.

American advisers assigned to the program were mostly drawn from A-10 pilots who needed training of their own on the twin-seat A-29 before instructing Afghan flyers. After providing introductory instruction to the Afghans at Moody, the advisers would deploy to Afghanistan to provide additional mentoring.

Afghanistan received its first A-29s from the U.S. in early 2016 as part of international efforts to build the country's fledgling air force. Training to fly, and especially maintain, most of the force's aircraft is still needed, U.S. and Afghan officials have said.

wellman.phillip@stripes.com
Twitter: @pwwellman



LARRY REID JR. / U.S. Air Force

An Afghan air force A-29 Super Tucano soars over Afghanistan in 2015. The 81st Fighter Squadron at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., graduated its last class of Afghan A-29 Super Tucano student pilots Nov. 13.

Americans are urged to avoid protest in Kaiserslautern

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — U.S. military officials and German police are urging Americans to avoid downtown Kaiserslautern on Saturday, where a planned demonstration against government-imposed coronavirus prevention measures could turn violent.

About 300 participants had registered for the protest, scheduled from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., as of Thurs-

day afternoon, U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz said on its Facebook page. Protesters are expected to march on a route between Messeplatz and Stiftsplatz.

The U.S. military is warning Americans to stay away from a planned protest in Kaiserslautern on Saturday, Nov. 21, against the German government's coronavirus lockdown measures. Hundreds of police are expected to be on scene, and they highly encour-

age people to stay away from the downtown area between Messeplatz and Stiftsplatz.

About 450 police officers are expected to be on duty and ask that "military members ... stay away" from the area, according to the 569th U.S. Forces Police Squadron at Vogelweh.

The rally is part of the "Querdenker" movement, a group that has adopted the German term for critical thinking to protest federal

and state government decisions to adopt restrictions during the pandemic, including social distancing and mask requirements while exercising the right of assembly. The group has staged protests in Stuttgart, Berlin and other cities, where they have demanded an end to the lockdown.

"The (German police expect) a lot of demonstrators from the right and left wing scene which will make the demonstration

probably aggressive and violent," the military police squadron said in its Facebook post.

A demonstration earlier this month in Leipzig drew around 20,000 people, thousands more than expected, according to German news reports. Coming days after Germany went into a second, partial lockdown, the rally turned violent, Deutsche Welle reported.

news@stripes.com

Battle: Trump's effort against 'endless wars' likely to come up short

FROM PAGE 1

more difficult politically to unwind."

Yet even if Trump wins this battle, he appears to have lost the larger war to bring U.S. soldiers home. Even with his latest moves, he will have made barely a dent in the estimated 200,000 U.S. troops stationed abroad. Grandier plans to move 12,000 troops out of Germany have made little progress. Trump's war against endless war seems set to end with a whimper, not a bang.

In seeking, and failing, to bring U.S. troops back to America, Trump's efforts fit with the record of recent presidents. His predecessor, President Barack Obama, often maintained, "there is no military solution," and once said that war was an "expression of human folly." During his first term, he oversaw an ambitious plan to withdraw around 150,000 U.S.

troops from Iraq.

Ultimately, Obama failed to curtail America's overseas commitments. After the Islamic State filled a vacuum in the Levant, he sent thousands of U.S. troops back to Iraq, and also began bombing the group in Syria. He dramatically ramped up troop numbers in Afghanistan in the hopes of divisive victory over the Taliban that still proved evasive by the time he left office in 2017.

Trump was a fierce critic of the Obama administration's policies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now, even many of his allies on the right argue he is making the same mistakes. The Washington Free Beacon called the drawdown in Afghanistan and Iraq a "parting gift to libs and terrorists," while Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said a "premature American exit would likely be even worse" than Obama's 2011 Iraq withdrawal.

Liberal critics, meanwhile, argue that the Trump administration leaned into the worst aspects of Obama's war on terror. Data from the watchdog group Airwars that was published by The Washington Post on Wednesday shows that civilian deaths during U.S.-led coalition airstrikes against the Islamic State rose almost 300% in Trump's first year in office.

And Trump's aggressive actions on the world stage have often come into tension with his stated ideals. Escalating frictions with Iran have led to dramatic increases in the size of U.S. bases in Gulf states like Qatar. The U.S. strike in January that killed Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, brought the countries to the brink of war.

Even as his Pentagon was making moves to pull the U.S. troops out of Afghanistan and Iraq, Trump had to be dissuaded from a

military strike on Iranian nuclear facilities, the New York Times reported.

But Trump's failure to bring troops home may say as much about the U.S. military as it does about him. Ingrained military attitudes can often overwhelm civilian decisions. In an exit interview this week, outgoing Syria envoy James Jeffrey said officials had hidden the size of the U.S. military presence in Syria from Trump, who had twice announced complete withdrawals from the country. "We were always playing shell games to not make clear to our leadership how many troops we had there," Jeffrey said in an interview with Defense One, adding that there were "a lot more than" the roughly 200 troops Trump initially agreed could remain there in 2019.

There are many who view America's global military presence as a benefit, not a bug. There

are roughly 28,500 U.S. troops in South Korea, a legacy of the Korean War — a conflict that effectively ended in 1953. Though Trump has complained that the arrangement is unfair, some military experts argue that leaving South Korea now would ultimately cost more than it would save and deprive the United States of a presence near China.

The Trump administration had promised to upend this orthodoxy. But even simple-seeming alternative arrangements like Poland's proposed "Fort Trump" have stalled as the government struggled with details. The final move to pull out troops from Iraq and Afghanistan is a last-gasp effort, and only a partial one.

As it is, decisions on whether to pull out totally or reinforce overwhelmed troops will fall to the incoming Biden administration — which some analysts argue was the plan all along.

MILITARY

Bases: Inhofe opposes new names

FROM FRONT PAGE 1

provisions to remove Confederate names from military bases.

Inhofe's office did not respond this week to a request for comment, but the senator's position on renaming the bases was telegraphed months ago.

In July, Inhofe told his home state newspaper, The Oklahoman, that he spoke to Trump about the measures to rename bases and predicted it would be removed from a compromise defense bill.

"We're going to see to it that provision doesn't survive the bill," Inhofe told the paper.

In a July tweet, Trump wrote he was relying on Inhofe to block the effort.

"I spoke to the highly respected (Chairman) Senator @JimInhofe, who has informed me that he WILL NOT be changing the names of our great Military Bases and Forts, places from which we won two World Wars (and more!). Like me, Jim is not a believer in 'Cancel Culture'."

The 10 Army posts named in honor of Confederate generals are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana; Fort Benning and Fort Gordon in Georgia; Fort

Bragg in North Carolina; Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett in Virginia; Fort Rucker in Alabama, and Fort Hood in Texas. The installations were named primarily during the south's Jim Crow era in the 1910s and 1940s.

"[President] Donald Trump and some Republicans' ongoing effort to block our military from taking this long overdue step forward, which passed with bipartisan support earlier this year, is disgraceful. It's time our armed services respect Black service members and all Black Americans by finally renaming the bases named after those who took up arms against the United States to keep Black Americans in chains," said Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and an Army veteran.

The House and Senate amendments to rename Confederate-named installations differ. The House version forces the Army to remove such names within one year of the NDAA becoming law, while the Senate version would require creating a commission to study the issue with the goal of stripping Confederate names

within three years.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, of Texas, the ranking Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, said Tuesday that he expects skirmishes with the NDAA to be resolved shortly. He suggested the Confederate issue could be the biggest snag.

"Everyone knew the base naming was going to be controversial. ... Somewhere there's got to be some give or compromise and, frankly, a lot of that decision is going to be made above our pay grade," Thornberry said.

Yet Thornberry, who is retiring, said the renaming of the bases is something President-elect Joe Biden will tackle regardless, and removing the measure from the NDAA would prevent a fight with Trump over military funding.

"Just to say what everybody knows, the incoming Biden administration is going to deal with the base naming issues anyway," he said. "What we're down to is whether it has to be in this bill, just this way and that whether that would provoke a veto."

beynon.steven@stripes.com
Twitter: @Stevenbeynon

Australia: Evidence shows elite troops killed Afghans

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — A shocking Australian military report into war crimes has found evidence that elite Australian troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan prisoners, farmers and civilians.

Australian Defence Force Chief Gen. Angus Campbell said Thursday the shameful record included alleged instances in which new patrol members would shoot a prisoner in order to achieve their first kill in a practice known as "blooding." He said the soldiers would plant weapons and radios to support false claims the prisoners were enemies killed in action.

Campbell told reporters in Canberra the illegal killings began in 2009, with the majority occurring in 2012 and 2013. He said some members of the elite Special Air Service encouraged "a self-centered, warrior culture."

The chief was announcing the findings of a four-year investigation by Maj. Gen. Paul Brereton, a judge and Army reservist who was asked to look into the allegations and interviewed more than 400 witnesses and reviewed thou-

sands of pages of documents. Brereton recommended 19 soldiers be investigated by police for possible charges, including murder.

"To the people of Afghanistan, on behalf of the Australian Defence Force, I sincerely and unreservedly apologize for any wrongdoing by Australian soldiers," Campbell said. He said he'd spoken directly to his Afghan military counterpart to express remorse.

"Such alleged behavior profoundly disrespected the trust placed in us by the Afghan people who had asked us to their country to help them," Campbell said. "It would have devastated the lives of Afghan families and communities, causing immeasurable pain and suffering. And it would have put in jeopardy our mission and the safety of our Afghan and coalition partners."

As well as the 39 killings, the report outlines two allegations of cruel treatment. It says that none of the alleged crimes were committed during the heat of battle.

Only parts of the report have been made public. Many details, including the names of alleged killers, remain redacted.

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PACIFIC



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE OF JAPAN/Prime Minister's Office of Japan

The Marine Corps commandant, Gen. David Berger, poses with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga in Tokyo, on Wednesday. They pledged to maintain a force strong enough to deter Chinese ambitions.

Marine commandant, Japanese PM pledge to maintain China deterrence

By AYA ICHIHASHI
AND CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps commandant and the Japanese prime minister pledged this week to maintain a force strong enough to deter Chinese ambitions in the Western Pacific, according to the prime minister's office and the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A brief meeting Wednesday between Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and Gen. David Berger is another sign that the United States is rallying allies in the region to counter an assertive China.

"I understand this severe security environment you are in, and that, I think, drives us to move ahead to change, to maintain the deterrence, and we do that together as one team," Berger said in a video of the meeting posted online by Suga's office.

Since 2012, Beijing has militarized dozens of islands and reefs in the East and South China seas,

most of which it claims as territorial waters. The U.S. and Japan maintain that the seas are international waters.

Japan faces off against China over control of the Senkaku Islands, a small, uninhabited chain west of Okinawa. The islands sit near vital sea lanes, near fishing grounds and close to potential oil and natural gas reserves.

Japan administers the islands, but China and Taiwan also claim them. Chinese coast guard vessels have spent a record number of days near the islands this year, watched by their Japanese counterparts.

The U.S.-Japan alliance has "never been more important," Berger said in the meeting. It's "very important for me to listen to understand how you view ... what the Marine Corps and the U.S. military can do as partners."

Berger is the latest top U.S. commander to comment on the Japanese alliance. On Oct. 26, dur-

ing the Keen Sword exercise, U.S. Forces Japan commander Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider emphasized the two nations' ability to deploy rapidly and defend the Senkaku.

U.S. Marines practiced island landings during Keen Sword with their Japanese counterparts in the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade. The new brigade is patterned after the Corps.

Suga told Berger that the Japanese "highly appreciate the effort of the U.S. Marine Corps to maintain a ready deterrence," according to the video.

"We'd like to continue to deepen our coordination together with the United States by enhancing our response and deterrence capabilities of the bilateral alliance and also achieve the free and open Indo-Pacific," Suga said.

ichihashi.aya@stripes.com
Twitter: @Ayalchihashi
doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos

UK boosts defense spending, Pentagon tells allies to also

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The Pentagon's new chief praised plans by the United Kingdom to give its armed forces the largest spending boost in 30 years, saying other NATO allies should take note.

"Their commitment to increased defense funding should be a message to all free nations that the most capable among us can — and must — do more to counter emerging threats to our shared freedoms and security," acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller said in a statement Wednesday.

On Thursday, the U.K. detailed some of its spending priorities, which include setting up a new space command much like the U.S. has done. Other focus areas include development of a cyber command and a future air combat system.

The \$21.8 billion increase, doled out over four years, is the largest boost in defense spending since the end of the Cold War. It cements Britain's status as the second biggest defense spender in the NATO alliance.

The investment also comes as the UK is exiting the European Union, which some analysts say has made military funding a larger priority as London aims to stake out a more assertive position

on the world stage.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the investments were needed even as the country struggles to recover from the economic damage brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

"I have taken this decision in the teeth of the pandemic because the defense of the realm must come first," Johnson said in a statement Thursday. "This is our chance to end the era of retreat, transform our armed forces, bolster our global influence."

Within NATO there are concerns that the pandemic could put pressure on allied governments to slow down increases in defense spending, which have been on the way up for six consecutive years due largely to concerns about a more aggressive Russia.

Elevating defense spending among European allies also has been a top priority of President Donald Trump, who has made threats about linking security guarantees to whether they meet NATO spending targets. Germany, Europe's economic powerhouse, has been repeatedly criticized by Trump for not spending enough on its military.

Miller, who took over leadership of the Pentagon last week, described the U.K. as America's "most stalwart and capable ally."

vandiver.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @john_vandiver

With 534 new infections, Tokyo leads Japan into record virus territory

By JOSEPH DITZLER
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan's capital city experienced more than 500 new coronavirus cases Thursday, a new benchmark as a fall viral surge continues across the nation.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government recorded 534 new infections according to a report in The Japan Times, surpassing the previous peak, 493 cases, reached the previous day.

Japan also set a pandemic record Thursday: 2,179 new cases, the first time the country has seen more than 2,000 infections in one day since the pandemic began, The Associated Press reported, citing the Japan Health Ministry. Japan reached its previous high, 1,723 new cases, on Saturday.

U.S. military commands in Japan and South Korea announced

a combined 12 new patients Thursday, all new arrivals. Nine of those are on the Korean Peninsula.

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said his country is in "the most alarming status" of the pandemic, according to a video statement on his office's website Thursday. He appealed to residents to wear masks, especially while talking and dining together, a practice that health experts say creates many coronavirus cases.

Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike on Thursday raised the metro area's health alert to the highest of four levels, but government statements are more advice than enforceable orders. She did not impose travel restrictions or shorten business hours.

Central Tokyo is off-limits to most U.S. military personnel except for official business.

U.S. military bases in Japan passed the day relatively quietly, announcing three new cases by 6 p.m. Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, 400 miles west of Tokyo, reported that one person tested positive while in isolation after having contact with a coronavirus patient.

U.S. Army Japan, headquartered at Camp Zama just outside Tokyo, on Thursday banned all non-essential travel to Yokota Air Base, 26 miles away in western Tokyo, until Thanksgiving Day, according to a post on the Army Facebook page. Yokota on Wednesday reported 14 new cases on base.

Farther south at Kadena Air Base on Okinawa, two people tested positive before exiting quarantine, according to a base Facebook post. The pair had recently returned from travel outside of Japan. Contact tracers

identified one person who was also quarantined, according to the base.

Okinawa prefecture, home to the majority of U.S. troops in Japan, had 54 new cases and one coronavirus death Thursday, a public health official told Stars and Stripes. The prefecture last reported more than 50 infections on one day three months ago.

Two new cases were reported at the Marines' Camp Foster and Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, the official said. The Marines did not respond to an emailed request for further information. The service stopped announcing new cases in early November, citing security concerns.

The U.S. military in Japan typically does not specify whether its new patients are service members, civilian employees or family members.

The nine new coronavirus pa-

tients reported by U.S. Forces Korea are all service members who arrived on the peninsula between Nov. 3 and 13, according to a USFK news release Thursday.

Eight of those patients flew into Osan Air Base on the Patriot Express, a government-chartered flight from the United States, on Nov. 3 and 6, according to USFK. The remaining service member arrived Nov. 13 on a commercial flight at Incheon International Airport.

One tested positive while in quarantine; the others did so on a test required to exit quarantine, according to USFK. All remain quarantined at Camp Humphreys.

Stars and Stripes reporters Matthew Keeler and Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.
ditzler.joseph@stripes.com
Twitter: @JosephDitzler
ichihashi.aya@stripes.com
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NATION

Jobless claims up to 742K; millions to lose aid

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans seeking unemployment aid rose last week to 742,000, the first increase in five weeks and a sign that the resurgent viral outbreak is likely slowing the economy and forcing more companies to cut jobs.

The worsening pandemic and the arrival of cold weather could accelerate layoffs in the weeks ahead. Of the roughly 20 million Americans now receiving some form of unemployment benefits, about half will lose those benefits when two federal programs expire at the end of the year.

“The risk of further job and income loss is high now from business operations being curtailed,” said Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, a forecasting firm. “Also, expiration of federal benefits later this year will put renewed strain on household incomes. Overall, the labor market remains under stress.”

The Labor Department's report Thursday showed that applications for jobless aid rose from 711,000 in the previous week. In March, when the pandemic first



BEBETO MATTHEWS/AP

People wait in a line stretching around a block outside a CityMD urgent care clinic offering COVID-19 testing in the Park Slope neighborhood of the Brooklyn borough of New York.

intensified, the number had soared to 6.9 million. Before then, applications typically hovered about 225,000 a week.

The surge in confirmed viral infections, and worry about its effect on the economy, are putting pressure on financial markets. The Dow Jones Industrial Average declined in early trading Thursday for a third day.

The economy's modest recovery is increasingly at risk, with newly confirmed daily infections

in the United States having exploded 80% over the past two weeks to the highest levels on record. More states and cities are issuing mask mandates, limiting the size of gatherings, restricting restaurant dining, closing gyms or reducing the hours and capacity of bars, stores and other businesses. At least 15 states have tightened curbs on businesses to try to slow infections.

Evidence is emerging that consumers are losing confidence in

the economic outlook and pulling back on shopping, eating out and other activities. Spending on 30 million credit and debit cards tracked by JPMorgan Chase fell 7.4% earlier this month compared with a year ago. That marked a sharp drop from two weeks earlier. Consumer sentiment also declined in early November and is down nearly 21% from a year ago, according to a University of Michigan survey.

And retail sales rose just 0.3% in

October, the smallest gain since stores reopened in April after a nationwide shutdown in March. The weak gain suggests that consumers began pulling back on spending even before many new restrictions on businesses were imposed.

The number of people who are continuing to receive traditional unemployment benefits fell to 6.4 million, the government said Thursday, from 6.8 million. Some of that decline reflects more hiring. But it also indicates that many jobless people have used up their state unemployment aid — which typically expires after six months — and have transitioned to a federal extended benefits program that lasts 13 more weeks.

Yet that extended benefit program is one of two federal supports that are set to expire at year's end, eliminating benefits for 9.1 million people, according to a report Wednesday from The Century Foundation. Congress has so far failed to agree on any new stimulus package for jobless individuals and struggling businesses. The cutoff of aid will sharply reduce income for the unemployed, force a further reduction in their spending and perhaps weaken the economy.

Biden reaches out to governors as Trump stymies transition

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — Joe Biden's meeting Thursday with a group of Democratic and Republican governors is his latest attempt to fight through President Donald Trump's unprecedented attempt to block the president-elect's transition to power.

Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris planned a virtual session in the afternoon with the National Governors Association's leadership team, which includes five Republicans and four Democrats. All the Democrats and a majority of the Republicans involved have acknowledged Biden as the

winner of the White House election.

One expected participant, Gov. Larry Hogan, R-Md., told The Associated Press recently that Trump's wild and unsupported claims of widespread voter fraud were “dangerous” and “embarrassing.”

The highest-ranking Republican on the NGA's executive committee, Asa Hutchinson of Arkansas, said over the weekend that Biden would be the next president and he called on the Trump administration to give Biden access to the intelligence briefings he needs in order to be fully prepared

to lead the country on Jan. 20, Inauguration Day.

So far, the governors have not swayed the Republican president.

Before Biden's meeting, Trump came out with a new round of false claims of voter fraud in key states, even as courts continue to reject his challenges and a small, but growing, number of Republican officeholders publicly begin to accept Biden's victory.

Beyond being a pillar of democracy, the peaceful transfer of power after an election is especially critical this year given the extraordinary governing challenges Biden will inherit in just nine

weeks. The United States is struggling through the worst public health crisis in a century, state and local government are facing massive budget shortfalls, and millions of Americans remain out of work.

But more than two weeks after the Nov. 3 election, the Trump administration is refusing to let Biden receive briefings on national security and pandemic planning that leaders in both parties say are vital to ensure Biden can govern effectively on Day One.

With Trump dug in and Republicans on Capitol Hill largely unwilling to challenge him, Biden

has been forced to turn to diverse collection of outside allies to ratchet up the pressure on Trump to concede.

The CEOs of America's largest companies have released a statement recognizing Biden and Harris as the clear winners. The heads of the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association and the American Nurses Association issued a joint statement on Tuesday urging the Trump administration to share “all critical information related to COVID-19” with Biden. Not doing so, they warned, would jeopardize American lives.

Trump targeting vote certification in late bid to block Biden

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Getting nowhere in the courts, President Donald Trump's scattershot effort to overturn President-elect Joe Biden's victory is shifting toward obscure election boards that certify the vote as Trump and his allies seek to upend the electoral process and perpetuate unsubstantiated doubts about the count.

The battle is centered in the battleground states that sealed Biden's win.

In Michigan, two Republican election officials in the state's

largest county initially refused to certify results despite no evidence of fraud, then backtracked and voted to certify and then on Wednesday flipped again and said they “remain opposed to certification.” Some Republicans have called on the GOP statewide canvassers to do the same. In Arizona, officials are balking at signing off on vote tallies in a rural county.

The moves don't reflect a coordinated effort across the battleground states that broke for Biden, local election officials said. Instead, they seem to be inspired

by Trump's incendiary rhetoric about baseless fraud and driven by Republican acquiescence to broadsides against the U.S. electoral system as state and federal courts push aside legal challenges filed by Trump and his allies.

Still, what happened in Wayne County, Mich., on Tuesday and Wednesday was a jarring reminder of the disruptions that can still be caused as the nation works through the process of affirming the outcome of the Nov. 3 election.

There is no precedent for the Trump team's widespread effort

to delay or undermine certification, according to University of Kentucky law professor Joshua Douglas.

“It would be the end of democracy as we know it,” Douglas said. “This is just not a thing that can happen.”

Certifying results is a routine yet important step after local election officials have tallied votes, reviewed procedures, checked to ensure votes were counted correctly and investigated discrepancies. Typically, this certification is done by a local board of elections

and then, later, the results are certified at the state level.

But as Trump has refused to concede to Biden and continues to spread false claims of victory, this mundane process is taking on new significance.

Among key battleground states, counties in Michigan, Nevada and Wisconsin have all made it through the initial step of certifying results. Except for Wayne County, this process has largely been smooth. Arizona, Pennsylvania and Georgia still haven't concluded their local certifications.

WORLD

Pompeo is first diplomat to visit Israeli settlement in West Bank

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday became the first top American diplomat to visit an Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank as the State Department in a major policy shift announced that products from the settlements can be labeled “Made in Israel.”

The two moves reflected the Trump administration’s acceptance of Israeli settlements, which the Palestinians and most of the international community view as a violation of international law and a major obstacle to peace.

Pompeo also announced that the U.S. would brand the international Palestinian-led boycott movement against Israel as “anti-Semitic” and bar any groups that participate in it from receiving government funding. It was not immediately clear which groups would be affected by the move.

Pompeo’s announcements were largely symbolic and could be reversed by the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden, who has promised a more evenhanded approach to Israel and the Palestinians.

Nonetheless, they illustrated the deep ties between the outgoing

Trump administration and the hard-line government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In a Twitter post, Pompeo confirmed his visit to the Psagot winery, located in a settlement near Jerusalem, which released a blended red named for the secretary last year in gratitude for his stance on the settlements. Reporters were not allowed to accompany him.

“Enjoyed lunch at the scenic Psagot Winery today,” he tweeted. “Unfortunately, Psagot and other businesses have been targeted by pernicious EU labeling efforts that facilitate the boycott of Israeli companies. The U.S. stands with Israel and will not tolerate any form of delegitimization.”

The European Union, like most of the world, opposes Israeli settlements and requires imports from the occupied territory to be labeled as such.

Pompeo later visited the Golan Heights, a strategic plateau Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war and later annexed. In a break from the rest of the international community, the Trump administration recognized the territory as part of Israel last year.

Pompeo was joined by Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi and Avigdor Kahalani, a decorated retired Israeli general famous for leading Israeli forces against a Syrian tank invasion during the 1973 Mideast war.

“You can’t stand here and stare out at what’s across the border and deny the central thing that President [Donald] Trump recognized, that the previous presidents have refused to do,” Pompeo said. “This is a part of Israel and a central part of Israel.”



PATRICK SEMANSKY / AP

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, right, leaves a security briefing Thursday on Mount Bental in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, near the Israeli-Syrian border.

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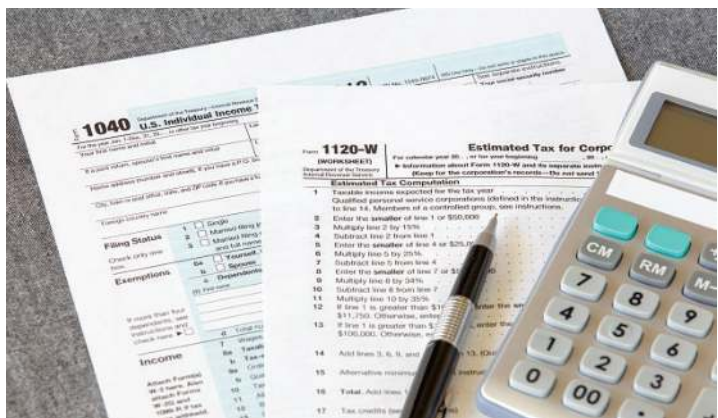
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WEEKEND



Sackboy: More puzzles, not much more story

Video games, Page 19



Complex character

Gentle giant Chris Stapleton has gone from scruffy country music maverick to standard-bearer in five years

Page 28

BECKY FLUKE

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY

Do you hear that?

Futuristic 'sound beaming' technology has arrived

By LOUISE DIXON

Associated Press

Imagine a world where you move around in your own personal sound bubble. You listen to your favorite tunes, play loud computer games, watch a movie or get navigation directions in your car — all without disturbing those around you.

That's the possibility presented by "sound beaming," a new futuristic audio technology from Noveto Systems, an Israeli company. On Nov. 13, it debuted a desktop device that beams sound directly to a listener without the need for headphones.

The company provided The Associated Press with an exclusive demo of the desktop prototype of its SoundBeamer 1.0 before the launch.

The listening sensation is straight out of a sci-fi movie. The 3-D sound is so close it feels like it's inside your ears while also in front, above and behind them.

Noveto expects the device will have plenty of practical uses, from allowing office workers to listen to music or conference calls without interrupting colleagues to letting someone play a game, movie or music without disturbing their significant others.

The lack of headphones means it's possible to hear other sounds in the room clearly.

The technology uses a 3-D sensing module and locates and tracks the ear position

sending audio via ultrasonic waves to create sound pockets by the user's ears. Sound can be heard in stereo or a spatial 3-D mode that creates 360-degree sound around the listener, the company said.

The demo includes nature video clips of swans on a lake, bees buzzing and a babbling brook, where the listener feels completely transported into the scene.

But even CEO Christophe Ramstein finds it hard to put the concept into words. "The brain doesn't understand what it doesn't know," he said.

In a Noveto demonstration conducted via Zoom from Tel Aviv, SoundBeamer Product Manager Ayana Wallwater was unable to hear the sound of gunshots on a gaming demo.

That's the point. But she does get to enjoy the reactions of people trying the software for the first time.

"Most people just say, 'Wow, I really don't believe it,'" she said.

"You don't believe it because it sounds like a speaker, but no one else can hear it ... it's supporting you, and you're in the middle of everything. It's happening around you."

By changing a setting, the sound can follow a listener around when they move their head. It's also possible to move out of the beam's path and hear nothing at all, which creates a surreal experience.

"You don't need to tell the device where you are. It's not streaming to one exact place," Wallwater said.



NOVETO SYSTEMS/AP

The SoundBeamer directs music and sounds straight into your head without the need for headphones. Three-dimensional sound feels like it's inside your ears, and all around.

"It follows you wherever you go. So it's personally for you — follows you, plays what you want inside your head."

"This is what we dream of," she adds. "A world where we get the sound you want. You don't need to disturb others and others don't get disturbed by your sound. But you can still interact with them."

After his first listening experience, Ramstein asked himself how it was different from other audio devices.

"I was thinking, 'Yeah, but is it the same with headphones?' No, because I have the freedom and it's like I have the freedom of doing what I want to do. And I have these sounds playing in my head as there would be something happening here, which is difficult to explain because we have no reference for that."

While the concept of sound beaming is not new, Noveto was the first to launch the technology, and their SoundBeamer 1.0 desktop device will be the first branded consumer product.

Ramstein said a "smaller, sexier" version of the prototype will be ready for consumer release in time for Christmas 2021.

"You know, I was trying to think how we compare sound beaming with any other inventions in history. And I think the only one that came to mind is the first time I tried the iPod I was like, 'Oh, my God. What's that?' I think sound beaming is something that is as disruptive as that. There's something to be said about it doesn't exist before. There's the freedom of using it. And it's really amazing."

GADGETS

Enjoy hours of screen-free fun

By GREGG ELLMAN

Tribune News Service

It is refreshing to use a new piece of technology that doesn't require staring at a screen. When I read about a new handheld game that asked what's small, round, and packed with 1,000 hours of fun for all ages and does not have a screen, it got my attention. The answer is Jogoball, which was easy to figure out since the email was from Jogoball and parent company Yogibo.

Yogibo is a company known for lifestyle furniture and accessories with comfort and relaxation, supplying sensory and health benefits. The new line of fun technology starts with the Jogoball.

Jogoball is subscription-free and recommended for ages 8 to 98. The baseball-sized handheld smiling character gadget has a Bluetooth speaker and built-in gaming console with 15 games with more than 1,000 hours of content, so no two games are the same.

Since it doesn't have a screen,

you need the companion app (iOS/Android) to choose a game.

Game choices include music (use Jogoball like an instrument to make music), active (endurance workouts), mind (trivia) and social games. Once a game is chosen, an announcer introduces the game and instructions.

To play, toss it between players, roll or tap it — just make it move to activate any of six built-in axis of motion detection sensors inside the durable device. A protective blue Hugibo silicone skin covering keeps it safe.

LED lights on the Jogoball blink at different times based on the game being played. Inside is a rechargeable battery, and a micro USB cable is included for charging and loading free updates and new content.

Replacement silicone character sleeve covers are available for purchase (\$29) to change the look of the Jogoball.

Online: yogibo.com; \$119

Twelve South's Curve Riser is a desktop accessory you won't think you need until you use it,

and then you'll wonder how you ever lived without it.

That might be a slight exaggeration, but the Curve Riser premium metal stand is an outstanding addition to any work station and helps declutter every desk. It's marketed for Apple iMacs, but will work just fine with any display Mac or PC, TV, or anything needing a little lift. Once it's in place and your display is on top, the valuable desktop real estate it was taking up is now back, and with a little extra.

Keeping a display on top also provides a much better viewing height with a 4.25-inch rise, resulting in a more healthy neck and back and an eye-friendly ergonomic viewing height. You also get a storage shelf for hard drives, hubs, cables, etc.

Small monitor-free computers, such as a Mac Mini, can fit in the center shelf with an easy, open air-flowing ventilated area. Connecting cables is simple since the monitor is right there and can be run out of the back end of the



YOGIBO/TNS

open shelf where all the ports need a short connection.

Under the shelf, the base of the Curve Riser curves in to sit on a flat surface and offers more storage space.

The overall dimensions of the sharp-looking Curve Riser with a matte black finish are 4.2 inches high, 12.52 inches wide and 9.65 inches deep. The shelf height is 1.75 inches. Displays with round or square bases up to 10 inches wide are supported.

