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Afghan couple claim Marine abducted baby

BY MARTHA MENDOZA,
JULIET LINDERMAN
AND CLAIRE GALOFARO
Associated Press

An Afghan couple who arrived in the U.S. as refugees are suing a U.S. Marine and his wife in federal court for allegedly abducting their baby girl.

The baby had been pulled from the rubble two years earlier after her parents and five siblings were killed during a joint U.S. Special Forces raid. After months of treatment in a U.S. military hospital in Afghanistan, she had gone to live with a newlywed Afghan couple, identified by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Afghan authorities as her relatives.

But unbeknownst to the couple, court records say, a U.S. Marine Corps attorney on temporary assignment in Afghanistan learned of the baby while she was still in the hospital. With his wife back home in Virginia, he felt compelled to adopt the Afghan baby and praised it as an act of Christian faith.

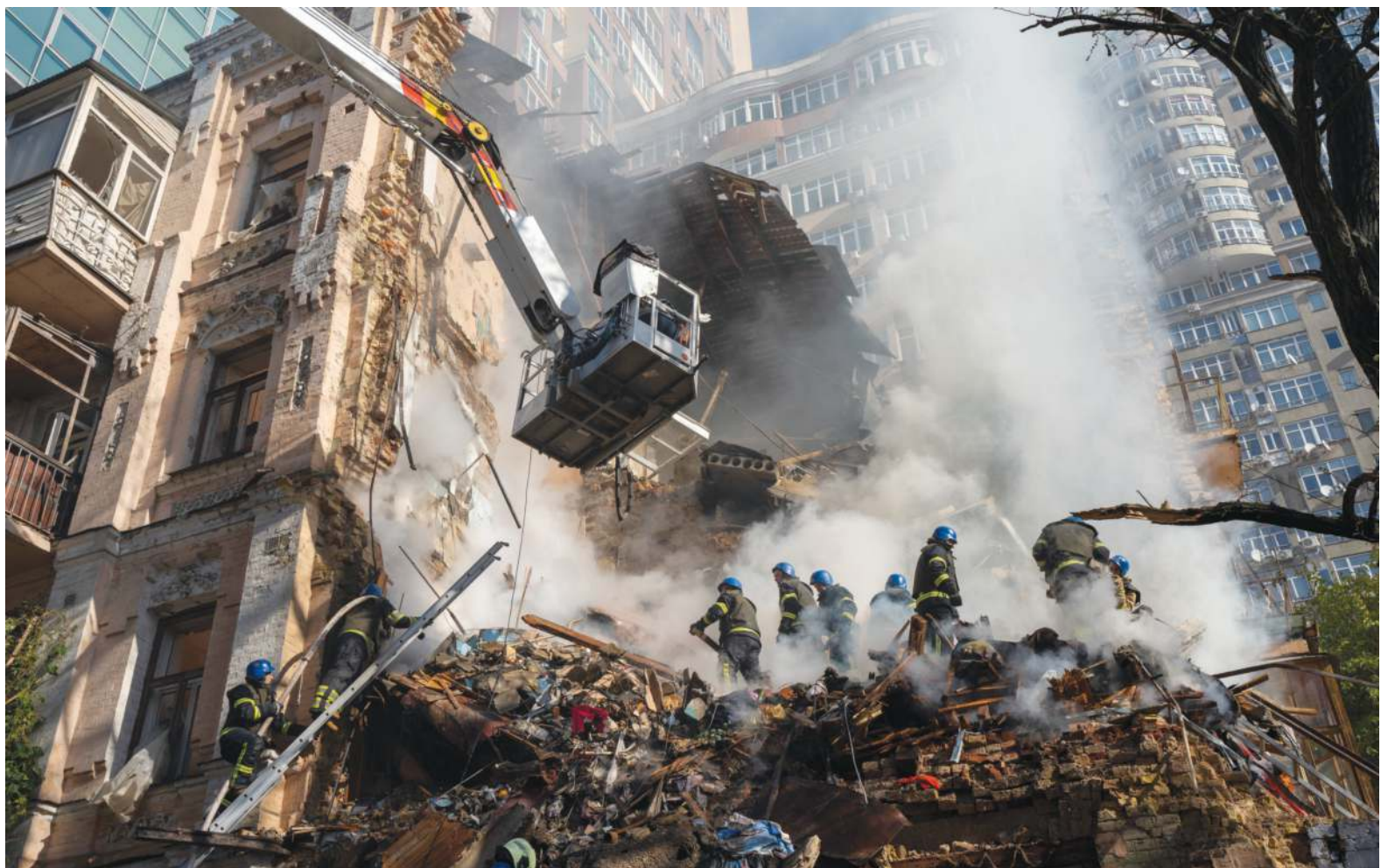
This little girl, now 3½ years old, finds herself at the center of a

SEE BABY ON PAGE 5



JOSE LUIS MAGANA/AP

Families evacuated from Kabul, Afghanistan, wait to board a bus after they arrive at Washington Dulles International Airport, in Chantilly, Va., on Aug. 27, 2021.



ROMAN HRYTSYNA/AP

Firefighters work after a drone attack on buildings in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday.

Digging for information

US examines wreckage of kamikaze drones Russia used in Ukraine

BY SHANE HARRIS,
DAN LAMOTHE, ALEX HORTON
AND KAREN DEYOUNG
The Washington Post

The U.S. government has examined the wreckage of Iranian-made drones shot down in Ukraine, deepening its insight into the unmanned craft that Russia has launched in a spate of kamikaze attacks on the country's critical infrastructure, according to two U.S. officials.

Information about the drones'

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Russia seeks to
regain ground, hits
power plants
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structure and technology could prove crucial in helping the United States and its Ukrainian allies better identify and ultimately defeat them before they can reach

their targets. Officials said the process has been used in the past to study weaponry deployed by Iran's proxies in conflicts in the Middle East. People interviewed for this report spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive intelligence collection.

The Shahed-136 unmanned aerial vehicles used in this week's attacks on the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, have targeted power sta-

SEE DRONES ON PAGE 8



Wreckage of an Iranian Shahed drone lies near Kupiansk, Ukraine.

AP

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Tesla 3Q profit more than doubles from year ago

Associated Press

DETROIT — Tesla reported Wednesday that its third-quarter profit more than doubled from a year ago, fueled by higher car sales.

The Austin, Texas, electric vehicle and solar panel maker posted net income of \$3.29 billion from July through September.

CEO Elon Musk said on the com-

pany's quarterly conference call that the Tesla is considering a \$5 billion to \$10 billion stock buyback next year, even if the economy stumbles.

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	Guam
Japan	..	\$4.819	..	\$5.409	\$3.949	\$3.949
Change in price	..	-6.0 cents	..	+12.0 cents	Change in price -4.0 cents	Change in price -4.0 cents
Okinawa	\$3.939	\$5.409	\$4.499	\$4.829
Change in price	-4.0 cents	+12.0 cents	Change in price -4.0 cents	Change in price -5.0 cents

*DieselEFD **Midgrade
For the week of Oct. 21-27

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		South Korea (Won)	1429.59
Euro costs (Oct. 21)	\$0.96	Switzerland (Franc)	1.0044
Dollar buys (Oct. 21)	0.9949	Thailand (Baht)	38.13
British pound (Oct. 21)	\$1.09	Turkey (NewLira)	18.5913
Japanese yen (Oct. 21)	146.00		
South Korean won (Oct. 21)	1398.00		
Commercial rates			
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770		
Britain (Pound)	1.1248		
Canada (Dollar)	1.3712		
China (Yuan)	7.2266		
Denmark (Krone)	7.6008		
Egypt (Pound)	19.6610		
Euro	1.0218		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8494		
Hungary (Forint)	418.50		
Israel (Shekel)	3.5483		
Japan (Yen)	149.90		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3106		
Norway (Krone)	10.6276		
Philippines (Peso)	58.83		
Poland (Zloty)	4.87		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7603		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.4228		

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

INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	6.25
Interest Rates Discount rate	3.75
Federal funds market rate	3.08
3-month bill	4.00
30-year bond	4.13

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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MILITARY

Expert: Marine drills a message to Russians

By SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Marine Corps last week test-fired missiles on Hokkaido of the same type that have plagued Russian forces at war in Ukraine.

The Marines fired their High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS, and Javelin anti-tank guided missile, systems supplied by the U.S. to Ukrainian forces that have been credited with turning the tide against invading Russians.

Test-firing missiles that are “the scourge of Russia’s invading forces in Ukraine ... so close to Russia’s eastern borders looks like the US thumbing its nose at the Russians,” James Brown, an international affairs expert at Temple University’s Japan campus, said in an Oct. 14 email.

Kunashiri, an island 15 miles north of Hokkaido, is the closest of four islands claimed by Japan but occupied by Russia since the end of World War II.

The Russian military has been expanding its presence in the islands, even as it fights a costly war in Ukraine, the Center for Strategic and International Studies reported Sept. 27.

Russian forces north of Hokkaido defend the Kuril chain and deny access to the Sea of Okhotsk, an important sanctuary for Russian submarines, Brown said.

“There has been a buildup of Russian capabilities on the islands,



DIANA JIMENEZ/U.S. Marine Corps

Members of 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division test-fire rockets from a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS, in Hokkaido, Japan, Oct. 14.

including the addition of anti-ship missiles and better anti-aircraft weapons,” he said. “However, these capabilities are consistent with defensive goals. Additionally, most Russian drills on the islands simulate defending the territory against amphibious landings, not attacking.”

Russia has no intention of invading Japan and Japan has no intention of retaking the disputed islands by force, Brown added.

“Things would have to get a

whole lot worse than they currently are for this situation to change,” he said.

A force of 1,600 Marines, led by the Okinawa-based 12th Marine Regiment, an artillery unit, trained on Hokkaido Oct. 1-14, alongside 1,400 troops from Japan’s Northern Army during the Resolute Dragon exercise.

“We are aware of the Russians. You can’t not be because they are very close,” 12th Marines commander Col. Jonathan Sims, who

led U.S. forces training on Hokkaido, told Stars and Stripes by phone from Okinawa on Thursday.

Last month, Russia scrapped an agreement with Japan to allow Japanese former residents to visit the disputed islands off Hokkaido without visas, sparking a protest by Tokyo. Japan and the U.S. have imposed sanctions on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

The Russians filed a diplomatic protest about the Resolute Dragon drills, Sims said.

A Russian destroyer, submarine and submarine rescue ship were sighted 25 miles northeast of Cape Soya, Hokkaido, on Oct. 6, Japan’s Defense Ministry reported the next day.

“We are all aware of what is going on in Ukraine,” Sims said, noting that the Marines are applying lessons learned from the conflict to their training.

Guidance from Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. David Berger calls for distributed operations, Sims said.

“Watching the way Ukraine is operating and winning has validated it,” he said. “A lot of things we have been practicing out here, they have put into practice there.”

On Hokkaido, the Marines spread out their launchers and fire direction centers to not provide large targets, Sims said.

“We have to be distributed as if we are under a persistent watch by an adversary,” he said.

The Marines practiced setting up bilateral command and control with their Japanese counterparts. Those skills will be honed next month during the Keen Sword exercise and at the Yama Sakura drills in December. Both exercises will happen on Okinawa and Kyushu, Sims said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report. robson.seth@stripes.com
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CENTCOM chief visits ballistic missile sub in Arabian Sea

By LOLITA C. BALDOR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The top U.S. military commander for the Middle East boarded a U.S. ballistic missile submarine in the Arabian Sea on Wednesday, a rare move that highlighted U.S. nuclear undersea capabilities during tense times with Iran and Russia.

Gen. Erik Kurilla was shuttled out to the USS West Virginia and went aboard for about eight hours as the submarine rose to the surface in an undisclosed location in international waters in the sea.

The West Virginia is one of the Navy’s Ohio Class, long-range submarines, known as boomers. They are stealthy and, as one leg of America’s nuclear triad, can

launch nuclear missile strikes and are considered a key strategic deterrent.

The U.S. seldom advertises the location of its nuclear-powered submarines, and doesn’t often have them patrolling in the Middle East.

In a statement Wednesday, U.S. Central Command said Kurilla met with Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, the commander of the U.S. Navy’s 5th Fleet, on the submarine.

It said Kurilla also got a “hands-on demonstration of the capabilities of the vessel.”

“These submarines are the crown jewel of the nuclear triad, and the West Virginia demonstrates the flexibility, survivability, readiness, and capability” of

the U.S. forces at sea, Kurilla said in the statement.

The unusual submarine visit by a Central Command leader comes as Russian President Vladimir Putin has threatened to use nuclear weapons with his forces losing ground in the war in Ukraine.

And Iran — which is in the Central Command region — has become more involved in the war, supplying waves of drones that Russia has been using to strike targets in Ukraine, including power plants, residential buildings

and other key infrastructure.

Central Command leaders have often visited U.S. Navy ships in the waters around the Middle East, including massive aircraft carriers that were routinely sent to the region as a deterrent to Iran.

Since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have ended, the Navy has not had a frequent carrier presence in the region.

Kurilla’s submarine tour also came as NATO began its long-planned annual nuclear exercises in northwestern Europe.

Fourteen of NATO’s 30 member countries were scheduled to take part in the exercises, which are conducted around the same time every year and run for about one week.

The drills involve fighter jets capable of carrying nuclear warheads, but do not involve any live bombs. U.S. long-range B-52 bombers are taking part in the maneuvers.

Russia usually holds similar nuclear force exercises this month, and those are expected to begin soon.

The Ohio Class submarines are equipped with Trident II D-5 missiles.

The U.S. submarine fleet, split between bases at Bangor, Washington, and King’s Bay, Georgia, represents one leg of the U.S. nuclear “triad,” along with the Air Force’s long-range B-2 and B-52 bombers and land-based Minuteman 3 missiles.



Kurilla

Pilot ejects before F-35A fighter crashes at air base in Utah

Stars and Stripes

The pilot of an F-35A Lightning II survived when the stealth fighter crashed Wednesday evening at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, according to local TV news reports.

Emergency responders from the base and surrounding community responded immediately

when the fifth-generation fighter went down at the runway’s north end at 6:15 p.m., according to a tweet by the 388th Fighter Wing.

The unidentified pilot ejected before the crash, according to a later tweet from the wing.

The pilot was sent to a medical facility for observation, the wing

said. A crash investigation is underway.

“Base officials said they were still working to determine the cause of the crash but credited the pilot for steering the plane away from populated areas,” KUTV of Salt Lake City reported.

State fire crews responded to a

small fire caused by the crash on Defense Department property near the base, according to the KUTV report.

Hill Air Force Base is south of Ogden, Utah, and west of the Great Salt Lake. Two fighter wings, the 419th and 388th, fly a fleet of 78 aircraft there, accord-

ing to Hill’s website.

A replacement F-35A costs about \$75 million to produce, down from the \$221 million it cost to build the first to come off the assembly line in 2007, according to a Reuters report in July.

news@stripes.com

MILITARY

DODEA schools to receive Blue Ribbon awards

By JUAN KING
Stars and Stripes

NAVAL AIR FACILITY ATSUGI, Japan — Three overseas Defense Department schools earned a coveted award for academic excellence this year from the U.S. Department of Education.

Shirley Lanham Elementary School in Japan, Naples Elementary School in Italy and Rota Elementary in Spain were among the 297 U.S. public and private schools named National Blue Ribbon Schools by Education Secretary Miguel Cardona on Sept. 16.

The three belong to the network of Department of Defense Education Activity schools for the children of U.S. service members and DOD employees.

Shirley Lanham at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, 27 miles southwest of Tokyo, made the list for the first time in its history.

"We were identified due to the continued high achievement and growth year after year," principal Jesus Calderon told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. "They looked at the required five years of sustained performance and nominated us as recipients of the Blue Ribbon."

About 270 students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade attend Lanham, one of 45 schools in the DODEA-Pacific region.

Fewer than 1% of the schools in the United States receive the award, according to a DODEA news release Sept. 20.

The Education Department has been recognizing Blue Ribbon schools for 40 years. They are



JUAN KING/Stars and Stripes

Fourth-graders attend class at Shirley Lanham Elementary School at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan, on Wednesday.

nominated based on one of two categories: exemplary high-performing schools, as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests; and exemplary achievement-gap closing schools, based on their ability to close achievement gaps between groups of students.

A school must meet several criteria based on the student assessments in reading or English language arts, and mathematics or a composite of these assessments with other measures of student

performance, the eligibility criteria said.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has made approximately 10,000 awards to more than 9,000 schools since 1982, according to the Education Department release.

The schools will be honored at an annual awards ceremony on Nov. 3-4, in Washington, D.C., and given a plaque and National Blue Ribbon flag to fly over their schools.

"Being involved with giving stu-

dents opportunities to do things, not just academics, but outside of the academics and getting to know them in that capacity, I think that definitely made a difference," Lanham second-grade teacher Nathan Rogers told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. "Being able to have the chance to work with them almost on a one-on-one basis made a difference."

Calderon said the 2020 death of Sharon Carter, his predecessor as Lanham principal, left a leadership void as the school, like others,

worked to maintain its educational standards during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Having Mrs. Carter pass away when she had started to set the tone and vision for the school, and still maintain the high level of student achievement was one of the huge barriers, but the staff came together and overcame this barrier," he said.

The transitional nature of military schools, with families coming and going to their duty stations, usually every three years, is another challenge to maintaining academic success, Calderon said.

"It's all the teachers — those are the ones that make this work; they are the ones who come in and put in all the extra time and really love the kids," he said.

Dahlia Moate, the parent of a kindergartner and president of Lanham's parent-teacher organization, agreed.

"It's a huge honor, I'm definitely proud of all the teachers and staff," Moate, 27, from Oceanside, Calif., said Wednesday. "I get to work with all the teachers very closely and they are just all so wonderful and definitely make sure all the students are ready to go, ready to excel in their learning abilities."

Fifth-grader Alyssa Uyeda, 10, said she found a rewarding environment at Lanham.

"I think the challenge for me was just challenging myself," she said Wednesday. "Math was easy, but now it's getting harder."

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Air Force family's baby awaits liver transplant in Ohio

By KELLY AGEE
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Emma Murphy was born a healthy, happy baby on March 17.

But six weeks later, Emma wasn't gaining weight. At age 2½ months, she was diagnosed with possible liver failure and despite surgery meant to correct the condition, she needs a transplant, her mother told Stars and Stripes by phone Oct. 7.

Emma and her parents, Tricia and Tech. Sgt. Brandon Murphy, of the 730th Air Mobility Squadron at Yokota in western Tokyo, traveled on Oct. 13 to Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, where Emma is preparing for a liver transplant, her mother said.

Emma's aunt, Carie Amoroso, 50, of Lewiston, Maine, started a GoFundMe campaign to cover expenses associated with the family's medical odyssey that are not covered by their insurance policy, Amoroso told Stars and Stripes by Facebook Messenger on Oct. 6.

"My hope is to ease not only the



Photo courtesy of Tricia Murphy

Emma Murphy, daughter of Tricia and Tech. Sgt. Brandon Murphy, of the 730th Air Mobility Squadron at Yokota Air Base, Japan, was diagnosed with biliary atresia on May 31.

financial burden but allow them to have one less thing to worry about," she said. "My hope is that this allows them to concentrate on being fully focused on being present for Emma during her transplant and recovery and ease the financial burden that comes with such a complex journey."

As of Thursday, "Emma's Journey to a New Liver" on the crowdfunding site had raised nearly \$8,700 toward a \$25,000 goal.

Emma's condition became apparent shortly after her birth March 17, her mother said. The infant was weighed twice weekly but wasn't gaining weight.

Within three months, doctors at Yokota's 374th Medical Group discovered levels of bilirubin in Emma's blood 12 times normal. Bilirubin, a yellowish pigment that results from the breakdown of red blood cells in the liver, is normally excreted, according to the Mayo Clinic website.

High bilirubin levels may indicate liver or bile duct problems, according to the website.

The Yokota medical group immediately contacted the Tokyo Metropolitan Children's Hospital, which directed the family to the National Center for Child Health and Development hospital in the city's Setagaya ward, Tricia Murphy said.

After a 1½ weeks of tests there,

Emma was diagnosed with biliary atresia on May 31, her mother said.

"Biliary atresia is when your biliary system, your bile ducts, all the little tubing inside of your liver and outside of your liver that connect to your intestines, becomes either inflamed, blocked or malformed," Tricia Murphy said.

The Murphys flew to Cleveland for the procedure because their insurance provider, Tricare Prime, outsources some coverage in Japan to International SOS, a health and security services firm, which does not certify any hospital in Japan for liver transplants, Tricia Murphy said she was told.

Early on, Emma's skin turned yellow, a symptom of jaundice, a sign of a bilirubin buildup in the body that can cause the skin, white of the eyes and gums to turn yellow, Tricia Murphy said. Another symptom of a liver problem is eight or nine bowel movements per day. Parents should expect two bowel movements daily for babies six months to one year old,

according to the Mayo Clinic.

October is National Liver Awareness Month, according to the National Liver Foundation, which encourages people to act early to prevent liver disease.

A child with biliary atresia should receive surgery — a procedure called a Roux-en-Y — within 60 days of a biliary atresia diagnosis, Tricia Murphy said. Emma had that procedure at the Tokyo children's hospital, but 90 days after her diagnosis, she said.

"If she had her surgery before 60 days, there's a possibility that we wouldn't be trying to get this transplant right now," she said.

The Murphys arrived in Cleveland on Saturday and Emma had her first appointment Monday, according to a post on the GoFundMe site by Brandon Murphy.

"We thank you again for all of your love and support for our Emma-chan," he said, using a Japanese term of endearment.

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MILITARY

Baby: US couple claims documents name them legal parents**FROM PAGE 1**

high-stakes tangle of at least four court cases. The ordeal has drawn in the U.S. departments of Defense, Justice and State, which have previously argued that the attempt to spirit away a citizen of another country could significantly harm military and foreign relations. The U.S. Marines and federal officials did not comment on the record.

The Afghan family has asked the court to shield their identity out of concerns for their family back in Afghanistan, and they agreed to communicate with the AP on condition of anonymity.

While authorities were looking for her Afghan relatives, attorney Joshua Mast, represented by his brother Richard Mast, told a Virginia state circuit court judge that the baby was a “stateless war orphan,” records show: They assured the judge that Afghan President Ashraf Ghani himself was planning to sign a waiver of jurisdiction within days. The state judge agreed, and granted Joshua and his wife Stephanie Mast custody, naming them as guardians on a birth certificate.

That waiver never arrived, and Ghani’s aide told AP earlier this month that there was no record of any discussion about this. Further, he said such a request would have to go through the courts, which did not happen. Finally, Islamic law prohibits non-Muslims from adopting Afghan babies.

Nonetheless, with documents naming them as her guardians, the Masts turned to a federal judge in Virginia to stop the U.S. government from handing over the baby, court records show. Justice Department attorneys stepped in and said the state adoption was “invalid.” The judge refused to intervene and the baby was given to her relatives.

The Afghan couple — who say they had no idea what had been

happening in U.S. courts — wept with joy when they met the 7-month-old baby.

“We didn’t think she would come back to her family alive,” said the young Afghan man. “It was the best day of our lives.”

Over the next two years, the Afghan couple say, they settled in as a family and raised the baby in the Muslim faith. The woman, who speaks three languages including English, was continuing her studies. The man was working in a medical office. They remember those early years fondly.

“She loved showing off her new clothes, and loved getting henna on her hands every week. Whenever I did makeup or brushed my hair, she wanted to do it for me,” said the woman.

Though the baby remained in Afghanistan, Joshua and Stephanie Mast had given the growing toddler a Western name in a U.S. state court, according to court records. They finalized the adoption, enrolled her in the Defense Department’s health care system, and even scheduled an appointment with a pediatrician.

Mast — through an interlocutor — kept in touch with the Afghan couple, offering to bring their child to the U.S. for medical care, court records say. But the couple say they told Mast that journey was too the arduous.

Everything changed last summer when the U.S. began its chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan. Amid erupting violence and instability, Mast offered to get the couple, and their little girl, evacuated to the U.S., records show. They took him up on his offer.

When the exhausted Afghans arrived at the airport in Washington D.C., they allege in court filings that Mast pulled them out of the international arrivals line and led them to an inspecting officer. They were surprised when Mast presented an Afghan passport for

the child, the couple said. But it was the last name printed on the document that stopped them cold: Mast.

They didn’t know it, but they would soon lose their baby. Just a few days later as the Afghan couple began their resettlement process at Fort Pickett Army National Guard base, they allege Mast con-

fronted them, took the little girl — then 2½ years old — and drove off.

The Masts insist in court documents that they are her legal parents and “acted admirably” to protect her. They’ve asked a judge to dismiss the lawsuit, claiming the Afghan couple are “not her lawful parents.” Mast’s attorney cast doubt on whether the Afghans

were even related to the baby.

The Afghan couple is not giving up.

“After they took her, our tears never stop,” the woman told The Associated Press. “Right now, we are just dead bodies. Our hearts are broken. We have no plans for a future without her. Food has no taste and sleep gives us no rest.”



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SHEKIB RAHMANI/AP

Hundreds of people gather near a U.S. Air Force C-17 transport plane at the perimeter of the international airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Aug. 16, 2021.

MILITARY

Army museum in S. Korea reopens after renovations

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — A museum dedicated to telling the history of the Eighth Army and the 2nd Infantry Division reopened on Wednesday after a \$2.1 million renovation.

The 2nd Infantry Division, Eighth Army and Korean Theater of Operations Museum at Camp Humphreys opened its doors after eight months of revamping that installed interactive, hand-drawn displays and a small theater.

The spruce-up was done by “some of the best museum professionals in the world,” including those who worked on the National Museum of Korea, museum director and retired Army colonel William Alexander said during a reopening ceremony attended by soldiers and officials from Gyeonggi province on Wednesday.

“This is just the start,” Alexander said. “We have more to go — landscaping, more artifacts, more displays and it’ll be really outstanding.”

Once inside the museum, visitors are greeted by an OH-58D Kiowa helicopter that served in Bosnia in 1997, Kosovo in 2002 and Iraq in 2004, where it was struck

by small arms fire.

Among the museum’s more than 2,000 items is a 2nd ID patch worn by NASA astronaut and Air Force Gen. Michael Collins during the Apollo 11 flight to the moon in 1969. The patch was originally worn by his father, James Collins, who was the division’s commander in 1939.

Also on display are priceless artifacts, like a Medal of Honor awarded to Army Sgt. 1st Class William Sitman of the 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd ID, during the Korean War. Sitman posthumously earned the medal after he threw himself on an enemy grenade to protect five other soldiers in his squad on Feb. 14, 1951.

Lifelike mannequins depicting combat first aid and other scenarios from World War I, World War II and the 1950-53 Korean War are displayed with speakers playing sounds from battle.

The museum’s “priceless collection” of artifacts is important in training and developing new soldiers, according to Charles Bowery Jr., executive director of the Army’s Center of Military History.

“The Army’s history matters to soldiers,” he said during the cere-



PHOTOS BY DAVID CHOI/Stars and Stripes

A soldier checks out a display inside the newly renovated 2nd Infantry Division, Eighth Army and Korean Theater of Operations Museum at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, on Wednesday.



A display at the Camp Humphreys museum depicts soldiers engaged in urban fighting during World War II.

mony. “The insignia that you wear on your uniforms, the places around you, the places you serve have a deep meaning in all our

past.”