Knowing these dimensions in

The Jogoball has a Bluetooth speaker and a gaming console built in with 15 games that provide more than 1,000 hours of content.

advance is helpful to measure your area before purchasing.

Changing the height of a monitor can be very beneficial but can also work in reverse if the angle isn't comfortable. If it fits, the Curve Riser is a great choice.

Online: twelvesouth.com; \$79.99

WEEKEND: MOVIES



SONY PICTURES CLASSICS/AP

Kyle Marvin, left, and Michael Angelo Covino are lifelong friends with some issues to work through in "The Climb."

A rocky path for 'The Climb'

New spin on buddy movie stalled since March by COVID

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

The film "The Climb" is a portrait of a male friendship told in single-shot chapters with cataclysmic happenings — marriage, death, children — in between. With each lurch forward, we have to get our bearings for where Mike (Michael Angelo Covino) and Kyle (Kyle Marvin) are now. Are they still friends? Have either of them matured at all?

Over the past two years, you could do similar check-ins with Covino and Marvin — longtime friends who wrote the film together with Covino making his directorial debut.

Take one. It's May 2019. They're flying high along the French Riviera, basking in the reception for "The Climb." It's hailed as a breakthrough at the Cannes Film Festival for both Mike and Kyle, and celebrated as a fresh, innovative spin on the buddy comedy.

Take two. It's October 2020. Their movie, several times postponed, is still awaiting release. Joined on a Zoom call, Kyle and Mike are hundreds of miles apart. Mike is staying at his parents' house in Connecticut. His arm is in a sling.

"First time I've talked to him in months," says Covino with a grin.

What happened?

The pandemic has made a mess of countless movie schedules and upended coming-out parties for plenty of filmmakers, but the postponed path for "The Climb" is as awkward as any. After Cannes, Covino and Marvin landed distribution from Sony Pictures Classics, rode the festival circuit and won a

Film Independent Spirit nomination. Then four days before the film's theatrical opening in March, cinemas shut down.

"That was the record-scratch stop," says Covino, who despite claiming otherwise speaks to Marvin nearly every day.

"It's an ice-dip bath after the glory of going to those festivals," says Marvin, speaking from Los Angeles. "You're throwing on tuxes, people are saying crazy things and you're meeting your heroes in the bathroom."

Covino nods and then, after a beat, asks: "What hero did you meet in the bathroom, Kyle? Elaborate on that."

"The Climb" has finally made its way into theaters this month, the culmination in a long, uphill journey for Covino and Marvin, both in their mid-to-late 30s. The two worked for years in commercials and producing independent films before trying to strike out on their own. "The Climb" started as a one-shot, eight-minute short, which plays nearly unchanged as the feature's opening chapter.

The two are on bikes mid-climb on a French country road. It's the day before Kyle's wedding, and he's full of excitement. Despite his huffing and puffing, he's also thrilled about adopting cycling as a more regular hobby. That's when Mike casually mentions that he's sleeping with Kyle's fiancée. Their subsequent argument plays out while they keep biking up the hill, and Mike continues to give Kyle pedaling instructions. It's the first in a series of vignettes, mostly in sinuous single shots, that dot years in the life of a sweetly loyal, possibly toxic friendship.

"There was a whole slew of films that dealt



AP

Michael Angelo Covino, left, and Kyle Marvin wrote and costar in "The Climb."

with this subject matter of male love affairs and friendship and that fine line between, 'Well, we're best friends, but we kinda love each other.' I love those films, don't get me wrong," say Covino. "But I think some of them handled it in more of a tongue-in-cheek way. What we were interested in doing is: No, this isn't the joke. This is the reality. It's not a joke that these guys love each other; it's just the sad state of things that they're all each other has."

Cycling has more than a cameo in "The Climb." It's woven into its DNA. Biking even shaped the scripting. When Covino and Marvin hit a wall while writing, they'd go for a ride to clear their heads and talk it over. They took bikes along at film festivals, riding outside Cannes (the setting of the opening scene), pedaling through snow at Sundance and riding right up to the red carpet at the oceanside Spirit Awards in Santa Monica, Calif. Security initially turned them away.

"We were like, 'We're not people on the beach,'" chuckles Marvin.

"When we were on our press tour, we would travel with our bikes and basically ride from interview to interview," says Covino. "We would do, like, the morning shows, 'Good Morning Houston' or whatever and we would ride into the studio. It was a real schtick. We'd be in full lycra."

Covino's shoulder injury, naturally, is from a biking accident. A while back, he went over his handlebars in New York but only recently got around to surgery. "I figured we're about to start a press tour right now, why not have a talking point?" says Covino, laughing.

'Climb' elevates male friendship

BY KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Michael Angelo Covino's "The Climb" opens with an incredibly funny setup that could be from an episode of "Curb Your Enthusiasm," but injected with pathos and sincerity. It's a long, one-take argument between two best friends, Mike (Covino) and Kyle (Kyle Marvin), wherein Mike confesses to sleeping with Kyle's fiancée, Ava (Judith Godreche), right as Kyle is opining about how excited he is to marry her. Oh, and also: They're on bikes, struggling up a hill in France.

The sequence makes up Covino's 2018 short film "The Climb," also written by and starring Covino and Marvin, who co-wrote the feature in addition to costarring. It is also the essence of what this film is: wryly funny but deeply felt, a brilliantly written, performed and executed moment of unflinching and intimate truth between two men, at once devastating and hilarious.

Those raw moments of truth-telling are what "The Climb" seeks to excavate in this tale of a lifelong friendship, which becomes a surprisingly sweet love story, and the bumps in the road they endure along the way.

The passing years are structured into seven chapters with cryptic titles like "Thanks" and "Fine." The film is constructed with incredibly long shots, intricately crafted sequences of dialogue and performance peppered with usually amusing reveals along the way. The camera penetrates space and elasticizes time, establishing a flow within each chapter, relentlessly building to a crescendo before cutting away at the height of tension.

All of this style is in service of a story about two friends who love each other very much, in spite of who they are, what they've done, and the women who come between them.

In another brilliant, norm-upending sequence, Mike bursts into a wedding chapel to object to Kyle's union, to tell his friend, whom he's betrayed and let down time and again, that he deserves to be loved the way he unconditionally loves others. It's a beautiful, vulnerable gift that Mike drags out from himself, the closest admission of fault he'll cop to, though you'll never guess how that scene will end, like every chapter in this odyssey. But at the heart of the matter, it's simple. Although Mike's a selfish jerk and Kyle selfless to a fault, and they fall, again, and again, they always find it within themselves to get back on the bike and ride, and that is a relationship, and a film, worth celebrating.

"The Climb" is rated R for language, sexual content, some nudity and brief drug use. Running time: 98 minutes. Now playing in select theaters.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Taking a stab at horror

Known for R-rated buddy comedies, Vince Vaughn embodies a teenage girl in body-swapper 'Freaky'

By JOSH ROTTENBERG
Los Angeles Times

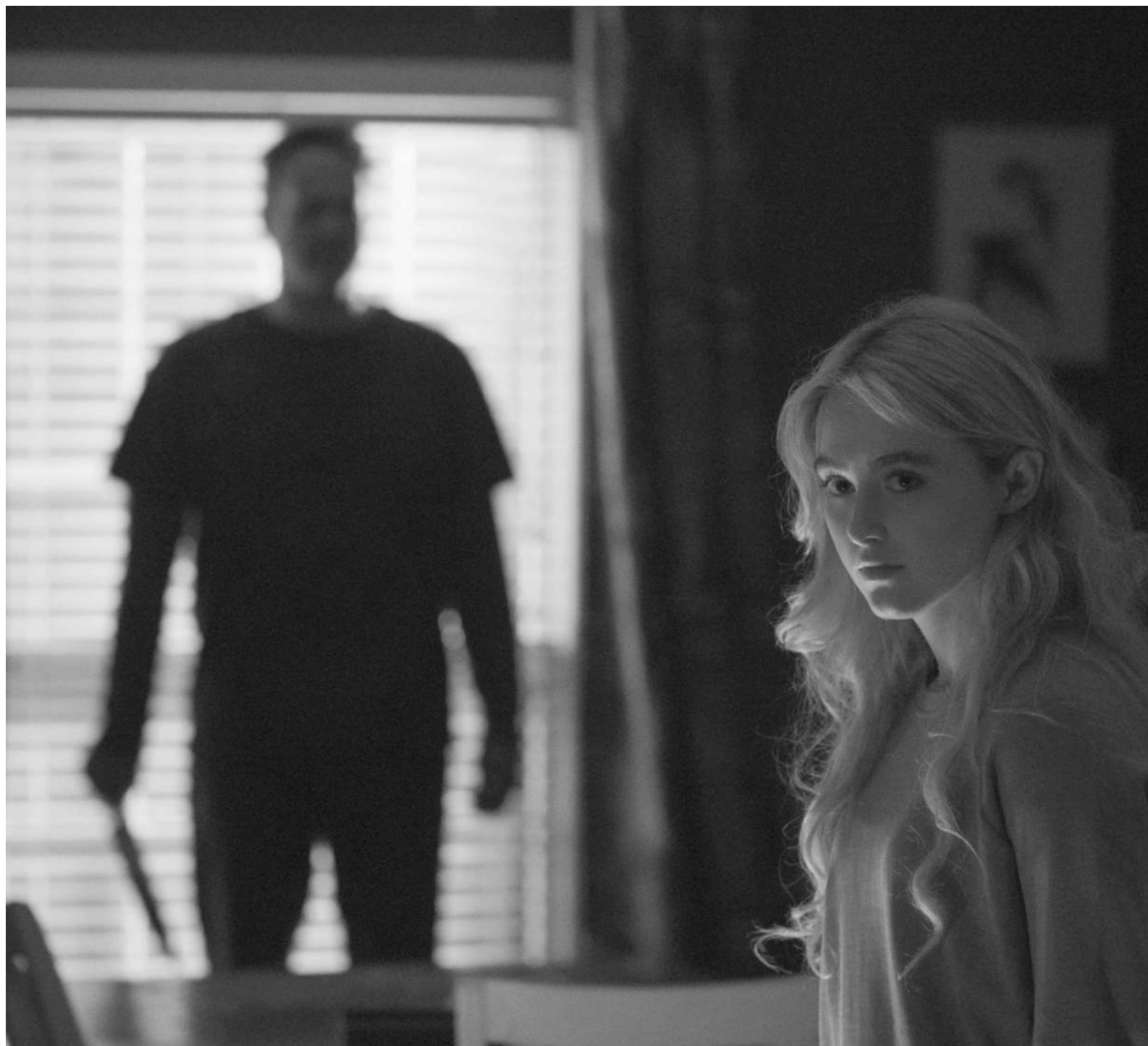
Vince Vaughn has been starring in movies for a quarter of a century, ever since his breakout as a swaggering wannabe actor in the 1996 indie comedy "Swingers." But in these strange and stressful times in which we find ourselves, his life is perhaps not as different from yours as you might imagine.

His days are punctuated by Zoom meetings. With his family largely confined to their home in Southern California, the 50-year-old actor frets over keeping his two kids, who are in the second and fourth grade, from falling behind where they should be academically and socially. Like most of us, he is looking for new ways to occupy his time; over the past few months, he's been playing the occasional Friday-night game of Dungeons & Dragons online with a group of friends led by Rage Against the Machine guitarist Tom Morello.

"I used to play as a kid," Vaughn said over Zoom from his home in late October, just eight days before a presidential election that would further test everyone's sanity. Outside his window, his children were spending the afternoon with six school friends and two teachers who have joined together in a learning pod. "I have to tell you, man, it's a blast. It's just so fun and nerdy."

In his career as well, Vaughn has come somewhat down to earth. Since the mid-2000s, when a string of hits including "Old School," "Wedding Crashers" and "Dodgeball" made him one of the most bankable stars in town, Hollywood has largely backed away from the type of R-rated, male-oriented comedies that were once his bread and butter. Following a series of box office duds including 2013's "Delivery Man" and 2015's "Unfinished Business," Vaughn has recently pivoted more toward drama, starring in the second season of HBO's "True Detective" and the gritty indie crime thrillers "Brawl in Cell Block 99" and "Dragged Across Concrete."

Now, in the midst of a pandemic that has brought the movie business to its knees, Vaughn finds himself looking for laughs again in his highest-profile film in years: the Blumhouse horror-comedy "Freaky," which opened



BRIAN DOUGLAS/AP

Vince Vaughn, left, and Kathryn Newton swap bodies courtesy of a supernaturally cursed dagger in the horror comedy "Freaky."

last weekend. In director Christopher Landon's new twist on the tried-and-true "Freaky Friday" formula, Vaughn plays a serial killer called the Blissfield Butcher who switches bodies with an insecure high school girl named Millie (played by Kathryn Newton) after stabbing her with a supernaturally cursed dagger.

With 24 hours to figure out how to reverse the curse, Vaughn — playing Millie inside of the Butcher in a Russian nesting doll of a performance — awkwardly struggles to adjust to a suddenly oversized body, performs cheer-leading moves to persuade Millie's friends of her true identity and, in one unexpectedly touching scene, reveals a secret crush on a jock named Booker.

One of the widest studio releases since cineplexes shut down in March, "Freaky" not only tests moviegoers' appetite to return to

theaters but also Vaughn's enduring appeal. Reviews have been largely positive, with a number of critics highlighting Vaughn's game performance. In September, no less a horror authority than Stephen King enthused on Twitter, "Based on the trailer of 'Freaky,' Vince Vaughn has GOT to get nominated for an Academy Award." (Considering how often the Oscars recognize horror or comedy, that is exceedingly unlikely.)

Vaughn was well aware that such a gender-swapping role had the potential to go off the rails. For every "Mrs. Doubtfire," after all, there is a "Jack and Jill." "It scared me a little at first," he says. "But I felt like, 'Well, that's probably good.' I'd sort of been wanting to do stuff where I feel a little like your feet can't touch the bottom."

While it may have been tempt-

ing to lean into slapstick, Vaughn worked to get into the emotional headspace of a vulnerable teenager, drawing inspiration in part from his own nieces. "The very first time I met Vince, we both arrived on the same page in terms of not wanting him to play a caricature of a girl," says "Freaky" director and co-writer Christopher Landon. "I felt like the movie would only succeed if we really invested in this character and were rooting for her. I wanted him to take it seriously."

"Freaky" producer and Blumhouse Productions CEO Jason Blum credits Vaughn with being open to new challenges. "He's a great comedian but he's also a really good dramatic actor, and I think he's choosing interesting material," Blum said. "Those (R-rated comedies) have all migrated to streaming, and I think it's cool that he's deciding

to not only do that but also trying other things."

Where some may see a stab at a commercial comeback in a genre with a steady box office track record, Vaughn insists he has simply been moving in the direction of what interests him. Those edgy studio comedies that had once been his forte had started to grow increasingly safe and bland, he says, pointing to 2013's "The Internship," which the studio watered down from a planned R rating to a PG-13.

"What I liked about the R comedies at the time is it felt like they were like these defiant rock albums. It felt like you were part of a band," says Vaughn. "I will go back and do comedies again. But I think I do better when I'm excited or challenging myself than when I'm trying to read the tea leaves of where the market is going. I don't really have that skill set."

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS



BLUMHOUSE PRODUCTIONS /AP

Vince Vaughn, left, and Kathryn Newton trade places in another take on the body-swap genre in "Freaky."

Vaughn a revelation in gender-bending 'Freaky'

Actors skewer stereotypical horror roles in fresh, bloody take on genre mash-up

BY KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Genre filmmaker Christopher Landon has carved out a niche for himself in the past couple of years. His two clever slasher comedy riffs, "Happy Death Day" and "Happy Death Day 2U," beg the question: What if "Sorority House Massacre" was "Groundhog Day"? It's a conceit that's just so silly it's brilliant, and Landon managed to squeeze real pathos out of the sci-fi-flirting sequel. His latest flick, "Freaky," co-written with Michael Kennedy, takes a similar approach. Take a familiar horror genre (the high school slasher), apply a high-concept narrative trope ("Freaky Friday"-style body swapping), add a couple of committed actors, and stir vigorously, sprinkling generously with horror references to delight any genre fan.

"Freaky" stars Kathryn Newton as a mousy Final Girl archetype, Millie. She's pretty but frumpy, smart but shy, relentlessly bullied save for a couple of close friends. After a homecoming football game toiling as the Beaver mascot, she ends up on the wrong end of an enchanted dagger wielded by the Blissfield Butcher (Vince Vaughn), who, just the night before, slaughtered a quartet of frisky teens, as local masked murderers do. When the Butcher stabs Millie with "La Dola," the knife he's nicked, the sky roils and the earth parts to reveal an ancient temple underneath the football field, both of their shoulders oozing blood. Although Millie escapes, the next morning, the Butcher wakes up in Millie's body, and she wakes up as, well, Vince Vaughn.

The swap offers the opportunity for Vaughn, Newton and Landon to skewer stereotypical gender roles in horror and play with those performances. As the Blissfield Butcher, Millie lumbers and glowers; her wardrobe is sexed up with a red biker jacket and swoosh of lipstick (sure to be the toast of

Halloween 2021). Newton sure is fun as Bad Millie, who can turn on the damsel-in-distress act when the Butcher needs to get out of a tight spot.

However, the revelation here is Vaughn, who, in his 6-foot-5-inch frame, physically channels the body language and gestures of an otherwise petite, cowering teen. He bumps into branches, marvels at appendages, utilizes emphatic clapping when trying to make a point. Like Jack Black in the "Jumanji" movies, it's a characterization that is indeed, notably juvenile and feminine, but it's not an outlandish stereotype. It's the restraint that makes the performance work, which in turn grounds Millie in real danger, and real emotion.

After the PG-13 outings of the "Death Day" movies (which cleverly skirted gore with each repeated wake-up), the R-rated "Freaky" is refreshingly bloody. The creative kills are veritably dripping in viscera, plus the teens talk to each other with a biting, crude wit (especially standout Misha Osheerovich as Millie's gay best friend Josh) that feels authentic to the world, and the genre.

Kennedy and Landon have cooked up a gender-bending twist on the classic slasher with flourishes of social commentary that make "Freaky" resonate far beyond its novelty. There's some surface-level discussion about bodies and power, but it's the imagery in this gender-flipped genre that speaks louder. When the blonde, ponytailed Millie wields a blood-spattered chainsaw, the frisson of recognition reverberates all the way back to 1974, Tobe Hooper's "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre." In "Freaky," Landon and Kennedy create an anarchic space of gender and sexuality, where men can be vulnerable and girls can be feared. How liberating, and how fun. The possibilities are endless.

"Freaky" is rated R for strong bloody horror violence, sexual content and language throughout. Running time: 101 minutes.

'Fatman': Here comes Santa Claus ... and now he's packing weapons

BY GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

Whoever cut the trailer for "Fatman" deserves a little something extra in his or her stocking this Christmas. Mel Gibson playing a despairing, bad Santa railing against the ballooning number of naughty kids while fending off a hitman hired to kill him offered some promise of perverse pleasure that, alas, the movie itself doesn't deliver. "Fatman" isn't a lump of coal. More like a fruitcake your neighbor dropped off in early December that's left on the counter through the new year, its red and green cherries hardening into buckshot before being hauled out to the curb with the Christmas tree.

The main problem with "Fatman" is that it plays its premise straight, squandering the opportunity to be the kind of gonzo holiday movie that could serve as seasonal counterprogramming to treacly Hallmark Channel fare. There's a brief moment at the end of the film where Gibson's Chris Cringle squares off against Walton Goggins' hamster-loving assassin and bellows, "You think I got this job because I'm fat and jolly?" The line hints at the movie "Fatman" could have been, had its creators possessed a little more focus and courage.

In the "Fatman" universe, Santa lives in secluded Alaska with his understanding wife (Marianne Jean-Baptiste, an inspired bit of casting) and a factory full of efficient elves. But because the U.S. government pays his subsidy based on the volume of presents he delivers (capitalism!) and because, in Chris' view, kids these days are

going to hell in a handbasket, the workshop has fallen on hard times. Santa's ratio of lumps of coal to presents is way off and needs adjusting.

Writer-directors Ian and Eshom Nelms ("Small Town Crime") don't delve much into these ideas because that would detract from their main focus: the hit taken out on Santa by spoiled brat Billy (Chance Hurstfield) after he received a lump of that sedimentary rock for Christmas. Billy, like everything else in "Fatman," is barely developed as a character. But we get the idea that he's a real piece of work when, after coming in second at the school science fair, he has Goggins' assassin kidnap the girl who won and bring her to Billy's basement.

"You cheated. You don't deserve to win," Billy tells her. He threatens to hook her up to a 12-volt battery, saying that it "might not kill you, but it'll make your teeth chatter."

Ho ho ho! Nothing like a little child torture to bring joy to the world! (Also: It's a bit ... odd ... that the movie chooses this spot to be its most transgressive moment.)

Goggins strains to bring his hitman to life, but no amount of effort can compensate for the listless way the story unfolds. A haggard-looking Gibson gives it his all too, though there's probably a limited audience eager to see him cast as a world-weary saint determined to make Santa's workshop great again. If this Santa really sees me when I'm sleeping, I'm leaving on every light in the house.

"Fatman" is rated R for bloody violence, and language. Running time: 100 minutes. Available Nov. 24 on video on demand and digital platforms.



Saban Films

Mel Gibson stars in "Fatman," about a disgruntled child who hires a hit man to take out Santa Claus.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Astronaut role surprisingly down to earth

Eva Green discusses newfound respect for motherhood, profession

BY LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Movies about astronauts and space are so often also about estranged fathers and sons. So it's a welcome respite that in the new film "Proxima," now available to rent on demand, the focus is on a mother, played by Eva Green, and her grade school-age daughter, Stella, who she must leave behind for the opportunity to go to space. It's a subtle yet powerful film from French director Alice Winocour, and many have singled out Green's performance as one of her best.

The Associated Press spoke to Green about the big issues "Proxima" addresses, from the guilt of being a working mother to sexism, and also how fun it is to play an astronaut.

Associated Press: What did you find interesting about this story?

Green: I thought it was an amazing love story. The connection that my character and her daughter have is very beautiful and very powerful. And to play a character who is constantly torn between her passion of being an astronaut and her love for her daughter was very appealing. And playing an astronaut is like a fantasy! It's very empowering. I love doing research on stuff like this. It was a good excuse to ex-



VERTICAL ENTERTAINMENT/AP

Eva Green is an astronaut who has to make difficult choices in "Proxima," available to rent on demand.

plore this world, which was completely unknown to me.

The motherhood and work conundrum is a big one that this film tackles with a lot of nuance and empathy.

I think lots of women will identify with this. And I don't know if the movie gives an answer, but lots of women are faced with the dilemma of having a high-powered career or having a family. And it's always a bit taboo. It doesn't look very good to kind of abandon your children. I think this movie also encourages women that it's OK to be ambitious and

to go against conventions and to pursue your dream. But there is always that enormous feeling of guilt, which is absolutely human and very complex.

Was it personal for you or your director?

(Alice) actually has a daughter who is the exact same age as the actress who plays Stella. So it came from her guts, this project. Even me, I don't have children and I understand this internal conflict.

Was this something you talked to your mother (actor Marlene Jobert) about?

We talked more about the fact that [the character] was an astronaut and how cool it was. But I have a twin sister, and when we were born, my mom really slowed down her career to raise the kids.

How did you prepare to play an astronaut? Did you get to meet any?

Alice is very nerdy, a bit like me. She does lots of homework and she really wanted me to meet some astronauts and to go to the training center in Cologne and to train with some of the real trainers, Russian trainers in partic-

ular, one who was quite harsh on me because obviously I know nothing about being an astronaut. But it was quite comical.

It's amazing to see how passionate those guys are. They go back home and they work, work, work, work, work. When we were in Moscow at Star City there was this sense of loneliness. And sometimes I was like, 'Oh my god, poor them!' They have absolutely no life! But they love it.

They love that sense of sacrifice and dedication for science. ... There is something saint-like like about astronauts. They feel like they've seen the unknown. So it was a real treat.

The film also explores the sexism she experiences at work. Did that ring true to what you saw?

The women that I met were very ballsy and really, really strong. But we're not as strong as men. You have to wear the very heavy spacesuit and have stronger shoulders than normal women. You have to adapt to this world made by men for men. You have to constantly prove yourself. You have to train harder, work harder. You have to be a bit masochistic, basically.

What was one of the most memorable things about this experience?

What was very exciting was the travel to those very sacred places, like Star City. For me, my favorite thing ever was a military plane — you needed the visa and all of this, and I felt I was entering another dimension like in "Star Wars."

Green at her best in deeply stirring 'Proxima'

BY JUSTIN CHANG
Los Angeles Times

At the beginning of "Proxima," a beautifully human-scaled movie about a great leap into the unknown, Sarah (Eva Green), a French astronaut, undergoes a series of intense physical tests in preparation for her first voyage into space. It's a grueling regimen, but Sarah, who is Mars-bound, has been training for it her whole life: She squeezes her lean, limber body through tight spaces and into mechanical constraints as required, her eyes signaling both natural ease and total concentration. Later at home, running and playing with her 7-year-old daughter, Stella (Zelie Boulant-Lemesle), she seems to be undergoing a different kind of test, steeling herself for a year away from the most important person in her soon-to-expand universe.

A little while later, Sarah will meet the other astronauts who will join her on the International Space Station, including an American, Mike (an excellent Matt Dillon), who introduces her to a small crowd with a boorish crack about French women being good cooks. In these opening moments, the writer-director Alice Winocour effectively lays out her territory: not the grand vastness of outer space but rather the human obstacle course that Sarah must navigate first and all the expressions of polite respect, gentle concern and barely concealed scorn she must endure along the way.

Sound mundane? It isn't. By focusing so closely on the planning stages, "Proxima," which Winocour wrote with Jean-Stephane Bron, somehow suggests more about the physical and psychological dislocation of space travel than many pictures that blast off right from the get-go. This is partly because of the intense realism of the film's entirely on-location shooting (by the cinematographer George Lechaptois), which takes us inside the European Space Agency in Cologne, Germany, and the facility in Russia's Star City, where Sarah, Mike and another member of their crew, Anton (Aleksei Fateev), go to complete their training.

Green, often typecast as witches and femmes fatales, here takes on a too-rare leading role devoid of any such fantastical trappings and emerges with one of the strongest performances of her career. The athletic demands are formidable, but they are more than matched by the emotional ones: Green achieves an especially moving rapport with the young Boulant-Lemesle, terrific as a girl who's frightened at losing her mom for a year — or forever, should something go horribly wrong.

Sarah is hardly the first movie astronaut to confront feelings of guilt over leaving children behind on terra firma, as her fellow voyagers in "First Man," "Ad Astra" and "Interstellar," among others, can surely attest. Those other protagonists, of course, were men, and within even the remarkable, rarefied field of space travel, Winocour subtly pinpoints an all-too-unremarkable double stan-



PANDORA FILMS/TNS

"Proxima" explores what astronauts leave behind when they spend a year on the International Space Station.

dard. Sarah is made to feel the particularly heavy weight of her decision. It's there in the mix of support and resentment she gets from Stella's astrophysicist father or in the guilt-tripping questions asked by a psychologist preparing mother and daughter for long-term separation.

None of these characters is treated as a cardboard antagonist. Even Dillon's Mike is shown to have his redeeming qualities. Winocour shows us smart, sometimes insensitive and fundamentally decent people navigating an extraordinary situation and the sacrifices that are made in service of a grand collective undertaking.

"Proxima" is unrated. Running time: 107 minutes. In English and French with English subtitles. Available on demand.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

Delightful, but missing something

Sackboy: A Big Adventure brings personality, loses a key feature

By HAROLD GOLDBERG

Special to *The Washington Post*

Sackboy: A Big Adventure is a lustrous romp of carnival fantasy, but it feels like they left something out. The new Sackboy has no game creation mode for fans; it is not a new version of LittleBigPlanet, which is disappointing because this is such a touted, anticipated PlayStation 5 launch title.

When LittleBigPlanet was released in 2008, it changed the nature of play for PlayStation gamers. Released just prior to Minecraft, the game allowed every player to construct their own 2D levels in a world he or she created by using the PlayStation controller. Media Molecule's landmark series also introduced Sackboy, a lovable character made of humble brown burlap and black button eyes. When I mentor underserved students in the Bronx, we use Sackboy and his LittleBigPlanet gang for social justice-inspired level-making contests about bullying, bigotry and the travails of homophobia. There's no such ability for fans in the new game, a sad thing indeed.

Over the years, Sackboy moved from a Media Molecule creation to a Sumo Digital production. Sumo has kept a good portion of the innovation alive in Sackboy: A Big Adventure, which is a fairy-tale melange of graphical delights, a platformer that shows the eager, eponymous toy creature immersed within a colorful variety of "Perils of Pauline"-style dangers. No longer limited to 2.5D, the 3D environment allows Sackboy to move more fully around his animated world. You get to know Sackboy a little better, how he moves and enunciates. Yes, he utters sounds for the first time.

To make the game longer sans a game creation element, Sumo focused more on gameplay, and less on story nuance. That's not enough. In a world focused on fantasy exploits, you want to focus more on story than you ever have. On a macro level, that's the PlayStation way. Sony Interactive Entertainment is the home of great narrative.

But after you meet Vex, your jester-outfitted nemesis in the introductory movie, you don't get any semblance of story for some time. Once you know the villain wants to change Craftworld's surreal nature into a dying planet via his wicked Topsy Turvy machine, your interest is piqued and you crave more right away. And it's not there.

Early on, you indulge in numerous themed levels, trying to get a gold cup for collecting points and, for the



Sackboy searches for orbs, which ultimately open up new environs to explore such as blizzard-swept mountains, ornate castles and outer space.



Sumo Digital photos

Innovation abounds in Sackboy: A Big Adventure, which is a fairy-tale melange of graphical delights.

completionist, searching for all the orbs in the hidden nooks and crannies. Orbs ultimately open up various environs to explore, like blizzard-swept mountains, ornate castles and outer space.

As there are more and more orbs and items of clothing to find, consider and wear, the story becomes more secondary. That shouldn't be the case. Sackboy here has more of a personality. You hear him give an endearing, grunting squeal if he can't jump up to reach an area. You hear him cheer, a la Mario, when he completes a level. So you want to know more story as you go. You would settle for a smidgeon of Sackboy's backstory as a collectible, just 20 words, not yet another wearable — however outrageously cool it looks.

It's not that the game isn't an eye-popping wonder. The backgrounds, as always, have been creatively rendered, almost as if each set piece had a narrative of its own to tell. In Sackboy, checking out an enemy's 3D nature is a joy. The artwork is deep, and its creepy Punch and Judy-inspired backdrops are like 2D cutouts that exude personality, occasionally giving you a mild fright. Under the sea, groups of crab-like things have one eye and a mustache. They let out a lone, militaristic dog bark as they move in lockstep. There's a psychedelic nature to the whole proposition, as if it were a Flaming Lips concept album come to life.

Music is extraordinarily important here. It always has been the case in LittleBigPlanet games, especially in the third edition, like the tense foreboding within Winifred Phillips' "Stitchem Manor." But now, licensed tunes like David Bowie's "Let's Dance" are there for your aural enjoyment. There's no doubt: you must put on your headphones to enjoy the full experience as you play. Bowie in particular was an early adopter of interactivity. (In fact, Rockstar Games founder Sam Houser worked on a Bowie multimedia production in the early '90s — prior to his Grand Theft Auto days.) The late glam rock legend would approve of what's here.

So Sackboy: A Big Adventure does some things astonishingly right, some things in a way that's effectively mediocre and some things that are perplexing. In fact, the promised multiplayer portion of the game isn't yet ready, delayed until some future date. (Couch co-op offline is available right now.) You can't play as Sackgirl or any of the character's pals you've met in the past. Sometimes, like a ghost, Sackboy's hand moves halfway through a solid wall. (It's not supposed to.)



Sackboy: A Big Adventure adds more puzzles, but not much more story or game creation mode.



Wear headphones while playing Sackboy: A Big Adventure; the music plays a huge part in the experience.

Yet it's definitely worth moving through a level a second time to see some of the animations you may have missed — the carnival-style beings on a wall who stick out their tongues to mock you, for instance. The way an enemy moves is Disney-like in its choreography, so you know countless hours of work went into each of them. You have to think, too, for example discovering you need to pull the tail of a fireball-spewing dragon/turtle to vanquish it. Figuring out puzzles and jumping rhythms are sometimes not as intuitive as in past games, and I can't help thinking that some of these conundrums were added to increase your time with an offering that doesn't have a game creation portion.

Platforms: PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5
Online: playstation.com/en-us/games/sackboy-a-big-adventure

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

English like a second language in Britain

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

Oscar Wilde famously said that the English "have really everything in common with America nowadays — except, of course, language." It's still true. A trip to Britain comes with plenty of linguistic surprises.

I'll never forget checking into a B&B as a teenager. The landlady asked me, "And what time would you like to be knocked up in the morning?"

I looked over at her husband, who winked, "Would a fry at half-eight be suitable?" The next morning, I got a rap on the door at 8 a.m. and a huge British breakfast a half-hour later.

Britain can be an adventure in accents and idioms ...

Every day you'll see babies in prams and pushchairs, sucking dummies as mothers change wet nappies. Soon the kids can trade in their nappies for smalls and spend a penny on their own. "Spend a penny" is British for a visit to the loo (bathroom). Older British kids enjoy candy floss (cotton candy), naughts and crosses (tic-tac-toe), big dippers (roller coasters) and iced lollies (popsicles). Kids are constantly in need of a sticking plaster (Band-Aid), which their parents buy at the chemist's (pharmacy).

In Britain, fries are chips and potato chips are crisps. A beef burger, made with mince (hamburger meat), comes on a toasted bap (bun). For pudding (dessert), have some sponge (cake).

The British have a great way with names. You'll find towns with names like Upper and Lower Slaughter, Once Brewed and Itching Field. This cute coziness comes through in their language as well.

You'll visit "brilliant" (wonderful) sights that'll give you "goose pimples" (goose bumps). Your car will have a bonnet and a boot rather than a hood and trunk. Never go anticlockwise (counterclockwise) in a roundabout. Gas is petrol, a truck is a lorry, and when you hit a tailback (traffic jam), don't get your knickers in a twist (make a fuss) — just be patient and queue up (line up).

The British never say they have a two-week vacation, but many locals holiday for a fortnight, often in a homely (homey) rural cottage or possibly on the Continent (continental Europe).

If you get settled into a flat (apartment), you can post letters in the pillar box or give your mum a trunk (long-distance) call. If that's too dear (expensive), she'll say you're tight as a fish's bum. If she witters on (gabs and gabs), tell her you're knackered (exhausted) and it's been donkey's years (ages) since you've slept. After



Rick Steves



Rick Steves

Have a chin-wag (chat) with these stylish British ladies.

washing up (doing the dishes) and hoovering (vacuuming), you can have a plate of biscuits (cookies).

All across the British Isles, you'll encounter new words, crazy humor and colorful accents. Pubs are colloquial treasure chests. The streets of Liverpool, the docks of London and parks throughout the UK are playgrounds for the American ear. One of the beauties of touring Great Bri-

tain is the illusion of hearing a foreign language and actually understanding it ... most of the time.

This article was adapted from Steves' new book, For the Love of Europe.

Rick Steves (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.

Thanksgiving is a good time to explore England's Boston

Long before there was a Boston in Massachusetts, a settlement of the same name arose along the eastern coast of England. The United Kingdom's Boston, today a city of about 35,000 inhabitants in the county of Lincolnshire in the East Midlands, was by the 12th century already a lively market town. Its name references St. Botolph, an Anglo-Saxon monk reputed to have passed through the area centuries previously.

Strategically positioned along a river flowing into the North Sea, Boston developed as an important trading center, and in the early medieval period, it ranked second

only to London in terms of wealth and clout. Several surviving buildings attest to Boston's glory days, first and foremost St. Botolph's Church, better known as "The Stump," likely after the distinct appearance of its 272-foot spireless tower rising high above the flat topography of the surrounding fens.



Karen Bradbury

American visitors to Boston are likely to be interested in the city's connections to its newer and much larger stateside brother.

In 1612, The Reverend John Cotton was appointed vicar at St. Botolph's Church. A man of great passion, his beliefs and teachings challenged the church, which he sought to reform from within. (The term "Puritan" referred to those seeking to remove, or purify, church practices.) Frustrated in his efforts to change the church, he inspired members of his congregation to seek a new life in America. Between 1630 and 1634, roughly 10 percent of Boston's population left for a fresh start abroad. Among this group of 200-300 were many powerful and educated residents, many of whom played decisive roles in shaping the city they founded in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. The first school on American soil, the Latin Free School, was based on the Boston Grammar School.

The English Boston's connection to those in search of religious freedom predates the settlement of the colonies.



TORNADOFLIGHT / Getty Images

In Boston — the one in Lincolnshire, on the east coast of England — the steeple of St. Botolph's church rises 272 feet and offers sweeping views.

In the fall of 1607, a group of men, women and children from a town named Scrooby were to have met a boat near Scotia Creek. But their plan to escape the reach of the English church by crossing the North Sea over to Holland was thwarted when the captain of the ship betrayed them and turned them in to the local militia. Stripped of their possessions, they were brought to Boston and the ring-leaders imprisoned at the Guildhall, site of the court and jail cells, for a month. The next year, the group made another attempt at escape from Immingham in North Lincolnshire, and this time, they managed to reach Holland. Following a brief resettlement in Amsterdam and several years in Leiden, many of this same group returned to England in 1620 to board the Mayflower and cross the Atlantic to begin a new life in Plymouth, Mass.

Several sites of remembrance to these events and times

await visitors to Boston and the surrounding area. A stained glass window in St. Botolph's Church depicts John Cotton's departure to America aboard a ship named the Arbella. The circa-1390 Guildhall shows the cells in which the Pilgrims were imprisoned and the court room in which they were tried. The Pilgrim Memorial at Scotia Creek, Fishtoft, marks the site of the Scrooby group's thwarted attempt at departure.

Mayflower 400 is an ambitious multi-country program commemorating the anniversary of the famous ship's voyage from England to America and its far-reaching legacy. Scholars, historians and interested parties from around the world have been examining the history of the crossing and the consequences of colonization from multiple angles. The milestone date was envisioned as an opportunity to explore both the darkness and the light that underpins the event's place in human history. Although the pandemic meant the end of plans for in-person events, one re-imagined and community-safe commemorative event is slated to go forward on Thanksgiving.

On November 26, many of Boston's business owners and residents will heed the Mayflower 400 event organizers' request to display a lit lantern in their windows, a gesture designed to pay tribute to the Pilgrims' roots in the region and an expression of hope in these uncertain times. Gainsborough and other North Nottinghamshire communities will organize similar activities. In better years to come, you can expect Boston's annual Illuminate events, including its impressive lantern parade, to once again light up the night.

Other commemorations unpacking the shared history of four nations — the Wampanoag, UK, USA and Netherlands — include an ambitious transatlantic community theater production and the exhibition of a Wampum Belt in the Guildhall Art Gallery in London (Jan. 8 – Feb. 14, 2021) and The Box, Plymouth (May 15 – July 19, 2021). Online: mayflower400uk.org

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING



PHOTOS BY NANCY MONTGOMERY/Stars and Stripes

If the waiter asks if you want parmesan on your gnocchi with veal ragu and black truffle at Biasio Centro in downtown Vicenza, Italy, always say yes.

Worry-free evening meal

Biasio Centro in Vicenza is open as long as possible for a pleasant dinner

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

Dinner is impossible, lunch is hard to find and takeout is supreme at Italy's restaurants, all a result of the second coronavirus wave's effect on dining culture.

Restaurants must close at 6 p.m., but Italians typically don't eat dinner until 8 p.m. Many eateries are either closing after lunch, at about 3 p.m., or not opening at all.

So it was nice to see that Biasio Centro, a longtime restaurant and bar in a prime spot in downtown Vicenza, was in mid-November still offering a diverse menu and multicourse lunch, while serving through the early evening.

Add in the outdoor seating, and the experience was just about worry-free.

Biasio Centro features traditional northern Italian dishes: various pastas, with clams or duck or veal ragu; carpaccios of meat and fish; lasagna; and of course, Baccala alla Vicentina, the dried cod dish named for the city.

The menu is grouped somewhat arbitrarily into starters,



firsts and seconds. There's also a size option with a price difference of two or three euros. I ordered the small sizes and they were for the most part more than enough. I brought most of my first and second courses home.

I started with the stewed cuttlefish on a bed of polenta. The marine molluscs were salty like the sea and nicely chewy. The polenta was a creamy porridge. This is Italian comfort food.

I chose gnocchi with veal ragu and black truffles for a first course. It was also quite comforting and delicious — although the truffles, unfortunately, were a minor note.

Grilled octopus — or as my very nice, masked waiter called it, "octopussy" — was one of the day's fish offerings. For 20 euros, I did not at all expect it to arrive in tiny pieces atop circles of whipped potatoes. It wasn't a good value, but it tasted great.

Sitting in the sunshine for



One of the starters at Biasio Centro in downtown Vicenza, Italy, is seppie in humido with polenta. It sounds more humble in English: stewed cuttlefish on a bed of cornmeal porridge.

Biasio Centro

Address: Piazza delle Biade 6, 36100 Vicenza, Italy
Phone: +39 0444 321061
English menu: Yes
Price: Moderate to expensive
Hours: Pandemic hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Closed Monday.
Information: Online: biasiocentro.it/it

Nancy Montgomery

more than an hour, with other diners seated a few feet away, I also enjoyed a glass of Lugana, a crisp white regional wine. It seemed in keeping with a long, traditional Italian lunch.

montgomery.nancy@stripes.com
Twitter: @montgomerynancy

This creamy tomato soup the ultimate comfort food

BY KATE KRADER
Bloomberg

Anyone who was thinking that the need for comfort food hit its apex during the first months of the pandemic did not anticipate Election Day in the U.S.

Searches for "fries near me" hit an all-time high as Nov. 3 dragged on, according to Google Trends. As did "liquor stores near me" — little surprise. But for those who have worked their way through the drinking options, here's an alternate comfort source: tomato soup.

The time-honored favorite is the culinary equivalent of a security blanket. A steaming bowl of the creamy, sweet soup conjures up coziness, especially when it's accompanied by a simple grilled-cheese sandwich. The combo is a powerful one: On "Friends," tomato soup with grilled cheese was Chandler's "traditional" Thanksgiving meal.

The pairing is also stars in "Hot Cheese: Over 50 Goopy, Oozy, Melty Recipes," by Polina Chesnakova. The new cookbook includes recipes for notable dishes involving cheese, from fondue to the glorious Georgian cheese-stuffed bread khachapuri.

To make tomato soup worthy of the book's subject, Chesnakova turns grilled cheese into a key part of the dish: a crouton garnish.

The recipe includes licorice-y fennel and a splash of white wine, which makes the soup more interesting and complex without adding obnoxious flavor.

Even the process of making the dish is soothing: A little chopping, some sauteing and simmering, and then the satisfying process of pureeing, transforming the contents of the pot into a smooth soup. As good as Chesnakova's combo is, it's also very adaptable. The book reflects the pantry mentality that so many people have adopted during the pandemic. If you don't have fennel, add more onion. If there's no fresh herbs, use dried ones. And feel free to substitute any cheese you like.

Tomato Soup with Grilled Cheese Croutons

Ingredients:

3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced
Kosher salt
3 garlic cloves, smashed
1 fresh basil sprig
1 fresh oregano sprig
1/4 cup dry white wine
4 cups chicken or veg stock
1 28 oz. can crushed tomatoes
Pinch of sugar
1/4 cup heavy cream
4 oz. (about 1 cup) blue cheese, crumbled
2 oz. cream cheese
Unsalted butter, at room temperature, for spreading
4 slices country white or sour-dough bread

Directions:

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and fennel slices and a big pinch of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften and begin to brown, about 12 minutes. Add garlic, basil, and oregano, and cook additional 2 to 3 minutes. Add the wine, scraping bits from bottom, and cook until the liquid evaporates, 2 minutes.

Add stock, the tomatoes and their juices, a big pinch of sugar, and another big pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 25 minutes. Let cool slightly, then puree in batches in a blender. Stir in the heavy cream and season with salt. If needed, add sugar.

In a small bowl, mash blue cheese and cream cheese together until spreadable. Butter each bread slice on one side. Spread mixture evenly on unbuttered sides, then combine to make two cheese-filled sandwiches.

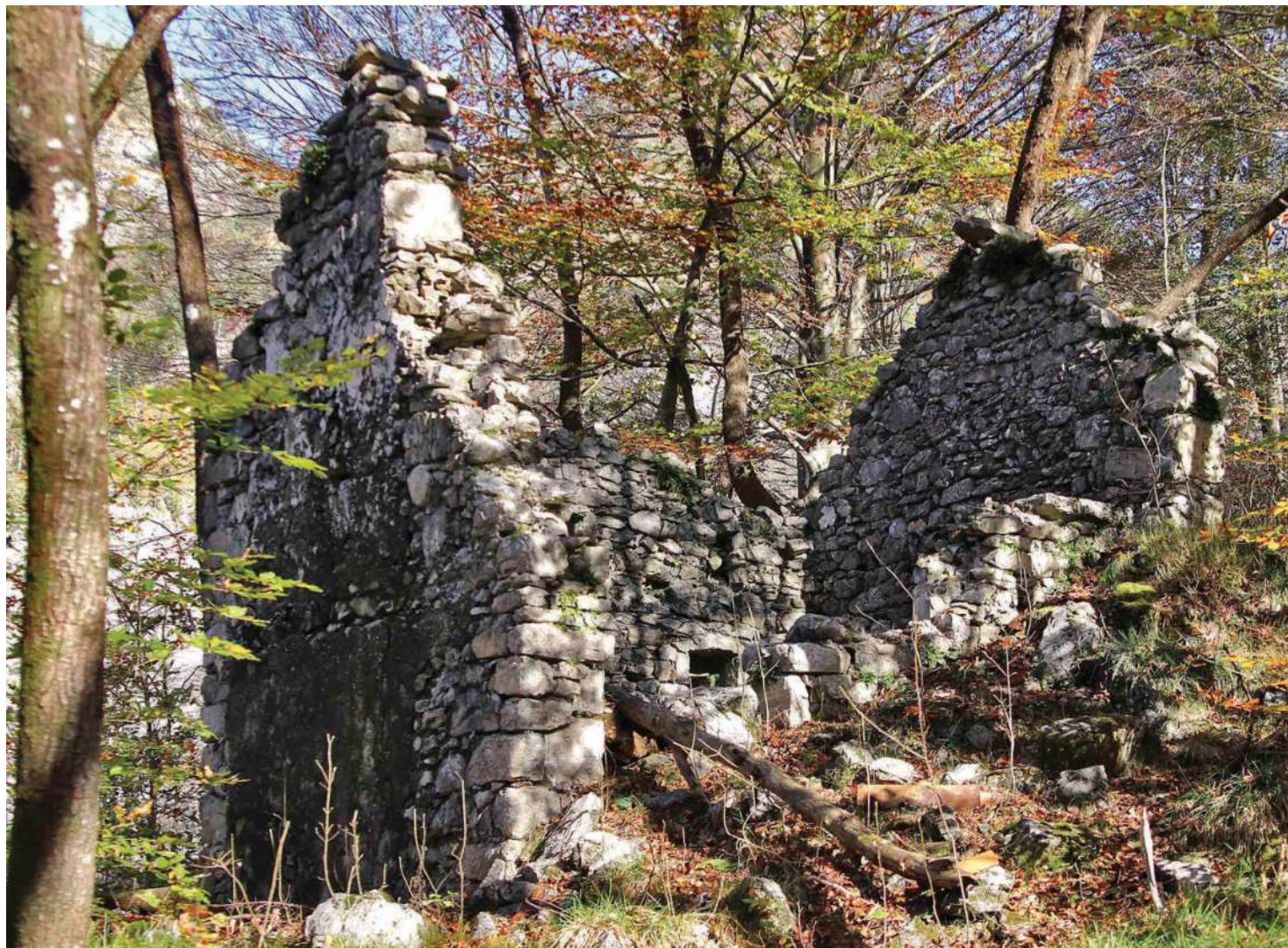
Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add the sandwiches, cover with a lid, and cook until browned on the bottom, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip and cook, covered, for another 1 to 2 minutes. When slightly cooler, cut into bite-size pieces. Serve immediately atop bowls of soup.



KATE KRADER/Bloomberg

When the author makes her Tomato Soup With Grilled Cheese Croutons, she prefers to make her croutons larger than bite-size.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY NORMAN LLAMAS/Stars and Stripes

This ruin of a house is along a trail in the Italian Alps that leads to the ghost towns of Palcoda and Tamar in Pordenone province, Italy.

A haunting good time

Breathtaking Alpine hikes, ghost towns help chase away pandemic blues near Aviano

BY BY NORMAN LLAMAS
Stars and Stripes

Our Halloween hike to a fabled ghost town in the Italian Alps did turn out to be scary, but less in a haunted sense and more in a “how are my injured wife and 5-year-old going to get down a steep mountain” sort of way.

The way to Palcoda, a town last inhabited in 1923, isn't a simple jaunt. But it does offer some of the most breathtaking mountain scenery I've ever seen.

There's no way to drive there, since there isn't much demand for roads to a ghost town. We drove to Tramonti di Sotto, which is less than an hour from Aviano Air

Base, and parked our car at the base of the Alps. We arrived at noon, but if the days are short and you're not a world-class hiking crew, arrive earlier.

At first, the trail seemed well-established and easy. The reds and yellows of fall foliage accented the mountains, their peaks framing expansive vistas under a blue sky. We were feeling good about what our information said was a roughly 90-minute hike to Palcoda.

We later came to a fork in the road, where wooden signs with times and distances point to different trails.

We chose the route to Palcoda, which several websites say dates back to 1400, when passing shepherds ended up settling

in the area. The village's economy blossomed in the 17th century thanks to agriculture, livestock and the production of straw hats that were traded all over Europe.

The town never grew beyond 150 inhabitants and was abandoned about 100 years ago in the midst of an economic crisis that had engulfed the Friulian territories.

Nature has since reclaimed the town and captured the interest of tourists. The only building that's been kept up over the years is the church, which was originally erected in 1780 and restored in 2011. There are other, similar towns dotting the countryside, which is abundant with waterfalls and other sights.

Soon after setting off on the Palcoda trail, the terrain changed. It was very steep and rocky, and with a child in our group, we trekked slowly and carefully.

We came up to a river and found another American family on a hike. After a quick chat, we learned that Palcoda was much further than we thought.

Not ones to be discouraged, we marched on. About 45 minutes into our trek, we came upon some ruins. We looked into them a bit closer and took some family photos while catching our breath.

We returned to the path, which got steeper and rockier. After trekking for 2 1/2 hours, we reached one of the highest peaks on the trail. From there, we witnessed priceless views of the surrounding Alpine mountains and the towns below.

On the QT

DIRECTIONS: Putting Aviano Air Base to Palcoda into Google Maps will show you the full route, though you will have to park in Tramonti di Sotto where the road ends. From there, follow the posted signs on the hiking trail to the ghost towns.

COSTS: Free parking can be found at a big lot in front of the Schloss.

FOOD: There are no shops on the trails, so pack your own.

INFORMATION: Tramonti di Sotto's tourism site in English is at www.turismofvg.it/locality/tramonti-di-sotto

Norman Llamas



A trail leading to the abandoned town of Palcoda in Pordenone province, Italy.

We could also see the ghost town out in the distance. At this point, despite our curiosity and need for adventure, we knew for sure that we weren't going to make it all the way to Palcoda and then back to our car before it got dark. We made the hard decision to turn back from there.

The trail, full of loose rocks and decaying vegetation, was even more challenging on the way down. My wife stepped on a large, damp rock and her left foot slipped. Her knee slammed hard into a rock when she went down, her right ankle twisting in the process.

After a few moments of collective panic, thinking that she might not be able to walk back down the mountain, she mustered enough will to slowly make her way back to the car. It took more than a week for her to recover from that slip.

Our takeaway from that episode is to watch every step and wear the right shoes, along with following other tried and true hiking recommendations: be aware of your surroundings, have a plan, pack supplies and stick to the path, among others.

Despite my wife's injury, we're all so thankful to have such amazing locations nearby, where we can escape during this long pandemic. Small scrapes and bruises won't keep us from going back out to the mountains and exploring their wonders.

llamas.norman@stripes.com
Twitter: @normanllamas



Magnificent views await atop a mountain peak in the Italian Alps on the way to the abandoned town of Palcoda in Pordenone province, Italy. It's about an hour's drive from Aviano Air Base, and it's accessible only by hiking from nearby towns.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



WHITETAIL MOUNTAIN RESORT

Instructors and members of last season's Women of Whitetail program, which provides female-only instruction at Pennsylvania's Whitetail Resort.

Finding encouragement on the slopes

In female-only ski classes, women push each other to tackle new challenges

BY REBECCA GALE

Special to The Washington Post

Last winter, Kelly Beeland joined the growing number of female skiers who have discovered the benefits of honing their skills in the company of other women. For six weeks, Beeland and about two dozen other students — some novices, some black diamond skiers — participated in Women of Whitetail (WOW), a ski instruction program at Pennsylvania's Whitetail Resort. Not coincidentally, the start time for the resort's weekend course was 30 minutes after drop-off time at its ski school for children.

Beeland, 46, a stay-at-home mom from Alexandria, Va., wanted to improve her own skiing so she could keep up with Sam, now 11, and Brynn, 9, when the family traveled from the East Coast to the more challenging skiing of Snowmass, Colo. Though she hadn't been seeking women-only classes, she found them an ideal fit, because "I think women and men approach learning things differently," she said.

Emily Spiker, the program manager of Women of Whitetail, concurs. "Learning with other women creates a more supportive group and makes skiing less intimidating," she said. The resort's only female instructor with Level 3 certification, Spiker has been skiing for 50 years and teaching it for 20. She estimates that about 70 percent of the Women of Whitetail participants are moms with a child in the ski school program or on the race team. Like Beeland, their goals are modest: improve their skiing, keep up with their kids and make the entire experience of spending the day at Whitetail more fun overall.

Launched 15 years ago, Women of Whitetail has grown so much in recent years that the instructors added a second session in the 2018-2019 season to meet the demand. The popular program reflects a larger industry effort to appeal to women — especially moms like Beeland, whose kids are already skiing — by creating wom-



DINA TILGHMAN

Dina Cappiello Tilghman and her son Luke, 7, ride the chairlift last season. He was in the Whitetail Resort's kid ski program; she was in the Women of Whitetail cohort.

en-specific ski programs.

Nationally, the number of women participating in downhill skiing is growing, and resorts have taken notice. Between 2009 and 2017, the number of women in skiing increased by 7.2 percent — to 4.7 million — while the percentage of men in skiing decreased by 13.3 percent to 6.9 million, according to data from Snowsports Industries America (SIA).

Getting more women on the slopes is also good for business: Industry surveys indicate that women are often the primary decision-maker on family vacations, and SIA estimates that women control between 70 and 80 percent of all ski-related consumer spending. As part of the outreach to women, Vail Resorts, which owns Whitetail, Roundtop and Liberty in Pennsylvania, began offering women-only lessons at most of its 37 ski resorts.

For example, it started its Women Ultimate 4 ski lessons at four of its Colorado resorts — Vail, Breckenridge, Beaver Creek and Keystone — in the 2014-2015 season.

Other resorts that have provided women-specific instruction include Snowbird in Utah, Whistler Blackcomb in British Columbia, Telluride in Colorado, Killington in

Vermont and Jackson Hole in Wyoming.

Now comes 2020, and a ski season like no other. Among the safety measures being adopted by many U.S. resorts is the modification of group ski instruction. Decisions are still being made, but so far Whitetail and Vail canceled large group lessons, though group lessons of up to six adults will be available, and other resorts in the chain were expected to follow. Snowbird was still planning to hold its three-day women's camps this year and its Wednesday morning women's group beginning in January.

When Whitetail announced the cancellation in October, the participants immediately began lobbying the resort to reconsider.

"Women of Whitetail was an outlet for me last year, and I was looking forward to it being even more of one this year because of the challenges COVID has placed on working women and working mothers," wrote editorial director Dina Cappiello Tilghman, of Silver Spring, Md., in an email. Cappiello, 46, credits the program with giving her the confidence to ski with her sons, Eli, 10, and Luke, 8, after tearing her ACL while skiing in high school.

"Looking at the long, dark winter ahead, especially after what we have all been through this year, skiing together week in and week out is perhaps one of the safest family activities to do this year," Cappiello wrote.

A resort spokesperson said that although Whitetail's adult group lesson programs are paused — it will still offer a modified kids' program — individuals at Vail resorts can create their own groups of up to six people for private lessons, which could be a workaround for interested women.

Though WOW and similar programs clearly fill a need, the notion of women-only classes initially met some resistance — even from female ski professionals. Mermer Blakeslee, an instructor at Windham Mountain in New York, balked at the idea when she was approached about teaching a women-only ski seminar. "And

then I did one," she said, "and I could not get over the difference in women skiing with only women." Her female students encouraged one another in tackling new skiing challenges, Blakeslee said. She also found that they opened up to one another, with conversations on the lifts flowing easily between banal topics and serious ones.

"Skiing is a risk sport. In an environment for risky learning, you have to be vulnerable, you have to risk making a mistake in public," said Blakeslee, who has been skiing for nearly 60 years and was on the National Alpine Team for the Professional Ski Instructors of America and American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI) from 1996 to 2000. "I found that women were more comfortable doing that in an all-female setting."

One frustration for Blakeslee, who serves as a regional examiner for PSIA-AASI, is the lack of women in the ski instruction world, particularly at the upper levels. The higher the certification level, "the more male-dominated it becomes," she said. "If so many women are coming into the ski world, why don't we have more instructors for them?"

Last year, PSIA-AASI created a task force to create opportunities for women in snowsport leadership positions. Its findings, released last month, spotlighted some of the issues holding female instructors back: feeling that they do not belong and have few opportunities for mentorship; ill-suited equipment (many women perform better on lighter, more nimble skis designed for people with a lower center of gravity); and issues with child care.

The task force recommended including women in all levels of the ski experience, from leadership to product design to training ski school instructors. As the industry pivots to develop more offerings geared toward female skiers, neither Blakeslee nor Spiker believes the temporary cessation of women's programs will affect their continued growth.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Hopes peaking

Facing pandemic economic woes, Nepal reopens to adventurers

By **BINAJ GURUBACHARYA**
Associated Press

Adventurers looking to scale Nepal's Himalayan peaks and trek its mountain trails can finally do so for the first time in seven months, as the country reopens to foreigners even as the coronavirus pandemic has left it short of hospital beds.

Foreign visitors are a major source of income for Nepal, and the closure has impacted the estimated 800,000 people who work in the tourism industry.

For now, the reopening will come with restrictions and mainly be limited to those seeking to climb or trek its famous peaks. Nepal is home to eight of the 14 highest mountains in the world, including the tallest, Mount Everest.

"We are not opening the country for all visitors, and only mountaineers and trekkers who have taken prior permit will be allowed to come to Nepal," said Rudra Singh Tamang, director general of Nepal's Department of Tourism. "We are opening to a sector of visitors who we know we can handle and manage."

Rather than a visa on arrival, visitors now need to get prior approval, give details of their itinerary, hire a local outfitting company and have health insurance that covers COVID-19 treatment. They are required to take a coronavirus test before leaving their home country, stay for a week in quarantine at a hotel in Kathmandu and then take another coronavirus test before being allowed to go up the mountains.

Local guides, porters, cooks and helpers who will be part of any mountaineering support team will be required to take coronavirus tests and prove they have been living in areas with no infections for the past two weeks.

"We are trying to revive the tourism industry that was badly hit by the pandemic, but we are not taking any changes or any risks," Tamang said. "We did a test run just recently with a foreign expedition team and now have a good idea how to manage the adventure tourists."

Spring is the mountaineering season when foreign climbers come to Nepal to attempt to scale the highest peaks, while the fall is popular for trekkers who come to hike the mountain trails. The spring mountaineering season was canceled in March when the scale of the pandemic became clear and was followed by the country mostly closing its borders to outsiders.

Nepal has reported 176,500 coronavirus infections since the pandemic began and 984 deaths. The nation of 30 million people is running short on hospital beds and the government has asked patients with less than life-threatening symptoms to stay at home in isolation.

Earlier in the fall season, a team of mountaineers from Bahrain was given special permission to scale Mount Lobuche and Mount Manaslu. They followed all the new rules placed by the government and reported no problems.

The success of the expedition was celebrated by the mountaineering community



SEVEN SUMMIT TREKS/AP

This team of mountaineers from Bahrain was given special permission to scale Mount Lobuche in Nepal in early October.



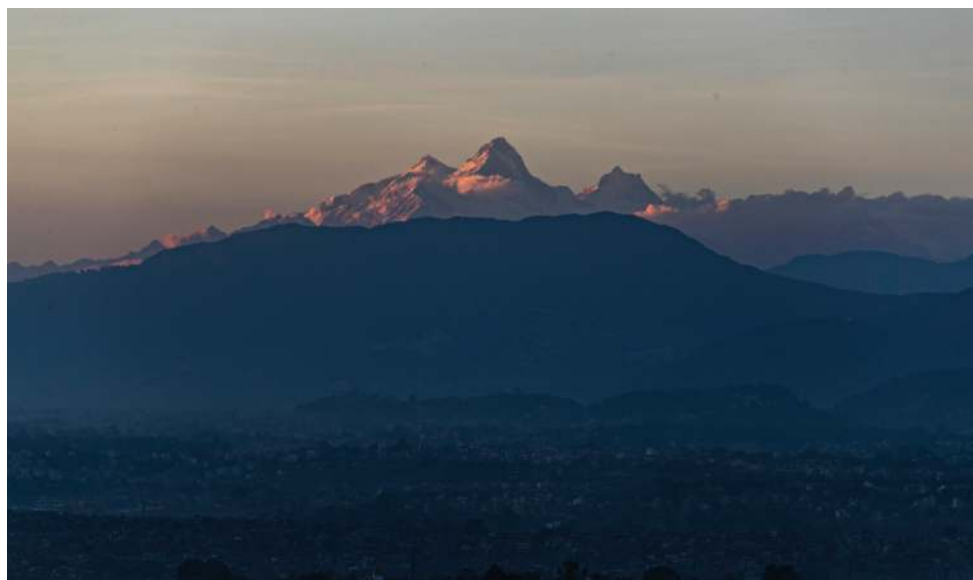
NIRANJAN SHRESTHA/AP

A Nepalese mountain guide stacks oxygen cylinders Nov. 2 at the Seven Summit trekking agency in Kathmandu, Nepal.



NIRANJAN SHRESTHA/AP

A Nepalese man walks past a trekking gear store Nov. 2 at Thamel, a touristic hub in Kathmandu, Nepal.



NIRANJAN SHRESTHA/AP

Himalachuli mountain, center, and the Manaslu Mountain range are visible Oct. 31 from Bhaktapur, Nepal. Those in the adventure tourism industry hope climbers return soon.

in Nepal, as was the government decision to reopen to all qualified mountaineers and trekkers in October.

"We need to give a small ray of hope to the people in the adventure tourism industry that there is still a future somewhere to look forward to," Tamang said.

The pandemic hit as Nepal was preparing to double the number of tourist arrivals with a government campaign declaring 2020 as Visit Nepal year.

People in the mountains have been the hardest hit. They normally work these spring and fall seasons to make enough money to last them all year.

The prospect of trekkers and mountaineers returning to the mountain has been a welcome piece of news for those in the industry.

"We in the adventure tourism industry are very excited that the country is finally open, and we are beginning to get many

calls and inquiries from foreign clients," said Ang Tshering of the Asian Trekking in Kathmandu.

He said there is particular interest in the spring 2021 climbing season, especially for Mount Everest.

Still, with the virus still surging in many parts of the world, it will take time for things to return to normal.

On a recent day in the tourist hub of Thamel in Kathmandu, most of the shops, restaurants, pubs and hotels remained closed. The shops normally selling down jackets, tents, hiking boots and survival equipment were mostly closed and those that were open had few if any customers.