Eighth Army commander Lt. Gen. Bill Bursleson, who also attended the ceremony, said the mu-

seum honored the U.S.-South Korea military alliance and the soldiers who upheld that partnership.

“Ultimately, not only is this about an alliance but it’s about the history of soldiers, soldiers who have personally sacrificed and have served tours here in Korea both during the war, as well as since the war and into the future,” he said.

Roughly 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea, the majority of them at Humphreys. The 2nd ID traces its lineage to 1917 and World War I and has produced 40 Medal of Honor recipients, according to the division’s webpage.

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Japanese minister pledges deeper dive into PFOS blood levels

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND KEISHI KOJA
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Japanese cabinet minister has promised to investigate claims made by an Okinawan civic group that high levels of synthetic toxins were detected in the blood of locals living near U.S. military installations.

The Ministry of the Environment will cooperate with municipalities on Okinawa, where the group said it took the measurements, and gather information needed to consider mitigation measures, Environment Minister Akihiro Nishimura said Tuesday in a video posted on the ministry’s website.

The announcement comes after the group — Liaison to Protect the Lives of Citizens Against PFAS Contamination — declared that the blood samples showed PFOS levels were 1.5 to 3.1 times higher than a government of Japan survey found last year. The group announced its results Saturday.

PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are chemicals used to

make “fluoropolymer coatings and products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease, and water,” according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. They include the subgroups PFOS and PFOA.

Japan does not set standards for safe bloodstream levels of PFOS, according to an expert, but the group said its samples showed levels that, in some cases, exceeded European standards.

Nishimura said he had not reviewed the group’s claims but said the ministry advises the public not to use or drink water that exceeds 0.05 micrograms of PFOS per liter, Japan’s recommended safe threshold.

The group believes U.S. military bases on Okinawa could be to blame for the pollution and has called for their cooperation in any investigation, group spokesman Toshio Takahashi, 69, told Stars and Stripes by phone Monday.

U.S. Forces Japan public affairs said in a statement Thursday that the command’s “highest priority is the health and safety of our communities, including our service

members, their families, and those that live and work near military installations.”

“We are aware of the recent survey by a private organization regarding PFOS levels,” said the statement emailed by USFJ spokesman Col. Greg Hignite. “We are committed to the well-being of those that live on and near our bases and will continue to coordinate with the Government of Japan to ensure we remain compliant with our international obligations and serve as good stewards of the environment. The U.S. Forces Japan engineer team regularly consults with their counterparts in the Government of Japan and will continue doing so.”

PFOS and PFOA are found in firefighting foam, aircraft grease, water-repellant materials and fluorine chemicals. Studies involving lab animals show exposure to PFOA increases the risk of certain tumors of the liver, testicles, breasts and pancreas, according to the American Cancer Society.

High levels of the contaminants have been detected in wells outside

Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Ginowan city, Kadena Air Base in Kadena town and Camp Hansen in Kin town.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency updated its health advisories in June to say there is no safe level of PFOS or PFOA in drinking water. The synthetic compounds accumulate in the body over time, the agency statement said.

The citizens’ group in June and July sampled the blood of 387 people in six municipalities, Takahashi said.

Japan does not set safe levels for PFOS or PFOA detected in the blood, Kouji Harada, an associate professor of health and environmental sciences at Kyoto University, said by phone Tuesday.

In Germany, PFOS levels over 20 nanograms per milliliter are considered dangerous, he said. Harada said he analyzed the data collected by the Okinawan group and approximately 10% of those surveyed exceeded the German standard. The testing was performed by medical professionals and satisfied sci-

entific standards set by the U.S. government, so Harada was confident in the accuracy of the results, he said.

The highest samples from Kadena town, Okinawa city, Ginowan city and Chatan town measured above the German standard for PFOS, according to data provided to Stars and Stripes by the group.

Alarming levels of perfluorohexane sulfonate, or PFHxS, were also detected, according to the data. The synthetic compound is in the same family of perfluorochemicals as PFOS and PFOA, according to the National Center for Biotechnology Information.

Okinawa city, Ginowan city, Kin town and Chatan town all exceeded 20 nanograms of PFHxS per milliliter, according to the group’s data. Kyuna in Ginowan city registering a maximum of 65.7 nanograms per milliliter.

“We must worry about future lifestyle-related illnesses,” Harada said.

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MILITARY

NATO assures security to Finland, Sweden

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

It's unfathomable that NATO would fail to respond to threats against aspirants Sweden and Finland as they await final membership approval from holdouts Turkey and Hungary, the top alliance official said Thursday.

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said at a news conference in Brussels that NATO is already treating the two Nordic countries as something akin to full-fledged members.

The United States and 27 others among NATO's 30 members have already green-lighted the entry of Sweden and Finland into the transatlantic security pact, which

comes with collective defense assurance that an attack on one member demands a response from all.

But uncertainty remains over whether Turkey and Hungary, two countries with reputations for going against the alliance grain, are on board.

Although there is no set timeline for the accession of Finland and Sweden, NATO is feeling a sense of urgency to get the deal done.

"As invitees, you are now integrating into NATO's political and military structures," Stoltenberg said alongside Sweden's new prime minister, Ulf Kristersson. "And it is inconceivable that allies would not act should Sweden and

Finland come under any form of pressure."

Many alliance member countries, including the U.S., have already given Finland and Sweden security assurances, and NATO has upped its presence in the Baltic as a security precaution.



Stoltenberg

Nevertheless, questions loom about what Turkey's and Hungary's next move will be.

Kristersson said he is prepared to visit Ankara to move talks with Turkey forward. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has

complained that Sweden and Finland have not been fully supportive of Turkey's concerns over terrorism on NATO's southern flank.

During NATO's June summit in Madrid, Sweden, Turkey and Finland entered into a trilateral memorandum designed to address Ankara's concerns about Kurdish militant groups.

Meanwhile, Hungary has been less explicit over what concerns, if any, it has about the membership bids of Finland and Sweden. But Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, known for his friendly ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin, remains a wild card.

Still, Sweden and Finland are on track for eventual membership,

said Stoltenberg, who noted that the accession process for both "has been the fastest in NATO's modern history."

Both countries are wealthy and boast advanced militaries and stable governments. In addition, they have been close partners with NATO states for years.

Formal induction would give the allies a more comprehensive security buffer, Stoltenberg said.

"Your membership will strengthen the alliance's presence in the High North and deepen Nordic and Baltic defense cooperation," Stoltenberg told Kristersson.

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Transfer of Green Berets, SEALs to Baumholder might require waiver

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — U.S. special operations units poised for a move to a rural part of western Germany could need a special Pentagon waiver that explains why those forces wouldn't be more useful in countries nearer to Russia.

For years, U.S. Special Operations Command Europe has wanted to send SEALs and Green Berets to an Army base in Baumholder, Germany.

And those plans are coming to fruition, with various construction projects in the works and hundreds of troops expected to relocate from their current base of operations in Stuttgart.

But House lawmakers want to

block funding for construction projects to support the move, saying that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin must first justify the effort.

Specifically, the House's version of the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act calls for Austin to explain why U.S. special operators wouldn't be better positioned in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania or Poland, all of which are on the front lines when it comes to deterring Russian aggression.

The waiver would need to detail how "hosting such forces in Germany would provide greater deterrence or greater operational utility" than the other nations, the NDAA states. It would also need to describe how taking up a position in Baumholder "is in the national

security interests of the United States."

The House version of the NDAA passed in July. It will eventually be reconciled with the Senate version of the act, which does not include the waiver provision and has not yet been put to a vote.

If the waiver provision makes it into the final bill, it's unlikely that it will pose a major obstacle for the military and its planned move to Baumholder, assuming Austin doesn't want to go in a new direction.

On the surface, Baumholder could appear to be an unlikely place to put special operations teams, given the range of security concerns along the eastern flank.

However, having sensitive infrastructure farther removed



CHRIS GARDNER/U.S. Army

Chris Hood of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a contractor discuss the progress of renovations at Smith Barracks in Baumholder, Germany, in May.

from potential hot spots in the Baltics could be one explanation for the Baumholder move.

The extensive training ranges in the area also would give operators space to coordinate larger drills with various allies.

Meanwhile, SOCEUR troops already do rotating deployments

from local training bases to the Baltics and Poland, where they have had a persistent presence since 2014, when Russia's first invasion of Ukraine paved the way for the Kremlin to annex Crimea.

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US military making policy changes to protect abortion access

By DOUG G. WARE
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department announced Thursday that it's updating military policies to protect access to abortions for female service members and back up health providers and doctors in states where laws prohibit the controversial procedure.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a memo that the updated policies are designed to protect and enhance access to reproductive health for women in the armed forces, including added safeguards for privacy and financial support for service members who must travel to obtain an abortion.

The policy updates are a response to President Joe Biden's directives that all federal agencies identify and evaluate ways to

protect access to reproductive health care after the Supreme Court in June struck down Roe v. Wade — the landmark 1973 ruling that granted legalized abortion nationwide.

The ruling allowed a number of states to pass laws that either partially or entirely ban abortions. Laws in some states, including Texas, also state anyone who helps a woman obtain an abortion — such as physicians and friends — can be held legally liable.

Military officials said the policy updates fall under four categories — preserving privacy, protecting health care providers, ensuring access to reproductive health care, and improving awareness.

On privacy, one policy update orders commanders to display "objectivity and discretion when addressing reproductive health

care matters" and underscores their duty to enforce existing policies "against discrimination and retaliation in the context of reproductive health care choices." Service members will also be given more time to notify commanders about a pregnancy.

As for protecting vulnerable health providers from potential legal risk, military officials said the department wants to reassure doctors that they have Pentagon support, which includes programs to reimburse fees associated with legal defenses and help physicians get licensed in other states.

Military officials, however, did not say how vulnerable providers might be protected in any number of possible scenarios, mainly because the entirety of the policies is still being worked out. Mainly, they said, Thursday's an-

nouncement serves to reassure providers that they will have Pentagon support.

To better ensure access, the department said reproductive health care will be available to service members regardless of where they are stationed, and the department will pay to varying extents for covered and non-covered abortions. Covered abor-

tions are those in the military that are done in cases of rape, incest and to protect the life of the mother. Officials said service members would still be responsible for some of the expenses from non-covered abortions, but they did not specify which costs.

Military officials said the department recorded 91 covered abortions between 2016 and 2021.

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EUROPE

Russia seeks to regain ground in Ukraine

By SABRA AYRES
AND HAAN ARHIROVA
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia's troops fought Thursday to regain lost ground in areas of Ukraine that Russian President Vladimir Putin has illegally annexed while Moscow tried to pound the invaded country into submission with more missile and drone attacks on critical infrastructure.

Russian forces attacked Ukrainian positions near Bilohorivka, a village in the Luhansk region of eastern Ukraine. In the neighboring Donetsk region, fighting raged near the city of Bakhmut. Kremlin-backed separatists have controlled parts of both regions for 8½ years.

Putin declared martial law in Luhansk, Donetsk and southern Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions on Wednesday in an attempt to assert Russian authority in the annexed areas following a string of battlefield setbacks and a troubled troop mobilization.

The unsettled status of the illegally absorbed territory was especially visible in the Kherson region's capital, where Russian military officials have replaced Kremlin-installed civilian leaders amid a mass evacuation and an ongoing Ukrainian counteroffensive.



FRANCISCO SECO/AP

People sit in the subway, using it as a bomb shelter during an air raid alarm, in Kyiv, Ukraine on Thursday.

Kherson city, with a prewar population of about 284,000, was one of the first urban areas captured by Russia when it invaded Ukraine, and it remains a prime target for both sides because of its key industries and major river port. Officials said 15,000 of a planned 60,000 residents had left the city as of Thursday in anticipation of intensified assaults.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's office said Thursday that Ukrainian forces continued to en-

gage the enemy, mounting 15 attacks on Russian military strongholds in the Kherson region.

Meanwhile, Russia continued its stepped-up attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, dispatching drones and missiles to eight regions. At least three civilians died and 14 were wounded in overnight attacks across Ukraine, according to the Ukrainian president's office.

In Kryvyi Rih, Russian strikes damaged a power plant and an-

other energy facility, cutting electricity to the central Ukraine city of about 600,000 residents. Apart from being Zelenskyy's hometown, Kryvyi Rih is home to several large metallurgical factories that are key to Ukraine's economy. Regional governor Valentin Reznichenko said the city sustained serious damage.

Ukrainian authorities said missile and drone strikes ignited several fires in the southern city of Mykolaiv, with four drones hitting

a school. Another school in Komyshevukha, a village in the Zaporizhzhia region, also took four drone strikes and sustained damage. Authorities reported no casualties.

Russia's sustained attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure prompted authorities to ask residents to reduce their energy consumption from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. starting Thursday and to dim city street lights. They warned of rolling blackouts.

"Now, every illuminated business sign, billboard or washing machine can lead to serious emergency shutdowns," Reznichenko said.

The general staff of the Ukrainian army said there was a heightened chance that Russian forces could launch an attack from Belarus with the aim of cutting off supply routes for Western weapons and military equipment.

Oleksii Hromov, a deputy chief of general staff's main operational department, said Russia was deploying aircraft and troops to air bases and military infrastructure facilities in Belarus.

In another sign of Russia's wavering mobilization, Ukrainian authorities said more than 3,000 Russians have so far called a dedicated hotline for soldiers who don't want to take part in the war and want to surrender.

Drones: Ukraine asks for UN experts to examine wreckage

FROM PAGE 1

tions and other utilities, killing at least four, authorities there have said. Their use by Russian forces has underscored the growing ties between Moscow and Tehran, alarming Western leaders whose sanctions and other punitive economic measures have drastically undercut the Kremlin's ability to regenerate its military after eight months of war.

The Iranian-made drones are being launched from three Russian military bases in Crimea and another position in Belarus, a Ukrainian official said. Tehran has dispatched advisers to Russian-controlled areas, where they have provided operators with technical instruction.

It is unclear how the United States gained access to the drone wreckage, though the Pentagon coordinates closely with Ukraine's military and maintains a small administrative presence at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv. That team is led by a one-star Army general.

The Shahed is a large, lumbering aircraft that flies very low and appears to have few metallic parts, making it difficult to detect with radars and other sensors be-

fore reaching its target. Examination of the wreckage may help overcome those challenges.

The drones' points of origin pose another challenge, the Ukrainian official said: They are too far for U.S.-supplied rocket artillery to strike, blunting options for destroying the aircraft before they are airborne.

Ukraine, which says it has destroyed more than 220 Shahed-136 drones since Sept. 13, appears to be studying the platform, Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur told reporters this week. Pevkur said it was of regional urgency to learn about the aircraft.

"We all have to understand that we all have to put our efforts to that. To understand how it works, and to understand how to take it down," he said. "Because it's not only the question of Ukraine at war at the moment, but it's a question of all of us who are in the situation where we are."

Iran produces a variety of drones and has reportedly supplied them to Hezbollah in Lebanon and Houthi rebels in Yemen, among other groups. The Pentagon believes Iran-allied forces have used them against U.S. military personnel in Syria, including

in an August attack at the U.S.-run base at Tanf.

Ukraine has asked the United Nations to examine the wreckage, to determine the aircraft's country of origin. In a letter dated Friday, Ukraine's U.N. ambassador invited "U.N. experts to visit Ukraine at the earliest possible opportunity to inspect recovered Iran-origin drones." The letter maintained that Iranian transfers of the drones would violate both U.N. sanctions against Iran and terms of the 2015 U.N. Security Council resolution on the Iran nuclear deal that year.

The Council held a closed-door meeting Wednesday to hear "an expert briefing ... on recent evidence that Russia illegally procured Iranian UAVs that it is using in its war on Ukraine," Nate Evans, spokesperson for the American U.N. mission, said in a statement after the session. "These UAVs were transferred from Iran to Russia in open violation of provisions" of the resolution approving the nuclear deal Iran signed with world powers.

The Shahed loiters in the air until it identifies a target, often a fixed position, and then dives into it, detonating onboard explosives.

Unlike bigger reusable drones that fire missiles and return to a base, it flies low and slow.

Ukrainians call it "the lawn mower" because of the loud buzzing sound it makes. The distinct noise has served as a warning of its approach, allowing people to scramble for cover and brace for the explosion, which is smaller than the impact caused by conventional ballistic missiles.

The drones pose a significant problem, analysts say. Many defensive systems capable of defeating them are costly, are designed mostly for bigger threats like jets and helicopters, and take months or years to produce, limiting how many can be distributed and forcing military planners to prioritize sites deemed most vulnerable.

While Ukrainian air defenses have shown some success against the drones, even a few slipping through can cause havoc, said Samuel Bendett, an expert on the Russian military at CNA, a research group. "It's a demonstration of Russian capability, and now they have cheap plentiful weapons that can constantly remind Ukrainians that their skies are not 100 percent safe," he said. "It's a very powerful psycholog-

ical weapon."

Russia's performance with the Shaheds in Ukraine "suggests an evolution," Bendett said. "They probably started with a basic concept the Houthis and the Iranians used themselves and built on it to possibly overwhelm Ukrainian air defenses, to fly around them, to circumnavigate them, in one way or another."

Iranian military leaders will probably seek feedback from Russian commanders on how they have evaded Western air defenses, experts have said. Such information could aid Tehran in any potential attacks it pursues against its regional adversaries.

The United States has provided Ukraine with air defense systems capable of destroying drones. One, the Vampire, can take down drones with a launcher attached to a pickup truck.

The Pentagon also has promised to send Ukraine NASAMS, a surface-to-air missile system capable of intercepting ballistic missiles and other aerial threats. Two NASAMS are slated for delivery in the coming weeks, U.S. officials have said. Six others pledged to Ukraine are expected to take years to build and deliver.

NATION

Heating worries mount across US

By DAVID SHARP
Associated Press

JAY, Maine — Across the U.S., families are looking to the winter with dread as energy costs soar and fuel supplies tighten.

The Department of Energy is projecting sharp price increases for home heating compared with last winter and some worry whether heating assistance programs will be able to make up the difference for struggling families. The situation is even bleaker in Europe, with Russia's continued curtailment of natural gas pushing prices upward and causing painful shortages.

In Maine, Aaron Raymo saw the writing on the wall and began stocking up on heating oil in 5-gallon increments over the summer as costs crept upward. He filled a container with heating oil as he could afford it, usually on pay-days, and used a heating assistance program to top off his 275-gallon oil tank with the arrival of colder weather.

His family is trying to avoid being forced into a difficult decision — choosing between food or heating their home.

"It's a hard one," he said. "What are you going to choose for food, or what amount of fuel oil are you go-

ing to choose to stay warm?"

A number of factors are converging to create a bleak situation: Global energy consumption has rebounded from the start of the pandemic, and supply was barely keeping pace before the war in Ukraine further reduced supplies.

The National Energy Assistance Directors Association says energy costs will be the highest in more than a decade this winter.

The Energy Department projects heating bills will jump 28% this winter for those who rely on natural gas, used by nearly half of U.S. households for heat. Heating oil is projected to be 27% higher and electricity 10% higher, the agency said.

That comes against inflation rates that accelerated last month with consumer prices growing 6.6%, the fastest such pace in four decades.

The pain will be especially acute in New England, which is heavily reliant on heating oil to keep homes warm. It's projected to cost more than \$2,300 to heat a typical home with heating oil this winter, the energy department said.

Across the country, some are urging utilities to implement a moratorium on winter shut-offs,



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

Lucinda Tyler and Aaron Raymo sit outside their home with fuel containers they used to fill their heating oil tank at their home earlier this month in Jay, Maine. The couple shopped around for the best prices and bought heating oil 5 gallons at a time throughout the summer whenever they had any extra money.

and members of Congress already added \$1 billion in heating aid. But there will be fewer federal dollars than last year when pandemic aid flowed.

In Jay, where Raymo lives with his partner, Lucinda Tyler, and 8-year-old son, residents were already bracing for the worst before the local paper mill announced it's going to close, putting more than 200 people out of work. That has the potential to wreak havoc on the town budget, and cause higher

property taxes that will further eat into residents' budgets.

Both Raymo and Tyler work full-time jobs. He works as many as 70 or 80 hours a week in an orthopedists' office and she works from home in shareholder services for a financial services company. They don't qualify for much help even though they're scraping by to keep up with repairs, buy gas and put food on the table — and heat their 100-year-old home in a state known for bitter cold weath-

er.

"We work significant hours but it seems that it's not enough," said Tyler, who wept with relief when she learned they qualified for even a modest amount of heating assistance.

Last month, Congress added \$1 billion in funding to Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, bringing the total to at least \$4.8 billion and making additional heating aid available for the start of the winter season.

Arizona refuses US demand to remove containers along border

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Arizona has refused the federal government's demand to take down double-stacked shipping containers it placed to fill gaps in the wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, saying it won't do so until the U.S. moves to construct a permanent barrier instead.

The Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs dug in its heels in an Oct. 18 letter to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, saying "the containers will remain in place until specific details regarding construction are provided." It was signed by Allen Clark, the department's director.

A regional spokeswoman for the Bureau of Reclamation did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Arizona's refusal in the most recent flap between the Biden administration and Republican-led border states over immigration policies.

The federal agency told Arizona officials in a letter last week that the containers were unauthorized and violated U.S. law. The bureau also demanded that no new containers be placed, saying it wanted to prevent conflicts with two federal contracts already awarded and two more still pending to fill border wall gaps near the Morelos Dam in the Yuma, Ariz., area.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey ordered installation of more than 100 double-stacked containers that were placed over the summer, saying he couldn't wait for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection to award the contracts it had announced for the work.

Migrants have continued to avoid the recently erected barriers by going around them, including



RANDY HOEFT, THE YUMA SUN/AP

Shipping containers fill a gap in the 30-foot-high bollard border fence near the Yuma Levee Road and Morelos Dam on Friday near Yuma, Ariz.

through the Cocopah Indian Reservation. The Cocopah Indian Tribe has complained that Arizona acted against its wishes by placing 42 of the double stacks on its land.

The border wall promoted by former President Donald Trump continues to be a potent issue for Republican politicians hoping to show their support for border security.

President Joe Biden halted wall construction his first day in office, leaving billions of dollars of work unfinished but still under contract. The Biden administration has made a few exceptions for small projects at areas deemed unsafe for people to cross, including the gaps near Yuma.

Fewer Americans applied for jobless aid last week

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell last week and remains historically low even as the U.S. economy slows in the midst of decades-high inflation.

Jobless claims for the week ending Oct. 15 declined by 12,000 to 214,000 from 226,000 last week, the Labor Department reported Thursday.

The four-week moving average rose by 1,250 to 212,250.

Considered a proxy for layoffs, applications for jobless aid have remained historically low since the initial purge of more than 20 million jobs at the start of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020.

Some recent employment data suggests the job market may be cooling slightly, but overall, it remains the healthiest part of an economy that's been shaky all year due to high inflation and Russia's war in Ukraine.

The government reported last week that inflation in the United States accelerated in September,

with the cost of housing and other necessities intensifying pressure on families and businesses.

Four-decade high inflation has prompted the Federal Reserve to keep raising its key interest rate, which is currently in a range of 3% to 3.25%. A little more than six months ago, that rate was near zero. The sharp rate hikes have pushed mortgage rates up to 15-year highs, and made other borrowing costlier. The Fed hopes that higher interest rates will slow borrowing and spending and push inflation closer to its traditional 2% target.

Fed officials have warned that the unemployment rate will likely have to rise as part of their fight against rising prices, and the most recent government jobs report likely snuffed out any hope that the Fed would pause rate increases when it meets in early November.

American employers slowed their hiring in September but still added 263,000 jobs and the unemployment rate dropped from 3.7% to 3.5%, matching a half-century low.

NATION

COVID-19 linked to rise in deaths during pregnancy

BY AMANDA SEITZ
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — COVID-19 drove a dramatic increase in the number of women who died from pregnancy or childbirth complications in the U.S. last year, a crisis that has disproportionately claimed Black and Hispanic women as victims, according to a government report released Wednesday.

The report lays out grim trends across the country for expectant mothers and their newborn babies.

It finds that pregnancy-related deaths have spiked nearly 80% since 2018, with COVID-19 being a factor in a quarter of the 1,178 deaths reported last year. The percentage of preterm and low birthweight babies also went up last year, after holding steady for years. And more pregnant or postpartum women are reporting symptoms of depression.

“We were already in the middle of a crisis with maternal mortality in our country,” said Karen Tabb Dina, a maternal health researcher at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “This really shows that COVID-19 has exacerbated that crisis to rates that we, as a country, are not able to handle.”

The nonpartisan U.S. Government Accountability Office, which authored the report, analyzed pregnancy-related deaths after Congress mandated that it review maternal health outcomes in the 2020 coronavirus relief bill.

The maternal death rate in the U.S. is higher than many other developed nations and had been

on the rise in the years leading up to the pandemic, but COVID-19 has only worsened conditions here for pregnant women.

Women who contract the virus while pregnant face elevated health risks. Staffing shortages and COVID-19 restrictions created more hurdles for expecting mothers to get in-person health care; And pandemic stress has intensified depression, a common condition during pregnancy.

Mental health issues likely contributed to the increase in pregnancy-related deaths, Tabb Dina said. Many women who experience depression and anxiety during or after their pregnancy struggle to get the care they need. “Mental health is the greatest complication in pregnancy that we don’t understand,” she said.

The biggest spike in deaths came during July through December of last year, as the COVID-19 delta variant infected millions, noted Carolyn Yocom, a director at the Government Accountability Office.

“It’s really clear from the data that the time in which the delta variant spread seemed to correspond to a huge increase in deaths,” Yocom said.

Pregnancy-related deaths for every 100,000 births climbed from 44 in 2019 to 68.9 among Black women last year. White women had death rates of 26.1 last year, a jump from 17.9 in 2019.

Death rates among Hispanics had been on the decline, but they swelled again during the pandemic from 12.6 per 100,000 in 2019 to 27.5 last year.



NASA/AP

Astronaut Nicole Mann shows her dreamcatcher during an interview on Wednesday.

First Native American woman in space awed by Mother Earth

BY MARCIA DUNN
Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — The first Native American woman in space said Wednesday she is overwhelmed by the beauty and delicacy of Mother Earth, and is channeling “positive energy” as her five-month mission gets underway.

NASA astronaut Nicole Mann said from the International Space Station that she’s received lots of prayers and blessings from her family and tribal community. She is a member of the Wailacki of the Round Valley Indian Tribes in Northern California.

Mann showed off the dream catcher she took up with her, a childhood gift from her mother that she’s always held dear. The small traditional webbed hoop with feathers is used to offer protection, and she said it’s given her strength during challenging times. Years before joining NASA

in 2013, she flew combat in Iraq for the Marines.

“It’s the strength to know that I have the support of my family and community back home and that when things are difficult or things are getting hard or I’m getting burned-out or frustrated, that strength is something that I will draw on to continue toward a successful mission,” Mann told The Associated Press, which gathered questions from members and tribal news outlets across the country.

Mann said she’s always heeded her mother’s advice on the importance of positive energy, especially on launch day.

“It’s difficult for some people maybe to understand because it’s not really tangible,” she said. “But that positive energy is so important, and you can control that energy, and it helps to control your attitude.”

Mann, 45, a Marine colonel and

test pilot who was born in Petaluma, Calif., said it’s important to recognize there are all types of people aboard the space station. It’s currently home to three Americans, three Russians and one Japanese astronaut.

“What that does is it just highlights our diversity and how incredible it is when we come together as a human species, the wonderful things that we can do and that we can accomplish,” she said.

While fascinated with stars and space as a child, Mann said she did not understand who became astronauts or even what they did. “Unfortunately, in my mind at that time, it was not in the realm of possibilities,” she said.

That changed later in her career. Now, she’s taking in the sweeping vistas of Earth from 260 miles up and hoping to see the constellations, as she encourages youngsters to follow their dreams.

Study: Cancer-causing gas leaking from Calif. stoves, pipes

Associated Press

Gas stoves in California homes are leaking cancer-causing benzene, researchers found in a new study published on Thursday, though they say more research is needed to understand how many homes have leaks.

In the study, published in Environmental Science and Technology on Thursday, researchers also estimated that over 4 tons of benzene per year are being leaked into the atmosphere from outdoor pipes that deliver the gas to buildings around California — the equivalent to the benzene emissions from nearly 60,000 vehicles. And those emissions are unac-

counted for by the state.

The researchers collected samples of gas from 159 homes in different regions of California and measured to see what types of gases were being emitted into homes when stoves were off. They found that all of the samples they tested had hazardous air pollutants, like benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene (BTEX), all of which can have adverse health effects in humans with chronic exposure or acute exposure in larger amounts.

Of most concern to the researchers was benzene, a known carcinogen that can lead to leukemia and other cancers and blood disorders, according to the Na-

tional Cancer Institute.

The finding could have major implications for indoor and outdoor air quality in California, which has the second highest level of residential natural gas use in the United States.

“What our science shows is that people in California are exposed to potentially hazardous levels of benzene from the gas that is piped into their homes,” said Drew Michanowicz, a study co-author and senior scientist at PSE Healthy Energy, an energy research and policy institute. “We hope that policymakers will consider this data when they are making policy to ensure current and future policies

are health-protective in light of this new research.”

Homes in almost every region in the study — Greater Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento and Fresno — had benzene levels that far exceed the limit determined to be safe by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessment. But the region with the highest benzene levels by far was the North San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys.

This finding in particular didn’t surprise residents and health care workers in the region who spoke to The Associated Press about the study. That’s because many of

them experienced the largest-known natural gas leak in the nation in Aliso Canyon in 2015.

Kyoko Hibino was one of the residents exposed to toxic air pollution as a result of the Aliso Canyon gas leak. After the leak, she started having a persistent cough and nosebleeds and eventually was diagnosed with breast cancer, which has also been linked to benzene exposure. Her cats also started having nosebleeds and one recently passed away from leukemia.

“I’d say let’s take this study really seriously and understand how bad (benzene exposure) is,” she said.

WORLD

Truss resigns as UK prime minister

By JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON — British Prime Minister Liz Truss resigned Thursday — bowing to the inevitable after a tumultuous, short-lived term in which her policies triggered turmoil in financial markets and a rebellion in her party that obliterated her authority.

Making a hastily scheduled statement outside her 10 Downing Street office, Truss acknowledged that “I cannot deliver the mandate on which I was elected by the Conservative Party.”

Hers is the third resignation by a Conservative prime minister in as many years and leaves a divided party seeking a leader who can unify its warring factions. Truss, who said she will remain in office for a few more days while that process unfolds, has been prime minister for just over six weeks.

Just a day earlier she had vowed to stay in power, saying she was “a fighter and not a quitter.” But Truss couldn’t hold on any longer

after a senior minister quit her government with a barrage of criticism and a vote in the House of Commons descended into chaos and acrimony just days after she was forced to abandon many of her economic policies.

A growing number of lawmakers had called for Truss to resign after weeks of turmoil sparked by her economic plan. When it was unveiled by the government last month, the plan triggered financial turmoil and a political crisis that has seen the replacement of Truss’ Treasury chief, multiple policy U-turns and a breakdown of discipline in the governing Conservative Party.

Earlier, Conservative lawmaker Simon Hoare said the government was in disarray.

“Nobody has a route plan. It’s all sort of hand-to-hand fighting on a day-to-day basis,” he told the BBC on Thursday.

Truss quit after a meeting with Graham Brady, a senior Conservative lawmaker who oversees



STEFAN ROUSSEAU/AP

British Prime Minister Liz Truss, followed by her husband Hugh O’Leary, arrives to make a statement outside 10 Downing Street where she announced her resignation in London on Thursday.

leadership challenges. Brady was tasked with assessing whether the prime minister still has the support of Tory members of Parliament — and it seemed she did not.

“It’s time for the prime minister to go,” Conservative lawmaker

Miriam Cates said earlier Thursday. Another, Steve Double, said of Truss: “She isn’t up to the job, sadly.” Legislator Ruth Edwards said “it is not responsible for the party to allow her to remain in power.”

With opinion polls giving the Labour Party a large and growing lead, the Conservative Party decided its only hope of avoiding electoral oblivion was to replace Truss. But they remain divided over who exactly should do that.

Philippines to buy US aircraft after scrapping Russia deal

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday backed a decision by his predecessor to cancel a deal to buy 16 Russian military heavy-lift helicopters and said his administration has “secured an alternative supply from the United States.”

Marcos Jr. said at a news conference that the Philippine government will negotiate to get back part of the down payment it made to the

Russian aircraft manufacturer.

It was the first time Marcos Jr., who took office in June, has commented publicly on the touchy issue involving Russia. His predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, signed the deal to buy the Mi-17 helicopters but decided before his term ended to cancel the contract due to fears of possible Western sanctions.

“I think it was already determined by the previous administration that that deal will not carry

through, will not go on,” Marcos Jr. said when asked to comment on a call by the Russian ambassador to Manila for the Philippine government to honor the helicopter deal.

“We have secured an alternative supply from the United States,” the president said. He added, without elaborating, that the U.S. aircraft to be ordered by the Philippines would be manufactured in Poland.

Moscow’s ambassador to Manila, Marat Pavlov, told reporters Wednesday night that the Philip-

pine government has not officially notified Russia of its decision to cancel the deal and a Russian company was proceeding to manufacture the Mi-17 helicopters after the Philippines made an initial payment.

Filipino pilots who would operate the helicopters have undergone Russian training, he said.

The Russian aircraft manufacturer was ready to deliver one of the helicopters in June “but unfortunately, it was not accepted by

your government,” Pavlov said.

“We are ready to fulfill all our obligations as a reliable partner of the Philippine side in the field of technical military cooperation and we consider that it will also be done by the Philippines,” Pavlov said.

The Department of National Defense in Manila, however, said it formally notified the Russian aircraft manufacturer Sovtechnoexport in June and last month of the Philippine decision to cancel the contract.

New Zealand farmers hit streets to protest government’s proposal to tax cow burps

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Farmers across New Zealand took to the streets on their tractors Thursday to protest government plans to tax cow burps and other greenhouse gas emissions, although the rallies were smaller than many had expected.

Lobby group Groundswell New Zealand helped organize more than 50 protests in towns and cities across the country, the biggest involving a few dozen vehicles.

Last week, the government proposed a new farm levy as part of a plan to tackle climate change. The government said it would be a world first, and that farmers should be able to recoup the cost by charging

more for climate-friendly products.

Because farming is so big in New Zealand — there are 10 million beef and dairy cattle and 26 million sheep, compared to just 5 million people — about half of all greenhouse gas emissions come from farms. Methane from burping cattle makes a particularly big contribution.

But some farmers argue the proposed tax would actually increase global greenhouse gas emissions by shifting farming to countries less efficient at making food.

At the protest in Wellington, farmer Dave McCurdy said he was disappointed in the small turnout, but said most farmers were working hard on their farms during a

spell of good spring weather at a particularly busy time of year.

He said farmers were good environmental stewards.

“It’s our life, our family’s lives,” he said. “We’re not out there to wreck it, we wouldn’t make any money. We love our farms. That’s what annoys us. We’re painted as these bad guys, but a lot of farmers have spent generations looking after that land.”

He said the proposed tax didn’t take proper account of all the trees and brush he and other farmers had planted, which helped trap carbon and offset emissions. He said if the proposed tax and herd reductions went ahead, it would be ruinous to many farmers.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

2 killed when small plane crashes at car dealership

OH MARIETTA — A small plane crashed into a car dealership parking lot near the border of Ohio and West Virginia early Tuesday, killing two people on board and sparking a large fire.

The crash of the 1974 Beechcraft Air King E90 in Marietta, Ohio, was reported at about 7:15 a.m., according to the Ohio State Highway Patrol. The pilot and another person on board were killed. The crash damaged several vehicles at the dealership and sparked a fire that sent dark plumes of smoke spewing into the air, but no one on the ground was injured. It wasn't known if anyone was in the dealership at the time of the crash.

The plane had apparently departed about 30 minutes earlier from John Glenn International Airport in Ohio, but it was not immediately clear where it was headed. The two victims were the only people in the plane, authorities said.

Wrestler saves teammate from grizzly bear mauling

MT BILLINGS — A college wrestler from a small Wyoming school helped his teammate survive a grizzly mauling over the weekend by trying to wrestle the massive bear off his friend, eventually drawing a more brutal attack to himself.

The men are crediting their bonds as wrestling teammates at Northwest College in Cody, Wyo., with helping them survive the attack Saturday evening southeast of Yellowstone National Park.

Brady Lowry of Cedar City, Utah, suffered a broken arm and puncture wounds in the initial attack after they surprised the bear while searching for antlers shed by elk and deer in the Shoshone National Forest.

"It shook me around and I didn't know what to do," Lowry told KSL-TV Monday from a hospital in Billings, Mont. "I curled up in a ball and it got me a few more times."

His teammate — Kendell Cummings of Evanston, Wyo. — tried to stop the attack on Lowry by yelling, kicking and hitting the bear and pulling on its fur.

The bear quickly turned its fury onto Cummings. After the bear attacked him twice and left, Cummings pulled himself up and began looking for his teammates. In the meantime, Lowry walked to an area with cell service and called 911.

\$275M verdict for toxic exposures at school

WA MONROE — A jury in King County has awarded \$275 million to 10 students and parents who say they suffered serious neurological injuries from chemical exposure at a school northeast of Seattle.

The lawsuit against Bayer Pharmaceuticals is the fourth to result in a multimillion-dollar verdict, The Seattle Times reported. The com-



JOEL BISSELL, KALAMAZOO (MICH.) GAZETTE/AP

Whitecaps on display

A person walks along South Beach as large waves crash into the South Haven lighthouse in South Haven, Mich., on Monday.

pany owns chemical giant Monsanto, the manufacturer of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs.

The first three lawsuits resulted in jury verdicts of \$268 million distributed to 14 plaintiffs. One lawsuit is ongoing and 16 more await trial.

More than 200 students, parents and teachers from the Sky Valley Education Center, an alternative school in Snohomish County, have sued Monsanto over environmental contamination. They say Monroe School District knew PCBs were found on the campus, but, despite cleanup efforts, toxins were still being found into 2019.

Police say 9 hurt when commuter train hits semi

CT WATERBURY — A commuter train hit a tractor-trailer Monday whose operator had driven to a rail crossing after leaving the scene of an earlier crash, transit authorities said. Nine train passengers suffered minor injuries.

The tractor-trailer was involved in a crash with another vehicle near Metro-North Railroad property in Waterbury, Conn., shortly before 11 a.m., officials with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said.

The tractor-trailer then drove a short distance to a railroad crossing and stopped in the path of the 10:45 a.m. train from Waterbury to Bridgeport, MTA police said in a news release. The semi driver noticed crossing gates lowering and tried to move out of the way but was unable

to clear the crossing before the train hit the truck, MTA police said.

About 30 passengers were aboard the train, and nine reported minor injuries that were evaluated at the scene, police said.

The driver of the tractor-trailer was ticketed for stopping on a railroad crossing, police said.

Dozens said to be injured in bonfire explosion

WI TOWN OF MAPLE GROVE — Authorities investigating a bonfire explosion over the weekend in eastern Wisconsin said Monday that as many as 40 people might have been injured in the blaze, including some who were seriously hurt.

The incident happened early Saturday in the Town of Maple Grove, located about 30 miles south of Green Bay. The Shawano County Sheriff's Office said an accelerant was poured on the fire, causing it to burn out of control.

The sheriff's office said that at least 17 people sought treatment on their own at local hospitals. Exact condition reports are not available, although some the injuries "range from critical, to others who have already been released from the hospital," the release said.

College student killed by plane propeller at airport

GA STATESBORO — A college student died after being struck by the propeller of a

small plane as he disembarked at an airport in southeast Georgia, authorities said.

The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Board are investigating the death Sunday night at Statesboro-Bulloch County Airport, FAA spokesman Steve Kulm said.

Sani Aliyu, of Atlanta, and a young woman had flown on the single-engine Cessna to nearby Savannah and back on a date, Bulloch County Coroner Jake Futch told the Statesboro Herald. He said the plane landed safely on the return trip to Statesboro.

The woman "got off the plane and walked toward the back of the plane," Futch said, "and he got off the airplane and walked toward the front of the plane, and when he did, the propeller hit him."

Aliyu was a sophomore enrolled at Georgia Southern University, school spokeswoman Melanie Simon said.

Worker admits dumping waste into water system

MS JACKSON — An employee of a Mississippi wastewater hauling company pleaded guilty in federal court Tuesday for his part in illegally discharging industrial waste into the capital city's sewer system.

William Roberts, an employee of Partridge-Sibley Industrial Services, admitted to supervising the improper disposal of industrial waste at a commercial entity in Jackson.

As a result of Roberts' negligence, the waste was trucked and hauled to a facility that was not a legal discharge point designated to receive the waste, federal prosecutors said.

"The defendant's negligent conduct contributed to the discharge of millions of gallons of untreated industrial waste into the Jackson water system," said Chuck Carfagno, a special agent for the Environmental Protection Agency's criminal investigations division.

Police: 20 cars stolen from lot for use in crimes

NY NEW YORK — Thieves stole 20 cars from a New York City dealership and will likely use the vehicles to commit other crimes, a top police official said.

The car thieves hit a Mitsubishi dealership over the weekend, broke open a lock box that held keys and drove off with late-model cars, NYPD Chief of Detectives James Essig said Monday.

While some stolen cars are sold overseas, Essig said investigators believe the cars stolen from the Mitsubishi lot will be used to carry out other crimes.

"Our feeling is just based on the way crime is going, people taking these cars, they will use these 20 cars in multiple robberies and burglaries throughout the city," Essig told reporters.

One of the cars was recovered in Brooklyn, he said.

WEEKEND



Scorn combines puzzles, body horror
Video games, Page 18

The Rock's superhero role

Dwayne Johnson fulfills a 9-year-old promise as DC antihero Black Adam

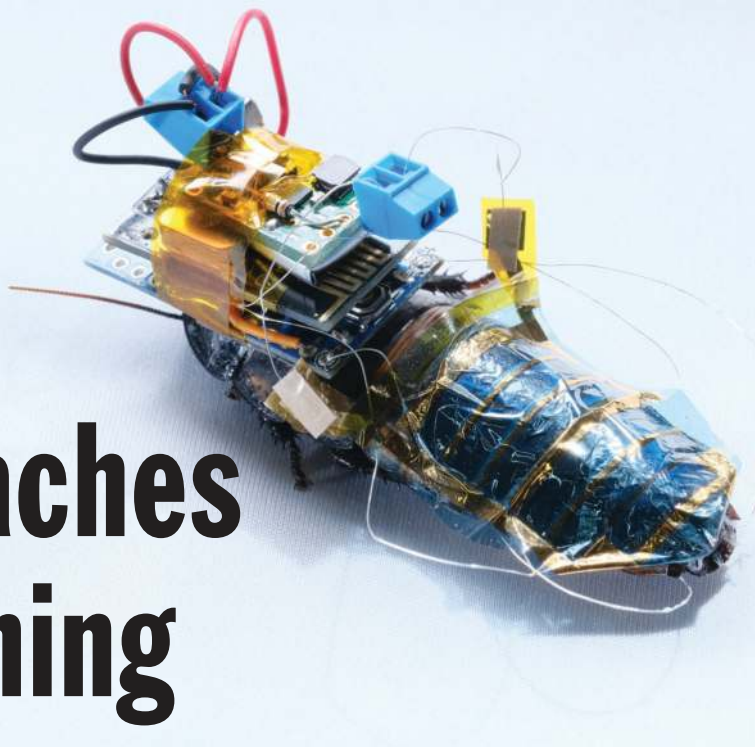
Movies, Page 15



Dwayne Johnson stars as "Black Adam."
WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AP

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY

Cyborg cockroaches are coming



KENJIRO FUKUDA/Riken Thin-Film Device Laboratory

Researchers at Japan's Riken Institute Thin-Film Device Laboratory are strapping 3D-printed sensors onto live Madagascar hissing cockroaches, creative cyborg cockroaches.

Scientists studying movements of insects to find better ways to build tinier, more agile robots

BY PRANSHU VERMA
The Washington Post

Cyborg cockroaches that find earthquake survivors. A “robotfly” that sniffs out gas leaks.

These aren't just buzzy ideas, they're becoming reality.

Robotic engineers are scouring the insect world for inspiration. Some are strapping 3D-printed sensors onto live Madagascar hissing cockroaches, while others are creating fully robotic bugs inspired by the ways insects move and fly.

Heavy robots are limited in what they can do. Building tinier and more agile robots, similar to how insects move and act, could vastly expand robots' capabilities.

“If we think about the insect functions that animals can't do,” said Kevin Chen, an assistant professor of electrical engineering at MIT, “that inspires us to think about what smaller, insect-scale robots can do, that larger robots cannot.”

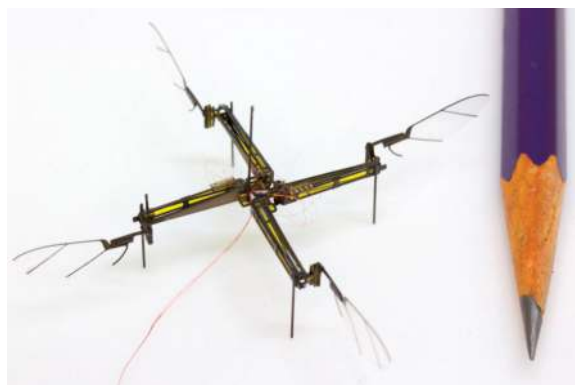
Most of the advances are in the research phase, years from commercialization. But they present tantalizing solutions for an array of industries, including emergency response, farming and energy.

The research is picking up the pace for a few reasons, experts said. Electronic sensors are getting smaller and better, largely because of smartwatch research. Fabrication techniques have advanced, making it easier to construct tiny parts. Small battery technology is also improving.

But several challenges remain. Tiny robots cannot replicate a larger robot's workload. Although batteries are improving, they would need to be smaller and more powerful. Miniature parts that convert energy into robotic motion, called actuators, need to become more efficient. Sensors have to be even lighter.

“We start by looking at how insects solve these problems, and we're making a lot of progress,” said Sawyer B. Fuller, an assistant professor who directs the Autonomous Insect Robotics Laboratory at the University of Washington. “But there's a lot of things ... we don't have yet.”

Much of insect robot research can be divided into a few areas, researchers said. Some scientists build an entire robot to mimic the motion and size of real



SAWYER B. FULLER/University of Washington

The Autonomous Insect Robotics Laboratory at the University of Washington is working on a robotic fly that could be used in search-and-rescue situations.

insects, such as bees and lightning bugs. Others put electronics on live insects and control them, essentially creating cyborgs (beings that have both organic and mechanical aspects). While some are experimenting with a hybrid — connecting parts of a live insect, such as an antennae, to a machine robot.

Robotic engineers started looking to insects for inspiration about 10 to 15 years ago. At the time, few research labs were studying it.

But over the years, more researchers have gotten into the space, largely because technology is advancing. Much of the activity has been driven by developments in carbon fibers and lasers, which can make “very fine features and complex structures” at a small scale, Chen said.

Electronic sensors have also gotten better, largely because smartphones and smartwatches have spurred research to make tinier electronic parts.

Kenjiro Fukuda, a researcher at Japan's Riken Institute Thin-Film Device Laboratory, leads a team that is strapping 3D-printed sensors onto live Madagascar hissing cockroaches. The sensors function like a tiny backpack containing solar panels for power; a blue-tooth sensor for remote control and specialized computers that connect to the cockroach's abdomen and send tiny shocks to direct it left or right.

Fukuda envisions these cyborg cockroaches helping in emergency situations, such as an earthquake. Survivors might be in the rubble and hard to spot from the naked eye, he said.

Fuller said he looks to insects when creating tiny robots because it's far better than relying on his imagination. “You see insects doing crazy things that you would just never be able to do at human scale,” he said. “We just look at how insects do it.”

GADGETS

House of Marley makes good-looking chargers

BY GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

House of Marley describes its durable cables and chargers as crafted from mindfully sourced materials, which include highly renewable bamboo and recycled plastics.

The Qi-certified 10-watt One Drop wireless charging pad (\$49.99) is made with CNC-milled bamboo, durable sides and backing made from Regrid silicone. Both Apple and Android Qi wireless charging-enabled smartphones and true wireless earbud cases only have to be placed on the charging pad for a fill-up of power.

The charger can wirelessly charge smartphones housed in cases up to 3mm thick, and an LED indicator light shows confirmation that the device is being charged. A 3-foot tangle-free USB-C to USB-A braided charging cable is included.

Everyone, including myself, wears out charging cables, but with the new House of Marley Rewind charging cables, I'd suspect that the only way they have to be replaced is if they go missing.

The premium quality braided cables are built with Rewind fabric woven with 99 percent post-consumer recycled GRS-certified material. Each cable comes with a cable management strap and is available with USB-C to USB-C and USB-C to USB-A tips in 10-foot lengths for \$34.99. The MFi-certified USB-C to Lightning cable comes in sizes of 5 foot (\$34.99) and 10 foot (\$49.99).

The charging tips enclosures are designed with solid FSC-certified walnut wood sourced from responsibly managed forests. Each cable has strain relief for flexibility and wear and tear.

Online: thehouseofmarley.com



HOUSE OF MARLEY/TNS

The House of Marley Qi-certified 10-watt One Drop wireless charging pad is made with CNC-milled bamboo.

Blendjet 2, a portable USB-C charging blender for on-the-go smoothies, shakes, margaritas, frappés or even baby food, has added a 32-ounce jar accessory, doubling its capacity.

Blendjet 2 is made so the clear jars can screw in and out for cleaning without having to use tools.

Like the smaller size, the 32-ounce jar has measurements marked on the side for an even better portable option. A soft-touch carrying handle is also built on the top screw on the lid of the jar.

Cleaning the new jar is just as easy as the old one, even while it's attached to the blender base. Add water and a drop of soap, then press the blend button, and it will clean itself.

The single-serving Blendjet 2 lets you blend on the go with shakes, smoothies or a mixed adult beverage in about 20 seconds. This is one of those gadgets you think you don't need, but once you have it, you're hooked.

Don't expect it to be as powerful as a full-sized AC-powered kitchen blender, but the 4000mAh internal battery does a great job powering it for about 15 blends after a one-hour charge.

Online: blendjet.com; XL 32-ounce jar, \$29.95, Blendjet 2 portable blender, \$49.95 in a variety of colors



BLENDJET 2/TNS

The Blendjet 2 is a portable USB-C charging blender.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Rock steady

Dwayne Johnson seeks to anchor the DC universe as the superhero 'Black Adam'

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

In Hollywood's superhero era thus far, there has been one particularly conspicuous absence: While a parade of big-name actors have taken their turns donning various spandex suits, Dwayne Johnson — arguably the biggest movie star in the world — has, until now, sat out the trend.

The Rock didn't really need a cape to prove his powers. The 6-foot-5, 260-pound actor was, in many respects, already a superhero in his own right: a skyscraper-climbing hulk, a shape-shifting demigod, even a bulked-up tooth fairy.

"I was always ready and open to playing a superhero," Johnson said in a recent interview. "But it had to be right and it had to feel right. I had been approached before in the past about playing a few superheroes that, ultimately, I ended up passing on. They ended up going to the right actors to play them. I just waited."

The fates have finally aligned in "Black Adam," a debut so seamless that it could be called redundant. When Johnson was first trying on Black Adam's suit, he had the muscle padding removed.

Johnson's entry to the superhero business comes at a crucial juncture for the DC Extended Universe, which has been plagued of late by scandal and misfires. Ezra Miller, star of the upcoming "The Flash," has been arrested twice this year amid reports of troubling behavior (in August, Miller sought treatment for what he described as mental health issues). "Batgirl," a \$90 million movie completed for HBO Max, was summarily axed, prompting an outcry over its atypical cancellation.

Warner Bros. Discovery CEO David Zaslav has promised a "reset" to the studio's DC operations in an overhaul to implement a more Marvel-like 10-year structure and improve quality. At the fulcrum of these two eras sits "Black Adam," which opened in theaters Thursday.

Amid such turmoil, it certainly doesn't hurt to be welcoming in a movie star as popular as Johnson, who has 341 million followers on Instagram and is often forced to deflect questions about a possible presidential run. But just how much stability can The Rock bring to DC?

"I think the timing is actually perfect. What an opportunity we

have," Johnson said. "I have been saying for almost years now that the hierarchy of power in the DC universe is about to change."

Before Johnson, not many saw Black Adam as such an axis-tilting force. The character, an ancient Egyptian created by Otto Binder and C.C. Beck, first appeared in a 1945 issue of Fawcett Comics' "In DC Comics" and has generally been portrayed as a supervillain and foe to Captain Marvel (not the Brie Larson one).

More recent treatments have pushed Black Adam more toward antihero status, something the film, directed by Jaume Collet-Serra ("Jungle Cruise"), extends. Black Adam, summoned to modern day, is depicted as a reluctant hero who fears his own powers.

In one telling scene, Black Adam stops for a moment to watch television with Clint Eastwood as the Man With No Name — an antihero model for Black Adam.

"He has been my inspiration from day one. My favorite actor and certainly one of my favorite directors," Johnson said. "I'm happy to call Clint a buddy. That was my way of paying homage to him."

How Black Adam would be introduced to movie audiences wasn't always clear. Initially, Captain Marvel, also known as Shazam, and Black Adam were to debut in a movie together. After the scripting stage, Johnson and others felt the combined launch did a disservice to Black Adam.

"We did have a template for a really good idea, but ultimately both characters required so much space to properly launch them," said producer Hiram Garcia. "We were just struggling in terms of bandwidth that the script could hold and in terms of tone, as well. Inherently, as you saw with how the 'Shazam!' movie came out, that movie is just so differently tonally from how 'Black Adam' is."

"Shazam!," starring Zachary Levi, was a goofy, well-received body-swap hit, grossing \$366 million worldwide in 2019 (a sequel is due out in March). The ambitions for "Black Adam" are larger.

The film, made with a budget roughly twice that of "Shazam!," also introduces the Justice Society of America, a superhero team of Hawkman (Aldis Hodge), Doctor Fate (Pierce Brosnan), Atom Smasher (Noah Centineo)



EVAN AGOSTINI, INVISION/AP

SEE BLACK ADAM ON PAGE 16

Dwayne Johnson attends the world premiere of "Black Adam" in Times Square on Oct. 12 in New York.