"We have not seen any customer since March in my shop," said Bir Lama, who sells hiking and mountaineering gear. "While I am paying rent, draining my savings, I am keeping the shop open only to keep myself from going insane."

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

A feast for the senses

A visit to DMM Kariyushi Aquarium in Okinawa is a futuristic, extra-sensory nature experience

By **MATTHEW M. BURKE**
Stars and Stripes

Opening a competitor aquarium on an island the size of Tokyo when the first is world renowned is a pretty bold move.

Okinawa is already home to one of the largest and best aquariums in the world. When it opened in 2002, Churaumi Aquarium boasted the largest aquarium window panel in the world.

The DMM Kariyushi Aquarium in the new Iias Okinawa Toyosaki mall in southern Okinawa offers a completely different experience, focused less on scientific discovery and more on technology and entertainment. It provides visitors with a quality, alternative, natural experience on the opposite side of the island.

Note: High-density indoor and outdoor tourist attractions where social distancing is not possible are currently off-limits for Marines on Okinawa, and airmen from Kadena Air Base are barred from visiting aquariums, specifically, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Service members should check with their commands to make sure a visit to Kariyushi is authorized before planning a trip.

DMM Kariyushi Aquarium was built by Japan-based DMM Resorts Co. Ltd., according to its website. It was scheduled to open in April but was delayed until May 25 due to coronavirus shut-downs.

DMM projected more than 2 million visitors in its first year, a statement on its website from February said.

The theme of DMM Kariyushi is “new entertainment aquarium,” combining “the latest visual expression and spatial representation,” DMM statements from February and March said.

Everything in DMM Kariyushi

feels futuristic, from the bright white ticketing area resembling the Star Wars ship Tantive IV to 60 shaped and well-lit water tanks holding 190 species of fish, to the cellphone app that guides and explains the aquarium’s attractions from the palm of your hand.

Upon entering, visitors are corralled into an empty room with a wraparound screen. An introductory film covers all of Okinawa, from the sea to the air and tourist attractions in between. The motion tricks your stomach into jumping several times.

Fans blow air on your face to coincide with the wind and mist tickles your nose as you soar through the clouds, temporarily transporting you to another place and time.

A door opens, leading visitors into a dimly lit “Emerald Forest.” The habitat is covered in vines and plants.

On a day in late September, tanks featured goldfish, rainbowfish and catfish, to name a few. There were caiman and Chinese water dragons, corn snakes and poison dart frogs.

A wooden trail takes you up into the trees so you can look down at the exhibits.

Real animals were apparently not enough for DMM Kariyushi. Peering through the grass and foliage revealed realistic boars and their young projected along the walls, darting back and forth. The sounds of the jungle added to the multisensory experience.

Visitors passed ocellate river stingrays and swimming Humboldt penguins, which are native to South America, on their way to a simulation of an Okinawa beach, complete with coral rock formations, tidal pools teeming with tropical fish, pennant coral-fish, sailfin tangs, porcupine fish and red stingrays. Waves lazily



PHOTOS BY MATTHEW M. BURKE/Stars and Stripes

A tidal pool is re-created at the DMM Kariyushi Aquarium in southern Okinawa.

lapped at the shore; boats passed by. A storm struck. It all felt real.

Next, visitors got to walk on water. Well, not in the biblical sense. After taking off their shoes, they were prompted to walk out onto a thick glass aquarium window over a 20-foot-deep tank. The fish swam underneath as their guests looked down in amazement.

There were charismatic Asian small-clawed otters diving for fish thrown by smiling handlers. There was a pool with sea stars, sea cucumbers and various small sharks, like the blackspotted catshark, that kids could touch. Staff supervised closely the entire time.

There were dozens more tanks downstairs in an area called “Ocean Beauty,” where visitors were now face to face with fish they had been previously standing above. There were spotted morays, blacktip reef sharks, spotted eagle rays and green turtles.

Patrons could even traverse a tunnel passing through a tank and schools of fish, so they were visible on all sides.

A separate mirrored room with jellyfish floating in tubular tanks to the ceiling, lit by changing



Kids can enjoy a hands-on experience at Okinawa’s DMM Kariyushi Aquarium.

colored lights, was very “Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas” meets “Doctor Who,” a highlight of the visit.

A deep-ocean experience was provided by screens on the wall with real water trickling in front. From what felt like the perspective of a small submarine’s windows, a giant octopus attacked.

Exiting through the forest once more, visitors passed two-toed sloths, capybaras and six-banded armadillos being fawned over by attentive staff in temporary holding areas. It can feel morally questionable to see animals in captivity, especially in a mall, but

On the QT

DIRECTIONS

2F Iias Okinawa Toyosaki, 3-35 Toyosaki, Tomigusuku-shi, Okinawa, or GPS 26.160531, 127.649338

TIMES

Open daily, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Last entry is at 8 p.m.

COSTS

1,500 yen for children 4-12; 2,000 yen for youths 13-17; and 2,400 yen for adults

FOOD

A cafe onsite offers snacks and drinks, including Okinawa staples like purple mixed sweet potato fries for 400 yen, an Agu pork hot dog for 560 yen and smoothies for 500 yen.

INFORMATION

Phone: 098-840-6900; Online: kariyushi-aquarium.com/en

Matthew M. Burke

the staff seemed passionate.

DMM Kariyushi Aquarium cannot compare to Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium, so it doesn’t try to; instead, it tries to be something altogether different. And it succeeds.

The aquarium offers an alternative natural experience that is equally fun and entertaining for children and families.

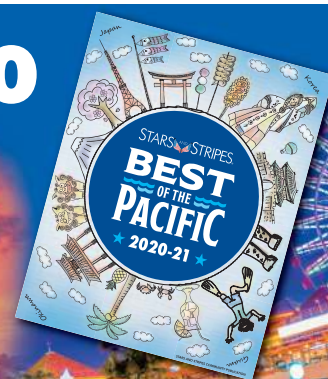
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WEEKEND: FOOD

Thanksgiving trimmed for a small crew

You don't have to give up traditional holiday fare when social distancing

BY KATIE WORKMAN
Associated Press

If you're planning a smaller Thanksgiving gathering this year because of social distancing, you don't have to give up the turkey, stuffing, pie and other traditional fare.

Thanksgiving feasts have typically been tailored for a crowd: big birds, large casseroles and so on. Your favorite recipes might serve 10 or more. But from turkey breasts to muffin-tin pies, there are ways to adapt the classics for a smaller crew, with less expense and potential for waste.

"Strangely, in the past, this time of year seemed challenging because we were trying to feed so many," says Rebecca Miller Ffrench, a food writer and founder of the State Table, a culinary studio in Kingston, N.Y. This year, "we are trying to feed fewer, and it may prove equally difficult, emotionally if not physically."

Many families already branch out to include main dishes other than turkey for Thanksgiving, and this could be a good year to have fun with alternatives. But if tradition beckons, as it does for most, here are some tips.

The turkey

Most birds sold for Thanksgiving dinners in U.S. supermarkets have traditionally been in the 16-pound range, with some much larger. That size turkey will serve 12 to 16 people. As a rule, when buying turkey, aim for about 1 pound per person when purchasing a whole bird; when cooking a smaller bird, especially if you want leftovers, aim for about 1 1/2 pounds per person.

So a 10-pound turkey might be OK for a group of 8, feeding your gang generously. But if your group is much smaller, think about buying just a turkey breast, say, and a couple of drumsticks.

The sides

First, you might serve fewer of them. Miller Ffrench says one of her favorite things about Thanksgiving has been "all the large variety of dishes, which just seems ridiculously decadent" now.

Instead of a table overflowing with food this year, she will spotlight each family member's favorite dish. And that's all.

"Just one kind of cranberry, not two. Just squash, and not sweet potatoes as well. I hope we will take the time to relish each bite more, really focus on the individual flavors of each food, not the collective mounded plate," she says. "These past months have taught me to truly savor things more, figuratively and literally."

Halving recipes

Many recipes can be halved: Roasted butternut squash, mashed potatoes and Brussels sprouts are all good examples.

If you have a recipe for stuffing that calls for a 9-by-13-inch pan and feeds 10-12, you can cut it in half and bake it in a 9-inch-square pan. Reduce the cooking time by about 25%. When it's browned and crispy on top and hot throughout, it's done. Same thing for sweet potato casserole or green bean casserole.



CHEYENNE M. COHEN/AP

The recipe for this Thanksgiving stuffing can be cut in half and baked in a smaller pan in less time for a smaller group.

Pies

Chef Maya-Camille Broussard, owner of Justice of the Pies bakery in Chicago, has some ideas for that most important category of Thanksgiving desserts: pies.

What if you'd like more than one kind of pie, but multiple 9-inch pies feel excessive?

Broussard suggests making galettes, mini pies in a muffin pan, or even whoopie pies in your favorite flavors. She also has small Le Creuset pots that she uses all the time to make individual pies.

"You may use a biscuit cutter to make small crust circles," she says. Or turn a coffee mug or a glass upside down, dip the lip in flour, and use it to cut out a circle of dough.

If you decide to make one of those smaller pies or muffin-tin pies, remember to reduce the cooking time. You might need to just rely on your eyes and nose for how long to bake them. Look for a browned crust, a slightly bubbling interior (if it's a fruit pie), or a mostly firm filling (if it's a pumpkin custard pie, for instance).

Broussard also believes in freezing pies.

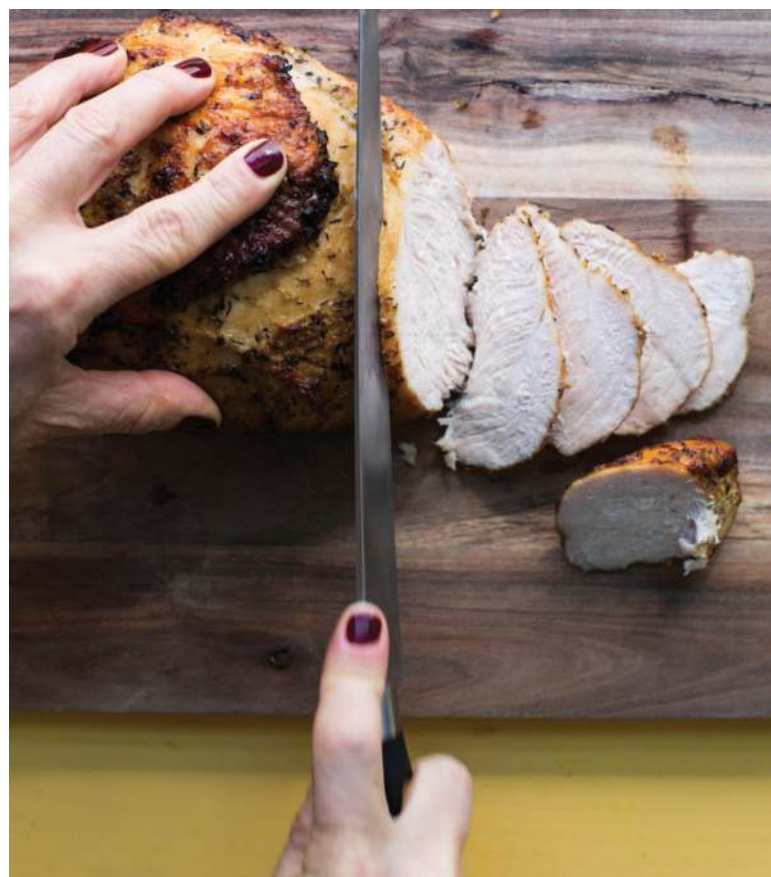
"Pies usually have a high moisture retention and they freeze incredibly well," she says. "Pies are typically good in the fridge for one week and in the freezer for one to two months."

Fruit pies freeze especially well, she suggests. Thaw one on the countertop and then "pop it back in the oven to warm it up and revive the crust."

Leftovers

Finding creative ways to use Thanksgiving leftovers has always been an issue, this year even more so.

Leftover squash can become a pureed soup; turkey a pot pie and a pozole soup. Mashed potatoes might top a shepherd's pie later in the week. And everyone looks forward to a day-after-Thanksgiving turkey sandwich, maybe topped



SARAH CROWDER/AP

A roasted turkey breast can serve a smaller group on Thanksgiving.

with extra cranberry sauce and a drizzle of gravy.

Miller Ffrench suggests freezing gravy flat in freezer bags and using it alongside a grilled chicken breast, or to enhance a pot pie base.

Another smart tip: "Slices of pumpkin pie are a delicious addi-

tion to any smoothie ... crust and all."

Above all, says Miller Ffrench, remember that it's not the size of the feast or the crowd that matters most:

"Big or small, and most importantly, we'll be counting our blessings."

WEEKEND: BOOKS

Add variety to dinner: No takeout needed

English chef Jamie Oliver says his latest cookbook, '7 Ways,' is his most reader-focused one yet

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Jamie Oliver knows one of the biggest obstacles home cooks face isn't the drudgery of shopping, the chore of chopping or the mess of washing up. It's delivery apps.

What he calls the Uber-ization of the food industry has led to tired families just ordering dinner for delivery or pickup. "It's never been easier to fix that urge for food at the click of a button," he said.

Oliver is hoping to inspire home cooks with his 24th book, "7 Ways," which he calls his most reader-focused cookbook yet. He promises maximum flavor for minimum effort.

"If I can write a recipe that's delicious and gives you lots of choice and excitement and I know you've probably got the ingredients in your fridge already, that has to be pretty powerful," the English chef said.

The book comes during the global pandemic, and Oliver hopes it offers beleaguered home cooks more options.

He notes that sales of cooking utensils and baking products have soared.

"If you cook from scratch yourself, the chances of you saving money is huge," he said. "Even cheap takeaways are pretty expensive when you're buying it for four people."

To write the book, Oliver pored over reams of data to find the 3,000 most common food items.

He boiled down the list to 18 key — or hero — ingredients, including chicken breast, salmon, shrimp and potatoes.

He then developed seven new recipes to highlight each of the 18 heroes. For the salmon, there's tacos and a po' boy. For eggs, he's got an Indian-inspired frittata and eggy crumpets. For mushrooms, there's a risotto, a soup and a beef stir-fry.

He also looked at the most popular takeout dishes and tried to replicate their taste. He calls them "fakeaways" and there's dozens of recipes — including sweet and sour pork, spicy shrimp noodles and a sausage pizza.

"I'll try and write a recipe that can lure you into having a go. And ultimately, that's what it's all about: trying to keep cooking skills alive," he said.

Oliver has become a household name for promoting sustainable and healthy foods since starring in BBC's "The Naked Chef," in which he stripped food down to its essentials, using sim-



ple ingredients and techniques. He later became familiar to North American audiences with Food Network shows like "Jamie at Home."

In "7 Ways," Oliver has capped the number of ingredients home cooks need for each dish at eight, and tried new ideas, informed by many consumers who said they were stuck in food ruts.

"I'm trying to represent different cooking methods, different costs and different color, different flavor profiles," he said. "One of my jobs in this book was to try and help celebrate the ingredient, but break the monotony of the same old dish every week."

"One of my jobs in this book was to try and help celebrate the ingredient, but break the monotony of the same old dish every week."

Jamie Oliver

The data showed some interesting things, like that sweet potato and avocado were more popular than initially thought. More avocados were sold in the UK than oranges last year, and Oliver does more than slice them into a salad: He makes an avocado hollandaise, an avocado tempura and bakes avocados with shrimp.

He also tackles a notoriously difficult vegetable — the eggplant, or aubergine in Britain. It takes center stage as one of the 18 heroes, alongside beef and chicken.

"We kind of worked out what to do with potatoes in lots of wonderful ways. We never really found out what the bloody hell to do with aubergines," he said. "What I tried to do in that chapter is look at how you can cook them so the skin is crispy and the flesh is creamy, how you can steam them or use them in a ragu or use it to layer up beautiful things."

One thing that Oliver has gradually warmed up to is including some pre-made ingredients, like jarred pesto or curry paste, and sometimes leaning on frozen vegetables.

"I never would've done it seven years ago. I've had to get over myself," he said, laughing. "There's a bit of ego in cooking as well. I try and control mine."

Oliver is a realist: "I wish I lived in a world where everyone had the time to make their own paste," he said. Then added: "You know, frozen peas are way better than fresh peas nine times out of 10."

CRISPY SALMON TACOS

Start to finish: 20 minutes.

Serves: 2

Ingredients

5 ½ ounce ripe mixed-color cherry tomatoes
1 small ripe mango
½ small ripe avocado
2 scallions
2 x 4 ½ ounce salmon fillets, skin-on, scaled, pin-boned
2 heaping teaspoons of Cajun seasoning
4 small tortillas
2 limes

Directions

Quarter the cherry tomatoes. Pit, peel and roughly chop the mango. Scoop out the avocado and finely slice. Trim and finely slice the scallions.

Carefully cut the skin off the salmon and place it in a non-stick frying pan on medium-high heat to crisp up both sides.

Pat the Cajun seasoning all over the salmon fillets, then fry for 5 minutes, turning to get them golden on each of their sides. Once the skin is crispy, move it to sit on top of the salmon.

Meanwhile, use tongs to toast the tortillas directly over the flames of your gas stove for 15 seconds or use a hot pan. Sprinkle the mango, avocado and scallions over the tortillas, then flake in the salmon and crack up and add the crispy skin.


Toss the tomatoes and the juice of 1 lime in the residual heat of the pan for 30 seconds, then spoon over the tortillas.

Serve with lime wedges, for squeezing over.



INVISION/AP

Jamie Oliver's latest book, "7 Ways: Easy Ideas for Every Day of the Week," came out on Nov. 10. Oliver says he boiled down his list of most common food items to 18 ingredients, and developed seven new recipes to highlight each, which he's included in the book.



Accountability
A Suggested Book For Reading Groups
Laura Strobel

"Their departure is interrupted and in sudden recognition, Aurora's hands shoot to her mouth and she whispers, "Oh, my -" as a black and white police car slowly advances toward them."

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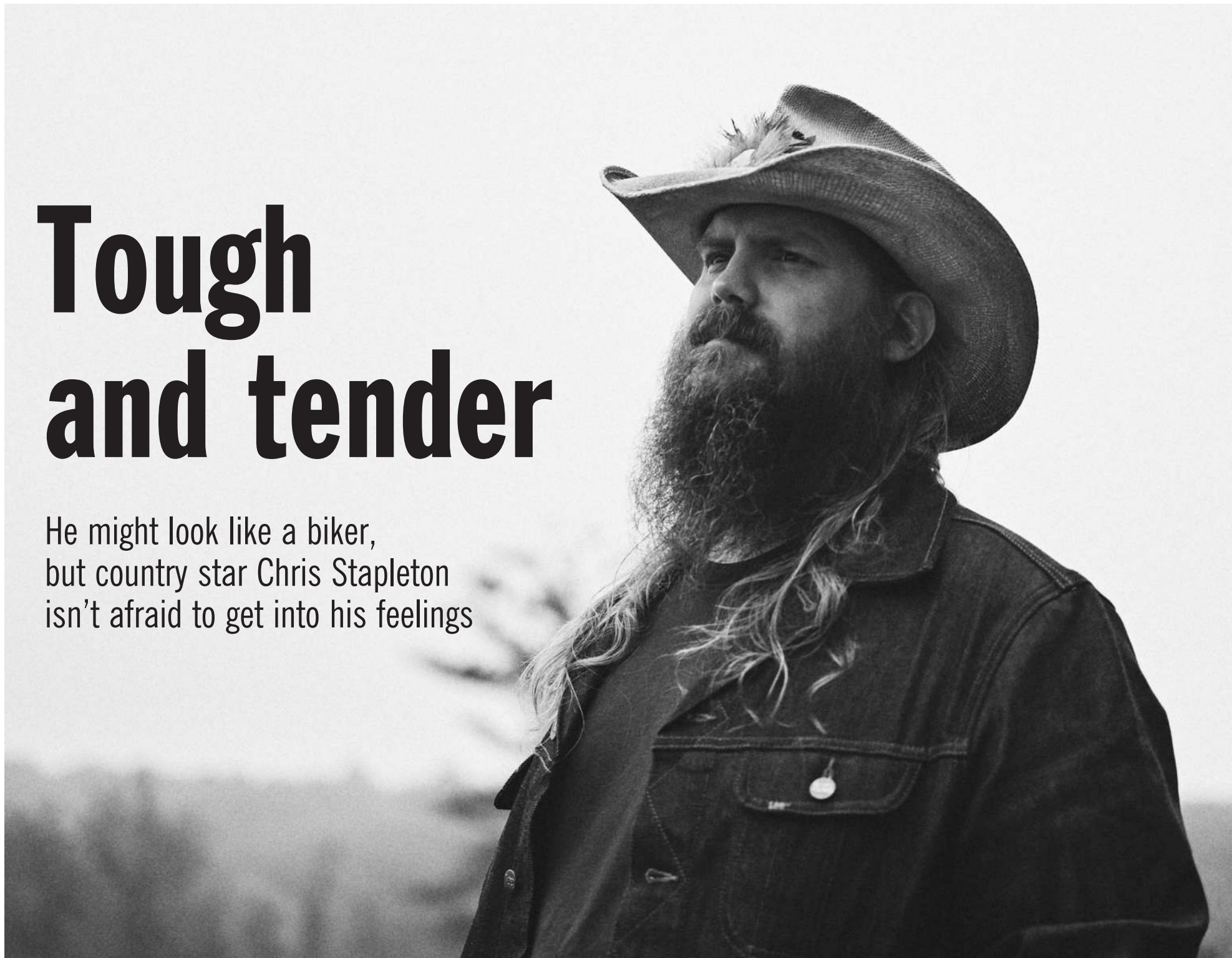
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WEEKEND: MUSIC

Tough and tender

He might look like a biker, but country star Chris Stapleton isn't afraid to get into his feelings



BECKY FLUKE

Chris Stapleton, who took the country-music world by storm with his quadruple-platinum debut in 2015, released his latest album, "Starting Over," on Nov. 13.

BY MIKAEL WOOD
Los Angeles Times

Chris Stapleton didn't take more than 10 or 15 minutes to write "Maggie's Song," a cut from the country star's new album about a "fuzzy black pup" that he and his wife, Morgane, took home after finding the dog abandoned in a shopping cart in a PetSmart parking lot.

"It's all true stuff," Stapleton said. "There's no embellishment in it." Yet recording the song was a different story.

Conceived as a tribute to Maggie after she died last year at age 14, the tender, loping "Maggie's Song" climaxes on a rainy Monday morning when the dog wakes up and finds she can't stand. The narrator lies down next to her as she puts "her head on my hand like she'd done so many times," and if you're getting choked up just reading those lyrics, you can imagine how Stapleton felt in the studio.

"That one was hard to sing," he said, the memory sharp even now. "I kept crying through a lot of it."

As delivered by this 42-year-old father of five, "Maggie's Song" vividly exemplifies the complex emotional character of Stapleton's best music. He's burly but soft. Tough yet vulnerable. A protector of his loved ones and a man in perpetual search of shelter.

"I'm no authority on masculinity, but I don't feel un-masculine or embarrassed by having feelings," he said. "In fact, I think it's the most manly thing you can do."

"And if somebody wants to say something to me about that," he said, chuckling again, "we can talk about it outside."

Stapleton's gentle-giant vibe helped bring him huge success when he emerged in 2015 — after years spent playing in bluegrass and

Southern rock bands and writing behind the scenes for other Nashville acts — with his quadruple-platinum solo debut, "Traveller." The LP, which like all of his music prominently features Morgane on backing vocals, was named album of the year by the Country Music Association and won a Grammy for best country album; his next two records, 2017's "From a Room: Volume 1" and "Volume 2" — each full of grown-up songs that move beyond infatuation to ponder what happens when love endures — both entered the all-genre Billboard 200 chart at No. 2.

With as much Allman Brothers as George Jones in his blood, the bearded, scratchy-voiced Stapleton was viewed by many at the time as a welcome disruptor of a seemingly endless parade of fresh-faced country bros dispensing glib hits about babes and beer. Some even regarded him as an inheritor of country's outlaw

tradition, though in truth that designation was always an awkward fit for an expert craftsman who'd written No. 1 singles for Luke Bryan and Kenny Chesney.

But as Universal Music Group Nashville President Cindy Mabe points out, country music changed in Stapleton's wake. "Right after 'Traveller,' every artist that came to town had a beard," said Mabe, who oversees Stapleton's label, Mercury Nashville. "We'd been living in the world of Ken and Barbie, and he brought a realness that maybe hadn't been there before."

Today, country's biggest young male stars are Luke Combs and Morgan Wallen — happily scruffy everydudes whose music similarly balances yearning and brawn. Which means that Stapleton, who was nominated for male vocalist of the year for the sixth time at the recent CMA Awards (Combs won), is less a maverick now than a standard-bearer.

On "Starting Over," released Nov. 13, you can hear him taking advantage of that position to push ever so slightly at the edges of his well-established identity. The album contains some of his hardest-rocking material, including several cuts he created with help from his avowed guitar hero, Mike Campbell of Tom Petty's Heartbreakers. It has a song, "Watch You Burn," addressed to the perpetrator of the horrific mass shooting that killed 60 people at a Las Vegas country-music festival in 2017 — a rare instance of the normally circumspect Stapleton stepping into the socio-political fray of modern American life.

Most gratifyingly, "Starting Over" showcases the extremes of his remarkable vocal ability, as in "Cold," a stately, whisper-to-a-growl R&B ballad filled with pained bent notes and lengthy

SEE STAPLETON ON PAGE 29

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS

FROM PAGE 28

runs as gritty as they are fluid.

"I love Chris the way I love Otis Redding and Donny Hathaway," said Pink, who drafted Stapleton for a romantic duet on her 2019 album "Hurts 2B Human" — just one of several pop-star collaborations (along with songs by Justin Timberlake and Ed Sheeran) that Stapleton has been approached to do in recent years.

"His soul has been around a lot longer than he has," Pink added, before mimicking one of the singer's key riffs from his slow-rolling rendition of the country classic "Tennessee Whiskey."

Asked how he developed the technique required to expand his natural gift, Stapleton, who grew up in small-town Kentucky, said he never took vocal lessons but sang along carefully as a teenager to songs by Luther Vandross, Mariah Carey and Bell Biv DeVoe. Stapleton was speaking over the phone from outside a recording studio in Nashville — he'd driven into town from his ranch outside Franklin, Tenn., where he can't get a strong cell signal — and suddenly paused as a loud whistle sounded in the background.

"Sorry, there was a train going by," he said after a few seconds. "How country is that?"

Stapleton completed "Starting Over" before the COVID-19 pandemic; in fact, he began work on the album two years ago with sessions near Muscle Shoals, Ala. (where Aretha Franklin, whom Stapleton called "the greatest singer that ever lived," famously worked) and at Nashville's Compass Sound studio, a favorite spot of the late Waylon Jennings also known as Hillbilly Central.

Eventually, the singer returned to his usual haunt, Nashville's historic RCA Studio A, where he and his longtime producer, Dave Cobb, made Stapleton's previous albums. Does he harbor any superstitions about re-creating the circumstances of success, as a ballplayer might by refusing to shave or combing his hair during a championship series?

"Well, if not shaving or combing your hair is superstitious, then I've been superstitious for years," he replied. Then he acknowledged that he hauls around an old dining-room chair from his parents' house that he likes to sit in every time he records. And he's got a lucky Fender Jazzmaster guitar. And a pocketknife of his father's that he always carries in his pocket.

"Besides all that, though — nah, no superstitions," he said.

Stapleton introduced a new element into his process by traveling to Los Angeles to write with Campbell, whom he was thrilled to meet when Stapleton opened for Petty and the Heartbreakers at Chicago's Wrigley Field in 2017. (The album also features the Heartbreakers' keyboardist,

Chris Stapleton

Starting Over (Mercury Records Nashville)

To say Chris Stapleton is one of country music's best singers is to sell him short. He's one of the world's finest singers of any genre, period.

On his new album, "Starting Over," the Kentucky native ranges around in style with the confidence of a man who deserves the widest possible audience. His voice is pleading and impassioned and sounds phenomenal whether he's wailing the blues or gently covering the Guy Clark classic, "Old Friends," one of two Clark compositions here.

It doesn't hurt that Stapleton's working again with Dave Cobb, a producer who seems incapable of musical missteps himself. Other collaborators include pedal steel virtuoso Paul Franklin as well as Benmont Tench and Mike Campbell of the Heartbreakers, Tom Petty's legendary band.

Stapleton doesn't need much help showing off his rock 'n' roll chops. He snarls and growls his way through "Arkansas," a song that could become the state's next anthem, and "Watch You Burn," an angry diatribe about domestic terrorism sung to the Las Vegas shooter and other perpetrators of mass violence. It ends with a roaring musical manifestation of what eternal damnation must sound like.

A singer this good can sometimes make unfortunate song choices and get away with it, but there is no weak cut on this album. On "Cold" and "Whiskey Sunrise," Stapleton shows his ability to live inside a heartache that few singers can match. On a ballad called "Nashville, TN," he bids a poignant, emotional goodbye to Music City. The common element throughout is soulful, honest singing.

"Starting Over" is the title song, but Stapleton needs no restart musically. He keeps building on all the good work he's done before, delivering songs that keep soaring higher — and in this case, one of the year's finest albums.

— Scott Stroud
Associated Press

Benmont Tench.) Among the tunes they finished together was "Arkansas," about a real-life road trip through the Ozark Mountains that Stapleton and his bass player took after his wife presented him with an Irish-green Porsche 911 for his birthday.

"We were trying to make a movie of the idea," said Campbell, a longtime fan of what he called "traveling songs" such as "I've Been Everywhere," made popular in the early '60s by Hank Snow.

"He names every city in the f----- country in that song," Campbell said with a laugh, and so Stapleton in "Arkansas" shouts out Fayetteville, Little Rock and West Memphis as he recounts "burn(ing) through one-light towns like a scalded dog" over his and Campbell's roaring guitars.

With its heavy twang and snarling tempo, "Arkansas" can evoke the rootsier hair metal of the late '80s — think Poison or Cinderella — a comparison that led Stapleton to reveal that the first concert he ever saw was by Bon Jovi on its tour behind 1988's "New Jersey."

"A lot of that stuff, it's become a kind of caricature, or we've relegated it to that," he said. "But there was a lot of great music back then" — even if he remembered stepping outside during Skid Row's opening set because the band was too loud. (Interesting factoid: Stapleton, a reliably combustible live draw, said he'd agreed to open for Van Halen on a proposed 2019 tour that ended up not happening due to concerns over the health of Eddie

Van Halen, who died of cancer last month.)

Stapleton's date for that long-ago Bon Jovi show was his dad, and decades later he's just as tight with his own brood of four sons and a daughter between the ages of 1 and 11. In "Starting Over's" stirring closer, titled "Nashville, TN," he reflects on his decision to move from the city to the country to secure some privacy for his family.

He and Morgane wrote the song in 2015 after his star-making performance with Timberlake on that year's CMA Awards made a tourist attraction of their home.

"All of a sudden there's a bus with people from four states away showing up in my driveway while I'm trying to play ball with my kids," he said.

"I'm not complaining, but I'd spent 37 years not living in that space. I had to get away from the anxiety of that bus rolling up twice a day."

As with virtually every other working musician, COVID forced Stapleton to call off a 2020 tour of arenas and amphitheatres, in his case directly after opening night in Texas on March 11 — the same evening the NBA suspended its season in a dramatic acknowledgment of the threat of the coronavirus.

Yet the singer, whose team has consulted with Major League Baseball regarding safety protocols for rescheduled dates set to resume in April, hasn't regretted the time he's been able to spend at home.

"It's been good — self-reflective," he said.

Grande explores intimate 'Positions'

By MIKAEL WOOD
Los Angeles Times

Staying at home for months on end doesn't appear to have been a disappointment for Ariana Grande.

In song after song on her very horny new album, "Positions," the 27-year-old pop star exults in the intimate possibilities of a quiet night (or 200) in quarantine. "We got all we need right here," she assures a lover in "West Side," and she's not referring to an embarrassment of streaming services.

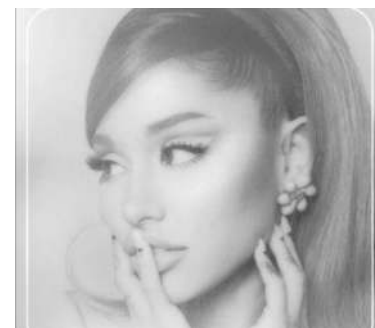
Singing about sex is nothing novel, of course — not for pop stars in general nor specifically for Grande, whose former boyfriend Mac Miller was rapping about putting on a movie only to ignore it on Grande's 2013 debut. (That the movie in question was "Bruce Almighty" shows how long Grande, a onetime Nickelodeon performer, has been a member of pop's ruling class.)

On "Positions," though, the bedroom setting registers as more than a fulfillment of her obligation to titillate; inspired or not by the reality of lockdown, her focus feels like an inward turn after the years of intense public scrutiny documented on Grande's two previous LPs: 2018's "Sweetener," which followed the horrific terrorist bombing of a concert of hers in Manchester, England, and last year's Grammy-nominated "Thank U, Next," which grappled with Miller's sudden death and with her breakup with the comedian Pete Davidson.

Sex as represented on her sixth full-length is an act of tenderness and enveloping — and also of monogamy. "Boy, I'm trying to meet your mama on a Sunday / Then make a lot of love on a Monday," Grande sings in the title track, while "Obvious" insists, "Ain't no price on my loyalty."

In many of the songs, Grande describes home as a kind of cocoon for two: a place to play video games at 2 a.m., ("Six Thirty") or the sanctuary in "Nasty" best enjoyed after she and her guy "get all the homies to bounce" (so that they might "switch from the bed to the couch").

For someone so skilled at using social media to cultivate fans' interest in her personal life, it's striking — and more than a little moving — to hear her dreaming of seclusion. It connects "Positions" to this year's pre-COVID "Changes" by Grande's old pal Justin Bieber, on which another young tabloid mainstay remakes



privacy as the hottest of concepts.

And yet Grande knows that the outright raunchiness of some of her new material, especially in the year of "WAP," is sure to rev the celebrity-industrial complex, stoking curiosity about her relationship with Dalton Gomez, the wonderfully named Los Angeles real-estate agent about whom she evidently wrote these songs.

Before the heavy breathing begins, "Positions" opens with "Shut Up," a jewel box of orchestral pop in which she tells off people too concerned with how she spends her time. "You know you sound so dumb," she trills in sweet multi-tracked harmony — a telling product of an age when the only thing worse than too much attention is none at all.

Though Grande's subject matter shifts after "Shut Up," the song's Disney-like strings carry through the rest of "Positions," which is brighter and sprightlier than the comparatively bleary "Thank U, Next."

Her singing too strikes a throwback note, with less of the almost-rapping she was doing in songs like the trappy "7 Rings" and more of the fluid R&B melisma she inherited from Mariah Carey.

Prudes can take comfort in the fact that Grande's sexual liberation hasn't come at the expense of her winningly earnest theater-kid eccentricities. "Off the Table," a sharply detailed slow jam featuring the Weeknd, has Grande cycling through the questions she asks herself between a breakup and a makeup: "Am I too cold? Am I not nice?" (Other guests on the album include Doja Cat, who joins Grande for the club jam "Motive," and Ty Dolla Sign, who lends his gritty croon to "Safety Net.")

"Positions" closes with one of its strongest tracks in "POV," a pretty, pillowy ballad in which Grande longs to see herself through her lover's eyes.

"I want to trust me the way you trust me," she sings, and there's something vaguely Prince-like about that setup. It's a welcome frisson on an album about humanity's oldest pastime — and a reminder that every couple is a world unto itself.

WEEKEND: TELEVISION



Filmmaker Madison Hamburg directed the documentary "Murder on Middle Beach," about the unsolved murder of his mother in 2010. It premiered Nov. 15 on HBO Max.

IN SEARCH OF A MOTIVE

First-time director explores mother's murder in docuseries

By AMANDA LEE MYERS
Associated Press

Madison Hamburg was 18 years old when he got the call from his sister:

Their mother had been stabbed and bludgeoned to death outside her home in the affluent southeastern Connecticut town of Madison.

Now 29, Hamburg has directed a nail-biting and hauntingly personal documentary series about his mother Barbara's murder, which remains unsolved. His directorial debut, "Murder on Middle Beach," premiered Nov. 15 on HBO Max.

Hamburg began filming the series in college as part of a school project. It was just three years after the March 2010 killing, and Hamburg was recovering from a drug addiction and still reeling from his mother's violent end.

"I decided to start navigating this journey into understanding who she was and why the murder might have happened," said Hamburg, who began uncovering a side of his mother's life he never knew about. Each interview he conducted only led to more questions and possibilities.

When it was time to turn in the project, Hamburg wasn't finished.

"We turned in a trailer — or a teaser — and my professor basically made me promise to never stop working on it and he gave me an A in return," Hamburg said recently from his home in Brooklyn. "And I never stopped working on it."

The genre-busting four-episode documentary is largely told from Hamburg's perspective and explores how his mother's death impacted him and his family. It also delves into potential suspects, including several of Hamburg's own family members.

The project forced Hamburg to ask the toughest question he could possibly ask a loved one: "Did you kill Mom?"

That question was something he posed to several close relatives after he had been working on the documentary for years and realized they needed to be given a chance to express their innocence.



AP

Conway Beach places flowers where she found her sister's body in a scene from "Murder on Middle Beach." Her nephew directed the documentary.

Hamburg recounted how his crew pressed him to ask, saying, "If we're going to do this again, this might be your only opportunity to ask that question. And you have to do it for their sake and your sake, bluntly. And you have to do it to elicit an honest, truthful answer out of them because this may be your only chance to exonerate people and ... resolve some of the lingering distrust," Hamburg said. "Because, you know, I love my family and it is unconditional, but it's really hard when a loved one is murdered and it's unresolved and it's done in a way that leaves a small percentage chance that it could have been done by a loved one."

Part of Hamburg's journey in the documentary includes secretly recording his father and his interactions with investigators who have yet to solve the killing.

Hamburg said all his family members except his father have watched "Murder on Middle Beach" before its release so they're prepared for any potential fallout or social media reaction.

In the end, he hopes all the hard work and potential family strife will simply help answer the biggest question of his life: Who killed his mother and why?

"If this series doesn't solve the case, it becomes a tool to get us closer," Hamburg said. "Anybody out there that might remember something, it might jog their memory when they see this, you know, please. There's anonymous ways to reach out. Please reach out because we will greatly appreciate, even if it's just to share how much you loved my mom."

WEEKEND: ENTERTAINMENT

NEW ON DVD

“Better Call Saul: Season Five”: Over the course of four seasons, we’ve seen Jimmy McGill (Bob Odenkirk) slowly devolve into his Saul Goodman persona, grappling with the death of his brother, Chuck (Michael McKean), his strange yet beautiful partnership with Kim (Rhea Seehorn), and deep down, his love of the game.

That slow burn explodes this season, with Jimmy inserting himself into the drug war between Lalo Salamanca (Tony Dalton) and Gus Fring (Giancarlo Esposito). Whereas Walter White (Bryan Cranston) quickly dove right into criminal activity in “Breaking Bad,” it’s clear that Jimmy, who assumes picking up \$7 million in cash for Lalo’s bail across the U.S.-Mexican border would be an easy peasy chore, is simply in way over his head.

It’s thrilling to watch, and it’s the series’ best season yet. While Mike’s (Jonathan Banks) guilt over killing Werner (Rainer Bock) and subsequent spiral and ultimate acceptance isn’t much of a surprise given what we know of his past and future, it’s fun to watch Nacho (Michael Mando) perform some Herculean acrobatics to save cartel product from DEA confiscation and woo Lalo in the process.

But the most powerful transformation here is that of Kim. After seemingly taking on more and more pro bono work to assuage guilt from the more capitalist-driven Mesa Verde case and ensuing problems, leading to such extreme conflict between her and Jimmy that she decides they either need to cut ties or get married, she also puts herself into the game, demanding an explanation from Lalo as Jimmy’s field trip to Mexico results in his disappearance. At first it seems she’s also in over her head, but as she saves Jimmy from Lalo’s repeated questions and proposes her own unhinged scheme, Kim’s breaking bad packs the greatest punch.

Also available on DVD:

“The Irishman”: A truck driver (Robert De Niro) rises up in a Pennsylvania crime family and earns a spot working for Jimmy Hoffa (Al Pacino).

“After We Collided”: In this sequel to 2019’s “After,” Tessa (Josephine Langford) and Hardin (Hero Fiennes Tiffin) reel from their devastating breakup.

“Ava”: After doubting her superiors, an assassin (Jessica Chastain) becomes a target.

“Blinded”: This Sundance Now series follows a financial reporter, who hits it off with a bank director, whose company is shady in more ways than one. In Swedish.

“Buddy Games”: A long-separated group of friends reunite to compete in extreme physical tasks. Stars Josh Duhamel, Olivia Munn, Jensen Ackles, Dax Shepard and Sheamus.

“The Gulf”: This New Zealand series follows a detective (Kate Elliott) who struggles on the job after suffering memory loss caused by a deadly car accident.

“Ice House”: Two men (Grant Reed and Greg Berman) head to a Minnesota lake house on a cold winter night, wherein debauchery turns deadly.

“Sonic the Hedgehog”: The 2020 Ben Schwartz-voiced version following the Sega hero is being rereleased in a limited-edition Blu-ray combo pack.

“Train to Busan Presents: Peninsula”: A soldier is sent on a mission in a zombie-ridden wasteland. In Korean.

— Katie Foran-McHale/TNS



Netflix

Diaana Babnicova (young Jessica Jangle) and Justin Cornwell (young Jeronicus Jangle) star in Netflix’s “Jingle Jangle.”

‘Stepping one foot forward’

Actor says journey to rediscover his passion mirrored that of his character in ‘Jingle Jangle’

By Ashley Lee

Los Angeles Times

The most memorable characters have the most melodic names: Willy Wonka, Caractacus Potts, Mary Poppins and, now, Jeronicus Jangle.

The last is the leading man of the Netflix musical “Jingle Jangle: A Christmas Journey,” which reinvigorates the fantasy storybook elements of beloved family films with a powerhouse, and majority Black, cast — including Phylicia Rashad, Anika Noni Rose and Keegan-Michael Key. But it’s Oscar winner Forest Whitaker who delivers a surprisingly delightful turn as Jangle, whether flying through his magical toy shop or dancing in the middle of a snowball fight.

“He’s a great dramatic actor — whenever you see him onscreen, he has power and gravitas and people are afraid of him,” said writer-director David E. Talbert. “But Forest Whitaker, the person, is a gentle giant, a warm teddy bear, who I knew could bring out the vulnerability and joy of this three-dimensional character. And he looks like Black Santa.”

The role — of a heartbroken inventor recovering from a major betrayal — mirrored Whitaker’s own artistic crisis, and pushed him to revisit a skill set he’d long left behind. From his home on New York’s Upper East Side, the 59-year-old spoke with The Times about stretching his range — both that of his singing voice and the types of roles he plays onscreen.

Los Angeles Times: What drew you to this role?

Whitaker: When you first meet Jeronicus (played as a youngster by Justin Cornwell), he’s on top of the world — and by that, I mean, he was living in joy. And then he loses his most prized inventions — which is a part of his spirit, really. He’s somebody who believes so much in joy

and magic, and then he’s robbed of it. It’s a story people can relate to, because we’ve all been in difficult places where we felt like we couldn’t go on because life had hit us so hard. But it’s possible, even if you’ve fallen, to rise. You can reawaken the joy inside of you; your dreams can still come through in different ways. And there’s always a possibility, as long as we’re alive and striving and stepping one foot forward, to change it.

I do feel lucky to play Jeronicus because he’s this character who’s trying to find himself and his passion again. In a way, I was taking a parallel journey as an artist.

How so?

Originally, I wanted to work as an actor as a way to explore the human condition and how we connect with others, and every part I’d play was about expanding that understanding. I wanted to learn something new about someone else, and also myself. And then, at some point, that joy of invention and exploration, it just got blocked. I didn’t feel like I was doing good work; I couldn’t make my work stronger. I felt like I had lost my passion.

Starting with the play “Hughie” (on Broadway in 2016), I’ve tried to get it back again and really push myself to grow. So the fact that “Jingle Jangle” is a musical, it was a great challenge, because I hadn’t sung in such a long time.

How did you prepare for these vocal demands?

I started taking vocal lessons right after I got the script. I was worried I wouldn’t be able to handle the complexities of the songs. I felt like I was straining whenever I’d get to a certain high note because I didn’t really have a falsetto. I called David and said, “I can’t do this. Can we change the key so I can sing it?” But he wasn’t really having it!

So I just buckled down and kept working on it with my vocal coach, Matt Farns-

worth, and started to get it. And then I got so excited that I asked David to get more and more songs added. So I think I have the most songs in the movie.

You’ve rarely sung onscreen, even though you studied music performance in college. Why is that?

I don’t know. I loved singing. I was in a doo-wop group when I was 13. We didn’t have real performances or anything, but we’d practice old R&B songs in the neighborhood. Spinners, Commodores, Temptations, Whispers, those kinds of tracks. And I played the baritone horn in junior high, and that’s how I started first reading music. I sang in the high school choir; in college, I had my first experiences going abroad by performing in different cathedrals across London with the madrigal choir. I studied classical voice at USC, and I got my first agent from my first professional play, “The Beggar’s Opera.”

Originally, I was thinking I would go do musicals on Broadway. But I guess I was concerned, with the Italian arias I was working on, that I wasn’t communicating to the people I knew, and that I wasn’t going to be able to connect in the way I was hoping. I had a scholarship at the USC music conservatory as a singer, but they also accepted me into the acting conservatory. So I made the decision not to sing anymore, even though I told the guys at the music department that I wouldn’t stop. I switched to acting, and I pretty much left music behind.

So, would you say you’ve rediscovered your passion for acting?

Yeah. I can feel the magic again in everything I’ve done since then. Even if it’s a darker character, like in my show “Godfather of Harlem” (on Epix), I’m enjoying the process of playing him, even though he’s not an easy character to carry. Same with (the Aretha Franklin biopic) “Respect.”

WEEKEND: HEALTH AND FITNESS



Blue times two

A psychologist offers suggestions for how to deal with the combined effects of the pandemic blues and seasonal affective disorder

BY DAN GIGLER

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Fleeting daylight. Colder weather. Gloomy skies. The churn of conflicting emotions and financial distress that can accompany the holidays.

These elements constitute the recipe for the annual anxiety stew that Jon Weingarden's patients have to swallow. Add to that the recent fallout of a vitriolic presidential election and the COVID-19 pandemic, and it can be an overwhelming scenario — especially for those with seasonal affective disorder.

"We definitely do see that," said Weingarden, a clinical psychologist and the senior program director of the Integrative Health and Aging Program and Center for Eating Disorders at UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital in Pittsburgh.

"I work in an acute hospital setting," said the 34-year-old doctor. "We do see more people now that are saying, 'Yes, this is a direct effect of COVID-19,' whether it's via job loss or loneliness or losses of resources, financial issues. So we are seeing more ... people getting exhausted from it."

The SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus primarily affects the respiratory and circulatory systems and has contributed to the deaths of nearly a quarter of a million Americans since February. But Weingarden has a different view of it.

"I look at it as a stressor," he said. "Stress is a psychological term. There are acute stressors like traumas and there are chronic stresses. At first when we experience stressors, even traumatic ones, it's more common for people to have growth from a stressor, but then we tend to wear out from it."

A recent Washington Post story said that a survey published in September in the JAMA Network Open, a monthly open access medical journal published by the American Medical Association, "found that U.S. adults were reporting levels of depres-

sive symptoms more than three times higher during the pandemic than before it" and that a June survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention yielded similar results.

Just as COVID-19 typically has a long arc between exposure and its symptoms, so too do the mental health ramifications of the disease take time to manifest.

"Even though people were extremely anxious about the pandemic, there were people who were sort of motivated, who were engaged. There is something that all of humanity was tied together in response to it, for the most part," he said. But as it's worn on, "I think people are really starting to get exhausted from this."

That gives him pause as a clinician: "I think that's where it really starts to couple with this seasonal depression because there's not as many (safe) ways that you can cope with it compared to what you may have been able to do over the summer."

He said three things contribute to depression at this time of year.

"The holidays tend to become more sort of nostalgic and bittersweet," he said. "You not only have good memories, but memories of loss of things you're no longer able to do or people you're no longer able to see.

"Many people struggle with winter weather, something we call the winter blues. The things that tend to trigger that are the shortened days, less sunlight and colder weather where we might be less active. We look at it very much as a sort of circadian rhythm biological process.

"We also just had a time change, which is hard for people. Sometimes when they're depressed they want to oversleep, which worsens it. If you oversleep, you miss your one sliver of sunlight. So if you're not getting any sunlight in the morning, there's nothing telling your body, 'Hey, it's daytime. Get active.' If you're getting up and going straight to work and getting home at 4 or 5 and not seeing any daylight, that's a problem."

Here's the Catch-22 of COVID-19:

"If someone has a seasonal pattern (of depression), they might be less likely to do the things they enjoyed, and now we've cut the number of things they can do significantly. So that's gonna be a major challenge," he said. "How do you stay engaged throughout the winter because those opportunities are much decreased?"

To help with the daily struggle, get outside, plan ahead, stick to commitments and be prepared to try something new.

"Get outside now while the weather is

still nice. If you avoid going outside now and you wait until the thick of the winter, it's going to make it much harder. Take a walk in the morning. Get up at a reasonable time. Get outside during your lunch break while the weather is still nice, and even once it gets bad, commit to bundling up," he said.

He noted that Europeans seem to handle winter weather better than some Americans: "They love the cold, and they don't bat an eye at it. We're gonna have to bundle up and change our culture a little bit, and that's gonna be easier for some people than others.

"Commitment is a big challenge. If you commit (only) to yourself, it's easy to let yourself out of it. But if you have a buddy at work or a neighbor or family member and you decide to walk together every day, committing with somebody really strengthens that because nobody wants to be the one to drop out. If one of the two of you says, 'Hey let's do it,' then both of you are more likely to go."

He said the pandemic monotony of telecommuting and home schooling can lead to the feeling that every day is the same.

"It has been hard, and it's going to continue to be hard," he said, suggesting people keep an eye on the big picture.

"While we're gonna have to get through a really difficult winter, we are anticipating starting to see some vaccines in the coming year."

For those who are concerned about family or friends, he suggests making plans and holding the person accountable.

"Make plans with each other, whether it's a Zoom phone call every Thursday, taking a walk every morning, or checking in with each other and offering resources, making plans with each other that are safe," he said. "Don't be afraid to ask somebody, 'Hey, are you OK? Can I help?' It's important to make this more normalized and less stigmatized."

"I think that's where it really starts to couple with this seasonal depression because there's not as many (safe) ways that you can cope with it compared to what you may have been able to do over the summer."

Jon Weingarden
psychologist

WEEKEND: FAMILY



SETH WENIG/AP

Julianna Lasczak, 3, and Dylan Lasczak, 5, visit with Santa through a transparent barrier Nov. 10 at a Bass Pro Shop in Bridgeport, Conn. Coronavirus protocols this season are completely changing what a Santa visit looks like.

Santa's out of touch in 2020

Jolly fat man returns to malls, but COVID safety protocols mean his lap's off limits

BY JOSEPH PISANI
Associated Press

Santa Claus is coming to the mall — just don't try to sit on his lap.

Despite the pandemic — and the fact that Santa's age and weight put him at high risk for severe illness from the coronavirus — mall owners are going ahead with plans to bring him back this year.

But they are doing all they can to keep the jolly old man safe, including banning kids from sitting on his knee.

Kids will instead tell Santa what they want for Christmas from six feet away, and sometimes from behind a sheet of plexiglass. Santa and his visitors may need to wear a face mask, even while posing for photos. And some malls will put faux gift boxes and other decorations in front of Saint Nick to block kids from charging toward him.

Other safety measures include online reservations to cut down on lines, workers wiping down holiday-decorated sets, and hand sanitizer aplenty. Santa's hours are also getting cut to give him a break from crowds.

Macy's canceled its in-person visits this year, saying it couldn't provide a safe environment for the more than 250,000 people that show up to see Kris Kringle at its New York flagship store.

But malls, which have struggled to attract shoppers for years, are not willing to kill a holiday tradition that is one of their biggest ways to lure people during the all-important holiday shopping season.

"You have to give them a reason to come or they'll stay home and shop online," says Michael Brown, who oversees the retail team at consulting firm Kearney.

More than 10 million U.S. households visited Santa in a mall or store last year, according to GlobalData Retail's managing director Neil Saunders. Nearly 73% of them also spent money at nearby restaurants or stores, he says.

"Santa is the magnet that attracts people to malls and without that attraction, malls will struggle more to generate foot traffic," says Saunders.

Mall operator CBL, which filed for bankruptcy this month, plans to bring Santa to nearly 60 malls at the end of November, about three weeks later than last year. The company decided against a plexiglass barrier because it didn't look right in photos. But Santa will be



DAN GLEITER/AP

Kashden Dunlap chats with Santa through plexiglass Nov. 11 at Capital City Mall in Lower Allen Township, Pa.

socially distanced and wear a face mask. He may also put on a plastic shield to protect his face.

"We're doing everything possible so that he stays healthy," says Mary Lynn Morse, CBL's marketing vice president.

Mall owner Brookfield started planning in-person Santa visits at 130 of its shopping centers in April, opting for sleighs and gift boxes where visitors can sit away from Santa. At one of its malls, The SoNo Collection in Norwalk, Conn., a round piece of plexiglass will be placed in front of Santa so it looks like he's inside a snow globe.

But the precautions may not be enough to convince some shoppers.

"It just seems like such a bad idea, just being in a mall," says Emma Wallace of Alexandria, Va., who decided against taking her toddler to his first visit with Santa this year.

"We're just so sad," she says. "We were really looking forward to that picture that seems like every parent has, where they're sort of terrified or just bemused by the whole Santa thing."

Malls realize many people may stay home. Cherry Hill Programs, which will bring Santa to more than 700 malls, is also offering Zoom calls with him for the first time in its 60-year history. And Brookfield teamed up with virtual Santa company JingleRing, giving people a way to chat with Santa from home.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



To all the turkeys I've ruined before

Since my husband, Francis, and I tied the knot many years ago, I've cooked exactly 26 Thanksgiving turkeys. We ate every one of them. Molinaris are not known to waste food, after all. But truth be told, not every turkey I cooked was perfect.

In fact, quite a few of the 26 birds could best be described as "learning experiences."

As a newlywed, I envisioned myself on our first Thanksgiving, aproned and waving a basting brush like a magic wand, wafting gracefully in and out of our kitchen on the delectable scent of roasting turkey, simmering cranberries, herbed dressing and buttery potatoes. The perfect new Navy wife preparing the perfect holiday feast.

However, at age 27, I had never been taught how to roast a chicken drumstick, much less a whole turkey. I had lived the simplified life of a single woman, subsisting on a diet dominated by noodles and eggs, and believing that as long as I could melt cheese on something, I'd be fine.

Although I had grown up watching my mother cook elaborate meals from scratch, I had assumed that such skills were automatically bestowed upon taking marital vows. Additionally, I'd been given the key and essential wedding gift that would show me the way: a "Better Homes and Gardens New Cookbook."

Despite having thoroughly perused the poultry section of this iconic gingham manual of domesticity, I neglected to thaw the bird properly, couldn't decipher the cooking time from the complicated weight chart and forgot to remove the bag of giblets. I thought basting the turkey was the ultimate key to success, but I opened the door so many times, the oven couldn't maintain enough heat to cook the bird properly. Two hours later than expected, we took our Butterball out of the oven and nibbled cautiously at the breast meat, which was singed because I'd gotten frustrated and turned on the broiler.

The next year, I found the kitchen gadget that would solve my culinary problems — a meat thermometer, which my cookbook instructed should be inserted into the turkey's thigh for a proper reading. The only issue? I had no idea where that was.

The succeeding Thanksgiving holidays were a crapshoot. After one year's turkey proved to be too small, the next year's turkey was so large, our repertoire of leftovers lasted until Christmas.

After serving one underdone bird whose bloody juices tainted the stuffing and had us all fearing salmonella poisoning, I cooked the next several turkeys so thoroughly, eating them required alternating bites with swigs of water in order to swallow the dry meat.

I received a turkey deep fryer one year for Christmas, but after weighing the risk of lighting my hair on fire, I stuck with my oven. That year, I discovered that the plastic leg holder doesn't melt if you forget to take it off. Another year, I found that a hair dryer comes in handy when defrosting.

I eventually realized that the perfect Thanksgiving turkey is nearly impossible to attain. While stationed in Germany, I tried a method of roasting breast-side down, which resulted in delicious, juicy meat; however, the finished bird looked like it had flown out of a Zombie Turkey Apocalypse with sodden, hanging chunks of pale skin. Last year in Rhode Island, I tried the convection roast function on my oven, which produced a turkey that appeared to have been electrocuted, but was surprisingly edible.

Every year, I learn something new, and regardless of how my 27th bird turns out, I know I'll be grateful for at least one thing this Thanksgiving: Gravy.

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

WAIT, WHAT?

BY EVAN KALISH AND CAITLIN REID / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

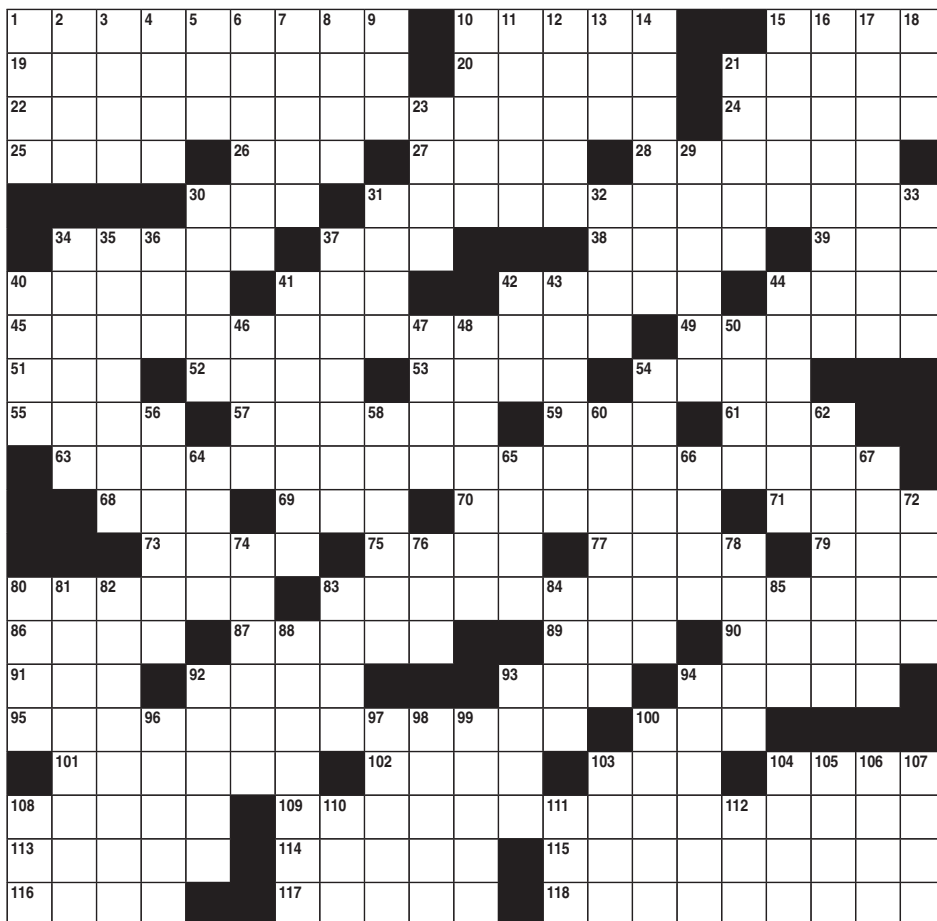
Evan Kalish, 33, of Bayside, N.Y., is a writer and crossword constructor. His hobby is visiting and photographing Post Offices around the country — more than 10,000 to date. Many photos and accounts of his travels appear on his blog, Postlandia. Caitlin Reid is a homemaker, crossword constructor and church pianist in Santa Ana, Calif. The two connected online and collaborated by email and video chat. This is Caitlin's second Sunday Times crossword and Evan's first. — W.S.

ACROSS

- 1 Aid for a small business
- 10 Dev of "Slumdog Millionaire"
- 15 Part of a prairie skyline
- 19 Strict commitment
- 20 Sidestep
- 21 "Way ahead of you"
- 22 Compliment to a runway model?
- 24 Low card in Texas hold'em
- 25 Some donations
- 26 Stable supply
- 27 Starting piece on al or h8, say
- 28 ___ Slam (tennis feat)
- 30 Drain
- 31 Easily offended by foul language?
- 34 Kind of high ground
- 37 Trial
- 38 Breaks down
- 39 Spanish "sun"
- 40 Axel ____, protagonist of "Beverly Hills Cop"
- 41 X
- 42 Japanese roadster since 1989
- 44 Residence that might be named for a donor
- 45 Question to a tantrum thrower?
- 49 Costly cuts
- 51 First two words of "Green Eggs and Ham"
- 52 ___ fixe
- 53 Malbec and syrah, e.g.
- 54 Role model
- 55 Wet-Nap, for one
- 57 Friend with a rhyming description
- 59 Sighting aptly found in "Are you for real?"
- 61 "Anything you'd like to ___?"
- 63 Relics proving how Noah steered his boat?
- 68 Something to do for recovery?
- 69 Pacific island ring
- 70 Neil with the hit "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do"
- 71 Carries out
- 73 Actor Elwes of "The Princess Bride"
- 75 Trade blows
- 77 Mild
- 79 Driver's org., no matter how you slice it?
- 80 Relent
- 83 Prepared for a field trip?
- 86 Interjections akin to "Yeah, su-u-ure!"
- 87 Bygone forensic spinoff
- 89 Android alternative
- 90 Quits at the last minute
- 91 Org. that awards the Safer Choice label
- 92 World capital established in 1535

DOWN

- 93 Jackanapes
- 94 Rap producers' favorite vegetables?
- 95 Masters of slapstick?
- 100 Retinal receptor
- 101 Drink after drink?
- 102 "To live without ___ is to cease to live": Dostoyevsky
- 103 Sign of summer
- 104 Stow cargo
- 108 Get into gear
- 109 Title for an oral surgeon's handbook?
- 113 Certain sexual preferences
- 114 Italian automotive hub
- 115 Subject of many an off-season rumor
- 116 "Young Frankenstein" character played by Teri Garr
- 117 Tee type
- 118 4th order?
- 1 ___ Rudolph, portrayal of Kamala Harris on "S.N.L."
- 2 Role model
- 3 Amigo
- 4 Rules' partner, for short
- 5 El Dorado treasure
- 6 Like apple seeds, if eaten in huge quantities
- 7 Fresh from a keg
- 8 Sore
- 9 Org. that sponsored the design competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- 10 MXN, on a currency chart
- 11 Adele and Cher, e.g.
- 12 ___ and Caicos
- 13 Part of a dean's address
- 14 "I'd rather pass"
- 15 Shooting sport
- 16 All together now
- 17 Farm-to-table consumer
- 18 Word that sounds like its first letter
- 21 Elba who played Macavity in 2019's "Cats"
- 23 One end of the PolitiFact meter
- 29 Willing subject
- 30 "Don't be rude . . . greet our guests!"
- 31 Loonie or toonie
- 32 Some are named for kings and queens
- 33 Stately street liners
- 34 Coat from a goat
- 35 High point of Greek civilization?
- 36 Emeritus: Abbr.
- 37 "It's me . . . duh!"
- 40 "Just sayin'," in shorthand
- 41 Needless to say
- 42 Mississippi ___ pie
- 43 Released
- 44 Thingamabob
- 46 Brink
- 47 World No. 1 tennis player between Navratilova and Seles
- 48 Lived in a blue state?