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Something borrowed

Johnson a natural as 'Black Adam' star, but derivative plot a drag

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Not long into "Black Adam," a preteen boy looks up at the muscled hulk of Dwayne Johnson and begs for his help: "We could use a superhero right now." Speak for yourself, kid.

Do we need another superhero with another convoluted origin story that stretches back thousands of years and fulfills a whacko destiny? Do we really need another clutch of secondary heroes to muddy focus? We're almost 40 deep into the Marvel Cinematic Universe and a dozen in the DC universe. You can almost smell the fumes now, can't you?

"Black Adam" isn't bad, it's just predictable and color-by-numbers, stealing from other films like an intellectual property supervillain. But Johnson is a natural in the title role, mixing might with humor and able to deliver those necessary wooden lines. Why he hasn't had a starring role in a DC or Marvel superhero flick until now is astonishing — c'mon, he's built himself into a freaking superhero in street clothes already.

Like Marvel's "Eternals," "Black Adam" gets out of the blocks very sluggishly with the tangled tale of our setting — Kahndaq, a fictional Middle Eastern kingdom in 2,600 B.C. that has wizards, a blood-thirsty king, a magical crown and Eternium, a rare metallic ore with energy-manipulating properties (Hello, Vibranium from "Black Panther").

Flash-forward to present day, where Kahndaq is under the cruel rule of the organized crime syndicate Intergang and



WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AP

Dwayne Johnson appears in a scene from "Black Adam" as the titular superhero, who can harness his own bluish electricity.

its citizens are ripe to rebel. They think they may have a leader in Black Adam (here Teth Adam, when he is introduced), who is released from his 5,000-year-long entombment and is naturally cranky. Is he a force for good or bad? (Or for a new sub-franchise?) The answer is yes to all.

Yet the other superheroes in the DC pantheon aren't sure about the new guy and send what can only be described as the Plan B of muscle from leftover members of a knockoff organization called the Justice Society of America.

There's Doctor Fate (a dollar-store Doctor Strange played by Pierce Brosnan, who somehow keeps his dignity), Atom Smasher (Noah Centineo, nicely playing a dweeby and always hungry giant), Aldis Hodge as a one-note Hawkman and Quintessa Swindell as Cyclone, who can control — checks notes — the wind. They apparently left at home the superhero with the ability to open jars.

Black Adam is more than a match for all of them combined. He can fly, move as fast as The Flash, catch rockets, deflect bullets and harness his own bluish electricity. Mostly he does this weirdly passive thing of just floating. "I kneel before no

one" he intones, which might explain it.

Director Jaume Collet-Serra and the design team do a great job in every department but are let down by a derivative and baggy screenplay by Adam Szykiel, Rory Haines and Sohrab Noshirvani that goes from one violent scene to another like a video game in order to paper over a plot both undercooked and overcooked. At one point, with the audience exhausted by all the carnage, they introduce skeletons who rise up as a legion from hell — just what we wanted.

They nicely include pockets of humor that DC has not always done well — a recurring bit with "Baby Come Back" and teaching Black Adam satire are fun; a Clint Eastwood gag fails — and there may have been three natural endings piling up before the final, manipulative one. ("This can only end one way," says the script. Don't believe it.)

Amid the superheroes are two humans — a rebel leader and her preteen son, played superbly by Sarah Shahi and Bodhi Sabongui. Comedian Mohammed Amer is a much needed bolt of bright humor.

Most intriguing — and the angle most fruitful to lean into — is the notion of hero

itself. The Justice Society members are shocked to find that they aren't seen as heroic to the residents of Kahndaq, living 27 years under oppression. Black Adam has come to help, even if he's a little more violent. Residents wonder where were the guys with all the superpowers for almost three decades while they suffered — a nice dig at Western nations.

"There are only heroes and villains. Heroes don't kill people," a confused Hawkman states. Black Adam replies: "Well, I do." It is Shahi's character who notes that it's easy to call someone a hero when you're the one drawing the line.

The number of — ahem — callbacks to other films is pretty sad — "Tomb Raider," "Back to the Future" and plenty of "Star Wars" (even, unforgivably, the line "You're our only hope".) It's a film that is sometimes self-aware, as when the kid urges Black Adam to come up with a catchphrase that will sell lunchboxes.

And that's probably ultimately what the filmmakers had in mind — selling those lunchboxes.

"Black Adam" is rated PG-13 for sequences of strong violence, intense action and some language. Running time: 124 minutes. Now playing in select AAFES theaters.

Black Adam: Johnson describes the film as a 'passion project'

FROM PAGE 15

and Cyclone (Quintessa Swindell).

"I always felt like it was a matter of convincing our studio partners to try to look beyond the Justice League," Johnson said. "I love the Justice League. But when you look past them, you open up the DC bible. There are so many cool characters you can tap into."

It's been a long haul to develop the film, tailor the part to Johnson and shoot the movie around COVID-19 delays. Johnson was first announced to play Black Adam in 2014.

But the filmmakers were committed to giving Black Adam the proper launch.

"If Dwayne Johnson's going to do a superhero, the powers better be A-plus," said producer Beau Flynn.

Superhero films aren't often described as a "passion project," but it's how Johnson talks about "Black Adam." He speaks

about the character's previously low profile like an underdog.

"No one gave him a shot," he said. Unlike many of the best-known comic-book characters, Johnson is not taking on this role secondhand.

"No other actors had stepped into the boots of Black Adam," said Johnson, who professes a deep connection with the character. "I'm a very direct talker. Black Adam is very direct with his thoughts, too. The difference is: Black Adam will slap some people around. I might slap some people around, but I'll do it with a smile."

As of this summer, Michael De Luca and Pam Abdy are running Warner Bros.' revamped film division, though no new DC leader has yet been appointed. Zaslav has been seeking his studio's answer to Marvel's Kevin Feige to take the reins. For Johnson, "Black Adam" is

part of that new chapter for DC.

"I think you're feeling this sense of urgency and the sense of excitement," Johnson said. "This has been a great convergence of 'Black Adam' coming out and new leadership."

Tracking reports have suggested that Johnson, 50, could be headed for his biggest opening weekend ever at the box office with "Black Adam." But sounding a little like his WWE wrestler, Johnson is also eyeing his next opponent. Black Adam, he believes, is a lesser power to no superhero. He's gunning for Superman.

"For five years, the most powerful and unstoppable force in the entire superhero universe has been idle on the sidelines. All that had to come to a new end," Johnson says. "This is what I mean with this new era in the DC universe. Let's get that hero off the sidelines and on the big screen."

"For five years, the most powerful and unstoppable force in the entire superhero universe has been idle on the sidelines. All that had to come to a new end. This is what I mean with this new era in the DC universe."

Dwayne Johnson
"Black Adam" star

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

Roberts, Clooney get 'Ticket to Paradise'

Predictable rom-com built on charm of reunited stars

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

It's often said that the movies that were fun to make never turn out great. Well, George Clooney and Julia Roberts look like they had a grand time making the Bali-set "Ticket to Paradise."

The film, directed and co-written by Ol Parker ("Mama Mia! Here We Go Again"), isn't the first movie to star Roberts and Clooney together. But it takes a moment to realize that their screen time together has been mostly limited to some scenes in the "Ocean's Eleven" movies and Jodie Foster's not-so-memorable 2016 thriller "Money Monster."

Given their friendship and natural rapport, you imagine that there must have been a half dozen rom-coms in their past. Instead, it's a reminder that Clooney, so often compared to Cary Grant, has, when dipping into comedy, mostly stuck to an archer, Coen-brothers register. And unlike Grant — whose on-screen romances included the brilliant likes of Irene Dunne, Katharine Hepburn and Rosalind Russell — Clooney has less frequently found a perfect match. Vera Farmiga in "Up in the Air" and Meryl Streep in "Fantastic Mr. Fox" deserve mentioning. But, really, Clooney's best chemistry was back in 1998's "Out of Sight" with Jennifer Lopez.

"Ticket to Paradise," now in theaters, is a more old-fashioned proposition: a movie built strictly — and without apologies —



UNIVERSAL PICTURES/AP

Julia Roberts, left, and George Clooney play a bitterly divorced set of parents determined to break up their daughter's impromptu wedding in "Ticket to Paradise."

on the charisma of its two stars.

Roberts and Clooney play Georgia and David Cotton, a bitterly divorced set of parents whose daughter, Lily (Kaitlyn Dever), is fresh out of law school. Just before she takes a demanding job with a top firm, Lily and her best friend, Wren (Billie Lourd), set off on a trip to Bali. (Here, Australia doubles for the Indonesian island.) Lily immediately falls in love with a local seaweed farmer named Gede (Maxime Bouttier) and they decide to marry within days.

For Georgia and David, such a wedding

is a four-alarm fire. They fly out straight away to sabotage it, a scheme that dredges up plenty of their own unresolved issues about divorce. "Nothing's forever," David hisses to his son-in-law-to-be.

It's an unholy alliance. They bicker constantly, so much so that it's clear that their feelings are still strong for one another. I know this probably comes as a shock. But, yes, the events of "Ticket to Paradise" will bring them closer again.

OK, so Parker's film, written by him and Daniel Pipski, is not exactly out here to reinvent the wheel. Predictability is part

of the appeal of "Ticket to Paradise," and you can't say it doesn't succeed in that. The familiar beats get played with sincerity. A wince-inducing late-night dance floor sequence with House of Pain's "Jump Around" arrives like a matter of prescribed ritual.

There are other traditions that fill "Ticket to Paradise" as the Cottons wrestle with and inevitably succumb to Balinese culture. But none so much as the customs of the rom-com. For me, "Ticket to Paradise" could have — like a lot of recent entries in the genre — greatly benefited from a funny person taking a pass at the script. There's not nearly as much to laugh at here as you might expect, as "Ticket to Paradise" remains mostly content to bask in the glow of its stars.

"Ticket to Paradise" goes down as a footnote to the many superior rom-coms Roberts has sparked in before. And if I wanted to watch Clooney in a tropical locale, I'd choose Alexander Payne's lovely "The Descendants." Or for Clooney in a divorcee plot, the Coens' "Intolerable Cruelty," with Catherine Zeta-Jones, would be the choice.

But if you just want to see Roberts and Clooney together, "Ticket to Paradise" clears that not-very-high bar with just enough charm. And, lest anyone doubt, the end-credits bloopers — which feel about as scripted as those that follow "Toy Story 2" — prove that everyone making "Ticket to Paradise" did, in fact, have a very good time.

"Ticket to Paradise" is rated PG-13 for some strong language and brief suggestive material. Running time: 104 minutes. Now playing in select AAFES theaters.

'Banshees of Inisherin' explores agony of a friendship ending

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

What if, one day, your best friend decided that they didn't want to be friends anymore? Not because of something that happened like a fight or some offense. You didn't say something stupid while drunk. It's not anything that can be apologized for or mended. It's much worse than that. It's just you.

Ask anyone it's happened to: Short of the death of a loved one, there are few things as devastating. Not even the end of a romantic relationship can quite compare. Those, we mostly understand, can come and go. But a friend who doesn't want to be around you anymore? It may sound like playground troubles, but whether it happens when you're 8 or 80, that's a wound that never really heals.

In "The Banshees of Inisherin" he the great playwright Martin McDonagh and a small group of wonderful actors have sculpted an aching reverie about friendship and fulfillment that is one of the very best films of the year.

It's 1923 on a small island off the west coast of Ireland when



SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES/AP

Colin Farrell as Pádraic in the window, and Brendan Gleeson as Colm, appear in a scene from "The Banshees of Inisherin."

we meet Colin Farrell's Pádraic, a happy and kindhearted fellow who is content with his life there living with his sister, the bookish Siobhan (a brilliantly sharp Kerry Condon), tending to his favorite donkey, Jenny, and meeting his best friend Colm (a quiet, soulful Brendan Gleeson) at the pub every day at 2 p.m. But on this day Pádraic's routine is upended when he knocks at Colm's window to go get their

daily pint and Colm ignores him. As Pádraic will come to find, Colm has decided he just doesn't like him anymore and would like to spend the rest of his days doing anything but talking to him. For Pádraic, this is just the start of an agonizing spiral of self-doubt that turns into a nightmare and leaves no one unchanged.

Colm's decision, everyone agrees, is mean. Really, really mean. It's something you just

don't do to a person, especially someone like Pádraic who values niceness above all else. But Colm has and isn't budging.

People also seem to agree that Pádraic and Colm always made an odd pairing. Pádraic is affable and kind and maybe a little dull. Colm is a more tortured soul, a musician and artist and reader who feels his own enlightenment is being stifled by boring chats. Mean, but also true, at least to Colm who in millennial speak has chosen boundaries and self-care at the expense of another's feelings.

"The Banshees of Inisherin" presents an impossible conundrum and there's no solution that will make everyone (or anyone) happy. It is a McDonagh joint after all, and Carter Burwell's melancholy score and Ben Davis' haunting cinematography add to the spiritual solemnness.

Farrell is as heartbreaking as he's ever been as Pádraic, whom we watch in horror as he slips into a crueler version of himself. A sweet and tragic local boy, Dominic (a perfect Barry Keoghan role), steps in and for a minute offers a glimmer of hope

for Pádraic. He's also possibly repeating the cycle of how Pádraic and Colm became friends in the first place — some combination of proximity and lack of options on a small island.

This is the nature of life on an insular island and it's a problem for more than Colm. It's starting to gnaw at Siobhan as well.

The film may leave you shattered, but it'll also have you laughing, quoting lines in a bad Irish accent and thinking about your own life and relationships. At the start, it seems clear that Colm is the unreasonable one, but as the story progresses, you begin to accept and maybe even admire his resolve. Somewhere along the way you may find yourself just praying for Pádraic to accept it too and let Colm live in quiet peace.

"The Banshees of Inisherin" is a rich, soulful journey, full of agony, dry Irish wit and big, haunting questions. If it's answers you're looking for, however, you're not going to find them on Inisherin.

"The Banshees of Inisherin" is rated R for language throughout, some violent content and brief graphic nudity. Running time: 109 minutes.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

Scorn is a first-person horror game that aims to immerse players in a grotesque, nightmarish biomechanical world.

Ebb Software

A beautifully grotesque experience

Scorn is a visually fascinating, minimalist horror game that doesn't quite congeal

BY JONATHAN LEE
The Washington Post

The Swiss artist H.R. Giger is best known as the creator who gave the “Alien” movie franchise its iconic, eerie aesthetic. Giger mixed biology, machinery and erotic imagery to create the titular Alien creatures that the series is so well-known for. The Xenomorph is an enormous monster, designed to evoke primal familiarity with its phallic head and vaguely humanoid body, but also an unnerving foreignness because of its machine-like exoskeleton. That uncanny valley is what makes the Xenomorph feel so disturbingly, well, alien.

As I explored the nightmarish world of Scorn, a first-person horror game from Serbian developer Ebb Software and published by Kepler Interactive, I felt like I was walking through a gallery of Giger's paintings with minimal loss in translation. It was a bizarre and sometimes breathtaking title. But some of the clumsy map design, phoned-in combat mechanics and an especially intense set piece during the game's final act made me wish for a more focused, shorter journey — and even a more prominent trigger warning.

On Scorn's Kickstarter page, Ebb described the concept behind the game as “being thrown into the world.” You play as a hairless humanoid waking up in a grotesque but beautifully realized biomechanical world. Walls that look like taut sinew are girded with beams and rafters reminiscent of bones. Flaps of flaky, skinlike cloth hang in tatters from ceilings. Decrepit, skeletal machines are powered by gunmetal intestinal tracts, and controlled by consoles rippling with industrial blood vessels. The bleak landscapes and towering, imposing buildings are clearly a nod to the Polish artist Zdzislaw Bekskinski. Even the dust particles drifting in the smoky, dull light of eye-shaped lamps move in a way that feels unnatural.

Your character enters Scorn naked and ignorant, and as the player, you are no better off. The game sports a bare-bones user interface that disappears when you're out of combat, and none of the creatures you encounter nor places you visit have names in-game. There is no dialogue, quest log, inventory or

map. There are no obvious objectives to complete or goals to reach. The only thing you can do is move forward — in true existential fashion, because you can. The many puzzles you'll encounter can only be solved through trial and error. This minimalist approach is how Scorn delivers on its concept of “being thrown into the world.”

Without notes or quest givers, I had to experiment my way through the game. The puzzles in Scorn are hard and many of them had me cursing at my monitor, wishing for walk-throughs that didn't exist yet. However, when I did eventually figure out the really

Your character enters Scorn naked and ignorant, and as the player, you are no better off.

tough puzzles, I got a cool sense of satisfaction. The solutions feel earned; they require you to be very observant and tinker with everything. Be prepared to travel back and forth, because sometimes a switch you pull will activate something somewhere else.

Unfortunately, navigating Scorn was also a real hassle. Eschewing a minimap is a perfectly respectable design decision, but it doesn't work when everything looks the same. For all of Scorn's exquisite detail, there are several areas that look way too similar, which made it very easy to get lost as I was backtracking to solve puzzles.

Scorn's combat is designed to be a struggle. You are a desperate survivor, not a soldier. The nameless machine-flesh weapons that the player character grafts onto their body resemble a pneumatic hammer, a shotgun, an even bigger shotgun and a grenade launcher. These weapons aren't very effective, reloading is slow and ammunition is scarce, leading to some unwieldy but tense fights. If you die, you'll be punished by Scorn's unforgiving checkpoint system.

I understand what Ebb was going for and I appreciate feeling like the player character is entirely out of their element. For most of the game, it's even enjoyable. But it all culminated in an underwhelming boss fight that boiled down to me circle strafing around the big bad guy for five minutes until an opening appeared for me to get a single shot in. I had to repeat this six times. It took the game from being scary to feeling like a chore.

Scorn's gameplay trailers have properly portrayed it as a gory affair. Expect to see lots of guts being splattered and blood being spilled as your player character guns hostile abominations and sacrifices innocent beings to unlock new areas. Toward the end of the game, there are also lots of risqué statues and landmarks clearly influenced by Giger's more erotic work. The game's description on Steam and the Microsoft Store make note of all this.

But there is one gruesome cutscene I can't describe fully in print. All I can say is that it involves extreme torture, mutilation and what I would argue is a form of sexual assault. The scene is unskippable and happens entirely in first person. Maybe I'm overanalyzing how brutal this scene could be for some people, but I don't think a general warning is enough of a heads up. Prospective players, be warned.

I finished Scorn wishing that there were things it did better, but also hoping that more games could learn from its finer points (unskippable torture scene aside). I wish there were more small titles like Scorn that play out like one giant level with a clear, cohesive theme. In an age when games are trying to squeeze every possible achievement-hunting minute out of us, I loved that Scorn had zero collectibles to track down. It kept me immersed in the game's atmosphere instead of worrying about a trophy I might have missed.

For me, the appeal of the game is how it made me feel rather than think. I felt a constant, humming anxiety for simply existing in its macabre world. I was never particularly scared of anything I encountered; like the playable creature, I just wanted out.

Platforms: PC, Xbox Series X and Series S
Online: scorn-game.com

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Indulgence along the French Riviera

I'm in Villefranche-sur-Mer on the French Riviera. It's twilight and I'm eating at La Mère Germaine (Mamma Germaine), a restaurant that got its start feeding hungry GIs in World War II. Now Germaine's grandson runs the place and he's at my table — artfully filleting six different fish before lovingly larding on the broth.

He explains the Riviera's most famous dish to me as if I plan to cook it back at my hotel: "It's a spicy fish stew based on recipes handed down from sailors in nearby Marseille. A true bouillabaisse must contain at least four types of fresh fish — though we include six. It never has shellfish. We cook the fish in a tomato-based stock ... flavor with saffron and white wine." He finishes the lesson sprinkling in croutons and capping everything with a dollop of garlicky rouille sauce.

Indulging in perhaps the most expensive dish I've ever eaten in Europe, I'm engulfed in the Riviera good life. I'm so close to the harbor that I can toss my olive pits into the sea.

Several mega-yachts stoke envy just offshore. On shore, rumors swirl about who's on board — you never know whose stern line you might be catching around here.

Pondering my lavish meal along with

the day's sightseeing, I'm reminded of the heritage of hedonism unique to this stretch of Mediterranean beach.

Some of the Riviera's priciest real estate stretches from where I sit, in Villefranche, to nearby Monaco. Just beyond one of the larger yachts I'm examining is Cap Ferrat, an extremely exclusive, largely residential community that fills a peaceful parklike peninsula. While you'll never get past any gates, I spent a delightful day here just strolling — and this isn't

your average jogging trail. Following its well-groomed path, I wandered the ritzy port of St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, toured the ultimate Riviera mansion and gardens — the Rothschild Ephrussi Villa — and stumbled upon a hidden little beach. Not very welcoming, it felt like the private domain of aristocratic nymphs and satyrs.

In towns all along the Riviera, graceful buildings from the late 1800s and early 1900s line the harborfront — reminders of the belle époque. It was literally the "beautiful age," when the world seemed to revolve around the upper class and indulgence with abandon was a lifestyle.

A prime example of belle époque luxury



Rick Steves



Rick Steves

Cap Ferrat, east of Villefranche in France, is filled with private mansions and gardens.

is the majestic Hôtel Negresco, overlooking the grand Mediterranean promenade of Nice. The hotel offers some of the city's most expensive beds and the chance to step back into that age of ultimate refinement. Its exquisite Royal Salon combines belle époque grace with engineering by the great French architect Gustav Eiffel.

Just beyond Nice is Antibes, where Picasso enjoyed the good life. In 1946, 65-year-old Pablo Picasso was reborn. World War II was over, and Picasso could finally escape the gray skies of Nazi-occupied Paris. Enjoying worldwide fame and the love of 23-year-old Françoise Gilot, he moved to Antibes. He painted like a madman, spent mornings swimming in the Mediterranean, evenings partying with friends, and late nights painting again.

In Antibes' Picasso Museum, his Joie de Vivre shows the painter's flower-child — Françoise. She kicks up her heels and dances across a Riviera beach.

Picasso was fascinated with the simple life of fishermen. Here on the Riviera, like so many others, Picasso found a pagan paradise, where people could let their hair down and indulge in simple pleasures.

Travel, like a bouillabaisse, is the happy result of good things coming together. For the French Riviera, take a variety of beach towns, spice with modern art, toss in a pinch of history, sprinkle in some market fun, and let simmer under the Mediterranean sun.

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

Season's bounty extends to a varied slate of colorful events

The days are growing shorter and cooler across Europe, but there's still plenty happening, even in outdoor spaces. The bounty of the harvest and the beauty of autumn's gold and red palette serve as enticements for afternoon excursions; by evening, events such as light festivals and museum nights beckon. Here are just a few ways to take advantage of autumn's fast-fading glory.

Fun fairs: Germany's fun fair season is enjoying its last hurrah, so enjoy one last round of gaming booths, beer tents and scary rides. Mayen's Lukasmart runs through



Karen Bradbury

Oct. 23, and Kaiserslautern's Oktoberkerwe goes until Oct. 24 — look out for a fireworks display from 9 p.m. on its final day. Munich's Auer Dult, not only a fun fair but a market, also runs through Oct. 23. Speyer's Herbstmesse keeps its gates open Oct. 21-31, and Rothenburg o.d. Tauber's version of the same can be visited Oct. 30-Nov. 7.

Another Volksfest of note takes place in Basel, Switzerland. The "Basler Herbstmesse," running Oct. 29-Nov. 13, is the country's largest fun fair and one with an impressive history — its first edition dates back to 1471. The Hääfelimäart, at which pottery and wooden goods are sold, is a reminder of the event's roots as a marketplace. Online: herbstmesse.ch/en

Wine and Walk: Always-charming Rudesheim am Rhein, Germany, celebrates harvest season over the two last weekends of October with its "Tage des Federweissen" wine fest. From Oct. 21-23 and Oct. 28-30, a handful of local vintners will set up their stands around the town's market square. Onion tarts and other dishes of the season accompany the fizzy drink made from freshly pressed grapes. Live music typically makes up part of the festivities as well. Online: tage-des-federweissen.de

One of the highlights of a visit to Rudesheim is a ride in its cable car. The old-timey attraction whisks passengers



iStock

The cable car above Rudesheim offers a sweeping view of the Rhine. The attraction closes Oct. 31 for three weeks.

high above the vineyards to the Niederwald Monument, a statue and assembly commemorating the founding of the German Empire in 1871. Sweeping views over the Rhine valley make an impressive photo backdrop. The chairlift operates daily through Oct. 30 and will resume service once the Christmas market opens on Nov. 21. Online: seilbahn-ruedesheim.de

Museum Nights: Mons, Belgium, keeps the doors of its museums open until just before midnight on Oct. 21; a bracelet allowing access to its 10 participating venues, along with concerts, workshops and other activities, goes for 6 euros. Online: visitmons.be/agenda/nuit-des-musees

Brussels' Museum Night Fever, slated for Oct. 22, plays out across 34 museums and the streets of the Belgian capital. Creative types are invited to bring their visions to life in the form of exhibitions, performances, installations, live music, DJ sets, guided tours and other initiatives. Adult passes cost 18 euros. Online: museumnightfever.be

Similar upcoming events include Museum Night Amsterdam, with more than 50 participating museums, on Nov. 5. Museum Night in Cologne, Germany, will also take place on Nov. 5.

Light Festivals: The city of Augsburg, Germany, will shine throughout the weekend. From 7 p.m.-11 p.m. Oct. 21-23, Light Nights Augsburg features installations and projections, including a show inspired by the nature of Tenerife, one of the Canary Islands. Online: tinyurl.com/2vfxrbvh

Eindhoven, Netherlands, hosts its light art festival GLOW from Nov. 12-19. Along a themed walking route, visitors can take in some 30 unique artworks, as standalone features or projected onto buildings, parks, roofs and other surfaces. The theme of this year's edition, Urban Skin, interprets the city center as a living organism. Online: gloweindhoven.nl

Similar events include the Fete des Lumieres in Lyon, France, Dec. 8-11. A show titled Lightopia debuts at the Château de Grand-Bigard in Dilbeek, just outside of Brussels, and run Nov. 18-Jan. 8, 2023.

Volksmarches: Walking need not be a solitary sport when taking part in a Volksmarch, an organized walk in which participants elect to hike various distances along well-signposted trails and receive stamps in a special passport-style booklet for their efforts. Hohenöllen, a village some 25 miles north of Kaiserslautern, is the site of walks of 5 and 10 kilometers on Oct. 23; the start time is between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. For other Volksmarch dates, search for "Wandertag" online at dvv-wandern.de.

Pick your own fruit: Fruits and nuts growing on some public lands in Germany, excluding protected areas such as national parks, can be harvested. Would-be pickers are allowed to take what's lying on the ground or within arms' reach, and only in amounts considered reasonable for their own private use. Online: tinyurl.com/25yd6n4r; mundraub.org

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

BY ALICIA ELER

Star Tribune

Every time I've gone to Istanbul to visit family, I stuffed my face with spicy köfte kebab and other meaty dishes. One of my fondest food memories in Turkey happened when I was 11 and we were driving through the countryside, en route to my grandfather's old flour factory with my entire extended family. We stopped to eat at a roadside restaurant where they ... killed a chicken and served it to us.

I've since been told I have "vegetarian vibes" — am I just that crunchy? — and I've certainly tried and failed at being vegan. But during a recent trip back to Istanbul, I discovered a new trend: vegetarian versions of all my favorite Turkish meals.

Veg on the European side

My food adventure began as soon as I arrived. I dropped my stuff at an Airbnb in Cihangir, a trendy neighborhood on the European side, the western half of this transcontinental city. An orange and white cat patrolled the street and stood watch atop a yellow taxi. I meandered to Urban Cafe, a busy restaurant with tables set up in the pedestrian street, and spotted my companion Elif inside. I was famished after my 10-hour Turkish Airlines flight from Chicago.

Elif ordered me a vegetarian köfte, with a creamy chickpea mixture replacing the meat, and a side of thick, crispy fries. While I was devouring it, my baba ("dad" in Turkish) called. I told him I'd made it safely, and he and Elif agreed that they were happy I was in Istanbul. After the meal, I ordered my first çay of the trip — Turkish tea that comes in a slender, clear glass.

The next morning, I navigated a few more narrow streets until I spotted the Ottoman-era Kiliç Ali Pasa Mosque. From there I walked up the busy Meclis-i Mebûsan street to Setup, just above the main road that runs along the Bosphorus Strait. The patio area is covered in red tiles and servers wear slick black shirts.

For lunch with my artist friend Sena Basöz, I ordered the simit kahvaltı (or simit breakfast; 75 lira or about \$4), which came with one perfectly sliced hard-boiled egg, tomatoes, sliced avocado, black olives, grilled olives, a strong and creamy ezine cheese, slices of simit (the to-die-for sesame seed-covered Turkish bagel) and çay.

"I remember you from last time," the waiter said to me in Turkish. "You came here."

"And we sat at the same table," I said, digging into the avocado. It had been 2 ½ years since I was last in Istanbul. The waiter dropped two small plates of gingerbread cookies on the table. Merry Christmas, Istanbul-style.

Vegan on the Asian side

I caught the ferry boat across the Bosphorus to the Asian side of Istanbul. For dinner at Çinili Tas Firin Kadıköy, Elif and I sat on small wooden tables on the patio and devoured vegan lahmacun (a usually meaty "Turkish pizza") and vegan Kusbasili pide, a flatbread normally covered in meat. This time it had chopped fake meat, red and green peppers, vegan rice yogurt and pepper paste.

"Do you want an ayran?" Elif asked me, referring to the salty yogurt drink that I loved. "Don't get the one that comes in an



ELIF KAYA/TNS

Star Tribune art critic Alicia Eler enjoys a slice of kazandabi, or Turkish burned milk pudding, in a cafe in Istanbul, Turkey.

No meat, no problem

Star Tribune art critic Eler embarks on a vegetarian journey through Turkish cuisine in Istanbul, Turkey



ALICIA ELER, MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/TNS

The simit breakfast at Setup came with one perfectly sliced hard-boiled egg, tomatoes, sliced avocado, black olives, grilled olives, a strong and creamy ezine cheese, slices of simit (the to-die-for sesame seed-covered Turkish bagel) and çay.



ALICIA ELER, MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/TNS

A glass of çay and a slice of cheesecake at Küff Yeldeirmeni in Istanbul, Turkey.

open container — I don't trust it."

After dinner we dashed over to Antepli Beraat, where I ordered my new favorite Turkish dessert: soguk (or cold) baklava. Even my friends in Istanbul had not heard of it, which made me feel like a trendsetter. The cold version of the pastry is filled with ground pistachios, baklava dough leaves and sugar, but with an added bottom layer of milk and a cold freshness.

The next day I swung by Küff Yeldegirmeni, where Elif works as a barista/manager. Before she started her shift we devoured the classic Turkish omelette-like peynirli menemen (with cheese) and sade bisi, which is like a puffy, plain doughnut, with a dip made of tahini and molasses.

"You like all the super Turkish foods, Kısmet," Elif said to me in Turkish, using my middle name, which roughly translates to "the good kind of fate." I shrugged playfully and winked at her. I'm half-Turkish, after all.

That evening we went hardcore vegan, stopping by Rulo Lezzetler, a cheap storefront spot with an awesome buffet and zero meat anywhere. Elif ordered mucver balls (zucchini and veggie mix) and falafel. I tried the "vegan ayran," which seemed paradoxical because ayran is normally yogurt-based. It tasted like a watery cacik, a yogurt-and-cucumber side dish.

Sweet family history

The next day, Elif and I headed back to the European side to track down the building where my baba lived when he was a kid before immigrating to the United States. The beige four-story building in the swank Nisantasi neighborhood is now a bank, but I managed to get to the fourth floor and peer out the silver windows, imagining what he might have seen.

Elif and I strolled down the street to find a sweet treat, and ended up at Saray Muhallebisi, where she ordered firin sütlaç, a small bowl of classic Turkish rice pudding with the top burnt. I got kazandabi, otherwise known as "Turkish burned milk pudding," shaped into a gooey roll of sweetness.

We took a taxi to Sis & Bros Café & Sarküteri to meet up with my artist friend Sevil Tunaboylu. As we drank çay and waited for food, a friendly orange cat jumped onto my lap.

"He's never like that with the customers," one of the employees said to us in Turkish.

Sevil dug into a sumptuous roast beef sandwich. I ordered a vegetarian version that ended up being soggy and small, making me wonder if I'd made the right choice to go veg after all. But for now, I was committed to exploring the many meatless possibilities that Istanbul presented, one meal at a time.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Solo success

Travel for 1 is a snap at these global destinations

By NATALIE B. COMPTON
The Washington Post

Traveling alone is one of life's most rewarding — and sometimes embarrassing — experiences, whether you're fresh out of high school or you're married with kids.

You get to wander on your own schedule, follow your instincts and pursue your perfect travel day. But you're also out of your element. You may have to navigate foreign cultural norms and faux pas. You may fail in the process. The good news is, those blunders build character — and make for better travel stories.

If you're new to solo travel, it can feel overwhelming to pick a place to go, let alone plan the whole trip. I've had the best time where there's accessible public transportation and plentiful Ubers or taxis. My favorite places feel vibrant and safe beyond hotels and resorts.

Remember that destinations that may have been perfect for some solo travelers may have been terrible for others. Some may be great for men but unsafe for women or people of color. Do your homework before you start locking in a trip to make sure a place is right for you.

So where should you go? Start with these suggestions.

San Cristóbal de las Casas, Mexico

San Cristóbal de las Casas, a town in Mexico's Chiapas highlands, makes cookbook author Rick Martinez's shortlist for its Spanish colonial architecture, textile artisans and outdoor markets.

The cafe culture reminds Martinez of Paris. "You can people-watch and relax," he said, "and the food is really amazing."

Don't leave without trying the city's tamales, roasted plantains and other fruits — from guava to apples to passion fruit — preserved in syrups and alcohol. Fair warning: you'll have to fly to the city of Tuxtla Gutiérrez and take a bus.

Amsterdam

Ranked one of the safest cities in the world, Amsterdam attracts solo travelers

with its architecture, parks, restaurants and nightlife. The capital of the Netherlands was travel writer Ali Wunderman's first stop as a solo traveler, and a favorite destination for countless others with similar stories.

Maybe that's because it's simple to navigate between biking and taking the tram. Or maybe it's that "the hostels in Amsterdam are known to be great places to meet people," Wunderman said. It was easy for her to make friends to go sight-seeing and museum-hopping. But even when she was on her own, "It's impossible to get bored," she said.

Japan

After five experiences traveling alone in Japan, I fully endorse a solo trip to the country whether you want excitement, peace and quiet or something in between. I'm not alone.

"I loved traveling Japan solo because it is safe, clean, and people are so respectful, kind, and helpful," Annie Cheng, founder of the group tour company The Table Less Traveled, said in an email.

The obvious place to go — particularly for travelers who may feel self-conscious on their own — is Tokyo, where restaurants, bars and public baths cater to the solo customer. You could spend your entire trip in Japan's capital, or venture out by train to see more of the country's special pockets, from mountainous Sapporo to the beaches of Okinawa to bustling Osaka.

Don't feel intimidated to plan a trip if you don't speak Japanese. "Despite the language barrier, I've had some of my best meals in Japan traveling solo," Cheng said. Her advice for travelers is to get outside of their comfort zone, try to talk to anyone you can.

"You may feel awkward, stupid, or embarrassed if it doesn't go as you planned, but in the best case scenario you make a new friend and local connection," Cheng said.

Tanzania

Chanice "Queenie" Williams, founder of the blog and travel planning site Fly with



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Amsterdam is a wonderful place to ride a bicycle, admire architecture and meet people.

Queenie, says her solo trip to Tanzania this summer was a perfect mix of relaxation and adventure. With an itinerary full of cities, national parks and beaches, it felt "perfect for solo travelers, particularly women who may not feel comfortable alone," Williams said in an email.

On her trip through Arusha, Moshi, Zanzibar, Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro Crater, Williams stayed in hostels where she could meet other solo travelers, choosing places that had good reviews online before booking. Zanzibar's population is predominantly Muslim, so "adhering to the dress code and covering up will keep you from standing out and getting stares," Williams advises.

Ponza, Italy

While Italy's big cities are immensely popular for wandering alone, Katie Parla, author of the forthcoming cookbook "Food of the Italian Islands," recommends heading off the coast of Lazio to the volcanic island of Ponza.

It's not just the destination that dazzles her, "I actually love the part of getting there," she said in an email.

To get to Ponza from Rome — about a four-hour trip door-to-door, Parla says — you'll have to take a ferry after a train or a bus.

Parla's No. 1 tip for visitors is to rent a boat to explore the island's breathtaking bays. After you drop anchor, "it is pure freedom to rent a scooter and zip around the volcanic contours of Ponza en route to

aperitivo or dinner in the village of Le Forna as the sun sets over neighboring Palmarola in the distance," Parla said.

Mexico City

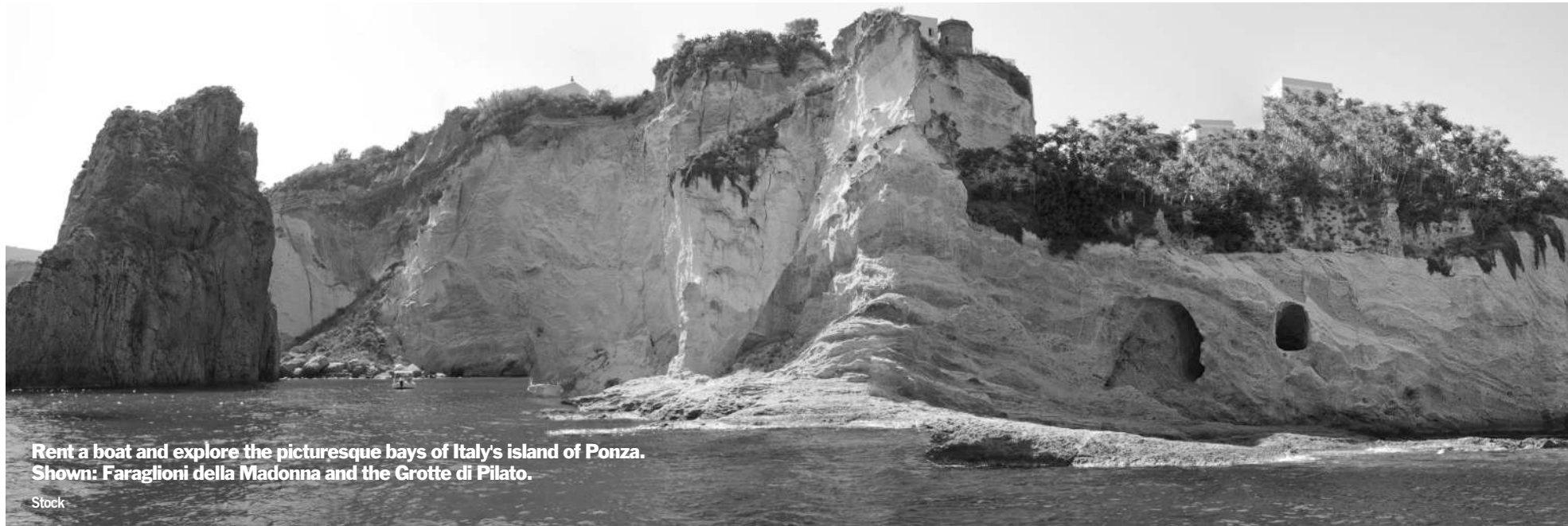
Anais Martinez, a food blogger and culinary tour guide from Mexico City, recommends her hometown for any solo traveler. One of the biggest cities in the world, it's full of museums and archaeological sites to wander, parks and public squares for people-watching and amazing food at every price point.

For those worried about getting into said famous restaurants, most "would happily take solo travelers even if there is a long waiting list," Martinez said in an email. "Show up at the door as soon as they open and you just might get lucky."

Bali

If you want a solo trip in paradise, Bali is the place. My first trip to Bali in 2015 was full of surfing, eating, making new friends, practicing the local language, listening to bewitching music played on the gamelan and exploring the coastline and nearby islands — all while feeling safe and relaxed on my own.

If you've never been to the Indonesian island, don't spend your whole time in Seminyak and Ubud. Rent a motorbike and get to know the rest of the island. You can ride through lush rainforest and rice terraces to pristine beaches with waves to surf and places to hike, or find new spots to feast on Indonesian cuisine.



Rent a boat and explore the picturesque bays of Italy's island of Ponza. Shown: Faraglioni della Madonna and the Grotte di Pilato.

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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



Super-chill experience

PHOTOS BY J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

A golf cart shuttles tourists around Katara Cultural Village in Doha, Qatar, and passes the entrance to the district amphitheater as well as a luxury chocolate shop on Oct. 1.

Doha's Katara Cultural Village features beautiful architecture, lavish shopping — and outdoor air conditioning

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

The coolest part of Katara Cultural Village in the Qatari capital of Doha was the outdoor air conditioning.

A surprise blast of cold air roared up from a grate embedded in the sidewalk as I ambled down a ritzy promenade in one of Doha's newest tourist districts.

I ran over another cold air geyser every few yards as I passed the luxury chocolate shop, the Louis Vuitton pop-up store and a display for underwater jetpacks.

I appreciated the air conditioning's help in the battle against the sweltering heat, even as I wondered how much it cost, in both riyals and environmental impact.

The Katara Cultural Village features beautiful architecture highlighting the city's historical legacy, all crammed into an outdoor mall. It is a great introduction to Doha's conspicuous excesses for deployed troops.

The village is about an hour's drive away from Al Udeid Air Base, depending on the traffic.

After parking outside it, I walked the wide, winding alleys, where I passed art galleries, restaurants and theaters.

I did not visit any of the luxury stores or food halls, but there was some idle fascination to be had in watching other people spend too much money.

There is an amphitheater that looks like a classical Greek playhouse. It also has a planetarium and a mosque with shimmering gold walls.

We walked past a beach, where tourists, provided they dress modestly, can rent kayaks and gondolas or go water skiing.



People wandering the wide alleys of the Katara Cultural Village can find art collections, museums and movie theaters.

On the QT

Katara Cultural Village

Directions: From Al Udeid, take Salwa Rd. about 15 miles into Doha. Get on the C Ring Road for about 7 miles to get there.

Cost: Free to get in, tens of thousands of dollars for other things.

Information: Online: katara.net

The village's galleries and event spaces are set to be busy hosting events, including during the World Cup in November and December.

Exhibitions will include a luxury watch showcase, a falconry show, a novelist convention and a performance by the most famous mime in Mexico, according to the event's planners.

Dining choices range from gourmet establishments to food trucks. If you get tired, free golf carts can drive you where you need to go. And if you run out of money, the ATMs are everywhere. All material needs are taken care of at the Katara Cultural Village.



The Golden Mosque at the Katara Cultural Village in Doha, Qatar, is built in the style of the Ottoman Empire but covered in tiny golden chips.

The place feels mysteriously unsettling, as if someone from the future re-created the winding streets of an ancient village based on a few blurry photos. On one afternoon, the wide alleys were quiet and empty, except for the hurried steps of the foreign workers who keep the city clean and functioning.

As I walked past a building shaped like a gift-wrapped present, I was struck at how the place feels like Times Square — a

self-aware constructed image of itself, where vendors cater to tourists seeking hot dogs, long-running Broadway show tickets and shirts with the Statue of Liberty on them.

Katara Cultural Village similarly delivers what I'd expect from a rich Gulf nation. Just don't expect too many bargains on the underwater jetpack sale racks.

lawrence.jp@stripes.com

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Thai Street Cafe in Newmarket just ducky

BY KYLE ALVAREZ
Stars and Stripes

Newmarket is becoming one of my favorite places to frequent while I'm stationed near RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall.

The city has a variety of fantastic sites and food options that can really hit the spot if you've traveled the world and are used to having lots of choices.

I've really been craving Asian food lately, and though there are good Chinese and Japanese options around the bases, I had yet to find a good Thai place. But then my eureka moment came in the form of Thai Street Cafe, right off of High Street.

Although not large, it has that "hole in the wall" feel of some of my favorite food experiences. I went on a Tuesday for lunch and it was packed. Good sign number one.

As soon as I walked in, I smelled the delicious fragrance of curry, which was not overpowering. Good sign number two.

The cafe offers a variety of curries and pad ka, a common a la carte style Thai meal, but it also has stir fry, assorted South-east Asian noodle dishes and Vietnamese pho. Online review-



The duck board offered at the Thai Street Cafe comes with steamed bok choy, covered in a rich barbecue sauce with sides of shredded spring onion, chili vinegar and jasmine rice.

ers are high on the panang curry and the drunken noodles, among other meals.

Although I wanted to try the pho, as it had been quite some time since I had that dish, I went

for the duck board. It sounded too good to pass up, with a rich barbecue sauce accompanied by steamed bok choy, spring onion and chili vinegar served with jasmine rice.

It was incredible. The fried duck, which came filleted, was crunchy on the outside and extremely tender on the inside.

Normally, duck comes with fat, which adds to the flavor. This

KYLE ALVAREZ/Stars and Stripes



Thai Street Cafe

Address: 26-28 High St., Newmarket, England

Prices: Starters and sides between 4.95 pounds and 9.79 pounds; Main dishes range from 9.62 pounds to 24.75 pounds

Hours: Monday-Saturday, 12-3 p.m., 5-10 p.m.; closed Sundays

Information: Phone: +44 01638 674123; Online: thaistreetcafe.co.uk

duck dish, however, had lean meat but still was a taste bull's-eye, savory and satisfying.

The meal was so good that when I finished, I actually was sad that it was all gone. When I expressed this sentiment to the waitress, she laughed and nonchalantly replied that I could come back and order it again.

How could I argue with that? Although I'm tempted to say I'll try something else on Thai Street's menu, it very well might be one or three more times before I can think about anything other than the duck board.

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For better roast chicken, slather spices under the skin

BY CHRISTOPHER KIMBALL
For The Associated Press

Slathering sauces or seasonings over a chicken before roasting may produce a beautiful bird, but it can deliver lackluster flavor. That's why we prefer to season a chicken under the skin.

Sliding spices and aromatic seasonings under the skin boosts flavor by putting the ingredients in direct contact with the meat. The skin also helps them stay put during cooking.

We also maximize flavor in this recipe from our book "COOKish," which limits recipes to just six ingredients without sacrificing flavor, by using two powerhouse pantry shortcuts.

The first is garam masala, an Indian spice blend with seven or more spices, including cumin, bay, fennel, cinnamon, dried chilies and black pepper. And the second is tamarind chutney, a sweet-tart punch of flavor that acts like several ingredients in one, balancing the richness of the chicken with bright acid and taming the spices. Blending both with butter makes the seasoning paste, which we supplement with extra cinnamon and black pepper to bring added warmth.

As the chicken roasts, the paste blends with the rendered fat from the skin and suffuses the meat with rich, complex flavors.

We like serving it with mild-tasting lentils and warmed flatbread to sop up the juices.

Garam Masala and Tamarind Roasted Chicken

Start to finish: 2 hours (15 minutes active)

Ingredients
4 tablespoons (½ stick) salted butter, softened

1 tablespoon garam masala
1 tablespoon tamarind chutney, plus more to serve
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
4-pound whole chicken

Directions
Heat the oven to 425°F. Set a wire rack in a rimmed baking sheet. Mix the butter, chutney, garam masala, cinnamon, 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Using your fingers, loosen the skin from the meat on the chicken's breast and thigh areas, then smear the mixture evenly under the skin. Season all over with salt, then tuck the wings to the back and tie the legs. Set the bird breast up on the rack and roast until the thighs reach 175°F, 60 to 80 minutes. Let rest for about 30 minutes, then carve. Drizzle with additional chutney.

Servings: 4

Garam Masala and Tamarind Roasted Chicken utilizes garam masala, an Indian spice blend including cumin, bay, fennel, cinnamon, dried chilies and black pepper.

MILK STREET/AP

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

From classrooms to high-class glamping

Japanese elementary school reborn as upscale getaway

By RYUZO SUZUKI
Japan News

A shuttered elementary school in Shizuoka Prefecture has been reborn as a glamping facility and is attracting numerous visitors to the area, both from within and outside the prefecture.

Shimada City Yui Elementary School, in Shimada in the prefecture, closed its gates in March 2021 due to a dwindling student population. After undergoing extensive renovations, it reopened in March as Glamping & Port Yui, offering visitors the chance to enjoy high-class camping in modern facilities.

Located roughly between Tokyo and Nagoya, Glamping & Port Yui sits close to the Makinohara Plateau — one of the country's largest tea-producing areas — and Mt. Fuji Shizuoka Airport.

The revamped site has 21 air-conditioned tents employing one of five designs. Each tent can accommodate up to six people, and features an all-weather dining space and a relaxation area equipped with sofas and beds.

The former school building has been decked out with shower booths and restrooms. The principal's office is now a bathroom, while the home economics classroom has been turned into a popcorn-making space.

The school gym remains a designated emergency evacuation center for local residents, but glampers are allowed to use it to play ball games.

The site also has an area set aside for local residents to sell agricultural products and hold exhibitions.

The school opened as a branch school in 1873. During its 148-year history, more than 3,000 students graduated from the educational facility. However, in the year prior to its closure, it only had about 30 students.

A 38-year-old company employee visiting from Nishio, Aichi Prefecture, who stayed overnight with his wife and 3-year-old son, said: "We arrived late last night and I played with my son in the gym. It's not possible to play with my kid at school, even in my hometown, so it was a very new experience for me."

Kazuhiro Fukazawa, the president of Aiwa Connect, which operates the site, said: "I've heard that it's quite difficult for foreign tourists to look around regular Japanese schools, but it's possible here at our glamping facility. Since the site is very close to Mt. Fuji Shizuoka Airport, I expect demand from overseas tourists to increase when the coronavirus pandemic ends."



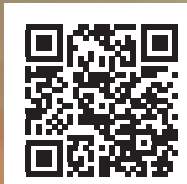
Japan News-Yomiuri

A transparent tent in the center of Glamping & Port Yui in Shizuoka Prefecture serves as a self-service drink area.

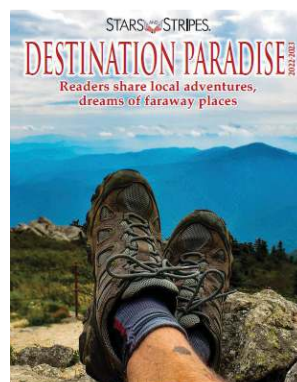
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WEEKEND: TRAVEL



Japan News-Yomiuri photos

Takuya Natsume explains about white T-shirts at his shop. He limits the number of customers who can enter at once so that he can explain the products thoroughly to help his customers find their favorite.

White in the spotlight

T-shirt store in Tokyo specializes in absence of color

By RYOICHIRO KIDA
Japan News

White T-shirts are hung neatly across the walls, a spotlight making the whiteness pop even more.

Although this space could be mistaken for a museum, it is a specialty store for white T-shirts — which must be a rarity anywhere in the world.

Takuya Natsume, 40, used to collect white T-shirts as a hobby, and he could not find a specialty store for white T-shirts anywhere. So he opened a store called #FFFFFFT in 2016 in Shibuya Ward, Tokyo, thinking, “I’ll have to do it on my own if [such a store] doesn’t exist.”

Natsume said the appeal of white T-shirts is that “they’re simple but profound. This duality is appealing.” Looking around at about 70 kinds of white T-shirts on display at the store, one can see the differ-

ences in necklines and silhouettes.

Visitors to the store will also notice distinctive shades of white, from warm yellowish tones to those with a blue tint.

The store is only open on Saturdays and Sundays because Natsume stocks up on items on weekdays. He also limits the number of customers who can enter the store to two or three groups at a time, aiming to ensure they can find a piece they are satisfied with.

Natsume looks earnest when serving his customers. Holding a T-shirt in his hand, he sometimes gestures while explaining the differences in comfort and how to care for them. He also speaks enthusiastically about the appeal of long sleeve T-shirts and layering them with other clothes as a suggestion for wearing them not only in summer, but throughout the year.

“I could get more detailed and special-



Customers can see the different shades of white in the T-shirts, from warm to bluish.

ized knowledge [on white T-shirts] than online,” said Masatoshi Takenaga, 44, a denim craftsman who visited the store from Tottori Prefecture.

The store name, #FFFFFFT, comes from the color code for white in website productions.

“I’d like our customers to get a sense of the appeal of white T-shirts by seeing, touching and trying them on at our store because they all have distinctive features,” said Natsume.

Bakery treats sold gacha-style in Matsue, Japan

Japan News

Customers are lining up in front of a vending machine installed by a confectionery shop in Matsue, Japan, to buy up the bakery’s unsold cakes.

Customers select cakes that are already boxed, so they cannot see what kind they are purchasing. The idea of selling the shop’s unsold cakes this way has cut back on food loss.

The machine was already set up near the entrance of Matsue Claude to sell cookies and other baked goods. However, on Aug. 15, the shop started selling fresh cakes — each of which costs about 500 yen for two slices — only on days when there were cakes left unsold.

The shop started referring to the selling method as “SDGs gacha for imperfect cakes,” which is named after the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. “Gacha” comes from the gachapon vending machines that dispense toys in capsules. Customers do not know what they have bought until they open it.

It is uncommon to be able to purchase fresh cakes from a vending machine, but it has grown in popularity, and the shop no longer has to throw away unsold cakes.

“I was happy to find a cheesecake I wanted inside the box,” said a 42-year-old woman who stood in line with her daughter for almost 20 minutes for their turn. “Not only is it inexpensive, it’s also delicious. It makes me want to line up again.”



Japan News-Yomiuri

A vending machine sells fresh Matsue Claude cakes in Matsue, Japan.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL



PHOTOS BY SHIHO FUKADA/For The Washington Post

Inside the Grand Warehouse, visitors will find meticulously detailed sets re-created from 14 classic Studio Ghibli movies.



Fans can look inside the house of Satsuki and Mei from "My Neighbor Totoro."

Life as Miyazaki envisioned it

Studio Ghibli theme park in Tokyo designed so visitors feel like they're in world of his films

BY MICHELLE YE HEE LEE,
JULIA MIO INUMA
AND SHIHO FUKADA
The Washington Post

Finally, it's here: the extraordinarily visual theme park from the legendary Japanese animation house of Studio Ghibli.

The studio announced plans for the attraction five years ago, and legions of Ghibli fans around the world have been eagerly awaiting its opening. That will happen Nov. 1, just as Japan is again welcoming international tourists.