- 50 One might be hard to sit for
- 54 Pipes at some bars
- 56 Brings out
- 58 Downfall in many an Agatha Christie novel
- 60 Buzzed hairstyle
- 62 Stops harping on something
- 64 Like a sparsely attended party
- 65 See 66-Down
- 66 With 65-Down, "Ditto"
- 67 Pelvic exercises
- 72 Give attitude
- 74 Instruction for a course?
- 76 Earnings
- 78 Drew back
- 80 "Sorry to intrude . . ."
- 81 Certain monkey . . . or monk
- 82 "Jackpot!"
- 83 One needing new, unburned pants?
- 84 De-lights?
- 85 Oil-rich state, for short
- 88 Appliance with apps
- 92 Yearns (for)
- 93 Fashionable pair
- 94 Cover for "little piggies"
- 96 "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk" is the last short story he wrote
- 97 "Take that!"
- 98 Kind of chemical bond in salts
- 99 Vivacious quality
- 100 What a meta clue might do to itself
- 103 Chicago mayor Lightfoot
- 104 Brick made of acrylonitrile butadiene styrene
- 105 New ___
- 106 Showy basket
- 107 Lifesavers, for short
- 108 Piece of equipment for gold medalist Lindsey Vonn
- 110 Marauder of old
- 111 Lifelong bud, slangily
- 112 Partner of hem

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FACES

Art of success

From showgirl to killer, Nicole Kidman excels in these 7 films, streaming now

By CHRIS HEWITT

Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

I can think of no better illustration of the different ways an actor can succeed in Hollywood than Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, who's currently starring in HBO's "The Undoing."

The pair, whose marriage diverged just as their careers did, clearly think about their work differently.

Both are stars. But while Cruise cranks out action movies that are as blockbusting as they are indistinguishable (even the titles sound the same: "Never Go Back," "Edge of Tomorrow," "Oblivion"), Kidman consistently chooses the weirdest projects she can find. Cruise makes money; Kidman makes art.

One of the most intriguing movies either made, they made together: Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut." While it's an outlier in Cruise's career, it fits a template that has guided Kidman ever since she got past the girlfriend-of-some-dude roles she was initially offered.

Kidman consistently allies herself with visionary directors — big names such as Kubrick and bolder choices such as Park Chan-wook ("Stoker") — and pledges to do whatever they need, even if it meant devoting nearly two years to a role, as she did for Kubrick.

Going back as far as "Dead Calm," the tense Australian thriller that brought her to Hollywood's attention and that hinges on us believing her character is more complicated than the script suggests, you can pick almost any period of

her career and see how that plays out.

The thing about Kidman's prolific career is that there are misfires, including on rare occasions when she chases the box office, as with the Adam Sandler comedy "Just Go With It."

But even her duds are worth seeing: "The Paperboy" is a garish mess, but her cornpone accent and brazen horniness are big fun. "Aquaman" is as overstuffed as most superhero movies but she brings heart and calm to her role as a mysterious mom. She outclasses the script in "Destroyer," but short of Catherine O'Hara on "Schitt's Creek," has anyone ever worn a wackier collection of wigs?

When the experiment works, as it does in these seven favorites, the results are incredible.

'To Die For' (1995)

Kidman came to Hollywood to make "Days of Thunder" with Cruise, but it took five years to establish herself as a talent in her own right.

She beat out many top female actors for the role of a scheming "weather girl" who believes "you're not anything in America unless you're on TV," which is fascinating because Kidman herself usually seems to be running away from fame.

'Moulin Rouge!' (2001)

Baz Luhrmann's Paris-set musical is a lot. Outsized performances, song mash-ups, multiple story lines and assaultive camera moves make for a sometimes-exhausting experience (not just for us — in dedication to Luhrmann's



HILARY BRONWYN GAYLE/ Lionsgate

Nicole Kidman plays Gretchen Carlson, a supporting but still critical role, in "Bombshell."

vision, Kidman had dressers cinch her corset so tight that she broke a rib).

It's dazzling, but it would feel empty if it weren't for Kidman's humanity as the showgirl at the center of the fireworks.

'The Others' (2001)

Kidman played Grace Kelly in "Grace of Monaco," which was not a great idea because Kelly is so singular. But Kidman projects a Kelly-like, placid elegance as a haunted British mother in this effective ghost story, which has been showing up a lot on cable TV lately.

'Dogville' (2004)

You can tell how weird it is by how hard the generic trailer works to convince us it's not weird. Lars von Trier's drama unfolds in nine chapters, set on a

bare stage with chalk outlines to indicate the "set," and acting and plotting that remind us we're watching something closer to a filmed play. Kidman's most stripped-down acting draws us into the mind of a drifter, enslaved by residents of a Colorado town, who eventually seeks revenge.

'Stoker' (2013)

"Over the top" is not generally a phrase you'd use to describe a Kidman performance, but it does apply to quite a few of her movies. It's true of both in this thriller, where she channels "Whatever Happened to Baby Jane"-era Bette Davis in what resembles a kinky 1950s psychodrama such as "Suddenly Last Summer." This romantic-triangle thriller finds Kidman as a viper in a house where almost everyone is capable of killing to get what they want.

'Paddington' (2015)

Kidman occasionally picks projects because they'll be fun, as with next month's "The Prom," where she'll be a dizzy bombshell, and this children's classic, where she's basically Cruella de Vil. Kidman's taxidermist wants to catch and stuff the titular teddy bear, and yes, her performance is as cheerfully perverse as that sounds.

'Bombshell' (2019)

Kidman is just as willing to grab a flashy lead in an indie movie as a supporting role in an ensemble piece such as "The Hours," which earned her an Oscar, and this one. She projects calm decency (and a good accent) as Minnesota native Gretchen Carlson, helping lead the charge against Fox News' sexist honcho Roger Ailes.

'Wonder Woman 1984' to debut in theaters, on HBO Max

Associated Press

"Wonder Woman 1984" isn't skipping theaters or moving to 2021, but it is altering course. The last big blockbuster holdout of 2020 is still opening in U.S. theaters on Christmas Day, but it will also be made available to HBO Max subscribers free of charge for its first month, Warner Bros. said Wednesday.

After the first month for free on HBO Max, "Wonder Woman 1984" will play in theaters for an additional few weeks before being made available for rental on demand.

It is an unprecedented strategy for a film of its size, but a sign of the extraordinary measures that many Hollywood studios have had to resort to in the COVID-19 era. Most major films that had been set for 2020 have either delayed theatrical releases until 2021 or sent them to streaming platforms for a premium rental price, as the Walt Disney Co. did with "Mulan."

"Wonder Woman 1984" is a major tentpole for Warner Bros. The first film made more than \$821 million globally in 2017. The sequel, which brings back director Patty Jenkins and star Gal Gadot, has been hotly anticipated, not only by fans, but by theater owners too.

Lil Baby, Swift, Ricch win at Apple Music Awards

Rapper Lil Baby has been named artist of the year at the second annual Apple Music Awards.

The rapper, who topped the charts this year with his sophomore album "My Turn" and reached the No. 3 spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart with his hit "The Bigger Picture," was hand-selected by the streaming service's global editorial team to win the title. The editorial team also named Taylor Swift songwriter of the year and Megan

Thee Stallion breakthrough artist of the year.

Roddy Ricch, whose successful year included a Grammy win, No. 1 album and No. 1 song, won two Apple Music honors that were based on streaming data. His debut album, "Please Excuse Me for Being Antisocial," has been streamed more than 1.5 billion times on the platform and was named top album of the year. His smash hit "The Box" logged more than 460 million Apple Music streams and was crowned top song of the year.

Pacino, Fey to appear in 'Heroes of New York' lineup

Al Pacino, Tina Fey and Eli Manning will join a star-studded lineup to celebrate the selfless acts of New Yorkers.

Robin Hood and iHeartRadio announced a collaboration Thursday to present "He-

roses of New York," which will air Dec. 1 on television and radio stations in New York. The one-hour show will share inspirational stories of generosity from individuals and organizations.

The show will feature musical performances from Mariah Carey, Tony Bennett and Andra Day.

Other special guests include Jon Stewart, Kevin Bacon, Mariano Rivera, Michael Strahan, Ryan Seacrest and Tracy Morgan.

Other news

■ Former President Barack Obama's "A Promised Land" sold nearly 890,000 copies in the U.S. and Canada in its first 24 hours, putting it on track to be the best selling presidential memoir in modern history. The first-day sales, a record for Penguin Random House, includes pre-orders, e-books and audio. Obama's 768-page memoir has a list price of \$45

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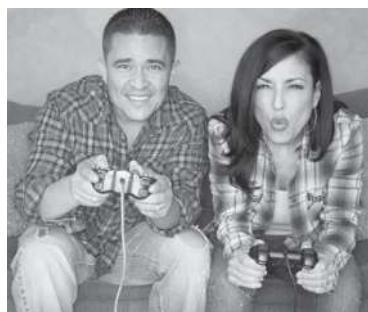
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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Prehistoric sturgeon washes up on beach

VA VIRGINIA BEACH — A rare and prehistoric fish has washed up on Virginia Beach's oceanfront.

The slow-moving, armor-plated species sometimes falls victim to ship strikes. And the sturgeon's head was nearly severed.

Atlantic sturgeon are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. The species used to have vast populations along the Atlantic coast.

Female Atlantic sturgeon lay eggs in the fall in the rivers of the Chesapeake Bay, and then migrate offshore, marine biologist Noelle Mathies said. She added that it's rare to find a sturgeon so quickly after it has died.

In recent years, scientists have been seeing increased numbers of sturgeon in some rivers because of cleaner water, dam removals and fishing bans. These discoveries provide some hope for a fish that is among the world's most threatened.

Dog reunites with owner year after being lost

MO ARNOLD — Nearly a year after Walter the dog went missing in suburban St. Louis, apparently wandering the woods behind an industrial park, the golden retriever is back with his owner.

Kate Olson of New Hampshire was in Arnold visiting relatives last Thanksgiving when Walter slipped out of his collar and took off. Olson stayed in Missouri for weeks searching for the dog and printing and distributing fliers.

She eventually returned to New England but got calls about sightings. She returned in January to search again. No luck, so she created a "Where's Walter?" Facebook page and enlisted animal rescue groups in the search.

Finally, Olson got the call she had been waiting for. A group based in Belleville, Ill., called Lost Paws Trapping was able to capture Walter. Olson immediately got on a plane and was reunited with Walter.

Man finds mortar shell while digging flower bed

MA WESTBOROUGH — A Massachusetts man found a mortar shell in his yard while digging up a spot for a new flower bed.

Department of Fire Safety spokesperson Jennifer Meith said bomb squad members determined that the mortar shell was a training mortar, which only contains a small charge called a "spotter charge."

Police Lt. Chet Hallice said that the Massachusetts State Police bomb squad removed the mortar and detonated it.

"The homeowner was cutting out a new flower bed when he hit something hard," Hallice said



KRISTOPHER RADDER, THE BRATTLEBORO REFORMER/AP

Forging his way

Kyle Farace hammers a knife into shape on an anvil at his Bellows Falls, Vt., workshop on Monday. Farace was featured as a contestant on the History Channel show "Forged In Fire" that airs Nov. 25.

Monday. "He dug it out and it was a metal item that looked like a shell. It was a 20-inch metal cylinder that he believed to be an explosive."

School disciplined for band's costumes

PA PITTSBURGH — Officials disciplined a western Pennsylvania high school because of costumes worn by some members of its marching band that were perceived as blackface.

The Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League placed the Peters Township School District on probation until Oct. 31, 2021, and ordered it to submit a written plan to "educate and eradicate the social and racial insensitivity displayed by the marching band."

At least two members of the band wore black full-body suits during a pregame performance when the school, which is comprised of mostly white students, played Woodland Hills, a predominantly Black school, on Oct. 30.

The community likened the outfits to wearing blackface.

University to get Apple store run by students

SC COLUMBIA — The University of South Carolina announced that a store

THE CENSUS

50 The number of tiny homes St. Louis, Mo., is planning to help provide shelter for the homeless. Mayor Lyda Krewson announced the plans for the homes on property near downtown that was previously the site of an RV park. Each house will have a bed, desk, chair, heating and air conditioning. Showers and security will be provided at the village. The city also plans to contract with a social services provider to implement on-site case management and supervision. A second tiny house community is planned in north St. Louis, also with about 50 homes. That village, announced last month, will focus on houses for homeless veterans.

selling Apple products is coming to its campus in Columbia in early 2021 — and will be managed largely by students as part of their curriculum.

It will be the second store of its kind in the U.S. that is managed and operated by students, according to a news release.

The store, which will be located in the Byrnes Building, will sell a range of Apple products including laptop computers, tablets and accessories.

Faculty from the College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management are leading the project and will help with store management, while students will manage daily operations.

Monastery will close after 74 years

NH CONCORD — A monastery in New Hampshire is closing after 74 years, according to The Concord Monitor.

The news was announced by the

Diocese of Manchester, in conjunction with Carmelite Communities Associated, a national association of Carmelite monasteries.

The 39-acre property is owned by the Carmelite Communities Associated and has an assessed value of nearly \$600,000.

Shark tagged off Canada found along Outer Banks

NC CHARLOTTE — A 17-foot great white shark that was tagged off Canada last month has made its way to North Carolina's Outer Banks, an ocean research group said.

OCEARCH, which tagged Nukumi on Oct. 2, posted data showing the 3,541-pound apex predator had popped up off Wilmington, then turned around and headed north to Buxton on Hatteras Island.

Tagged sharks show up on satellite only after their dorsal fin breaches the water surface for more than a few seconds. Accord-

ing to OCEARCH, the shark has spent the past two days off Avon.

Nukumi, named by OCEARCH, counts as the largest of seven white sharks currently tracking off North Carolina's coast. She is considered unique among the more than 60 sharks being tracked in the Northwest Atlantic because she is the biggest and likely, estimated to be more than 50 years old, the oldest.

Police: Thief cooked pizza during burglary

CA FULLERTON — A thief took a break during his burglary of a Southern California pizzeria to make himself a pizza pie before fleeing with the restaurant's delivery car, authorities said.

The suspect, later identified as Oscar Sanchez, 25, broke into Big Slice Pizza in Fullerton on Nov. 8, police said. After he was arrested, police posted security video of the pizza-making to Facebook.

Sanchez allegedly also stole the pizzeria's cash and tablets, police said. Security footage shows him stretching dough at the restaurant's counter. Prosecutors have charged him on suspicion of grand theft, grand theft auto, second degree burglary, the possession of burglary tools and other crimes.

STARS AND STRIPES

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Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher
Lt. Col. Marci Hoffman, Europe commander
Lt. Col. Richard McClintic, Pacific commander
Caroline E. Miller, Europe Business Operations
Joshua M. Lashbrook, Pacific Chief of Staff

EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor
leonard.terry@stripes.com

Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stripes.com

Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stripes.com

Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stripes.com

Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erik Slavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
slavin.erik@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9350; DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com
+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380; DSN (315)227.7380

Washington

Joseph Cacchioli, Washington Bureau Chief
cacchioli.joseph@stripes.com
(+1)(202)886-0033
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

Robert Reismann, Mideast Circulation Manager
robert.w.reismann.naf@mail.mil
xsscirculation@stripes.com
DSN (314)583-9111

Europe

Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager
lewis.karen@stripes.com
memberservices@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9090; DSN (314)583.9090

Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stripes.com
+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

CONTACT US

Washington

tel: (+1)202.886.0003
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Reader letters

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Additional contacts

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Ernie Gates

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Must remedy COVID-19 polarization

BY GARY ABERNATHY

Special To The Washington Post

CLERMONT COUNTY, Ohio
The same dramatic spread of COVID-19 that is leading health officials, governors and numerous media voices to call for more restrictions on our behavior is also making more restrictions a tougher sell. Why? Because almost everyone has by now been touched by the virus, either being infected themselves or having family members or friends diagnosed with it, and they're drawing their own conclusions.

It's only natural. Though there are aspects of COVID-19 that are not fully understood, including why some people suffer lingering health problems, the majority of cases pass quickly without requiring medical assistance. Yes, there are of course exceptions, usually among the elderly with underlying health problems; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 94% of COVID-related deaths have, on average, nearly three other "comorbidity" issues.

These cases should affect our thinking, but so should the much larger share that pass without serious consequences. People in my family have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Fortunately, their symptoms were mild and they quickly recovered. Policy-makers need to better grapple with the effect of that basic, most common outcome.

In Ohio, Democratic Gov. Mike DeWine took a hardline approach early on. Just this week, he announced a new three-week curfew. But along with lockdowns and restrictions, DeWine has chosen the language of fear, warning alternately that "the monster is still loose" and "our state's life is now in

danger" and the virus is "coming after all of us." He has also played the guilt card, asking: "Will the family reunion be worth it if your grandmother tests positive and dies?"

Such overwrought language is counterproductive and can only erode trust. My daughter is the oldest of my four children, and she has always had a nurturing spirit. With three younger brothers, she was often both sister and second mom to them through the years. She and her husband are parents to two daughters, and she has spent two decades as an elementary school teacher. When the coronavirus came along, she worried about her grandparents — my parents — who are both well into their 80s. She ran errands for them, urged them to stay home and checked on them every day. She tried to keep them in a safe bubble.

But as she recounted this month in a Facebook post, "My grandpa finally sat me down and told me that he would not live in fear. He would not isolate or social distance or wear a mask when he did not need to. He understands that the simple flu could take him out. He understands that a car accident could take him out. He wants to live his life and he completely changed my mind about things. I will not live in fear. . . . I know who ultimately holds my fate in His hand."

Social media is filled with tragic stories of elderly Americans passing away after weeks or months in isolation, with no physical contact from family or friends. One friend this week posted a picture of her elderly mom, who is in a nursing home. "She just recovered from COVID," she wrote. "I haven't hugged her for 9 months."

Most Americans who chafe at COVID-19 restrictions understand science, but not everyone worships at its altar. They balance the science with other lived principles such

as faith, family and freedom. We should all respect those who choose to quarantine, especially elderly Americans and people with serious medical conditions, and do our best to keep hospitals from being overwhelmed. But even with vaccines finally on the horizon, there are those, including National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci, who submit that Americans should accept being a masked, distanced and isolated people for months to come because of the dangers of the virus spreading in the interim. Some will call objections to such suggestions short-sighted "COVID fatigue." Others will call it the American spirit yearning to be free.

During the election, these disparate approaches to COVID-19 were starkly represented by President Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Biden prevailed, but Trump still won 47% of the vote, and they each carried 25 states. So how does a divided America resolve its differences on COVID-19? "Just wear the damn mask!" won't win over those who resist restrictions, any more than raising alarms about constitutional freedoms will sway those who believe we should obediently follow government edicts. Let's ditch the stereotypes — lockdown resisters are not ignorant or uncaring any more than advocates for restrictive health precautions think the Constitution is irrelevant.

The disagreements are heartfelt. Finding a balance that everyone can accept will require respect and compromise — two things in short supply in the United States right now but just as important as hospital workers and medical science for the well-being of our nation.

Gary Abernathy, a contributing columnist for The Washington Post, is a freelance writer based in southwestern Ohio.

What will history say about Trump?

BY MATT BAI

Special to The Washington Post

Come January, whether by persuasion or court order or military escort, the 45th president will pack his things and leave the White House for good, and the Trump administration will be history.

What, then, will history make of President Donald Trump?

I'm not asking whether historians 100 years from now will consider Trump a good president or bad one. The book on that is pretty much closed.

The unresolved question is how those historians, with the benefit of distance, will explain Trump's rise and what it portended. My guess is they'll conclude that Trump reflected nostalgia for a fast-receding American moment — while also giving us a glimpse of the one that lay ahead.

History will record that from the late 1980s, with the end of the fragile Cold War consensus, our politics began to fracture rapidly. Rattled by seismic transformations in technology, left behind by social movements and global markets, many Americans lost faith in the big institutions — banks, churches, media, military — that had been the cornerstones of community life.

Tremors rocked the political establish-

ment as a parade of celebrities and self-styled reformers — Ross Perot, Jesse Ventura, Arnold Schwarzenegger — moved to exploit the sudden vulnerability of industrial-age parties. Then came Barack Obama's toppling of the Democratic order in 2008 — a sign that personality and identity had at last supplanted party machines.

The history texts will note that by 2016, a leaderless Republican Party was primed for a hostile takeover. The idea of a conservative billionaire populist may sound inherently contradictory to students in the 22nd century, but in 2016 America, ideological coherence wasn't a particular selling point. Trump was a skillful entertainer who terrified the political and media elite, and that was enough.

Students will write that Trump's brief presidency was notable mostly for its affront to the democratic norms of the age. Trump behaved more like a small-time strongman than an American president — sharing power with his children, misinforming the public through a primitive digital platform called "Twitter," whipping up the masses with staged-for-TV rallies. His enduring hold on these audiences — white and less educated, a sizable plurality of the electorate — stemmed from a promise to restore the past. Trump was the natural anchor on a relay whose baton of racial and socioeconomic resentment had passed from

George Wallace to Richard Nixon to Ronald Reagan before him.

By the 2020s, though, American culture was moving quickly and inexorably toward mass urbanization and the more tolerant social attitudes that came with it. It will be clear to future historians, with the benefit of hindsight, that Trump's presidency marked the last, tortured spasms of a dying ideology. And yet, scholars of the next century will point out that Trump's presidency wasn't only a rearview mirror trained on where America had been. It was also a kind of headlight, illuminating the road ahead.

Because, after Trump, presidential politics would never again be the sole purview of parties or their careerist politicians.

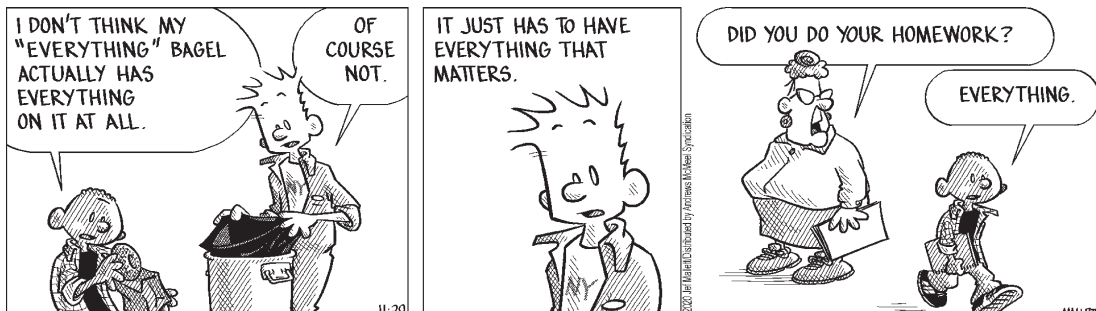
Will historians say this was a bad thing? That's a hard one to predict.

There's a version of what Trump represents — persona over party, outsidership over conventional experience — that might actually ennoble our politics. But then there's the more alarming version of the free-standing, celebrity president — a demagogue who preys on divisions, an aspiring autocrat whose self-gratification eclipses all public good.

If that's where we're headed, history will have little problem tracing it to the source.

Matt Bai, a Washington Post contributing columnist, is a journalist, author and screenwriter.

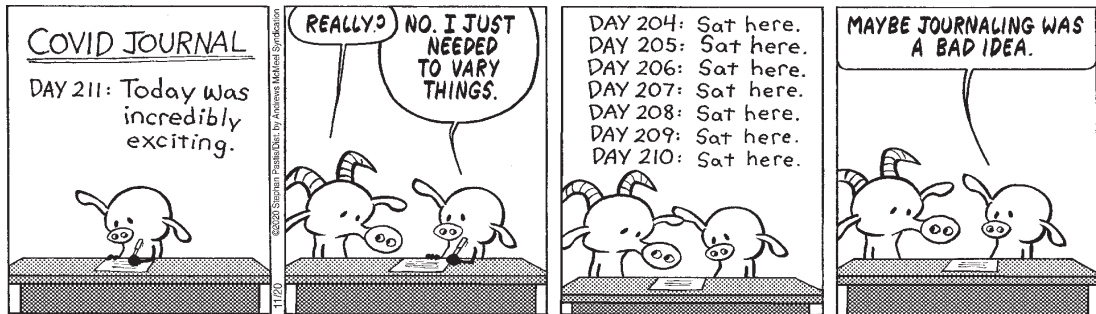
Frazz



Dilbert



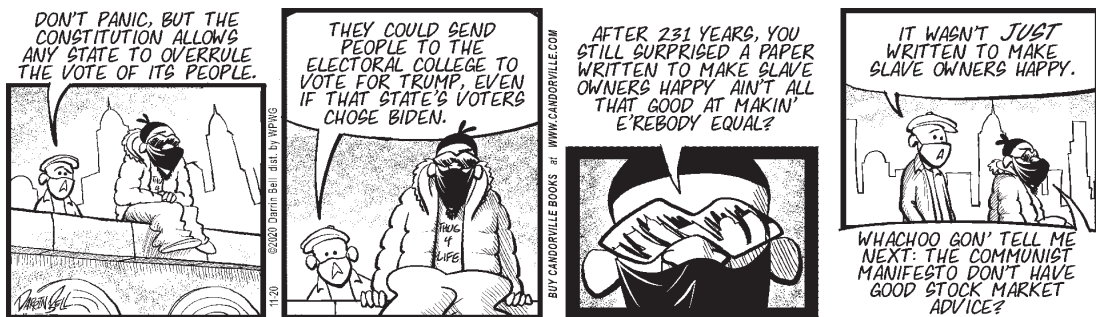
Pearls Before Swine



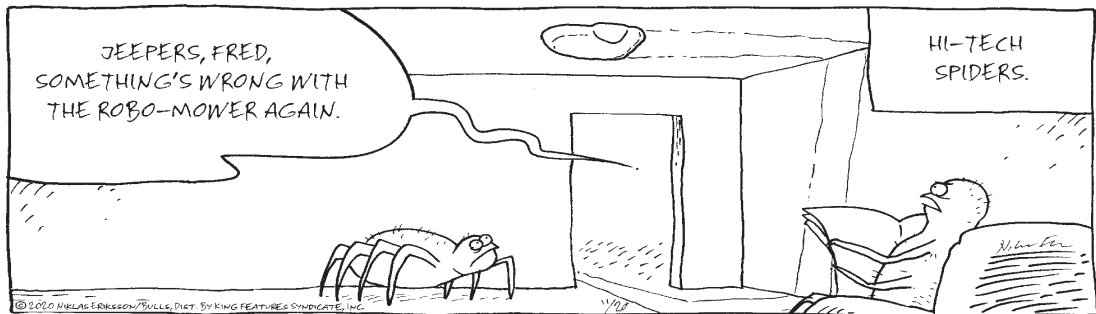
Non Sequitur



Candorville



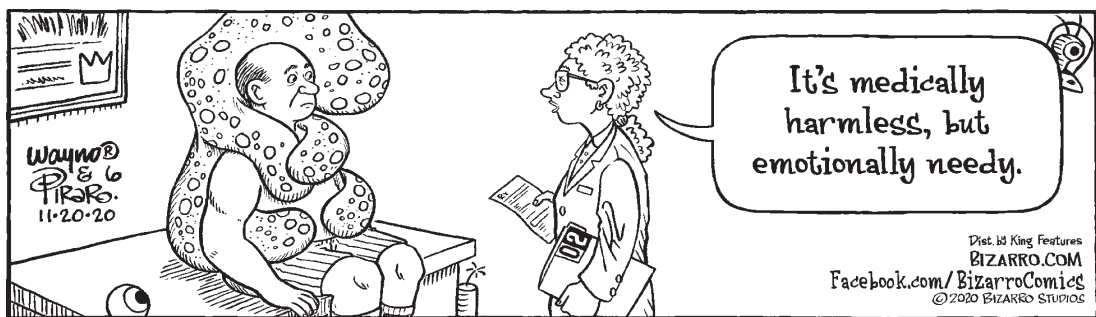
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
12						13				14		
15						16				17		
		18				19				20		
21	22			23				24				
25			26		27		28					
29				30			31			32	33	34
			35			36			37			
38	39	40				41		42		43		
44					45			46				
47				48				49			50	51
52					53			54				
55					56			57				

ACROSS

- 1 Taxi ticker
- 6 — out a living
- 9 "Awesome, dude!"
- 12 Florida city
- 13 Started
- 14 French pal
- 15 Ninnies
- 16 Fruit-filled dessert
- 18 Polar buildup
- 20 "— Misbehavin'"
- 21 "The Matrix" hero
- 23 "— Kapital"
- 24 High hairstyles
- 25 Early Peruvian
- 27 Rich kid in "Nancy" comics
- 29 "Scram!"
- 31 Short and thick
- 35 D-Day beach
- 37 Sloth's home
- 38 Myanmar, once
- 41 Non-Rx
- 43 Toronto's prov.
- 44 Yours (Fr.) or "CSI"
- 47 Bacardi-spiked dessert
- 49 Sleep problem
- 52 Before
- 53 Texter's guffaw
- 54 Jockey's handful

DOWN

- 1 '60s chic
- 2 Green prefix
- 3 Pudding-like dessert
- 4 Power co. supply
- 5 Demolished, in Dover
- 6 Sun Bowl city
- 7 Iodine source
- 8 Sch. URL ender
- 9 Speedy
- 10 Acid in proteins
- 11 Losing ventures?
- 17 Plan in detail
- 19 Magna —
- 21 Pen tip
- 22 Away from WSW
- 24 Last (Abbr.)
- 26 Kind of clock
- 28 Exams for future attys.
- 30 "— Little Teapot"
- 32 Goopy dessert
- 33 Oscar winner Kingsley
- 34 Still
- 36 Shacks
- 38 Exposes
- 39 Road reversal
- 40 Juliet's beau
- 42 Scorches
- 45 Boxing stats
- 46 Autobahn auto
- 48 Pub pint
- 50 Finale
- 51 Ninny

Answer to Previous Puzzle

H	O	L	A		P	A	N		C	P	A	S	
A	P	E	S		L	I	E		A	I	L	S	
T	E	E	S		A	R	T		N	E	O	N	
S	C	R	E	W	Y		S		H	A	D	E	S
					R	E	D		A	D	O		
K	E	P	T		A	P	P	L	A	U	S	E	
F	R	I			T	E	A			G	E	L	
C	A	P	E	F	E	A	R			T	H	A	I
					E	G	O		T	R	U		
B	A	D	G	E	S		Y	E	N	T	A	S	
E	L	O	I			A	N	D		D	O	M	O
G	O	W	N			R	O	I		R	I	P	S
S	U	N	G			I	M	P		A	L	S	O

11-20

CRYPTOQUIP

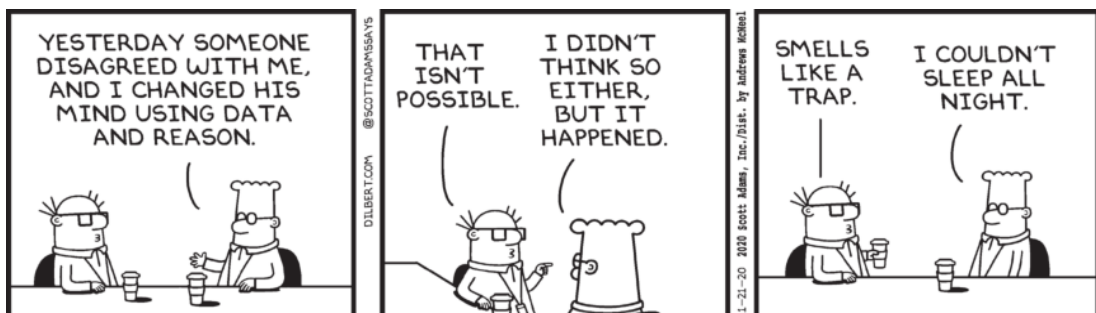
OSUGJNJ OSGJULUCD IPGS
 JOGHUMK SGKUDUIEJ
 JGSPUHGJ WGKL TIS JKEDDUJW
 QMQMKJ: QGC IT NWG JKINW.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU'RE STAUNCHLY REFUSING TO TASTE THIN, FLAT COOKIES OR CRACKERS, ARE YOU UNWAFERING?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals L

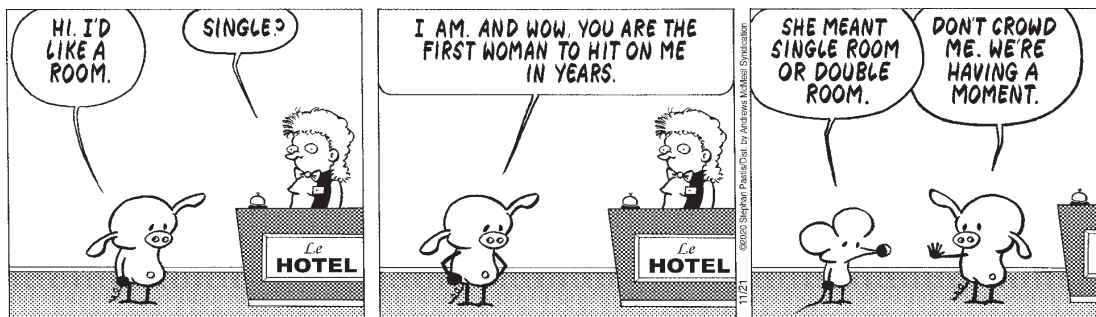
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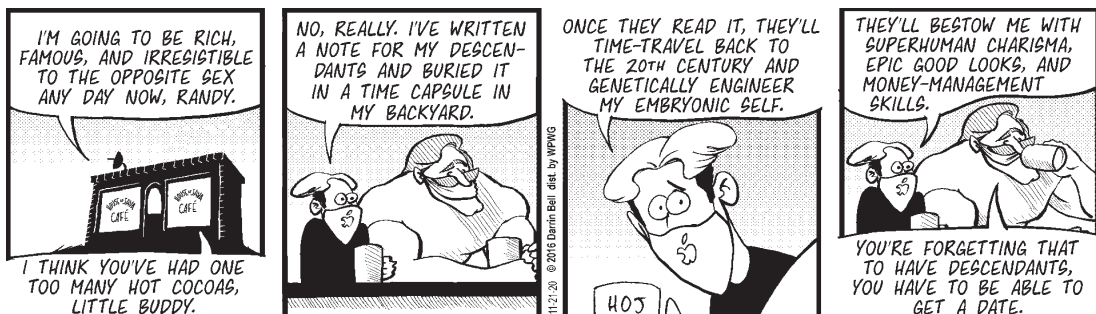
Pearls Before Swine



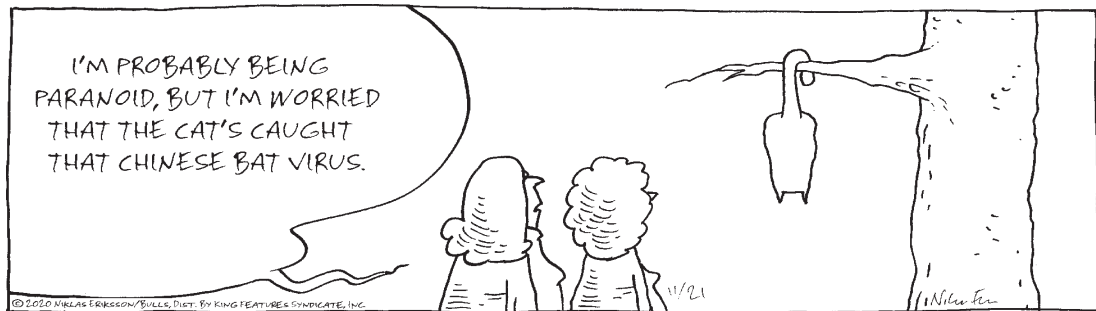
Non Sequitur



Candorville



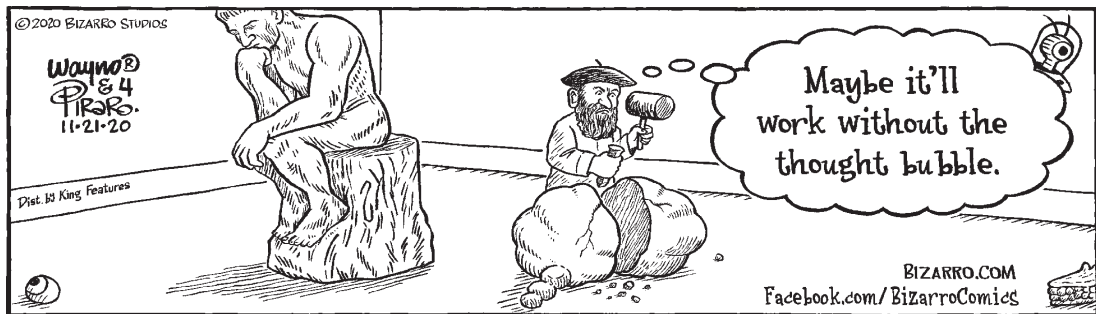
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
11							12					13
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24				25		26		27				
			28		29		30					
31	32	33				34		35		36	37	38
39					40		41		42			
43				44				45		46		
47			48					49		50		
51								52				
	53							54				

ACROSS

- 1 Terrific
- 6 "Endymion" poet
- 11 Bagel choice
- 12 Golf's Palmer
- 14 Calm
- 15 Gilda of "SNL"
- 16 D followers
- 17 Slangy farewells
- 19 Six, in Sicily
- 20 Stead
- 22 Pouch
- 23 Donate
- 24 Inventor Nikola
- 26 In the fridge
- 28 "The Voice" network
- 30 Altar affirmative
- 31 Portable grill
- 35 Malia's sister
- 39 Shrek, for one
- 40 Gerund ending
- 42 Go sightseeing
- 43 Slangy suffix
- 44 Wide, fancy necktie
- 46 Bovary's title (Abbr.)
- 47 This evening, in an ad
- 49 Start of a nursery rhyme
- 51 "Awesome!"

DOWN

- 52 Trembling trees
- 53 Avoids
- 54 Big name in tractors
- 21 Arm bones
- 23 Be a poor winner
- 25 Jackson 5 hit song
- 27 Dog tags, e.g.
- 29 Woodworking tools
- 31 Owl sounds
- 32 Domed homes
- 33 Tree limb
- 34 Business mag
- 36 Gloomy
- 37 Compassionate
- 38 Locales
- 41 Spoil
- 44 Like — of bricks
- 45 Use a stun gun
- 48 Debtor's letters
- 50 Mimic

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

11-21

CRYPTOQUIP

LFES EMW SLV PBI SFBDIY
SFES EDJ GBOYSBHX-KEXBDI
HV KOEDJ YFVRGZ HEMW
EPVRS? OMOVABS EDZ IGVYY.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: PRIESTS PRESIDING OVER SPECIAL RELIGIOUS SERVICES HELD FOR SLUGGISH MAMMALS; MEN OF THE SLOTH.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals G

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Schedule

Friday's games

SOUTH
Syracuse (1-7) at Louisville (2-6)
UMass (0-2) at FAU (4-1)

MIDWEST

Purdue (2-1) at Minnesota (1-3)

SOUTHWEST

UAB (4-3) at UTEP (3-4), ppd.

FAR WEST

New Mexico (0-3) at Air Force (1-2)

Saturday's games

EAST

Georgia Southern (6-2) at Army (6-2)
East Carolina (1-6) at Temple (1-5)
Michigan St. (1-3) at Maryland (2-1)
Iowa (2-2) at Penn St. (0-4)
Virginia Tech (4-4) at Pittsburgh (4-4)
Michigan (1-3) at Rutgers (1-3)

SOUTH

Stephen F. Austin (6-3) at Memphis (4-2)
Clemson (7-1) at Florida St. (2-6)
Wake Forest (4-3) at Duke (2-6)
Florida (5-1) at Vanderbilt (0-6)
Appalachian St. (6-1) at Coastal Carolina (7-0)

Cent. Arkansas (5-4) at Louisiana-Lafayette (7-1)

FIU (0-4) at W. Kentucky (3-6)
UTSA (5-4) at Southern Miss. (2-6)

W. Carolina (0-1) at E. Kentucky (2-6)
Cincinnati (7-0) at UCF (5-2)

Middle Tennessee (2-6) at Troy (4-3)
Georgia St. (3-4) at South Alabama (3-5)

Abilene Christian (1-4) at Virginia (3-4)
Kentucky (3-4) at Alabama (6-0)

Tennessee (2-4) at Auburn (4-2)
Missouri (2-3) at South Carolina (2-5)

Liberty (8-0) at NC State (5-3)
Mississippi St. (2-4) at Georgia (4-2)

Georgia Tech (2-5) at Miami (7-1), ppd.
Navy (3-4) at South Florida (1-7)

MIDWEST

Indiana (4-0) at Ohio St. (3-0)
Illinois (1-3) at Nebraska (1-2)

Wisconsin (2-0) at Northwestern (4-0)
Texas (5-2) at Kansas (0-7)

Kansas St. (4-3) at Iowa St. (5-2)

SOUTHWEST

Houston (3-3) at SMU (7-2)
LSU (2-3) at Arkansas (3-4)

Rice (1-1) at North Texas (2-3)
Arkansas St. (3-5) at Texas State (1-9)

Mississippi (3-4) at Texas A&M (5-1), ppd.

Oklahoma St. (5-1) at Oklahoma (5-2)

FAR WEST

UCLA (1-1) at Oregon (2-0)
North Alabama (0-3) at BYU (8-0)

California (0-1) at Oregon St. (0-2)
San Diego St. (3-1) at Nevada (4-0)

UNLV (0-4) at Colorado St. (1-2)
San Jose St. (4-0) at Fresno St. (3-1)

Arizona (0-1) at Washington (1-0)
Southern Cal (2-0) at Utah

Boise St. (3-1) at Hawaii (2-2)
Washington St. (1-1) at Stanford (0-2)

PRO SOCCER

MLS playoffs

Play-in

Eastern Conference

Friday's games

(9) Montreal at (8) New England

(10) Inter Miami at (7) Nashville

First Round

Eastern Conference

Saturday's games

Orlando City vs. New York City FC

Columbus vs. New York

Tuesday, Nov. 24

Toronto vs. higher-seeded play-in winner

Philadelphia vs. lower-seeded play-in winner

Western Conference

Sunday, Nov. 22

Sporting Kansas City vs. San Jose

Minnesota United vs. Colorado

Portland vs. Dallas

Tuesday, Nov. 24

Seattle vs. Los Angeles FC

Conference Semifinals

Sunday, Nov. 29-Wednesday, Dec. 2

Teams TBD

TENNIS

ATP World Tour Finals

Wednesday

At The O2 Arena

London

Purse: \$5,700,000

Surface: Hardcourt indoor

Men's Singles

Group 1

Alexander Zverev, Germany, def. Diego Schwartzman, Argentina, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.

Daniil Medvedev, Russia, def. Novak Djokovic, Serbia, 6-3, 6-3.

Men's Doubles

Group 1

Marcel Granollers, Spain, and Horacio Zeballos, Argentina, def. Bruno Soares, Brazil, and Mate Pavic, Croatia, 7-6 (4), 6-7 (4), 10-8.

Jurgen Melzer, Austria, and Edouard Roger-Vasselin, France, def. Michael Venus, New Zealand, and John Peers, Australia, 2-6, 7-6 (4), 12-10.

PRO FOOTBALL

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	7	3	0	.700	272	265
Miami	6	3	0	.667	251	182
New England	4	5	0	.444	189	211
N.Y. Jets	0	9	0	.000	121	268

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Indianapolis	6	3	0	.667	242	177
Tennessee	6	3	0	.667	249	235
Houston	2	7	0	.222	200	252
Jacksonville	1	8	0	.111	199	271

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	9	0	0	1.000	271	171
Baltimore	6	3	0	.667	244	165
Cleveland	6	3	0	.667	216	244
Cincinnati	2	6	1	.278	204	250

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	8	1	0	.889	286	183
Las Vegas	6	3	0	.667	255	241
Denver	3	6	0	.333	186	254
L.A. Chargers	2	7	0	.222	226	245

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	3	5	1	.389	203	232
N.Y. Giants	3	7	0	.300	195	236
Dallas	2	7	0	.222	204	290
Washington	2	7	0	.222	180	218

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	7	2	0	.778	271	213
Tampa Bay	7	3	0	.700	296	226
Atlanta	3	6	0	.333	243	251
Carolina	3	7	0	.300	233	272

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Green Bay	7	2	0	.778	277	224
Chicago	5	5	0	.500	191	209
Detroit	4	5	0	.444	227	267
Minnesota	4	5	0	.444	236	247

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arizona	6	3	0	.667	266	210
L.A. Rams	6	3	0	.667	216	168
Seattle	6	3	0	.667	290	266
San Francisco	4	6	0	.400	238	234

Thursday's game

Arizona at Seattle

Sunday's games

Atlanta at New Orleans

Cincinnati at Washington

Detroit at Carolina

New England at Houston

Philadelphia at Cleveland

Pittsburgh at Jacksonville

Tennessee at Baltimore

Miami at Denver

N.Y. Jets at L.A. Chargers

Dallas at Minnesota

Green Bay at Indianapolis

Kansas City at Las Vegas

Open: Buffalo, Chicago, N.Y. Giants, San Francisco

Monday's game

L.A. Rams at Tampa Bay

Thursday, Nov. 26

Houston at Detroit

Washington at Dallas

Baltimore at Pittsburgh

Sunday, Nov. 29

Arizona at New England

Carolina at Minnesota

Cleveland at Jacksonville

L.A. Chargers at Buffalo

Las Vegas at Atlanta

Miami at N.Y. Jets

N.Y. Giants at Cincinnati

Tennessee at Indianapolis

New Orleans at Denver

San Francisco at L.A. Rams

Kansas City at Tampa Bay

Chicago at Green Bay

Monday, Nov. 30

Seattle at Philadelphia

NFL injury report

NEW YORK — The National Football League injury report, as provided by the league (DNP: did not practice; LIMITED: limited participation; FULL: Full participation):

SUNDAY

ATLANTA FALCONS at **NEW ORLEANS SAINTS** — **FALCONS:** DNP: T Matt Gono (illness). LIMITED: WR Calvin Ridley (foot). FULL: T Kaleb McGary (knee). **SAINTS:** DNP: QB Drew Brees (right shoulder, ribs), TE Josh Hill (concussion), DE Cameron Jordan (back), WR Tre'Quan Smith (concussion), RB Dwayne Washington (back). LIMITED: DT Malcom Brown (calf), RB Alvin Kamara (foot), CB Marshon Lattimore (abdomen), T Ryan Ramczyk (knee).

CINCINNATI BENGALS at **WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM** — **BENGALS:** DNP: DT Geno Atkins (not injury related), DT Mike Daniels (not injury related), WR A.J. Green (not injury related), RB Joe Mixon (foot), LB Germaine Pratt (not injury related). LIMITED: CB Mackensie Alexander (concussion), S Jessie Bates (not injury related), T Bobby Hart (knee), G Alex Redmond (biceps), CB LeShaun Sims (concussion), DT Xavier Williams (back), FULL: T Jonah Williams (stinger). **WASHINGTON:** DNP: DE Ryan Anderson (knee), T Geron Christian (knee), S Deshaun Everett (ankle), LB Dustin Hopkins (right groin), WR Dontrelle Inman (hamstring), T Cornelius Lucas (ankle), LB Jared Norris (hamstring).

DALLAS COWBOYS at **MINNESOTA VIKINGS** — **COWBOYS:** DNP: C Tyler Biadasz (hamstring), DE Randy Gregory (illness). LIMITED: G Zack Martin (calf), FULL: QB Andy Dalton (concussion), RB Ezekiel Elliott (hamstring), LB Joe Thomas (wrist). **VIKINGS:** DNP: G Ezra Cleveland (ankle), RB C.J. Ham (not injury related). LIMITED: C Garrett Bradbury (shoulder), DT Hercules Mata'afa (ankle), TE Irv Smith (groin).

DETROIT LIONS at **CAROLINA PANTHERS** — **LIONS:** DNP: WR Danny Amendola (hip), DE Austin Bryant (thigh), WR Marvin Jones (knee), QB Matthew Stafford (right thumb). LIMITED: LB Jarrad Davis (knee), WR Kenny Golladay (hip), TE T.J. Hockenson (toe), LB Christian Jones (knee), T Halapoulivaati Vaitai (foot), DT Nicholas Williams (shoulder). FULL: R Jamal Agnew (ribs). **PANTHERS:** DNP: CB Donte Jackson (toe), RB Christian McCaffrey (shoulder), G John Miller (knee, ankle), LB Tahir Whitehead (rib). LIMITED: QB Teddy Bridgewater (knee), S Sam Franklin (ankle), DE Yetur Gross-Matos (shoulder), DE Marquis Haynes (shoulder), TE Chris Manhertz (shoulder), T Russell Okung (calf). FULL: RB Mike Davis (thumb).

GREEN BAY PACKERS at **INDIANAPOLIS COLTS** — **PACKERS:** DNP: DE Montravious Adams (toe). LIMITED: WR Davante Adams (ankle), CB Jaire Alexander (concussion, hand). FULL: T David Bakhtiari (chest).

MONDAY

LOS ANGELES RAMS at **TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS** — **RAMS:** No Data Reported. **BUCCANEERS:** No Data Reported.

COLTS:

DNP: TE Trey Burton (not injury related), TE Jack Doyle (concussion), DE Justin Houston (not injury related), CB Kenny Moore (ribs), S Khari Willis (ribs). LIMITED: TE Mo Alie-Cox (knee), S Julian Blackmon (pelvis, knee), DE Kemoko Turay (ankle).

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS at **LAS VEGAS RAIDERS** — **CHIEFS:** No Data Reported. **RAIDERS:** DNP: RB Jalen Richard (chest). LIMITED: S Erik Harris (ribs), DT Maurice Hurst (ankle), RB Alec Ingold (ribs), T Kolton Miller (ankle), CB Keisean Nixon (groin), T Sam Young (knee, back). FULL: LB Nicholas Morrow (knee), DE Carl Nassib (ankle, knee), TE Darren Waller (back)

MIAMI DOLPHINS at **DENVER BRONCOS** — **DOLPHINS:** DNP: LB Kyle Van Noy (hip). LIMITED: G Solomon Kindley (foot). FULL: RB Matt Breida (hamstring), S Kavon Frazier (shoulder), CB Byron Jones (achilles), DE Shaq Lawson (shoulder), CB Jamal Perry (foot), TE Durham Smythe (knee), QB Tua Tagovailoa (foot). **BRONCOS:** DNP: TE Noah Fant (ribs), LB Joseph Jones (calf), QB Drew Lock (ribs), T Jake Rodgers (shoulder). LIMITED: T Calvin Anderson (ankle), CB A.J. Bouye (hip), WR Jerry Jeudy (ankle), LB Josey Jewell (quadricep), S Trey Marshall (elbow). FULL: T Demar Dotson (groin, hand).

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS at **HOUSTON TEXANS** — **PATRIOTS:** LIMITED: LB Ja'Whaun Bentley (groin). **TEXANS:** DNP: P Bryan Anger (right quadricap), RB Duke Johnson (illness), WR Kenny Stills (back), S Michael Thomas (shoulder), T Laremy Tunsil (illness). LIMITED: G Senio Kelemete (concussion), LB Jacob Martin (not injury related), DE Charles Omenihu (hamstring).

NEW YORK JETS at **LOS ANGELES CHARGERS** — **JETS:** DNP: DE Henry Anderson (knee, ankle), LB Blake Cashman (hamstrings), QB Sam Darnold (right shoulder). LIMITED: K Sam Ficken (right groin), WR Breshad Perriman (shoulder), WR Vyncint Smith (groin), DT Quinnen Williams (hamstring). FULL: T Mekhi Becton (chest), LB Patrick Onwuasor (hamstring). **CHARGERS:** No Data Reported.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES at **CLEVELAND BROWNS** — **EAGLES:** No Data Reported. **BROWNS:** No Data Reported.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS at **JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS** — **STEELERS:** DNP: G David DeCastro (not injury related), RB Trey Edmunds (hamstring), LB Jayrone Elliott (illness), C Maurkice Pouncey (not injury related), QB Ben Roethlisberger (not injury related), RB Jaylen Samuels (quadricep), WR Juju Smith-Schuster (not injury related), DE Stephon Tuitt (not injury related), T Alejandro Villanueva (not injury related). FULL: LB Dakota Allen (ankle), CB Mike Hilton (shoulder), RB Anthony McFarland (illness). **JAGUARS:** DNP: TE Tyler Eifert (not injury related), TE James O'Shaughnessy (knee), WR Laviska Shenault (hamstring). LIMITED: LB Dakota Allen (ankle), DE Josh Allen (hip), CB C.J. Henderson (groin), WR Collin Johnson (hamstring), CB Sidney Jones (achilles), C Brandon Linder (back), QB Gardner Minshew (right thumb), RB Devine Ozigbo (hamstring), T Cam Robinson (shoulder), RB James Robinson (shoulder).

TENNESSEE TITANS at **BALTIMORE RAVENS** — **TITANS:** DNP: LB Jadeveon Clowney (knee), WR Corey Davis (not injury related), WR Adam Humphries (concussion), CB Adoree' Jackson (knee), CB Chris Jackson (illness), C Ben Jones (knee), DT Larrell Murchison (rib), TE MyCole Pruitt (knee), G Rodger Saffold (ankle). LIMITED: T Dennis Kelly (knee). FULL: RB Senorise Perry (knee). **RAVENS:** DNP: DT Calais Campbell (calf), S Anthony Levine (not injury related), CB Jimmy Smith (ankle), DT Brandon Williams (ankle). LIMITED: T Orlando Brown (not injury related). FULL: LB L.J. Fort (finger).

MIAMI DOLPHINS at **DENVER BRONCOS** — **DOLPHINS:** DNP: LB Kyle Van Noy (hip). LIMITED: G Solomon Kindley (foot). FULL: RB Matt Breida (hamstring), S Kavon Frazier (shoulder), CB Byron Jones (achilles), DE Shaq Lawson (shoulder), CB Jamal Perry (foot), TE Durham Smythe (knee), QB Tua Tagovailoa (foot). **BRONCOS:** DNP: TE Noah Fant (ribs), LB Joseph Jones (calf), QB Drew Lock (ribs), T Jake Rodgers (shoulder). LIMITED: T Calvin Anderson (ankle), CB A.J. Bouye (hip), WR Jerry Jeudy (ankle), LB Josey Jewell (quadricep), S Trey Marshall (elbow). FULL: T Demar Dotson (groin, hand).

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS at

NBA DRAFT

Edwards, Wiseman go 1-2 in NBA's long-delayed draft

BY BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

Anthony Edwards paid tribute to his mother and grandmother. Onyeka Okongwu recalled his brother. Obi Toppin thought about coming home.

Tears flowed freely for those and many more players Wednesday night when their long-awaited, months-delayed NBA dreams were finally realized.

Edwards was taken by the Minnesota Timberwolves with the No. 1 pick in an NBA Draft delayed multiple times because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Commissioner Adam Silver announced the pick from ESPN headquarters in Bristol, Conn. The draft was originally scheduled for June 25 before multiple delays caused by the virus pushed it back and out of its usual home at Barclays Center in Brooklyn. Boxes of hats were shipped to the top prospects to put on the one they needed after their name was called.

Edwards watched while seated next to portraits of his late mother and grandmother. They both died of cancer and he was emotional after his name was announced.

"As far as just being excited and just being happy and ready to go and ready to work and ready to get

there as soon as possible, those emotions were overwhelming with just my mother and grandmother being there," Edwards said. "I mean, it was just a dream come true and just a blessing."

And though there wasn't the usual family table in the green room and trip on stage to meet the commissioner, some players still were outfitted in fashionable attire — perhaps none more than No. 12 pick Tyrese Haliburton of Sacramento, whose blue, floral suit had the words "Black Lives Matter" on the inside.

They celebrated with family, friends, coaches — and in Cole Anthony's case, even celebrity fans. Movie director Spike Lee jumped up and down with his family when Orlando took Anthony, whose father, Greg, played for the Knicks, at No. 15.

Some moments triggered deeper emotions. Okongwu, taken No. 6 by Atlanta, recalled his older brother, Nnamdi, who died after a skateboarding accident in 2014.

Toppin, the national player of the year last season at Dayton, struggled to speak after New York took him at No. 8, bringing the Brooklyn-born forward to his hometown.

"I'm from New York, that's why it's important," Toppin said. "Me



KAREN PULFER FOCHT / AP

The Minnesota Timberwolves took Georgia's Anthony Edwards as the first pick in the draft Wednesday.



CRAIG MITCHELDDYER / AP

Memphis center James Wiseman was taken No. 2 overall by the Golden State Warriors.

repping my city, it's amazing."

Edwards became the 11th straight one-and-done player to be the No. 1 pick, coming in a year where there was no clear obvious choice. He averaged 19.1 points

for the Bulldogs, tops among all freshmen.

The Golden State Warriors, stung by the news that Klay Thompson sustained another leg injury earlier Wednesday, took Memphis center James Wiseman with the second pick. They stumbled to the bottom of the league while Thompson missed the entire season with a torn ACL in his left knee.

The severity of his injury had not been revealed as the draft began but it didn't persuade the Warriors to take another guard. Instead they went with the 7-foot-1 center who arrived as the No. 1 recruit out of high school and averaged 19.7 points and 10.7 rebounds in three games before he was suspended for eligibility reasons and eventually left the program to prepare for the draft.

LaMelo Ball then went to the Charlotte Hornets, the next stop on a lengthy basketball journey that sent the guard from high school in California to stops as a professional in Lithuania and Australia. He joined brother Lonzo, taken No. 2 by the Lakers and now in New Orleans, to give the Balls two brothers taken in the top three picks.

After all his travels, Ball is eager to make a home playing for Michael Jordan's team in Charlotte.

"I feel like I can go out there and play basketball," Ball said.

The newcomers will have precious little time to prepare for their debuts and need to knock off months of rust or more — Wiseman hasn't played an organized game in a year — without the benefit of summer league.

As usual, draft has an international feel

BY TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

It never takes long for the international flavor to hit the NBA Draft, and Wednesday was no exception.

With Killian Hayes and Deni Avdija going seventh and ninth respectively, it was the eighth consecutive year where a pair of international players went in the draft's first 10 picks. Hayes was born in Lakeland, Fla., but holds French citizenship, and going seventh overall made him that nation's highest pick ever.

Hayes, picked by Detroit, obviously also became the first European player taken this year.

"It's a cool title to hold, but it's not something I was aiming for," Hayes said. "I'm just trying to be in a great situation where I'm able to play and show what I can do."

Avdija was picked by Washing-

ton. The Israeli player was in Tel Aviv for the announcement, which came at about 4 a.m. Thursday local time.

The first round had a slew of international influence.

No. 3 pick LaMelo Ball played internationally in Australia, as did No. 24 pick R.J. Hampton. No. 17 pick Aleksej Pokusevski is a Serbian who played in Greece. No. 18 pick Josh Green played college basketball at Arizona, but hails from Australia.

No. 20 Precious Achiuwa hails from Nigeria originally, and now is part of the Miami Heat. Nigeria had two first-rounders for the first time; Kansas' Udoka Azubuike went 27th overall to Utah.

And Leandro Bolmaro, who played in Spain, went with the No. 23 pick. That made him the highest-drafted Argentinian player ever.

NBA Draft

Wednesday FIRST ROUND

1. Minnesota, Anthony Edwards, g, Georgia.
2. Golden State, James Wiseman, c, Memphis.
3. Charlotte, LaMelo Ball, g, Chino Hills, Calif.
4. Chicago, Patrick Williams, f, Florida State.
5. Cleveland, Isaac Okoro, f, Auburn.
6. Atlanta, Onyeka Okongwu, c, USC.
7. Detroit, Killian Hayes, g, Ratiopharm Ulm (Germany).
8. New York, Obi Toppin, f, Dayton.
9. Washington, Deni Avdija, f, Maccabi Tel Aviv U18 (Israel).
10. Phoenix, Jalen Smith, f, Maryland.
11. San Antonio, Devin Vassell, g, Florida State.
12. Sacramento, Tyrese Haliburton, g, Iowa State.
13. New Orleans, Kira Lewis, Jr., g, Alabama.
14. Boston (via Memphis), Aaron Nesmith, f, Vanderbilt.
15. Orlando, Cole Anthony, g, North Carolina.
16. a-Portland, Isaiah Stewart II, c, Washington.
17. b-Minnesota (from Brooklyn via Atlanta), Aleksej Pokusevski, f, Olympiacos U18 (Greece).
18. Dallas, Josh Green, g, Arizona.
19. c-Brooklyn (from Philadelphia via LA Clippers), Saddiq Bey, f, Villanova.
20. Miami, Precious Achiuwa, f, Memphis.
21. Philadelphia (from Oklahoma City via Orlando and Philadelphia), Tyrese Maxey, g, Kentucky.
22. Denver (from Houston), Zeke Nnaji, f, Arizona.
23. d-New York (from Utah), Leandro Bolmaro, g, FC Barcelona II (Spain).
24. e-Milwaukee (from Indiana), RJ Hampton, g, Dallas.
25. f-Oklahoma City (from Denver), Im-

- manuel Quickley, g, Kentucky.
26. Boston, Payton Pritchard, g, Oregon.
27. Utah (from New York through LA Clippers), Udoka Azubuike, c, Kansas.
28. g-LA Lakers, Jaden McDaniels, f, Washington.
29. Toronto, Malachi Flynn, g, San Diego State.
30. h-Boston (from Milwaukee via Phoenix), Desmond Bane, g, TCU.

SECOND ROUND

31. Dallas (via Golden State), Tyrell Terry, g, Stanford.
32. Charlotte (from Cleveland via LA Clippers and Orlando), Vernon Carey, Jr., c, Duke.
33. i-Minnesota, Daniel Oturu, c, Minnesota.
34. j-Philadelphia (from Atlanta), Theo Maledon, g, ASVEL Basket (France).
35. k-Sacramento (from Detroit via Phoenix), Xavier Tillman, c, Michigan State.
36. l-Philadelphia (from New York), Tyler Bey, f, Colorado.
37. m-Washington (via Chicago), Vit Krejci, g, Zaragoza U18 (Spain).
38. n-Utah (from New York via Charlotte), Saben Lee, g, Vanderbilt.
39. o-New Orleans (from Washington via Milwaukee), Elijah Hughes, g, Syracuse.
40. p-Memphis (from Phoenix), Robert Woodard II, f, Mississippi State.
41. San Antonio, Tre Jones, g, Duke.
42. q-New Orleans, Nick Richards, c, Kentucky.
43. Sacramento, Jahmi'us Ramsey, g, Texas Tech.
44. Chicago (from Memphis), Marko Simonovic, c, KK Mega Bemax (Serbia).
45. Milwaukee (from Orlando), Jordan Nwora, f, Louisville.
46. Portland, C.J. Elleby, g, Washington State.
47. Boston (from Brooklyn via Charlotte, Orlando and Philadelphia), Yam Madar, g, Hapoel Tel Aviv (Israel).
48. Golden State (from Dallas via Phila-

- delphia), Nico Mannion, g, Arizona.
 49. Philadelphia, Isaiah Joe, g, Arkansas.
 50. Atlanta (from Miami via Sacramento, Cleveland and Boston), Skylar Mays, g, LSU.
 51. Golden State (from Utah via Dallas, Detroit and Cleveland), Justinan Jessup, g, Boise State.
 52. r-Sacramento (from Houston), Kenyon Martin Jr., f, Los Angeles.
 53. s-Oklahoma City, Cassuis Winston, g, Michigan State.
 54. Indiana, Cassius Stanley, g, Duke.
 55. Brooklyn (from Denver), Jay Scrubb, g, John A. Logan.
 56. Charlotte (from Boston), Grant Riller, g, Charleston.
 57. LA Clippers, Reggie Perry, c, Mississippi State.
 58. Philadelphia (from Los Angeles Lakers via Orlando), Paul Reed, f, DePaul.
 59. Toronto, Jalen Harris, g, Nevada.
 60. t-New Orleans (from Milwaukee, Sam Merrill, g, Utah State.
- Proposed trades**
- a-Detroit from Houston through Portland.
 - b-Oklahoma City from Minnesota.
 - c-Detroit from LA Clippers through Brooklyn.
 - d-Minnesota from New York.
 - e-Denver from New Orleans through Milwaukee.
 - f-New York from Oklahoma City.
 - g-Minnesota from Oklahoma City through LA Lakers.
 - h-Memphis from Boston.
 - i-LA Clippers from New York through Minnesota.
 - j-Oklahoma City from Philadelphia.
 - k-Memphis from Sacramento.
 - l-Dallas from Philadelphia.
 - m-Oklahoma City from Washington.
 - n-Detroit from Utah.
 - o-Utah from New Orleans.
 - p-Sacramento from Memphis.
 - q-Charlotte from New Orleans.
 - r-Houston from Sacramento.
 - s-Washington from Oklahoma City.
 - t-Milwaukee from New Orleans.