We got a sneak peek at Ghibli Park, which is several hours southwest of Tokyo. Here's what you need to know:

Don't expect rides or human-sized characters posing for photos. The vision for the 494-acre park is unique to the vision of Hayao Miyazaki, the studio's 81-year-old co-founder, and is an homage to his legacy as a groundbreaking animator and creator. (The idea came about in 2017 after Miyazaki made what seemed to be his final retirement announcement, though he is now working again.)

The result is believed to be Japan's first "hybrid park," built around an existing public space to minimize harm to the environment. Mindful of sustainability, its creators sourced as many materials as possible locally. The main attraction — Ghibli's Grand Warehouse — is converted from an indoor pool attached to an indoor skating rink.

As with Ghibli films, you cannot help but appreciate the nature surrounding you. It's designed so that you feel like you are living in an actual Ghibli world, rather than visiting a fantasy. The result: a sensory overload that is peaceful at the same time.

The park ultimately will consist of five areas, with three ready next month. Ghibli's Grand Warehouse is an indoor show-



An exhibit shows a "From Up on Poppy Hill" scene in the Grand Warehouse.



An exhibit displays cakes and breakfast dishes that appear in Studio Ghibli films.

case that re-creates sets from 14 Ghibli classics. In Dondoko Forest, visitors will find the house of Satsuki and Mei from "My Neighbor Totoro." The Hill of Youth presents Nishi's antique shop from "Whisper of the Heart" and the Cat Bureau from "The Cat Returns."

Next fall, Mononoke Village will be added, based on "Princess Mononoke," and in spring 2024, the Valley of Witches, based on "Howl's Moving Castle" and "Kiki's Delivery Service," will make its debut.

The meticulous attention to detail is remarkable. At almost every turn, you'll be surprised by the little gems, particularly in Ghibli's Grand Warehouse.

Clusters of soot sprites, or Makkuro kurosuke, are hidden in corners. Individual contracts signed by those whose names were stolen by Yubaba, or Granny, before Chihiro entered the spirit world in "Spirited Away." A sleeping Totoro tucked in a nook in the kids' play area. The realistic expressions of the raccoon dogs from "Pom Poko." Acorns stacked along the walking path in Dondoko Forest. The fully functional gas stove in Nishi's antique shop. Water droplets the size of your hand as you view the world through Arrietty's eyes.

Again and again, they leave you wondering: Really, they even thought of that?

Fans know the cuisine in Ghibli films functions almost like a character of its own.

An exhibit in Ghibli's Grand Warehouse celebrates the iconic Ghibli meals: Kiki's

If you go

Ghibli Park is located within the Aichi Expo 2005 Commemorative Park in Aichi Prefecture. It is accessible via public transport from Tokyo, and a visit is doable as a day trip from the city.

The park, which is suitable for all ages, will allow about 5,000 visitors a day. Tickets are sold on its website through a lottery on the 10th of every month for each of the three areas. Prices range from \$3.50 to \$9 for children and from \$7 to \$17 for adults.

Wear comfortable shoes and be prepared to cover a lot of ground. A bus can take you to Dondoko Forest, but the walk there is scenic and relaxing. Bring snacks and water; there currently is only one small cafe, with vending machines few and far between.

The signs, exhibit descriptions and directions are almost entirely in Japanese, which will be challenging for non-Japanese speakers.

fish pie, the bacon and egg breakfast from "Howl's Moving Castle," the "Spirited Away" food stall where Chihiro's parents pig out, spaghetti Bolognese from "Porco Rosso," and so many more.

It also takes you inside the painstaking animation process required to create the eating and cooking scenes, along with life-size replicas of some of those scenes. (This is a temporary exhibit, though we hope park organizers consider making it a permanent installation.) Prepare to leave hungry.

There is a distinct aesthetic of simplicity and nostalgia at the park that feels so Ghibli-esque. A vintage candy shop sells sweets that are now difficult to find in Tokyo. Old-school "gacha-gacha" vending machines hold capsule toys. A dessert stand offers bottled milk with a pastry.

It's all fitting, given Miyazaki's aversion to using computers, smartphones or computer-generated animation.

While you'll no doubt want to capture it on your phone, take a moment to enjoy life as Miyazaki imagines it.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



How to carve a pumpkin like a pro

Esteemed maker of custom-made patterns and stencils recommends tools, offers tips for making jack-o'-lanterns

By HIRA QURESHI

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Have you ever seen a piece of art and thought, “I could totally do that — and better?”

That’s what David Morgenstern realized when searching for pumpkin carving inspiration online 16 years ago. Now, Morgenstern runs Stoneykins, where he sells custom-made intricate jack-o'-lanterns and design stencils, while also running a Facebook hotline to answer pumpkin carving questions.

Morgenstern, who attended the Art Institute of Philadelphia, hails from South Philly. He is winner of the 2013 Pumpkin Masters Online Carving contest and the 2021 Great Pumpkin Carve in Chadds Ford. He’s known for his intricate, detailed pieces, with carvings for the NFL and Rolling Stone Magazine among others.

It’s in the basement of his home, where Morgenstern has his laboratory of tools, tricks and pumpkins to build his creations. Upstairs in his office — filled with more (creepy and friendly) pumpkins — he designs carving patterns and answers the questions of amateur and pro pumpkin carvers around the world.

“I have a year’s worth of work in two months,” he said about the fall season. “One day, I’ll get no orders. One day, I’ll get 25 from the same person.”

Through trial and error, Morgenstern developed two jack-o'-lantern carving methods — for carvings of the Joker to the gates of hell — which he shares below.

Tools you’ll need:

“The tools are the key,” Morgenstern said, and can make the pumpkin carving process seamless. Find all you need online or at local craft stores.

- Sharpie pen
- Serrated spoon or large spoon
- Large washable glue stick
- Printed designs or stencils (Stoneykins has plenty to choose from.)
- Sheetrock saw
- Art transfer paper (Morgenstern recommends the white Saral paper)



NATALIA KOZYNSKA, DREAMTIME/TNS

When cutting out the lid, skip the seemingly obvious circle.

■ Pumpkin carving saw (Morgenstern recommends a Warren Pro)

■ Ceramic loop tool, pear-shaped

■ X-Acto knife blade No. 2, with No. 15 keyhole

■ Speedball Lino set (Only V and U nibs needed)

■ Clay ribbon tool (This is for final cleanup of a shaded carving)

Pro tip: You’ll also want a pot.

Before you begin, place your pumpkin on a pot for ease of carving. Be sure to find one with a rim size that’s just a bit smaller than the pumpkin you’re carving so that it sits nice and snug.

“If you’re putting it on the table by itself without the pot, then you’re constantly angling it and holding it,” Morgenstern explained. “If you put it on a pot, then both your hands are free.”

1. Cut a hole for the lid

Using your Sharpie pen, outline a carving path at the top of the pumpkin for your lid — the stem will be your handle.

When carving the lid, be sure the Sheetrock saw is at a 45-degree angle.

“If I was cutting straight, the lid would fall in the pumpkin,” he said. “So if you do it at an angle, it will have a bevel edge.”

Pro tip: When cutting out the lid, skip the seemingly obvious circle. Outline a little pumpkin instead — the “stem” of your outline will let you easily place the pumpkin’s top back on later, so you don’t have to adjust the lid until it’s flush.



iStock

Stencils can make carving a design into your pumpkin much easier.

Cut off the excess on the inside of the lid for a clean top.

2. Gut your pumpkin

Gut the pumpkin with a serrated or large spoon. Then, use a pear-shaped ceramic loop tool to scrape the excess and thin the pumpkin walls.

Be sure to make the front wall — where your design will be carved — even thinner by about ¾ of an inch.

3. The glue stick method

Smear a washable glue stick on the back of a printed cut-out design. (Print the designs on sticker paper to skip the glue if you’re okay spending a bit more money.) Cut slits on the sides of the pattern for the design to line up with the curves and grooves of the pumpkin.

Stick the pattern on the pumpkin and overlap those slits for a nice fit. Smooth out wrinkles.

“Wherever you see grooves of the pumpkin, you wanna get your finger and put that pattern right in the groove,” he shared. “It only takes a little to make (the pattern) flush.”

Wait about 5 to 10 minutes for the glue to dry. Then, carve right through the pattern with a No. 2 X-Acto Handle with No. 15 keyhole saw blades. Be sure to test the thinness of the pumpkin wall with the blade — if most of the blade comes through, you’re all set. (Scrape the wall a bit more till the blade is clearly visible.)

Saw in a continuous motion for quick carving. Move the blade up and down without removing it from the pumpkin. Adjust the pumpkin as you carve for the best leverage.

After carving, soak the pumpkin to remove the printed design and excess glue — the paper will fall right off. Scrub off any remaining glue residue.

... Or try the transfer method

Tape art transfer paper (white works best) on the pumpkin. Place your printed design on top and use a pen to outline the pattern. Then carve the outline with the Speedball Lino, V nib.

Use the Speedball Lino, U nib for everything in between the outline. Smooth out ridges with a clay ribbon tool. These tools allow you to easily scrape and design on the pumpkin skin.

This method works best for carving shaded or three-color patterns.

“The pattern is a negative image, but when you carve it and light it, it becomes a positive,” Morgenstern said.

4. Keeping your pumpkin alive

Pumpkins, like humans, need to stay hydrated, Morgenstern said.

To make it last, dunk the pumpkin in water with bleach after carving — just in and out. For every gallon of water, add four tablespoons of bleach. Get the scented bleach if you wanna get fancy with it.

“It stops mold and mildew,” he shared. “Your pumpkin’s (going to) last longer — it’ll give you like two weeks.”

And to keep squirrels from snacking on your pumpkin, dampen the pumpkin and sprinkle paprika on it.

“They don’t like the taste of it — they’ll take a lick and say goodbye,” he said.

Final pro tips for some festive fun: Christmas lights are best for lighting a jack-o'-lantern. But if you’re using a real candle, make sure you have a hole for venting.

Morgenstern’s pro tip: Sprinkle some cinnamon powder on the inside of the lid. The candle will “cook” the spice and your jack-o'-lantern will smell like pumpkin pie.

WEEKEND: MUSIC



MOSES BERKSON

Pavement, from left, Mark Ibold, Stephen Malkmus, Scot Kannberg, Steve West and Bob Nastanovich. The band is currently on its first reunion tour since 2010.

Harnessing new hopes

Reunited once again, indie rock band Pavement is more popular than ever

BY JAKE O'CONNELL
Associated Press

Four sold-out shows at Brooklyn's Kings Theatre. A new band member and an expanded live set. Momentum from unlikely followers gained while the band was on hiatus.

Pavement, reunited for the first time in 12 years, is back at it — again — and more popular than ever.

Pavement was once the '90s quintessential indie rock band, effusing an air of equal parts defiance and nonchalance, half-singing erudite lyrics while flashing an in-the-know glance.

"It's pretty amazing to see the energy that people — or Pavement fans, I suppose — have for this band, over 30 years since its inception," said percussionist Bob Nastanovich. "I mean, it's not like we weren't liked. We've always had very loyal fans. In droves seems to be the different aspect."

Launched in Stockton, Calif., in the late 1980s by guitarist/singer Stephen Malkmus, guitarist Scott

"Spiral Stairs" Kannberg and studio owner/drummer Gary Young, Pavement referenced everything from Swell Maps to the Eagles in their songs. But it was always more about how they translated those influences into their own sonic language.

Throughout their 10-year run, during which they grew to include Nastanovich, bassist Mark Ibold and drummer Steve West, they released five albums and earned cult status among fans. They were loved for their loose approach, tangled resonance, shrouded pop sensibility and seemingly off-the-cuff mindset in live shows.

Still, aside from the semi-hit "Cut Your Hair," they never got too big, and the band split up at the turn of the century as Malkmus set off on his own career, now nine albums deep. His guitar playing has moved into master-class territory, and he now runs a tighter ship on stage with his band The Jicks.

After years of indicating they would never get back together, Pavement reconvened for a

"It's pretty amazing to see the energy that people ... have for this band, over 30 years since its inception."

Bob Nastanovich
Pavement percussionist

world tour in 2010, and then went separate ways again. Kannberg has stayed in bands and released his own music and that of others, while West is a stonemason in Richmond, Va., and Ibold is a bartender in Brooklyn.

Nastanovich, based in Des Moines, Iowa, has a podcast called "3 Songs" and works in horse racing. To prove to people in the racing industry that he was

in Pavement, he sometimes had to Google the band and show them pictures.

But then something unexpected happened: TikTok. "Harness Your Hopes" — a B-side released in 1999 — went viral with more than 10 million views of people dancing, lip-syncing or posting about the song.

It's also the top Pavement track on Spotify.

"Maybe in hindsight it would have been a successful single, but it's always good to let your audience figure out what your hits are," Nastanovich said.

Malkmus joked during one of the recent Brooklyn shows that no one told the band members back in the day that "Harness Your Hopes" was a hit. Adds Nastanovich, "It's kind of nice to have sort of a funny song that we play every night that makes people smile and dance."

The band also added a new member, keyboardist Rebecca Cole, also of the band Wild Flag. "She is a very good vibe, and she allows us to play about 15 to 20 more songs well than what we

played in 2010," said Nastanovich.

An international museum exhibition, "Pavements 1933-2022," opened at a gallery in lower Manhattan this month tracing the band's history through flyers, artwork, notebooks and videos. A few advertisements showed the band's reach — and depth — in the 1990s.

There's Malkmus strumming a broom like a guitar for Apple's "Think Different" campaign, a play on their "Wowie Zowie" album cover art for Absolut Vodka, and promotions for "Got Milk?" and America's Libraries.

Younger artists Snail Mail, Lucy Dacus and Soccer Mommy played Pavement songs at the exhibition.

"More than anything else, it seems like the people who care about the band are very genuine and it's just interesting to see such an amazing span of ages," Nastanovich enthused.

"It's just amazing to me that over the past 12 years, Pavement has for some reason continued to gather steam."

WEEKEND: MUSIC

A roadmap of love

Lennox chronicles romance on album 'age/sex/location'

BY GARY GERARD HAMILTON
Associated Press

Writer's block confined Ari Lennox during the creation of her latest album, "age/sex/location," but her label head and friend, rap superstar J. Cole, suggested she begin journaling to unlock her creativity.

"He was like, 'I just want you to write and just don't stop for a certain amount of time.' And so, you start to see all of these words and experiences that are going on," Lennox said of a session for "POF," the album's opening track. "It was just pages and pages of life, and it was just a really cool, a beautiful writing exercise, and it really helped me be able to write better."

Released earlier this month, Lennox's sophomore project follows up 2019's critically acclaimed "Shea Butter Baby." Whittled down from 80 potential songs to 12, the album, executive produced by Elite, features the soulful vocalist taking listeners through the lifespan of a romantic relationship. The album's title alludes to a common questionnaire used by internet chatroom participants in the late '90s and early 2000s.

"It just encompasses dating and its entirety — the ups and downs, the crushes that start off so light and sweet, but it's a crush for a reason, and ends in pain, misery, horror," the 31-year-old said with a laugh. "Then there's the realization of how important my queen space is and how important protecting my peace is and blocking people or any type of negative energy."

Lennox's unique, soulful sound — an updated version of the early 2000s neo-soul era — is a welcome alternative to the R&B-melodic fusion that owns much of today's airspace.

The album release was propelled by the success of the light, sing-along bop "Pressure," a callback to '60s soul. Composed by a super team including Lennox, iconic R&B writers Bryan-Michael Cox and JohnTá Austin and superstar hit-maker Jermaine Dupri, the track hit No. 1 on Billboard's adult R&B airplay chart.

Beautifully channeling her inner Erykah Badu on the angelic, jazzy "Mean Mug," she serenades, "There's a magic in your eyes" throughout the chorus as a



GARY GERARD HAMILTON/AP

R&B singer Ari Lennox poses for a portrait in New York on Sept. 15 to promote her sophomore album, "age/sex/location."

Theo Corker trumpet solo swells at the song's conclusion.

"'Mean Mug' is my favorite song on the album. It's just a soulful, special masterpiece to me," the native Washington, D.C., soprano revealed. "I love the idea of love so much ... when I really think someone's special, I'll romanticize and so much poetry can come out of it."

In the same sexually empowering arena as her "On It" feature on Jazmine Sullivan's Grammy-winning "Heaux Tales" album, Lennox is not afraid to ask for what she wants on slow jams like her groovy "Stop By" or the seductive Chloe Bailey-assisted "Leak It," referring to releasing personal, intimate videos.

"She killed it. She offered something I could have never even imagined," Lennox said of Bailey. "It's basically you feeling so safe with someone, someone that you could trust and just feeling like, you know what? I want to just do it all with you. And I don't even care if anyone sees. We should show the world — maybe not literally — but that's how amazing the passion in this moment is."

But it's not all about the newness and excitement of infat-

uation; Lennox sets personal boundaries and makes time for self-care with tracks like "Blocking You" and "Queen Space" featuring Summer Walker, which also hit No. 1 on the adult R&B chart. Lennox has masterfully doubled down on her soul sound, further strengthening the command of her art. She's also growing in her personal life, navigating fame as her profile sharply rises. Despite lashing out in the past in response to Twitter trolls and toxic comments, Lennox is learning that social media isn't always an accurate reflection of real life.

"I'm going to always be myself. Nothing about that will ever change. I don't see myself like getting any (cosmetic) work done or anything like that. I may have cried about certain things people have said about me on Twitter. But yeah, I've realized what's real and what's not," said Lennox. "I like my nose. I like what my body looks like ... I like my music. I like how beautiful and different it is. And it's for me, and it's for whoever loves it. So, that's really all you can ever do in life — you got to just live for what you like, what you want, what's important to you."

REVIEWS

Miko Marks and the Resurrectors

Feel Like Going Home (Redtone Records)

Miko Marks created a buzz last month at AmericanaFest in Nashville, and her latest album is an engaging encore.

"Feel Like Going Home" is also the follow-up to "Our Country," Marks' 2021 album that marked the revival of her musical career after a hiatus of more than a decade to focus on family.

Marks joins a welcome trend of recent breakouts in country music by Black women who defy genre boundaries.

Her new album draws on gospel, the blues, Motown, Memphis soul, Southern rock and more, the result an auditory rainbow to match the visual delight provided on stage by Marks and her band, the Resurrectors.

Marks never oversings, but every note is delivered with fervor on such subjects as deliverance, perseverance, transcendence and empowerment.

Her church roots are a unifying element, with singalong choruses out of the choir loft and ballads as prayer.

Steve Wyreman and Justin Phipps produced and wrote the material with Marks, and make distinctive contributions on multiple instruments.

"Let me ride, ride, ride to the other side," Marks sings on "The Other Side," and Wyreman's electric slide guitar emerges to show the way.

His frantic playing provides an energetic push on "Trouble," a topical stomper inspired by the late civil rights leader John Lewis. The song pairs passionate lyrics with an unspoken message: The joyful momentum of Marks' music is not to be stopped.

— Steven Wine
Associated Press



The 1975

Being Funny in a Foreign Language (Interscope)

There is plenty to like about The 1975's new album until there's something to really admire.

"Part of the Band" is the kind of song — is it post-pop, prog-pop, post-prog pop? — that refuses to follow a tempo pattern as it caroms from cellos to lounge ballad to sax solo, with dense, funny lyrics. It will make radio DJs sweat.

"Am I ironically woke? The butt of my joke? Or am I just some post-coke, average, skinny bloke calling his ego imagination?" frontman and lyricist Matty Healy sings.

Have any lyrics captured the 2022 mood better for a liberal-leaning white cis male pop star?

"Part of the Band" is the outlier on the 11-track "Being Funny in a Foreign Language" — an album designed to blow up radio with romantic love songs, from ballads to dance hall ditties, all the while referencing Aperol and QAnon.

The blissful pop of "Happiness" will make those scared DJs now very happy, with utterly sincere lyrics from a lovesick man: "I would go blind just to see you." Ditto with "I'm In Love With You," a delicious wave of glistening pop.

"Looking For Somebody (To Love)" has an '80s vibe with sped-up production elements and the smoky ballad "Human Too" has a Coldplay feel as Healy looks back on his transgressions: "I'm sorry that I quite liked seeing myself on the news." And the sweeping, dreamy "About You" has a welcome presence not often on The 1975 albums: A woman's voice front and center: that of Carly Holt, wife of guitarist Adam Hann.

Throughout are trademarks of The 1975 — orchestral sweeps, very personal snapshots and snippets of dialogue that muddy the production, like the ghostly image of a previous painting peeking through the new.

The jewel is that fourth song, "Part of the Band," where super-producer Jack Antonoff's influence is most felt. "So many cringes in the heroin binges / I was coming off the hinges, living on the fringes," go the lyrics.

It's the sound of a band reaching for the highest compliment: being funny in a foreign language.

— Mark Kennedy
Associated Press



WEEKEND: BOOKS

Embracing his role as the 'Karate Kid'

In memoir 'Waxing On,' Macchio says before 'Cobra Kai,' he couldn't imagine returning to the role he's known for

By ALICIA RANCILIO
Associated Press

There was a time in Ralph Macchio's life where he couldn't imagine playing "Karate Kid" protagonist Daniel LaRusso ever again. After three films, Macchio didn't think there was more to add to the story, and he wanted to flex his acting chops with other roles.

"People think I live in Newark, New Jersey, and my mom drives a green station wagon, and I have this Japanese-American guy who fixes the faucet when I need him," said the actor, who has a new book out called "Waxing On: The Karate Kid and Me," about his experience making "Karate Kid" and how time helped him to embrace his association with the character.

Macchio's feelings were only reinforced in 2005 when Pat Morita, who played his mentor and father figure, Mr. Miyagi, passed away.

"It just seemed, why dance a solo without my partner? It's like, you know, Abbott without Costello ... He and I had something special from the moment he started reading Mr. Miyagi and I would answer back as Daniel. That chemistry was unique and effortless."

Over time, it was William Zabka, who played Macchio's "Karate Kid" nemesis Johnny Lawrence, who felt there was

more story to tell.

"He was always like, 'I wonder if there's a way to bring these two together,'" Macchio said.

Macchio was surprisingly intrigued when Josh Heald, Jon Hurwitz and Hayden Schlossberg pitched the idea of "Cobra Kai," a continuation series of these characters some 30 years later. After two seasons on YouTube, it was picked up by Netflix where it was nominated for an Emmy Award for outstanding comedy series. Season five is now streaming.

"They just saw how you could open up this world and take the black and white of 'Karate Kid' and add all these gray shades of these characters where not everyone is good or bad all the time and your allegiance may change as you learn (character's) back stories, and that's really a lesson on how to do it and how to do it right. And then we have this great young cast as well. They're just incredible. They're becoming big stars."

With his book, Macchio is forthcoming about some things he would go back and do differently if he could. When Elisabeth Shue was written out of the sequel after the first "Karate Kid," he



CHRISTOPHER SMITH, INVISION/AP

Actor Ralph Macchio poses for a portrait in New York on Oct. 4 to promote his memoir "Waxing On: The Karate Kid and Me."

says he should've contacted her.

"I was doing a movie called 'Teachers' at the time, and then I had 'Crossroads' and 'Karate Kid II' lined up, and I didn't stop to think of what that might have felt like for her. So then years later, I look back and I think I would have prob-

ably picked up the phone at that point."

Macchio says he's always had an appreciation for the impact of "Karate Kid" but writing "Waxing On" amplified that: "It was even deeper and more poignant as I was writing."

Newman memoir a confessional of a life filled with self-doubt

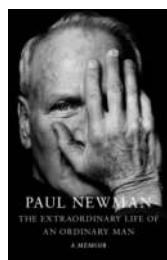
By DOUGLASS K. DANIEL
Associated Press

Paul Newman may have been a better actor than many moviegoers realized. Self-assured in his talents, the Oscar winner was not. A sexual ace with the ladies? Hardly. Nor was he the devoted husband and family man presented to the public.

Newman grappled with alcoholism, too, and the man who famously played fun-loving Butch Cassidy could turn into an ugly drunk before passing out. After he became a social activist in the 1960s and '70s, he considered getting into politics, but thought his drinking might become an issue. The movie star who craved privacy had a lot to keep private.

Says who? Newman himself, in "The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Man," a stunning memoir by an actor who could convincingly play a charismatic but self-destructive outsider because he knew the breed all too well. Just watch "The Hustler," "Hud," "Cool Hand Luke," "The Verdict" or "Nobody's Fool."

Newman, who died in 2008 at age 83, began working on a memoir in 1986 with a pal and confidant, writer Stewart Stern. After several years of effort that included recorded interviews with



relatives, friends and colleagues, their project began to drift. Newman's daughters Melissa and Clea decided to turn that raw material into a book punctuated by first-person accounts by others, including Newman's first wife as well as his second, actress Joanne Woodward. The result is a brutally frank reflection on a life filled with self-doubt.

Newman grew up in a well-off but dysfunctional household in Shaker Heights, Ohio, his parents marrying when their first son was conceived out of wedlock. Paul soon followed, not making the marriage any happier. His heavy-drinking father was emo-

tionally distant while his mother might beat him one moment and hug him the next.

His mother draws the most criticism in his memoir, followed closely by Newman himself. She became a symbol of his bottled-up emotions and low self-esteem, and success did little to wash away those feelings. When he became a star, his mother sent him clips of negative reviews. After one slight too many — an insult aimed at Woodward — Newman didn't speak to her for 15 years.

The blue-eyed future sex symbol recalls being terribly shy as a teenager, a short and skinny kid smitten with girls but more comfortable playing a laugh-getting buffoon. In college, a date once told him, "I like going out with you because you're so harmless." An unfocused student, he mainly chased girls and drank.

A stint in the U.S. Navy flying as a radioman gunner during World War II put some meat on Newman's bones and forced some maturity on him. The ser-

vice also gave Newman ample opportunity for some serious boozing and tomfoolery, neither helping him overcome his belief that he was a poser.

What's an insecure showoff to do? "Acting gave me a sanctuary where I was able to create emotions without being penalized for having them," Newman writes. Yet he also says he never really liked the craft but discovered that he was good at it, at least in the eyes of others, and worked hard to make it a career.

Good looks, charm and an air of confidence provided an effective cover. He went from understudy in the 1953 Broadway production of "Picnic" to a featured role, then to starring in the movies. It sounds so meta: the professional faker faking it so professionally.

Things just seemed to go his way — "Newman's luck," he called it. The irresponsible drinker booted from the Kenyon College football team found a place in college theater. The lazy student managed to graduate and

later study drama at Yale. The immature husband and father pivoted to eager adulterer when Woodward made him feel sexy. Yet he was noncommittal about their future for several years before divorcing the mother of his three children to marry his co-star in 1958.

Those left in the wake of Newman's selfish pursuits were the unlucky ones, especially his son, Scott, whose own problems ended with a fatal drug overdose at age 28. Newman felt guilty, but he also believed people were ultimately responsible for themselves. Such reflections often smack of rationalization, with Newman offering a shrug of sorts by concluding that he could have done both better and worse.

"The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Man" lacks the keen look at filmmaking that usually punctuates a movie star's story. While a bumpy, disjointed confessional, it also smolders with introspection as Newman tries to ascertain what he couldn't see in himself that so many others did.

WEEKEND: TELEVISION



AMC

“The Walking Dead” franchise ends next month, but the spinoffs live on, including the six-episode “Tales from the Walking Dead.” Pictured: Julie Carmen as La Doña Alma.

Vampires ‘are the most human of monsters’

As ‘The Walking Dead’ ends, TV zombies are a dying breed, but the blood-sucking undead are alive and well

BY NEAL JUSTIN
Star Tribune

Zombies are a dying breed. As “The Walking Dead” creeps toward its Nov. 20 series finale, an old friend is reclaiming its title as TV’s mightiest monster.

“Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire*,” the first of AMC’s adaptations of Rice’s novels, premiered Oct. 2 as cable’s most popular ad-supported drama of the year. Showtime’s “Let the Right One In,” in which a father goes to extreme lengths to quench the thirsts of his vampire daughter, and Syfy’s “Reginald the Vampire,” a more light-hearted take on the mythical creature, also debuted this month.

They join a club whose members already include Peacock’s “Vampire Academy,” in which its female protagonists share more than a mutual taste for blood and FX’s “What We Do in the Shadows,” which recently wrapped up its fourth season and celebration its second Emmy nomination for best comedy series.

“Interest is up, up, up, up,” said Gordon Grice, who teaches classes on classic horror at the University of St. Thomas. “Vampires are becoming more and more popular.”

Grice believes interest in vampires dates back to the ancient Greeks, centuries before the 1819 publication of John Polidori’s “The Vampyre” and 1897’s “Dracula” by Bram Stoker.

They made their first significant mark on TV in 1967 when vampire Barnabas Collins joined the weekday soap opera “Dark Shadows,” turning the gothic series into a cult classic.

Collins would eventually transform from sinister to sympathetic. But for the most part, early vampires were fairly one-dimensional characters, either giving us hope that recently deceased ones may not have completely left us or tapping into that part of our psyche that loves to be scared silly.

That all changed with “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.”

The series, created by Joss Whedon and starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, drew parallels between the mythical creatures and troubled teens, convinced that going to the senior prom was just as traumatic as Dracula spending a sunny afternoon on the beach.

“With ‘Buffy’ and Rice’s novels, vampires became a



AMC

Jacob Anderson and Sam Reid appear in a scene from “Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire*” on AMC.

mode of identification rather than one of projection,” said Laurence Rickels, a teacher and author, best known for “The Vampire Lectures.”

“Reginald” creator Harley Peyton said his series, in which the title character constantly feels like an outsider, wouldn’t have been possible without Whedon’s 1997-2003 TV dramedy as a template.

“I mean, you can’t make a show like this and not think about ‘Buffy,’” he said.

The young vampires in “Buffy,” as well as in later hits like “True Blood” and “Vampire Diaries,” weren’t all that different from your coolest and cruelest classmates. That can make them more mortifying than a nameless corpse stumbling after you in the post-apocalypse.

“For me, they are the most human of monsters,” said Andrew Hinderaker, who developed the “Let the Right One In” novel for television. “They look like us. They talk like us. They attack us in the most intimate ways. That makes them feel dangerously close. There’s something really exciting and thrilling about that.”

Sam Reid, who plays Lestat in “Interview,” gives Rice a lot of credit for creating the more relatable vampire.

“She really made these complex, beautiful creatures,” said Reid, who dressed up as a vampire on Halloween for 12 years while growing up in Australia. “They talk about our own darkest desires, and they’re constantly questioning their existence, why they are here, because they are motive-conscious demons who don’t really ever get to die.”

Even kids feel a connection, a tradition that dates back to learning numbers from the Count on “Sesame Street” and slurping up Count Chocula cereal for breakfast.

“Monster High,” which debuted Oct. 6 on Nickelodeon, is based on the fashion-doll franchise aimed at 7- to 14-year-olds.

“There’s definitely a similarity between what these monsters go through and very real human experiences,” said Nayah Damasen, 17, who plays the singing-and-dancing Draculaura on the series.

Vampires serving an adult audience often have more daunting responsibilities than nailing a musical number. They’re often called upon to help us deal with issues ripped straight from the headlines.

“Dracula came out and became a huge hit at the height of syphilis,” said Grice, drawing comparisons between neck bites and infections. “Now we’re dealing with the COVID virus and monkeypox. Vampire stories can be a great metaphor for those.”

AMC’s “Interview” differs from the 1994 film version starring Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt by dealing directly with issues of race and sexual orientation. In this adaptation, Louis de Pointe du Lac is a Black man facing discrimination in 1910 New Orleans. The writers leave no doubt that he and his mentor Lestat are lovers.

“I’m not going to try to compete with Brad Pitt. He was a brilliant De Pointe,” said Jacob Anderson, who plays the same role for the series, which has already been picked up for a second season. “But there are things about Louis in this interpretation that are reflective of lots of things from that time and this one. How amazing is that that all these Anne Rice interpretations and books can exist at the same time?”

The new shows may all have different tones, but each seem to share the same ambition: Be more than just fright factories.

“I think the foundation of our show is very rooted in real emotional dynamics,” said “Reginald” executive producer/director Jeremiah Chechik. “It’s based on how we fit in, how we present ourselves, what we think of ourselves, how we relate to each other, what’s expected of us. The goal of our show is not really to create a horror vampire ‘I’ll suck your blood’ kind of show. It’s really about how, when you die, you can become a better person. Or not.”

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Foundational food

Making small changes to your diet can not only improve your overall health but also increase your life expectancy

By ANAHAD O'CONNOR
The Washington Post

No matter how old you are, or how much junk food you consume, it's never too late to start undoing the damage caused by a poor diet.

That's the message from scientists who study how our food choices affect our life spans and our risk of developing diseases. They have found that people can gain sizable health benefits at any age by cutting back on highly processed foods loaded with salt, sugar and other additives and replacing them with more nutritious foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, lentils, seafood and whole grains.

The earlier you start, the better. Following a healthy diet from a young age leads to the greatest gains in life expectancy. But even people who wait until middle age or later to improve their eating habits still can add years to their lives.

The research is empowering for several reasons. It shows that you don't necessarily have to transform your diet to gain benefits. Even small changes, like adding a handful of nuts to your daily diet as a midday snack and cutting back on processed meats like ham and hot dogs, can potentially add years to your life. And it suggests that even if you're in your 60s or older, making these relatively small changes to your diet could still lead to major benefits.

In a study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, scientists followed roughly

74,000 people between the ages of 30 and 75 for more than two decades. During that time, they analyzed their diets and lifestyle habits and tracked changes in what they ate. The researchers used several scoring systems to assess the quality of their diets, including the Alternate Healthy Eating Index, which was developed by nutrition experts at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

The index gives low scores to unhealthy foods and higher scores to healthier foods. Among the foods that received high scores were fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans, whole grains and foods rich in unsaturated fats and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, like fish, avocados and olive oil. Some of the unhealthy foods that received lower scores were things like red and processed meats and foods high in sodium and added sugars, such as sugar-sweetened beverages, pizza, potato chips and other junk foods.

The more nutritious foods people ate, and the fewer junk foods they consumed, the higher their diet scores. The researchers found that people who had consistently high diet scores were up to 14% less likely to die of any cause during the study period compared to people who had consistently poor diets.

But perhaps most important: People who improved their eating habits saw big benefits. The researchers found that people who increased their diet scores by just 20% during the study had at least an 8% reduction in mortality during the study



period and a 7 to 15% drop in their likelihood of dying from heart disease, specifically. Achieving a 20% increase in your diet score could be as simple as replacing the sugary drinks in your diet with sparkling water and eating at least one handful of nuts or one serving of beans or lentils daily, said Mercedes Sotos-Pieto, the lead author of the study.

She pointed out that most of the participants in the study were over 60 years old, demonstrating that it's never too late to benefit from an improvement in your eating habits. The reductions in mortality among people who improved their eating habits largely stemmed from a decreased incidence of cardiovascular disease, which is strongly influenced by diet. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death worldwide.

Sotos-Pieto noted that eating a more nutritious diet by making small and gradual improvements in your food choices over time can help you lose weight and lower your cholesterol levels, blood pressure, blood sugar and inflammation — all of which can improve your cardiovascular health and reduce your likelihood of having a heart attack or stroke.

"It's not necessary to dramatically change your lifestyle," said Sotos-Pieto, an assistant professor at the Autonomous University of Madrid and an adjunct professor at Harvard's School of Public Health. "Choose small goals that you can achieve and sustain over time."

In another study published earlier this year in *PLOS Medicine*, scientists analyzed large amounts of data on the impact that different foods have on the risk of premature death. Then they used that data, along with other research on deaths and chronic disease rates, to estimate how changes in a person's diet might influence their life expectancy at different ages.

The researchers found that a 20-year-old who switched from the typical West-

ern diet to an optimal Mediterranean-style diet (and stuck with it) could add on average 11 to 13 years to his or her life expectancy. But even seniors could benefit: A 60-year-old who made this switch could boost his or her life expectancy by up to nine years, and an 80-year-old could gain about 3½ years.

The study found that the biggest gains in life expectancy stemmed from eating more legumes such as beans, peas, lentils and peanuts. If overhauling your diet seems like a daunting task, then start small by adding a few particularly important foods to your diet:

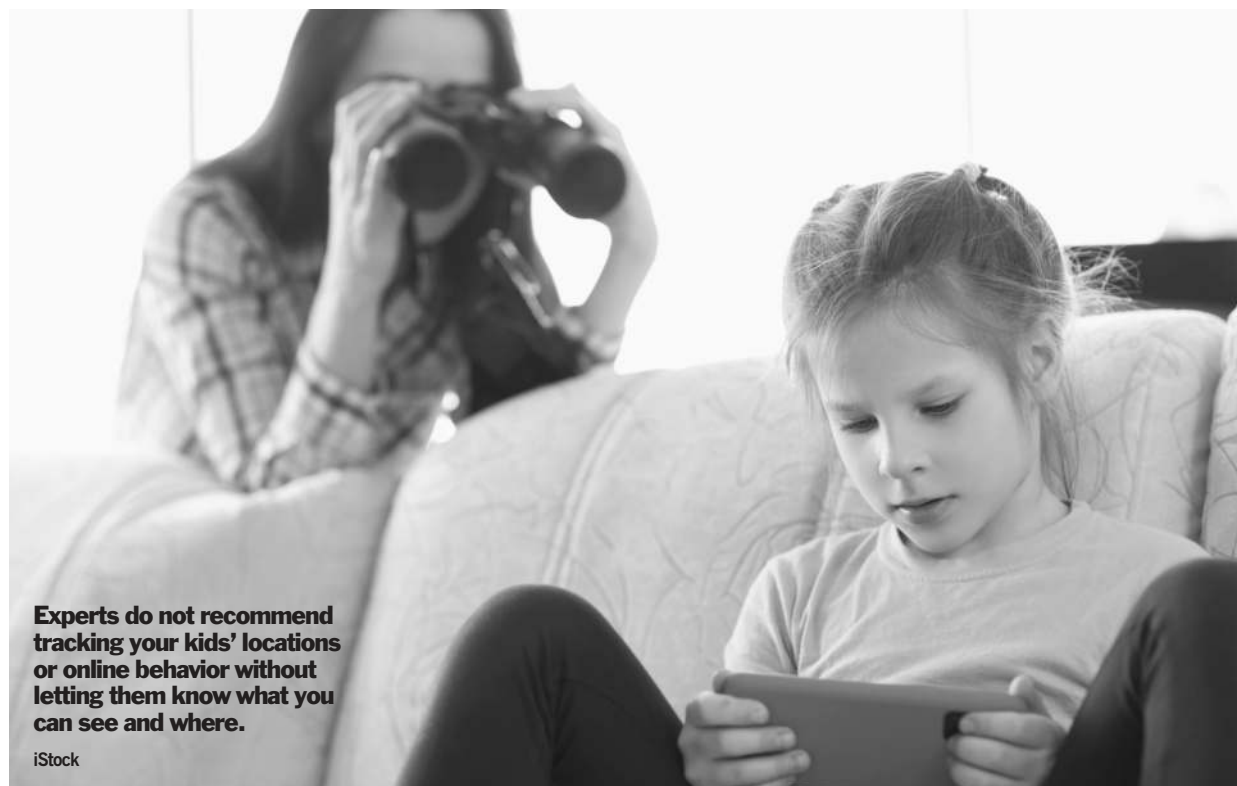
- Eat a handful of nuts every day.
- Add a few servings of whole grains to your diet. Switch to brown rice instead of white rice.
- Eat at least one cup of beans, lentils or peas daily. Add chickpeas to a salad; eat a burrito bowl with black or pinto beans.
- Add nut butters (peanut butter or almond butter) to toast, oatmeal or yogurt for breakfast.

The health benefits you gain from eating more legumes, nuts and whole grains stems from their metabolic profile, said Lars Fadnes, the lead author of the *PLOS Medicine* study and a professor at the University of Bergen in Norway. These foods are nutrient-dense, containing large amounts of fiber, vitamins and minerals.

Legumes for example are high in protein and they contain several B vitamins, iron, copper, magnesium, manganese, zinc and phosphorous, he said. These foods have also been shown in clinical trials to reduce inflammation and improve cholesterol levels and other metabolic markers.

Fadnes emphasized that if you eat a lot of junk food, the earlier you change your eating habits the better. Even for people who are overweight, older and in poor metabolic health, the benefits you can gain from eating more nutritious foods, he said, "are likely to be substantial."

WEEKEND: FAMILY



Experts do not recommend tracking your kids' locations or online behavior without letting them know what you can see and where.

iStock

A parental judgment call

Here is a guide for deciding when, how to set up a phone for your child

BY HEATHER KELLY
The Washington Post

The biggest milestone for teenagers used to be getting their driver's license, opening them up to a new world of freedom and danger. For many, it's now getting their first smartphone.

Unlike with a car — which comes with driving lessons, a learner's permit and a big test to ensure road readiness — many parents buy the phone first, then try to teach their kids how to use it. It's a risky approach, experts say. As easy as it is to give your child more freedom, it can be a brutal battle to claw it back when they're misusing it or showing signs of overuse.

We have made this guide for parents or guardians who want to be ready for that big moment, not stumble into it. The most critical element is to keep the lines of communication open. Children's needs, interests and issues will evolve as they age, and the adults in their life need to keep up. Be open to reassessing your rules and allowing more flexibility as they grow.

When should kids get their first phone?

The answer varies depending on the child. Anywhere from 10 to 14, though there are valid reasons to give a child a phone earlier (they commute alone, or switch between two parents' houses) or later (they're not mature enough, have shown previous problems with tech overuse).

Laying the groundwork

Some of the work should happen before the device is ever in your child's hands like rule setting, parental controls and warnings about the darkest corners of the internet. When choosing a device, your options include kid-specific phones, wearables, feature phones like the classic flip phone, your old smartphones and a range of new smartphones costing anywhere from \$200 to \$2,000.

Starting with a more limited device can act as training wheels and give them something to earn in the future with good phone behavior. Using something in the same ecosystem as your own phone means it is easier to set up and link accounts. Make this a discussion with your child, while knowing what your budgetary or feature limits are, so they can have some input in the big decision affecting their life.

Choose starter apps: A good starter set might be default apps for texting and phone calls, email and a

calendar. Let them add a couple of games, any school or educational apps, a news option and possibly one social media app. Start with the basics, and as they get the hang of being online on their own, you can allow more options.

Discuss expected behavior: what's not allowed, appropriate times and locations when phones can be used and consequences for breaking any agreements. Many families put these down in writing by drawing up a phone contract or media plan. The American Academy of Pediatrics has a tool for making your family's own media plan.

Setting up parental controls

You will need to decide what you hope to control: Do you want to limit screen time? Block access to specific apps or content? Monitor activity like individual messages? Or just get screen-time and app summaries?

Keep in mind, parental settings are tools, but they should not be the bedrock of your tech-control strategy. Children find a way: They trade hacks and workarounds, use the internet or computer at friends' houses, or just stumble onto content they shouldn't see by accident.

The only way to truly make sure kids aren't on their phones when they shouldn't be is to take the device away. Experts recommend physically removing devices every night, so kids aren't tempted to use them, more likely helping them get a good night's sleep.

Monitor what they're doing

This is the most controversial type of parental control but can have its place depending on the age of the child. If you're helping someone learn the ins and outs of using a phone you can consider setting up their device so you can see what they're doing remotely.

There are third-party apps like Bark, Qustodio and Boomerang that can simplify the process by letting you control multiple apps and platforms at once. They often can be used for the more intense surveilling that parenting experts warn against. Location tools such as Life360 can also walk this fine line.

Experts do not recommend tracking your kids' locations or online behavior without letting them know what you can see and where. You risk setting up a combative relationship over technology instead of a collaborative one, and any lack of trust could mean they don't come to you with real problems if and when they arise.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



To the friend I ignore: It's not you, it's moving

Dear [insert friend's name here],

I can see it in your eyes. You're not happy. You think I've been ignoring you. You think I'm an awful friend.

Not long ago, we were close. We talked on the phone. We had lunch. We met at the gym. We exchanged texts. I showed interest in your life.

But recently, I've been aloof. I haven't called. I stopped meeting you for coffee. I didn't "Like" that photo of your kids on Instagram.

To be quite honest, I haven't given you a second thought.

But before you jump to conclusions, let me assure you: I'm not tired of you. I'm not hanging out with other friends. And I most certainly haven't forgotten about you. The fact is, I haven't been thinking much about you, or anyone else for that matter, because our family is moving again.

Including [insert transitional housing], our military family has moved [insert number, e.g., 11] times since my spouse and I married [insert number e.g., 29] years ago.

I'm not bellyaching. Many military families have moved a lot more than we have, others less. Besides, I've enjoyed every place we've lived. Well, nearly every place, perhaps.

It doesn't really matter how many times a military family moves. What matters is that every move — whether it's overseas or across town — is a big ordeal. The kind of thing that destroys daily routines, challenges the strongest coping skills and turns grown adults into moody little brats.

It happens every time my husband receives orders. My behavior doesn't change at first, but as our move dates get closer and closer, I slowly withdraw into my own chaotic, stressed, little world. My normal everyday thoughts about [insert thoughts, e.g., dog hair, power walks, coffee, defrosting chicken, Friday night fire pits] — are slowly replaced, one by one, with frantic ramblings and strange inner voices, until I become a military spouse precariously perched on the threshold of moving insanity.

"How did we accumulate all this crap? We need more plastic storage bins! What if I forget to call about turning off the cable? We have to spackle that hole in the wall before the housing inspection! What if we go over the weight limit again? Why haven't I taken the stickers off the furniture from our last move?!"

Be forewarned. In the days before the packers arrive, I'll become so self-absorbed, I'll be incapable of normal social interaction. In a subconscious attempt to repel other humans and thereby minimize distractions, I'll stop showering, brushing my hair and applying deodorant. I'll become so hell-bent on using up our food, I'll concoct strange casseroles with things like pork chops, oyster crackers, canned green beans, raisins and tater tots. I'll walk around the house armed with Sharpie markers and a clipboard, muttering something about ziplock baggies and duct tape, my left eye twitching.

It's not a pretty sight. But at this point, I really don't care about my rat's nest hairdo, the drool on my chin, the neighborhood potluck, the next episode of "Survivor," or you. Because all I can think about is one thing: Our Next Move.

As I write this, I have exactly [insert number] days until the moving company arrives to pack up every coffee cup, photo album, extension cord, lounge chair, lampshade, screwdriver, textbook, holiday ornament, bicycle, pencil and picture frame we own.

The reason I like you is because you understand. Until our household goods arrive at their new destination, until we find the towels and sheets and dishes and TV remote and coffee maker, and until I flop down on the couch in our new home and take a deep breath — I won't realize how much I really miss you.

Thanks, my friend, for always forgiving me.

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

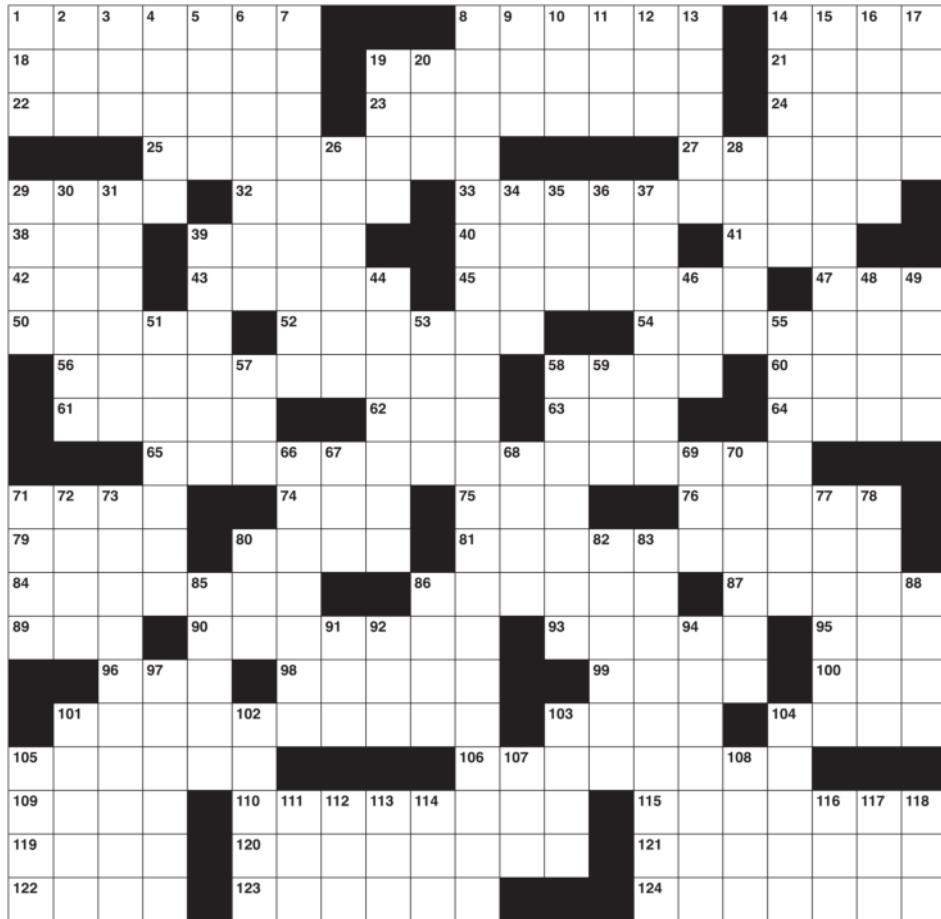
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

BY JESSIE AND ROSS TRUDEAU / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Jessie Trudeau, of Cambridge, Mass., recently graduated with a Ph.D. from Harvard's department of government. Next fall she'll start as an assistant professor of political science at Syracuse University. Ross Trudeau is in his final year of a creative writing M.F.A. at Emerson College. His thesis project is a memoir of his life in puzzles. The couple were married on July 23, during the weekend of their last Sunday crossword collaboration. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Like the protagonist at the start of "28 Days Later"
 - 8 -
 - 14 Lady Macduff, e.g.
 - 18 Group of fighters
 - 19 One way to recoil
 - 21 Male deer
 - 22 "My ____" (No. 1 hit for the Knack)
 - 23 One of the two main branches of Buddhism
 - 24 N.B.A. All-Star Gobert
 - 25 *Worker with a brush [three rungs]
 - 27 Fuel option
 - 29 "Ciao!"
 - 32 Completely pooped
 - 33 -
 - 38 A.C.C. school
 - 39 Place with counselors
 - 40 Maker of Pilots and Passports
 - 41 Team ____
 - 42 "____ Canto" (2001 Ann Patchett novel)
 - 43 Structure resembling a pergola
 - 45 -
 - 47 Airport with a BART station
 - 50 Mail, e.g.
 - 52 Otis who founded the Otis Elevator Company
 - 54 Expelled from the body
 - 56 *Captain with a periscope [four rungs]
 - 58 Some military wear, informally
 - 60 Carpet specification
 - 61 Former make of Ford
 - 62 [I'm frustrated!]
 - 63 Lab eggs
 - 64 Animation and sculpting, for two
 - 65 Advances through corporate ranks . . . and what the answer to each starred clue in this puzzle does
 - 71 "Mon ____!"
 - 74 Singer Grande, to fans
 - 75 Center
 - 76 Celebrity gossip show with an exclamation point in its title
 - 79 Map inits. until 1991
 - 80 Pest control brand
 - 81 -
 - 84 "Really good work!"
 - 86 Sung by a group
 - 87 Writer known for his anthropomorphic animal characters
 - 89 "When r u coming?"
 - 90 *Seasonal orchard worker [eight rungs]
 - 93 Staple of Dutch Golden Age art
 - 95 Feeling while watching a volcanic eruption, perhaps
 - 96 According to
 - 98 Narwhal's tusk, actually
 - 99 Pleasant speech cadence
 - 100 Pen that aptly rhymes with "click"
 - 101 *Worker for AT&T or Verizon [four rungs]
 - 103 Common wall mirror shape
 - 104 Sound on Old MacDonald's farm
 - 105 Chicken scratch
 - 106 -
 - 109 Worker who probably isn't paid enough
 - 110 Really, really spicy
 - 115 1/100 of a franc
 - 119 Dirt clump
 - 120 Googles, e.g.
 - 121 Like people in crowds, whether intentionally or not
 - 122 Donations for the needy
 - 123 *One putting a coat on outside [three rungs]
 - 124 Surreptitious assents
 - 14 Snowboards well, informally
 - 15 Rabble-rouse
 - 16 Something taken by a waiter
 - 17 "Cya!"
 - 19 "How ____ Your Mother?"
 - 20 Con's vote
 - 26 Mafia : Sicilia :: Camorra : ____
 - 28 Harden
 - 29 Latin for "trumpet"
 - 30 Disinclined
 - 31 Temple text
 - 34 Beach in Rio de Janeiro, informally
 - 35 "From now ____ won't be hanging around" (bluegrass lyric)
 - 36 1600, in ancient Rome
 - 37 Tick off
 - 39 ____-by-the-Sea, Calif.
 - 44 Welcomes, as the new year
 - 46 Narcissist's treasure
 - 48 Perceived
 - 49 Output from Sappho
 - 51 Cloud
 - 53 Adjustable bike part
 - 55 "I don't wanna hear it"
 - 57 Boxer Laila
 - 58 Stephen who said: "Think books aren't scary? Well, think about this: You can't spell 'Book' without 'Boo!'"
 - 59 Director DuVernay
 - 66 Play title that superstitious actors avoid saying aloud in theaters
 - 67 Certain sib
 - 68 Currency to which the Maltese scudo is pegged
 - 69 Opus ____
 - 70 Hypnotized, say
 - 71 Sci-fi novel made into films in 1984 and 2021
 - 72 Skeptical reply to "That's true"
 - 73 Activity one tries to get out of?
 - 77 Sushi condiment
 - 78 Strand, perhaps
 - 80 "Silly me!"
 - 82 Pope of 1963-78
 - 83 Government bonds?
 - 85 Preppy clothing brand
 - 86 Ending with leuko- or oo-
 - 88 Quick kiss
 - 91 One with a marsupium, affectionately
 - 92 Bacardi, e.g., in México
 - 94 Threat from a squealer
 - 97 Antelopes with twisty horns
 - 101 Immune system agent
 - 102 Like luxurious pillows
 - 103 Breakfast that may be prepared overnight
 - 104 Former N.F.L. QB Kyle
 - 105 Pet rescue org.
 - 107 "The Black Cat" author
 - 108 Genderqueer identity
 - 111 Soccer star Messi, familiarly
 - 112 Delta ____ Chi, house in "Animal House"
 - 113 B&O and Reading: Abbr.
 - 114 Either half of pocket rockets, in poker slang
 - 116 ____ Jima
 - 117 Rx from a doc, e.g.
 - 118 Newsroom heads, for short
- DOWN**
- 1 Communications on Slack, e.g.
 - 2 Org. funding Covid-19 research
 - 3 In the manner of
 - 4 Roughly
 - 5 "Then again . . ." in a tweet
 - 6 Upscale-hotel-room fixture
 - 7 One calling for a tow, maybe
 - 8 Visual depiction of the apparatus used by the starred professionals
 - 9 "____ wise guy, eh?"
 - 10 Like some humor
 - 11 Important stretch
 - 12 Stretch longer than an 11-Across
 - 13 Mario who founded a fashion empire



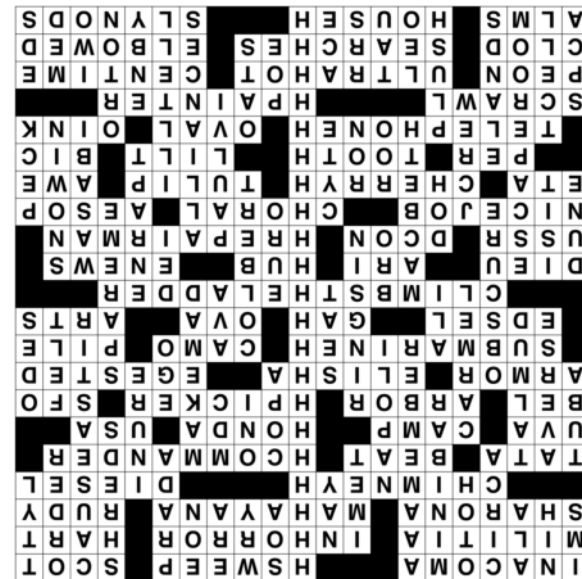
- 68 Currency to which the Maltese scudo is pegged
- 69 Opus ____
- 70 Hypnotized, say
- 71 Sci-fi novel made into films in 1984 and 2021
- 72 Skeptical reply to "That's true"
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- 117 Rx from a doc, e.g.
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"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

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CHRIS PIZZELLO, INVISION/AP

Writer-director Charlotte Wells, photographed Sept. 12 in Toronto, has moved and devastated moviegoers with her feature debut, "Aftersun."