Jaguars meeting former teammates down stretch

BY MARK LONG
Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — The Jacksonville Jaguars are seeing former teammates nearly every week, so many down the stretch that it could be considered a Revenge Tour.

It started last Sunday, when veteran tight end Mercedes Lewis, receiver Allen Lazard, running back Tyler Ervin and offensive coordinator Nathaniel Hackett faced their former team for the first time since leaving Jacksonville. The Packers won 24-20.

Next up: Pittsburgh defensive end Tyson Alualu, a first-round draft pick in 2010 who returns to Jacksonville on Sunday.

Alualu spent seven years with the Jaguars (1-8) after then-general manager Gene Smith surprisingly chose him with the 10th overall pick. Alualu's productivity never matched his draft position, although his durability was another story.

The 6-foot-3, 300-pound Hawaiian didn't miss a game because of injury during his time in Jacksonville; he was a healthy scratch for the first two weeks in 2016.

He's been equally stout for the unbeaten Steelers (9-0).

"Man, I can't say enough about Tyson. His play is really consistent and very productive," Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin said. "Just his leadership, his quiet leadership, how he goes about his business, how he lives his life, is a shining example for young players."

"He's been an awesome addition to us and really has been a significant component to why we've been able to play good defense. It was evident in recent weeks, particularly in run defense, when we did not have him."

But don't expect Alualu to make much of facing the team that let him go in 2017, after paying him more than \$28 million.

"That's not his agenda. He's not petty in any way," Tomlin said.

Others might be. The Jaguars will face seven more former regular over its next five games:

Ronnie Harrison

Harrison returns to Jacksonville on Nov. 29. The Jaguars traded the 2018 third-round pick to Cleveland a little more than a week before the opener, parting ways because veteran Josh Jones beat Harrison out in training camp. The Browns gave up a fifth-rounder in 2021 to land Harrison, who has started four straight games and totaled 27 tackles and five pass breakups.

Yannick Ngakoue

Ngakoue was initially scheduled to face Jacksonville in Minnesota on Dec. 6, but he will have to wait two weeks after getting traded to Baltimore. The Jaguars got a second-rounder and a conditional fifth for Ngakoue, who is second in franchise history with 37½ sacks. He has ripped Jacksonville repeatedly, including getting in a Twitter spat with minority owner Tony Khan in April.

Calais Campbell

The "Mayor of Sacksonville" was dumped as part of a salary cap purge in March. Baltimore gave up a fifth-round selection to get a veteran leader — the NFL's reigning Walter Payton Man of the Year — and a defensive stalwart who started every game in three seasons with the Jags. Campbell has 24 tackles, including four sacks, and six pass breakups for one of the league's best defenses.

Nick Foles

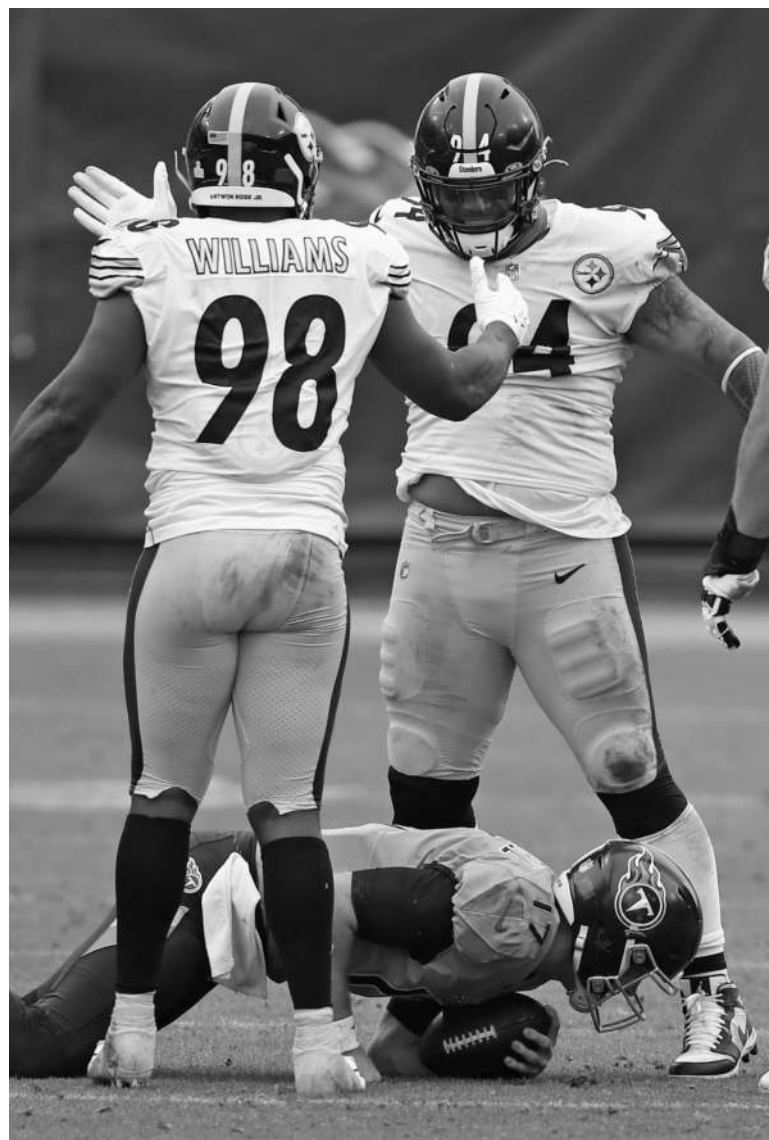
Foles also was part of the salary dump and will return to Jacksonville in Week 16. Chicago gave up a compensatory fourth to get Foles, who started the past seven games for the Bears. The trade allowed Jacksonville to recoup some of the \$50.125 million it guaranteed the 2018 Super Bowl MVP as part of a four-year contract in 2019.

John DeFilippo

DeFilippo and Foles were a package deal. Jaguars coach Doug Marrone brought "Flip" on as offensive coordinator two months before free agency, likely to help lure Foles in free agency. When Foles failed, Marrone fired DeFilippo after just one season. He landed in Chicago as quarterbacks coach, reuniting with Foles.

Tashaun Gipson

Gipson was an integral part of Jacksonville's defense that led it to the AFC championship game in 2018. He was sent packing a year



WADE PAYNE / AP

Pittsburgh Steelers inside linebacker Vince Williams, left, celebrates with nose tackle Tyson Alualu after Williams sacked Tennessee Titans quarterback Ryan Tannehill, bottom, for a 3-yard loss during the second half on Oct. 25 in Nashville, Tenn.

later, a cost-cutting move that helped create enough salary cap space to sign Foles. He has started every game for the Bears this season.

Allen Robinson

Robinson is, without question, the best receiver Jacksonville has drafted. The Jaguars let the 2014

second-round pick leave in free agency after he missed most of 2017 with a knee injury. They've spent nearly \$32 million trying to replace him with Marqise Lee, Donte Moncrief and Chris Conley.

"It's funny because those are people I talk to almost every day, every other day, weekly," Jaguars receiver Keelan Cole said.

Kamara-Jones matchup highlights Saints-Falcons

BY BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

METAIRIE, La. — Alvin Kamara's next chance to build on his prolific, workhorse of a season comes against a Falcons defense that hopes it has an answer to the Saints' dynamic running back.

Atlanta's Deion "Debo" Jones — who happens to be a New Orleans native and former LSU standout — has been tough on the Saints in the past and is among the few linebackers who has the combination of strength and quickness to give Kamara a long day.

Or a short one, as in 2017, when Jones ended Kamara's game five minutes into the first quarter with a hard, high tackle that dropped the running back for a 4-yard loss on a screen pass. The Falcons won that game, 20-17, and Jones clinched the victory with a late interception of Drew Brees in the end zone.

"Debo is always called upon big in these games. Deion Jones steps up big for us, taking on a big as-



BUTCH DILL / AP

New Orleans Saints running back Alvin Kamara crosses the goal line untouched for his second touchdown during a game against the San Francisco 49ers on Nov. 15 in New Orleans.

signment," Atlanta coach Raheem Morris said. "Covering Kamara is always going to be a big challenge for him. It's also going to be a big challenge for Kamara. ... It's al-

ways a five-star matchup. Get your popcorn and get ready."

Kamara, now in his fourth year as a pro, ranks second in the NFL in yards from scrimmage with

1,134, and touchdowns with 11 through nine games — an average of 126 yards and more than one TD per game.

The Kamara-Jones matchup has occurred four times since Kamara entered the league in 2017, when he was the NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year. Jones missed both 2018 games against New Orleans because of injury.

Kamara has yet to reach 100 yards from scrimmage — or score a touchdown — against Atlanta when Jones has played.

"There's a handful of linebackers that'll draw that (one-on-one) matchup, and he's one of them," Saints coach Sean Payton said of Jones. "Just watching the games last year, I mean, five, six, seven different times, there's that one on one. ... I think that that's a credit to both players. Obviously, (Jones) can move and he's athletic, and so it is a matchup, especially on third down."

Kamara was scheduled to speak with reporters Wednesday, but

that was postponed after he did not participate fully in practice. He was listed on New Orleans' injury report as limited by a foot injury. Jones also did not meet with reporters.

Because of Brees' rib injury last weekend, former Tampa Bay quarterback Jameis Winston is expected to start for the Saints and share snaps with change-of-pace option QB Taysom Hill.

Jones, who has intercepted Brees three times, also intercepted Winston and returned it for a touchdown against the Bucs at the end of last season.

For much of the past three seasons, New Orleans' approach on offense has emphasized limiting turnovers, generally opting against risky downfield throws and checking down to running backs. That has worked in large part because of Kamara's exceptional skill as a receiver out of the backfield, as well as his ability to set up blocks on screens, and slip tackles in general.

NFL

Chiefs look to avenge loss to Raiders

BY DAVE SKRETTA
Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — It takes a lot to get Big Red to turn red.

When he's not in the pressure cooker of an NFL sideline, Kansas City Chiefs coach Andy Reid is about as mild-mannered as it gets. He wears floral print shirts by Tommy Bahama, prefers sweat shorts to slacks, and the Southern Californian exudes the kind of surfer chic that comes with the laid-back lifestyle of the beach.

The sight of the Las Vegas Raiders doing a victory lap around Arrowhead Stadium in their caravan of buses after ending the Chiefs' 13-game winning streak last month? Well, that was enough to get under Reid's rather thick skin.

"I don't think either team likes each other that much," he said, "as they've stated before."

Making the entire scene all the more galling is the fact that Reid considers Raiders coach Jon Gru-

den a close friend. Big Red spoke glowingly of him when Gruden chose to return to the AFC West from his plush gig in the television booth.

For his part, Gruden didn't want any part of discussing the victory lap ahead of Sunday's rematch in Las Vegas.

"I mean, you can find the smart aleck bus driver in Kansas City who made some snide comments when we got on the bus, maybe that's why we drove around the stadium — just to tick him off," Gruden said. "This is ridiculous. Next question."

Oh, don't expect that to be the last time the parade around the Truman Sports Complex gets brought up.

The Chiefs (8-1) haven't had a lot of chances to exact a little bit of revenge on opponents the past few years. They've only lost four regular-season games in three of the past four seasons, and each of

those years ended with an AFC West title.

So they usually end up having the last laugh.

When the Chiefs do get a chance for payback, they tend to make it count. They lost to Houston in Week 6 last season, then trounced the Texans in the divisional round of the playoffs. They lost to Tennessee in Week 10 and beat the Titans a couple of months later for the AFC championship.

"Any time you lose to anyone, the next time you play them you want to win," Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes said. "In this league, when you're in the same division, you get that opportunity. We're going to be ready, I promise you that."

The mystique of the rivalry only ups the ante. The two franchises trace their animosity to the earliest days of the AFL, and it grew when Al Davis purchased the Raiders in the late 1960s.



Kansas City Chiefs head coach Andy Reid watches play against the New York Jets on Nov. in Kansas City, Mo.

7 more Raiders positive

BY JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

The Las Vegas Raiders have placed seven more players on the COVID-19 list as "high risk" close contacts with teammate Clelin Ferrell after he tested positive for the coronavirus.

Ferrell, a starting defensive end, was placed on the list Tuesday following his positive test, along with defensive back Lamaricus Joyner. Safety Johnathan Abram, defensive tackle Maliek Collins, defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins, defensive lineman David Irving, cornerback Isaiah Johnson, defensive end Arden Key and defensive tackle Kendal Vickers were added to the list on Wednesday after contact tracing.

If those players all keep testing negative and have no symptoms they will be able to return to play Sunday night at home against Kansas City, even though they will miss the week of practice.

"We practiced today and we'll be ready for the game on Sunday," coach Jon Gruden told Kansas City writers during a conference call after the news came out. "It's what you have to do. Everybody has to adapt to a lot of things in every phase of life. We had to go through some things before. We'll be there on Sunday and we'll be prepared."

The Raiders went through this last month after right tackle Trent Brown tested positive. Four other



ISAAC BREKKEN / AP

Las Vegas Raiders head coach Jon Gruden has been fined \$150,000 this season for violation of the league's COVID-19 protocols.

starting offensive linemen missed practice, but were able to return to the team the morning of a 45-20 loss to Tampa Bay. Abram missed the game because his five-day window ran until Monday that week.

Brown was activated from the COVID-19 list on Oct. 30 in time to play at Cleveland two days later. But a pregame IV mishap sent him to the hospital and he was later placed back on the COVID-19 list when he developed symptoms of the coronavirus.

Starting linebacker Cory Littleton was placed on the list following a positive test last week and remains sidelined.

That leaves the Raiders with six defensive starters currently on the COVID-19 list for the Raiders (6-3).

The Raiders, their players and Gruden have already been fined

more than \$1,215,000 and docked a sixth-round draft pick for violations of the COVID-19 protocols.

The team was docked \$500,000 and the pick and Gruden fined \$150,000 for not following protocols related to Brown's positive test last month.

Gruden was fined \$100,000 and the team docked \$250,000 after the coach didn't wear his mask properly during a Week 2 win over New Orleans. The team also was fined \$50,000 for allowing an unauthorized employee in the locker room after the game.

Tight end Darren Waller was fined \$30,000 and nine teammates, including quarterback Derek Carr, were fined \$15,000 for attending an indoor charity event held by Waller's foundation that violated local protocols. Players were seen at the event not wearing masks or social distancing.

NFL placing all teams in intensive protocols

BY ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

The NFL is placing all teams in intensive protocol starting Saturday to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 as the number of cases rises around the country.

Use of masks will be mandatory at all times at team facilities, including during practice and in weight rooms. Meetings must be held either virtually or in the largest indoor space with approval by the league. Meals have to be made available for grab-and-go to avoid players and staff congregating in cafeterias. Time spent in the locker room also has to be limited.

Clubs operating under the intensive protocols have reduced close contacts by more than 50% since the fifth week of the regular season, according to a memo obtained by The Associated Press that was sent from NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell to teams on Wednesday.

"These sustained reductions and the resulting health and safety benefits make it appropriate to implement the intensive protocols on a mandatory, league-wide basis," Goodell said in the memo.

So far, 28 teams have entered intensive protocol at some point and 16 teams have done it more than once.

"The upcoming holidays, beginning with Thanksgiving next week, will introduce new risks of exposure that we need to address now," Goodell wrote. "Because we have a highly sophisticated program of daily testing, we know when the virus enters our facilities, which underscores the im-

portance of contact tracing and other steps to minimize close contacts within a facility.

"Recent experience has highlighted the importance of minimizing high-risk close contacts; on multiple occasions, we have seen individuals identified on that basis test positive within a short time. We have also seen many instances in which effective action by clubs to minimize these close contacts prevented the virus from spreading within the club, and avoided players or coaches being ruled out of practice or games."

The NFL said Tuesday there were 17 new confirmed positives among players and 35 among other personnel during testing from Nov. 8-14. That brought the league's total to 95 players and 175 other personnel since Aug. 1, not counting new cases this week.

"The biggest motivator I find when we talk to the clubs about this is simply that if they are not in compliance with the protocols from a mask-wearing perspective or for some reason somebody forgot their device or something like that, they're much more likely to be identified as a high-risk close contact than they would otherwise," said Jeff Miller, the league's executive vice president of communications, public affairs and policy.

"So when that individual coach or player is removed from the team environment for five days because their mask was down, that's a lesson learned throughout the facility. And so I don't think we see a lot of repeat problems as far as that goes."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Cancellations dim Pac-12's bowl plans

Associated Press

With so much uncertainty ahead, Pac-12 teams are doing everything they can to make sure they get enough games in to legitimately be considered for a bowl. Any bowl.

UCLA and California even got together and scheduled their own Sunday morning game at the Rose Bowl. But time is running out as the league enters its third week-end with coronavirus cases spiking across the nation.

No Pac-12 team has had it worse than Utah. The Utes have seen their first two games of the shortened season canceled because of COVID-19 outbreaks, but on Saturday night they're set to host No. 20 USC (2-0).

Asked what Utah can accomplish this season with limited games, coach Kyle Whittingham said the Utes just want to play at this point.

"I think we're the only Power Five team that hasn't played yet, so that's first and foremost — just get on the field and getting an actual game, see what we've got with these new players," he said.

Whittingham didn't rule out on-the-fly scheduling to get in games, similar to what the Bruins and Cal pulled off.

"As long as it's not a health and safety factor for our players, we're good to go," he said. "But a caveat to that is making sure that if one team has been planning all along for the possibility of playing a certain team, and the other team was scheduled to play another team and then last minute had to switch gears, that isn't ideal.

"But this is a unique year, unique circumstances, and you've got to be ready to adapt and make changes like that."

Four Pac-12 teams — Cal, Washington, Arizona and Arizona State — have played just once this season. Five games have been canceled, including Colorado's meeting with the Sun Devils that

"This is a unique year, unique circumstances, and you've got to be ready to adapt."

Kyle Whittingham
Utah football coach

was set for next Saturday. An outbreak at Arizona State meant the team did not have the required players available.

Buffaloes coach Karl Dorrell said his team is closely watching how the week shakes out. Should another game be canceled, Colorado (2-0) could potentially play the unaffected team.

"We are on high alert for anything and everything that could happen in this given week," said Dorrell, who is in his first season with the Buffaloes. "It's kind of the nature of this year. It's a year where everything can change day to day."

The possibility remains that division games could be made up the final weekend of the season (Dec. 18-19) for the teams that are not in the Pac-12 championship game. The NCAA has already ruled teams do not have to finish at .500 to be eligible for bowl games.

The Pac-12 initially had eight bowl partners, but is now down to six because the Redbox Bowl and the Holiday Bowl have been canceled for this season.

Under pressure to get games in, Cal and UCLA threw together their impromptu Sunday game in less than 48 hours. The Bruins emerged with a 34-10 victory.

UCLA coach Chip Kelly said he joked with Cal coach Justin Wilcox following the game that the Golden Bears should just stay in Los Angeles and play the Bruins if more games get canceled.



ROBERT WILLETT / AP

North Carolina players enter Kenan Stadium against Wake Forest on Nov. 14 in Chapel Hill, N.C. The Tar Heels are 6-2 and in fourth place in the league and could become its fourth ranked team.

Sagging middle: Mediocrity abounds in ACC after top 3

Coaches: League is not as top-heavy as it looks after Notre Dame, Clemson and Miami

BY CHARLES ODUM
Associated Press

There is a growing look of mediocrity in the middle of the Atlantic Coast Conference's standings.

The league appears to have sagged in the middle even as the ACC's headliners have been quite impressive. There are three Top 25 teams — No. 2 Notre Dame, No. 4 Clemson and No. 12 Miami — sitting atop the league.

No other ACC team is ranked, creating a top-heavy appearance in the league which this week has been dealt two postponements due to COVID-19 positive tests.

A fourth ACC team could soon join the top three in the Top 25. By edging Wake Forest 59-53 last week, North Carolina (6-2, 6-2 ACC) holds fourth place in the

league and is just outside the Top 25.

Duke coach David Cutcliffe doesn't believe the league is top-heavy, saying there's plenty of talented teams battling for position in the middle of the ACC, despite the .500 records.

If he's correct, those teams will need strong finishes in the final weeks of the season.

That starts with Saturday's game between Virginia Tech, which has lost two straight, and Pittsburgh, which had its scheduled game at Georgia Tech postponed last week. The ACC also could be boosted if North Carolina State, which had lost two straight before beating Florida State, finishes the season on an upswing.

N.C. State (5-3, 5-3) has an op-

portunity to build momentum from its 38-22 win over Florida State when it faces undefeated No. 21 Liberty, which already has wins over Syracuse and Virginia Tech, on Saturday night.

Winning records are not necessary for bowl bids this season, thanks to damage done to schedules by the coronavirus pandemic. Even so, pride is on the line.

"I want to be separated from the group, but each game is a one-game season," said Pitt coach Pat Narduzzi. "We want to win each one of them. Again, it's called pride. I've got pride in our work and who our kids are and what this program represents. So to me it comes down to pride. And I just want to keep going where we are."

SEC keeps adapting with eye on crowning a champ

Associated Press

Commissioner Greg Sankey and the Southeastern Conference have their finish line in sight: The league championship game is set for Dec. 19 in Atlanta.

The division champs might not be the only SEC teams playing that day.

The SEC came into this season with a contingency plan to deal with coronavirus-related issues. While those plans have been severely tested as the pandemic has wreaked havoc, SEC officials continue adapting to navigate set-

backs in pursuit of a league title and possible national championship.

"We hope to get through the end of the season," Vanderbilt coach Derek Mason said of the SEC. "But I'm not a soothsayer, and I don't have a crystal ball. I'm just trying to go day to day, week to week."

The SEC tried to protect itself, member schools and TV partners by including open dates as part of its 10-game, league-only schedule. Part of that contingency was using Dec. 12 as an extra week.

Eight SEC games have been

postponed already with only Arkansas, Kentucky and South Carolina not affected — yet. LSU, Missouri and No. 5 Texas A&M each have had two games postponed, including the Aggies' game Saturday against Ole Miss being postponed Monday.

The leaguewide open date is also being used with three games now slotted as makeups for Dec. 12. League officials also announced Ole Miss-Texas A&M, originally picked by CBS for its SEC game for Saturday, could be made up Dec. 19 if the Aggies

aren't playing for the league title that day. Back-to-back postponements aren't helping Texas A&M (5-1) catch top-ranked Alabama (6-0) in the Western Division.

"Life is about changes," Texas A&M Jimbo Fisher said. "It's about adaptation."

Making sure all SEC teams play a full 10-game schedule might not be possible.

The number of positive COVID-19 tests needed to stop games have varied:

■ Two Aggies and a staff member at Texas A&M

■ Ten players and three staff members at Auburn with a similar number quarantined because of close contact

■ More than 30, including Dan Mullen at Florida, with another positive test result within the past week.

Neither Vanderbilt nor LSU detailed its numbers. Alabama had coach Nick Saban and athletic director Greg Byrne test positive, though Saban was cleared by a third negative test and was on the sideline days later against Georgia.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Famous
footsteps

Son of NFL Hall of Fame WR Jerry Rice carving own niche at Colorado

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — Like any other college freshman, Brenden Rice is determined to carve his own path and make a name for himself.

What makes his quest so different is he's the son of Hall of Famer Jerry Rice.

No matter how many catches he makes, the Colorado receiver realizes comparisons to his dad will inevitably trail him.

To make his own name, he has to step out from the shadow of his powerful last name.

"I have my first name Brenden," he said, "and that's what it starts with every day."

Brenden Rice, freshman receiver — that's how the coaching staff treats him. He's not Jerry Rice's kid. He's just another wide-out who has the size (6-foot-3, 205 pounds) and skills to be molded into something special.

"I want him to be him," said Colorado coach Karl Dorrell, whose 2-0 team is slated to be off this weekend after the Pac-12 canceled its game with Arizona State due to a number of positive COVID-19 cases with the Sun Devils. "Brenden Rice is a really good player and he's got a chance to have his own great career and he's going to do it on his own merit."

Rice certainly had a memorable day at Stanford last weekend with two receptions for 38 yards, including a 34-yard touchdown catch on the most open play he could recall.

This was how it unfolded: He and QB Sam Noyer sensed the cornerback was going to blitz off the



JEFF CHIU / AP

Brenden Rice is following in the footsteps of his father, NFL Hall of Famer Jerry Rice, by playing as a wide receiver for the Colorado Buffaloes during this coronavirus-shortened season.

edge. Noyer pointed down and Rice instantly understood.

Then, Rice broke free — with no safety help over the top. Noyer lofted a pass, Rice easily grabbed it and glided into the end zone as the Buffaloes beat Stanford 35-32.

"It was a good first touchdown," Rice said.

One of the first to send him a congratulatory text was his father. It meant a lot.

Growing up, he lived with his mom. He said his relationship with his father really began to bloom in high school.

"It's amazing, how we developed and how we got to know each other a little bit better," he explained.

Sorry dad. Ask him whom his game most resembles and he says

Arizona Cardinals receiver DeAndre Hopkins. The younger Rice's regard for Hopkins was only enhanced last weekend with Hopkins' 43-yard winning catch — in heavy traffic — from Kyler Murray against Buffalo on a play now dubbed "Hail Murray."

"Big, physical dude that's able to run routes but at the same time you throw a jump ball up and he's going to go get it," Brenden Rice explained. "I love that mentality."

It's the same sort of mentality as his father, who played for two decades with the 49ers, Raiders, Seahawks and very briefly the Broncos. Jerry Rice holds the NFL records for career receptions (1,549), yards receiving (22,895) and total touchdowns (208).

So he has his dad to lean on, too.

Emotional: Allen's
authenticity resonates

FROM PAGE 48
real as it gets.

He put this long-languishing program back on the national map with an unwavering set of principles — playing with conviction, confidence and spirit, demanding accountability, developing the kind of relationships coaches respect and players revere and making sure priorities take precedence over wins and losses.

That includes being a father first.

It took former Indiana athletic director Fred Glass one phone call to recognize Allen's unique skill set would be a perfect fit as the Hoosiers' new defensive coordinator in 2016. Then, just weeks before Indiana made its first bowl appearance in nine seasons, Glass fired head coach Kevin Wilson, now the Buckeyes' offensive coordinator, and handed the reins to Allen. Why?

"He's authentic, I'd say that's his greatest quality," Glass told The Associated Press on Monday. "Some coaches, I think, try to relate too much with the kids. He's got his administrator's license and some might say he's a little nerdy but he is who he is. I think that makes it OK for those kids to be who they are."

Allen has never been shy about sharing his innermost thoughts or that he has bigger responsibilities than coaching.

So before taking questions after last week's school-record tying fifth straight league win, before singing and dancing with the Old Brass Spittoon, before reflecting on how the Hoosiers' defense handed Michigan State its first

shutout at home since 1985, Allen made two critical stops.

The first was to the golf cart where everyone watched Tom Allen hug and kiss his injured son. Teammates soon gathered round to offer their support before the linebacker was taken off the field. The second came after the final gun, and included some tears and prayer.

"I just love him so much," Allen said after the game. "It's hard, it's hard to see your son out there. I knew by the way he responded that it was serious. It's hard to stand there and see that and then have to keep coaching but that's what you have to do."

Allen said his son's injury is similar to the one that sidelined Alabama quarterback Tua Tagovailoa last year. The Hoosiers' linebacker is scheduled for surgery Tuesday.

It's not the first time the Allen family has embarked on this journey.

Last season during a win at Nebraska, Thomas Allen suffered a season-ending left shoulder injury.

"Unfortunately, I'd seen that movie before," Glass said.

The COVID-19 pandemic cost Thomas the use of Indiana's team facilities to rehab. Yet he still made it back for the start of the season, which excited Tom Allen every bit as much as any of Indiana's first four wins.

Allen feels the same way about every player on the Hoosiers roster, and it's something he wants them to see and feel.

"I love this place and I love these kids and we're going to fight, man, I don't care what anybody says about this stinking game," Allen said. "We're going to compete and we're going to fight and good Lord willing, we're going to find a way to keep proving everybody wrong."



Allen

Navy has third consecutive game postponed

By KAREEM COPELAND
The Washington Post

The Navy football team has had its third consecutive game postponed due to a COVID-19 outbreak.

The American Athletic Conference announced Wednesday that the game between Navy and South Florida has been postponed due to positive tests at USF. Navy hasn't played since a 51-37 loss to SMU on Oct. 31. Games against Tulsa and Memphis were postponed due to an outbreak on the Navy grounds.

The Midshipmen have one final game scheduled for Dec. 12 against Army in West Point, N.Y., after local safety guidelines prompted a venue change from Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia. Cadets and Midshipmen will be permitted to attend the

game in West Point.

South Florida has one final game scheduled against Central Florida on Nov. 27, so both teams have the first weekend of December open as a possible landing spot for a rescheduled game. Navy, however, is also trying to make up two other games.

The Midshipmen took a nearly two-week break from in-person football activities while dealing with the outbreak. They returned to the field Friday and had been preparing for USF this week, but still weren't expected to have everyone available. The team lost its Senior Day against Memphis at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium.

"Really excited about this game," Navy coach Ken Niumatalolo said Monday. "Our practices on Friday and Saturday, our

young men were just excited to get out of their rooms. Just that part, getting out of their rooms, some of our more spirited practices. Just the fact of being able to get out of their rooms is definitely beneficial for them."

Niumatalolo spoke Monday about having to be flexible during a 2020 season that is different from anything college football has previously seen. From spring and summer workouts being canceled to no tackling in fall practices to position meetings online, Niumatalolo has been consistent with his message.

"We've been dealing with this for so long, you just keep rolling," he said. "The approach I've taken with our guys... I'd imagine when they're overseas and they're in deployment or they're on a ship in the Middle

East somewhere, things change. You might have a mission and things change and you adapt.

"I have no idea, that's just me watching movies. I don't know if that's how it works. I'm just saying, you're going to have to adapt in life. You're going to have to adapt as a leader. And the circumstances might not be great. You may not have all your supplies or all the things you need, but you make the best of it."

Postponements and cancellations have been a weekly occurrence as coronavirus numbers continue to spike around the country. Wake Forest at Duke and Louisiana-Monroe at Louisiana Tech have both been canceled this week. Ole Miss at Texas A&M and Georgia Tech at Miami have both been postponed this week.

SPORTS



Looking for revenge
Chiefs have opportunity to even score with Raiders » **NFL, Page 45**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Real as it gets

Indiana's remarkable turnaround fueled by emotional coach Allen

By **MICHAEL MAROT**
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Tom Allen rubbed his chin, took a couple of deep breaths and composed himself Monday.

It was yet another moment for the college football world to steal a glimpse of the pure, raw emotion flowing through the Indiana coach. Allen proudly embraces letting those around see what fuels him, even if it involves his injured son, a Hoosiers linebacker, and especially now as fans increasingly follow the No. 9 Hoosiers (4-0) and their best start in decades.

The fun moments have been must-see videos — the 50-year-old Allen crowd-surfing through the locker room, players chanting "We Love You" and the cheek wound he suffered after sprinting down the sideline to hug Devon Matthews following an interception.

But with Indiana's biggest game since its 1967 Rose Bowl season looming Saturday at No. 3 Ohio State (3-0), Allen struggled with the reality that his son, Thomas, would miss the rest of this historic season with a fractured hip.

"It's been a long journey, but it's been awesome. My kids have sacrificed, my wife," Allen said, pausing. "That's why I hurt so much for Thomas because I know what he's been through to get here. He's a tough sucker."

Those who know Allen understand this is



CARLOS OSORIO / AP

Indiana tight end Peyton Hendershot jumps over Michigan State cornerback Shakur Brown on Saturday in East Lansing, Mich.

SEE EMOTIONAL ON PAGE 47

Edwards, Wiseman go 1-2 atop NBA Draft » Page 43