A shattering debut

Director Charlotte Wells shows control, empathy in 'Aftersun'

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

A normal morning scene. Breakfast on the kitchen table. A newspaper rustles. A backpack is packed. The mother asks her teenage daughter if she'll be home later. "It's Tuesday, so, um, I'm going to go to Dad's."

The look of concern on the mother's face, and the tone of the school day's interactions, give a sense of some unspoken loss hanging over the girl. Each detail tugs at you until finally, after the girl has spent the afternoon alone in the dying light of her father's apartment, her mother arrives to quietly take her home.

So unfolds "Tuesday," the first short film by the 35-year-old Scottish filmmaker Charlotte Wells, and one that bears many of the hallmarks found in her shattering feature debut, "Aftersun." It, too, centers on a young girl and her father. It, too, radiates with the glow of memory while coursing with an undertow of grief.

"I made the first one without ever considering who would see it and why. It was an exercise for myself. A few people responded very strongly to it, but it was a few. Like, 10% would be generous," Wells says. "But when they did, it was a very meaningful response. It seemed very sincere. That was always enough for me."

Many more have been moved by "Aftersun." Devastated, actually, is more like it. Since its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May, "Aftersun" has accumulated a rare kind of buzz. Here was the uncommonly mature debut of a filmmaker of masterful control and deep wells of empathy.

"The rumors," The New Yorker wrote recently, "are true."

It was Wells' shorts that first brought her to the attention of Barry Jenkins and Adele Ro-

manski. While making "If Beale Street Could Talk," they had coffee with Wells to talk about a possible feature. Two years later, Wells came back with a script. Romanski and Jenkins signed on to produce through Pastel, their production company formed with the intention of enabling young directors similar to how Plan B helped them make "Moonlight."

"Through that whole process, Charlotte always had faith in the ethereal gooey stuff that you can't arrive at mathematically, that you can't arrive at through some book on screenplay conventions," Jenkins says. "I kind of describe it as a magic trick. As you watch the film, you get to those last two minutes, and you realize: 'Holy s—, I've arrived at this place and it feels like magic.'"

"Aftersun," which A24 releases in select theaters Friday, stars newcomer Frankie Corio as 11-year-old Sophie who's traveling with her father, Calum (Paul Mescal), on a summer vacation in Turkey. Gently poised from the perspective of an older Sophie we only vaguely see, the film is a memory piece. In many ways, it feels like a coming-of-age film. Sophie, teetering between childhood and young adulthood, is attracting the attention of older kids. But we gradually grasp that it's not Sophie who's sliding away from her dad. It's Calum, wrestling with his own demons, who may be adrift.

Wells recently reflected on a head-spinning year and some of the heartache behind "Aftersun." Wells' father died when she was 16.

"He lived in London for the most part when I was a kid. I spent a lot of time with him. He would come up a lot," Wells says, brightening with his memory. "He was really loving and ambitious and super creative and probably had some ambition that I be a filmmaker, which is something that occurred to me only



A24/AP

Frankie Corio, left, and Paul Mescal portray a fraught father/daughter relationship in flashbacks in "Aftersun."

recently. I hate to think that I fulfilled some idea of what a parent wanted for me. My goal was to do the opposite."

Her father, Wells says, exposed her to a lot of art, music and film — sometimes to "stuff that was much cooler and more interesting than I was ready for," said Wells. "It laid a foundation so that when I was ready on my own terms, I could find it."

"My mom would joke that his head was above the clouds and her feet were more firmly planted on the ground," Wells adds. "In a lot of ways, I'm some combination of them that I appreciate. My feet are on the ground and my head is above the clouds." She laughs. "I'm just really tall."

"Aftersun" has played on the festival circuit around the globe, including the New York Film Festival and the Toronto International Film Festival. Wells, who started out making movies as "an exercise for myself," has been surprised by how much "Aftersun" has resonated with others.

"Adele likes to remind me: 'See, you would have been happy if only one person got your film,'" Wells says, smiling. "But it has been nice, I'll admit, that more than one person has responded to this film, and that the ratio has been flipped a little. I don't know why."

"But I'm glad I never thought about what would happen when the credits rolled, until they rolled."

Lana Del Rey says LA thief stole laptop, new music

From wire reports

Amid the excitement of her upcoming collaboration with Taylor Swift, singer Lana Del Rey said she's facing a "bit of a roadblock" with her own work.

Addressing fans in a video posted Wednesday to Instagram, Del Rey revealed that she lost her in-progress album and a 200-page draft of a book she was writing.

"A few months ago, I parked my car on Melrose Place and I stepped away for a minute. And the one time I left my backpack inside my car, someone broke all of the windows and took it and inside of it was my computer and my three camcorders and my hard drives," she said on Wednesday.

The singer said that she did not have any of her work backed up to the cloud and wiped her computer. She added that with her laptop, the thief could remotely access her phone and "leak our songs and personal photos."

Del Rey expressed concern over "what's going to be out there" as a result of the theft.

While the promise of new music may entice some fans, Del Rey had one request.

"Please don't listen to the music if you hear it, because it's not coming out yet," she said.

Perry 'grateful to be alive' after addiction battle

"Friends" actor Matthew Perry said he feels "grateful to be alive" after a lengthy battle with addiction and repeated trips to rehab.

Perry, who starred as Chandler Bing on the sitcom that aired from 1994-2004, says he was given a 2% chance of survival after his colon burst as the result of opioid use, according to People.

"I was put on a thing called an ECMO machine, which does all the breathing for your heart and your lungs," Perry, 53, told the magazine. "And that's called a Hail Mary. No one survives that."

The health crisis left Perry hospitalized for five months, including two weeks in a coma. His condition required him to use a colostomy bag for nine months.

Perry said his struggles worsened as he aged, including using 55 Vicodin pills each day at one point while he was on "Friends."

"I didn't know how to stop," Perry said. "If the police came over to my house and said, 'If you drink tonight, we're going to take you to jail,' I'd start packing."

After 15 rehab stints and 14 stomach surgeries, Perry told People he's sober and "pretty healthy now." He chronicles his addiction struggles in a new memoir, "Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing," out Nov. 1.

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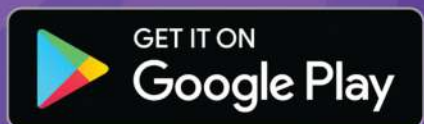
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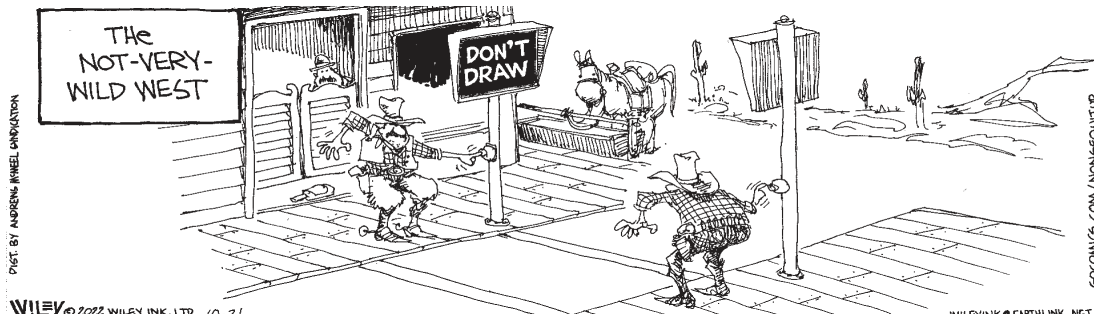
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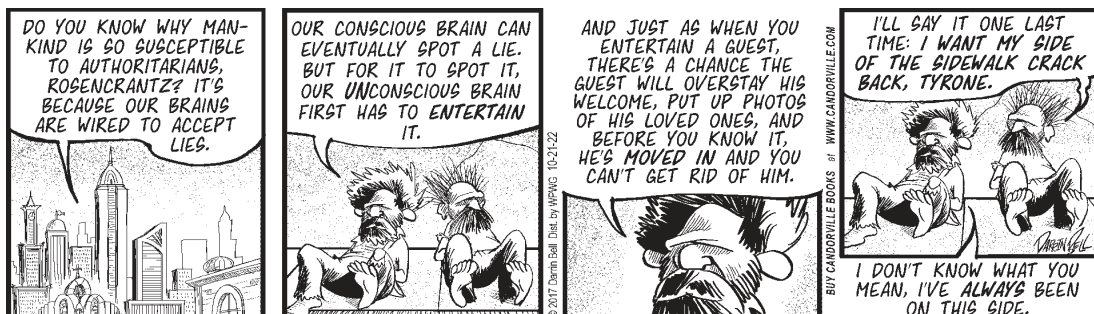
Pearls Before Swine



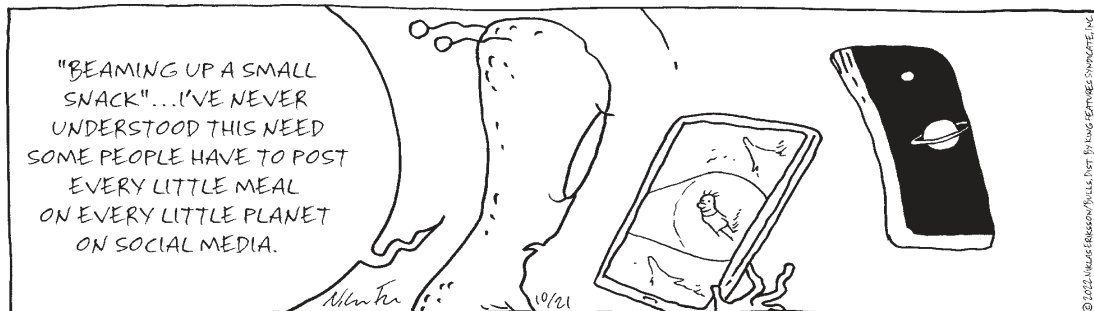
Non Sequitur



Candorville



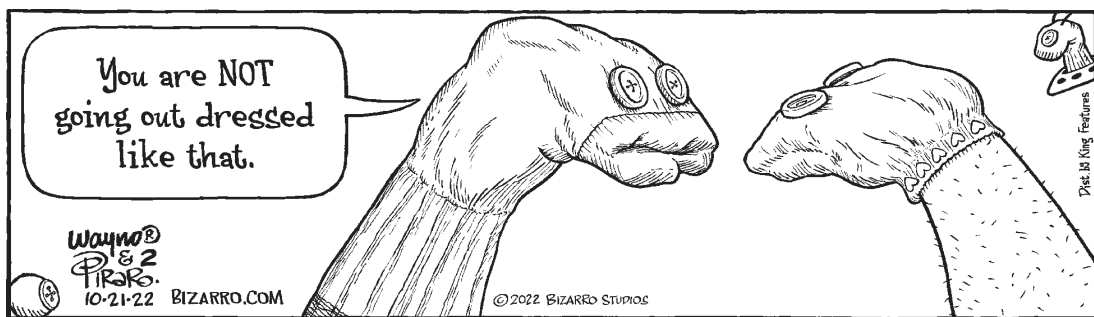
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
12						13				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 Photo book
- 6 Col. Sanders' co.
- 9 Parisian pal
- 12 Fictional Doone
- 13 Gmail alternative
- 14 Deity
- 15 Non-clergy
- 16 Military unit
- 18 Port city of Libya
- 20 Saint Laurent of fashion
- 21 Diner order
- 23 "A mouse!"
- 24 Refine ore
- 25 Body powder
- 27 Golfer's wear
- 29 Veer
- 31 Novelist Allende
- 35 Shrill barks
- 37 Jog
- 38 Entice
- 41 Fan's shout
- 43 Ky. neighbor
- 44 Part of Q.E.D.
- 45 Put in more film
- 47 Beef cut
- 49 Egged on
- 52 British ref. work
- 53 Bankbook abbr.
- 54 Wozniak or Jobs
- 55 Dict. entries
- 56 Stocking stuffer
- 57 Road twists

DOWN

- 1 100 percent
- 2 Mauna —
- 3 Peanut candy
- 4 "Do — others ..."
- 5 Perhaps
- 6 Japanese drama
- 7 Salad utensil
- 8 Roman 151
- 9 Tequila source
- 10 Paragon
- 11 Namely, in Latin
- 17 Avid exerciser
- 19 Make merry
- 21 "Butter" K-pop band
- 22 Attorney's field
- 24 "Mayday!"

- 26 Burial vaults
- 28 Twine fiber
- 30 Doggie doc
- 32 "Homeland" actor Beau
- 33 Ages and ages
- 34 British "Inc."
- 36 Rather
- 38 Former quarterback Tim
- 39 Goofed
- 40 Hotel workers
- 42 Dwelling
- 45 Nevada city
- 46 Sciences' partner
- 48 DIY buy
- 50 Wife of Adam
- 51 — Moines

Answer to Previous Puzzle

I	M	A	C		F	A	B		P	R	A	M	
M	A	U	L		R	H	O		L	A	C	E	
A	R	N	O		E	A	T		A	I	R	E	
M	A	T	U	R	E		S	O	N	N	E	T	
					D	E	F		R	E	F		
F	U	S	S		A	L	L		S	T	A	R	S
I	A	N			L	O	A			L	O	S	
B	R	O	O	K	L	Y	N		A	L	M	S	
					W	P	A		D	E	N		
E	F	F	E	T	E		F	R	O	W	N	S	
A	L	A	N		T	S	A		I	R	A	N	
S	E	L	L		O	R	L		N	I	N	A	
E	E	L	Y		N	I	L		T	T	O	P	

10-21

CRYPTOQUIP

WPB KJXMPKL KUXJZTI IZNM
 NLUTU KUAUTXE YUC JXSXBU
 RUEPAUTC KUTAPSUK XTU
 W X K U R : J X T S U E Z M X .
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THE BRIDGE CHAMP IS REALLY GUNG-HO TO PLAY CARDS, SHE KEEPS ASKING "TEN-ACE, ANYONE?"
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals E

Frazz



Dilbert



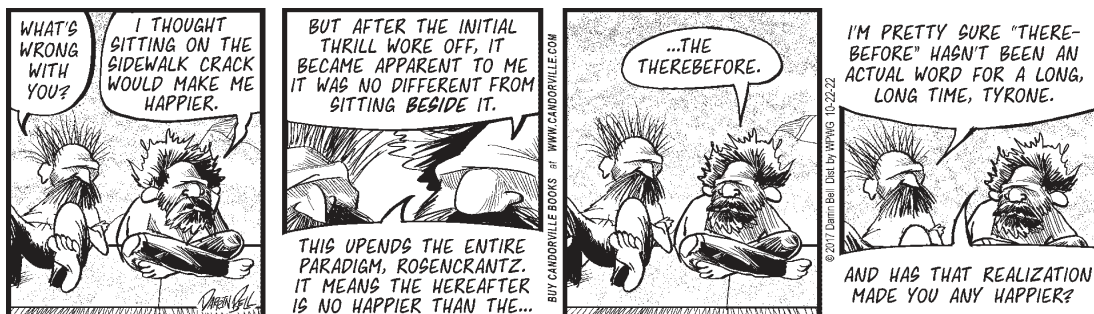
Pearls Before Swine



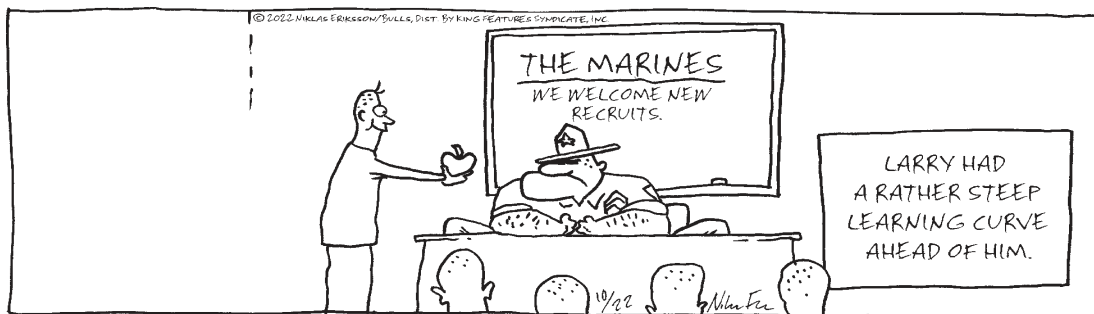
Non Sequitur



Candorville



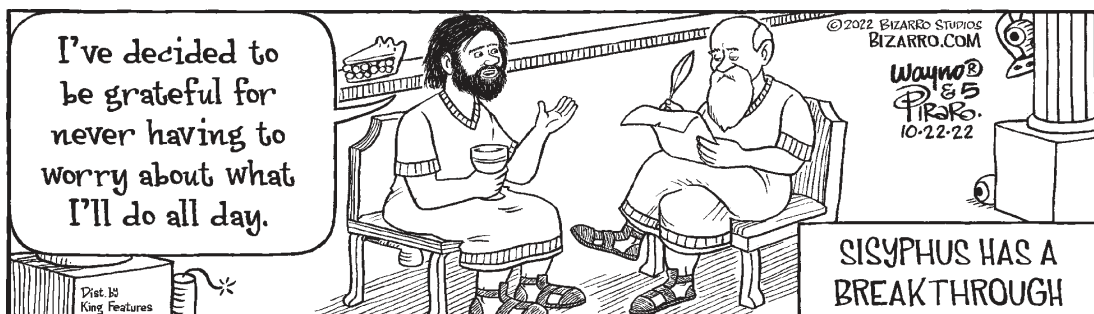
Carpe Diem



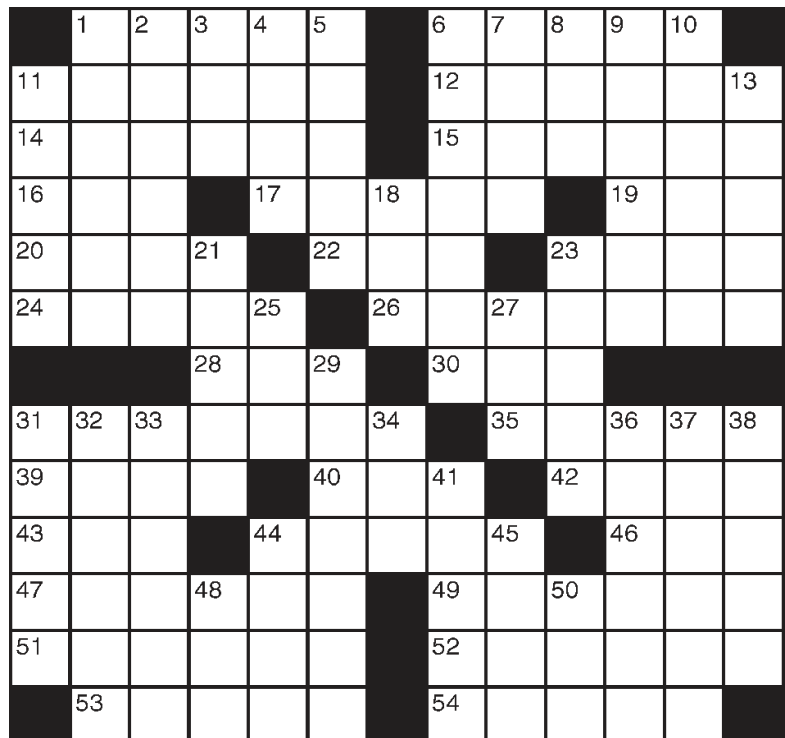
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Declares
- 6 Plank
- 11 Celtic language
- 12 Spool out
- 14 Tell
- 15 Purify
- 16 Off-roader (Abbr.)
- 17 Whoville creator
- 19 Indian bread
- 20 Yon folks
- 22 Genetic letters
- 23 River deposit
- 24 Filled fully
- 26 Hall of TV talk fame
- 28 Meadow
- 30 — Salvador
- 31 Wine stores
- 35 Blue Grotto isle
- 39 GPS suggestions
- 40 Matching pair
- 42 Subsequently
- 43 "Caught ya!"
- 44 Got wind of
- 46 Wife of Adam
- 47 Draining device
- 49 Breadwinner
- 51 Shrimp recipe
- 52 Debutante's date

DOWN

- 53 Unemotional
- 54 Dishonor
- 21 Screams
- 23 French legislature
- 25 Narc's org.
- 27 Pouch
- 29 Element #33
- 31 Boorish
- 32 Morals
- 33 Eagerly accept
- 34 Salty expanse
- 36 Wunderkind
- 37 Esteem
- 38 Not moving
- 41 Kilmer poem
- 44 Arizona tribe
- 45 Sprint
- 48 Med. plan
- 50 — Victor

Answer to Previous Puzzle



10-22

CRYPTOQUIP

WMSW DYVWGUYV, ZSGI-HDYFLZ
 JEGZ MSV S GLFSGISJDO
 VYGHGEVERQ VURQ. EW'V S
 VWSGWDERQ VWSGDERQ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BIG SPANISH SEAPORT TOWN WHERE SEVERAL KEY PACKAGE DELIVERY SERVICES ARE BASED: PARCELONA.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals G

STARS AND STRIPES

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Emboldened Xi to the world: Full speed ahead

BY DAVID IGNATIUS

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON

As Chinese President Xi Jinping prepared for his coronation this week as China's 21st-century emperor, he trumpeted the success of his hard-line policies over the past five years — and, in the process, offered an ominous warning of what's to come.

Xi's self-celebration came in the "work report" he delivered Sunday to the National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party that's meeting in Beijing. It was an unyielding official affirmation of the leftward turn he has adopted — without any sign that he recognizes the damage these policies have caused for China's economy or reputation abroad.

The congress will conclude this weekend by granting Xi an unprecedented third term as China's leader, and installing a new generation of reliable Xi supporters to the ruling Politburo. Most telling in this festival of personal celebration: Xi's utter lack of self-criticism.

Outside the echo chamber of Chinese propaganda, there's growing evidence that Xi is making mistakes. China's economic growth is slowing, to what many expect could be under 3% this year, and the party was evidently so nervous about this issue that it delayed this week's scheduled release of third-quarter gross domestic product numbers. China's business elite, meanwhile, are struggling to cope with Xi's emphasis on inefficient state-run companies rather than Chinese innovators. And Chinese citizens have suffered under an oppressive "zero COVID" lockdown.

Some analysts expected he might offer some modest concessions to his critics at home and abroad — scaling back the zero-COVID policy, for example, or promoting officials who might provide more of the checks

and balances that had existed among the Chinese collective leadership until Xi took power in 2012 and began a ruthless consolidation.

But Xi offered no apologies for China's recent course, only praise for his policies and pointed insults for his critics. The setting of the party congress gave his self-assessment special importance. The bottom line: If Xi has been moving in the wrong direction in recent years, as many Chinese and foreign analysts believe, he is now promising to run even faster in that direction in the future.

Xi's speech was encyclopedic. The official translation ran to 60 pages, single spaced. Its anodyne-sounding theme was "socialism for the new era," and Xi mentioned this "new era" — the Age of Xi, we might call it — more than 40 times. The speech had 80 mentions of security, 45 of socialism, 23 of technology. It mentioned freedom once.

Xi's tone toward the United States was not bellicose, but he signaled that China is hunkering down for a period of intense competition with what he suggested was a bullying America: "Confronted with drastic changes in the international landscape, especially external attempts to blackmail, contain, blockade, and exert maximum pressure on China, we have put our national interests first, focused on internal political concerns, and maintained firm strategic resolve," he said.

Xi's most intriguing comments were his attacks on domestic critics, who have grumbled about the Communist Party's ever-tightening control of all sectors of Chinese life. Xi ripped these naysayers: "Inside the Party, there were many issues with respect to upholding the Party's leadership, including a lack of clear understanding and effective action as well as a slide toward weak, hollow, and watered-down Party leadership in practice."

The Chinese leader continued: "Some Party members and officials were wavering

in their political conviction. Despite repeated warnings, pointless formalities, bureaucratism, hedonism, and extravagance persisted in some localities and departments. Privilege-seeking mindsets and practices posed a serious problem, and some deeply shocking cases of corruption had been uncovered."

On his police-state COVID lockdowns, Xi said he had launched "an all-out people's war to stop the spread of the virus," and he made no mention of the human costs of these policies. With the coronavirus, China truly has been caught between the health risks for an aging population and the costs of strangling commerce and social interaction.

As for the economy, Xi defended his neo-Maoist emphasis on state-run firms, and the consequent throttling of entrepreneurs. He attacked "money worship, hedonism, egocentricity, and historical nihilism" and said of the once-vibrant Chinese internet sector, "online discourse was rife with disorder." Chinese business leaders were already intimidated by Xi's attacks; now they are likely to retreat from any Western business contacts that might be dangerous.

Taiwan is the issue that most concerns many Western analysts. They will hardly be reassured that Xi got loud applause when, after saying he wanted peaceful reunification, that "we will never promise to renounce the use of force, and we reserve the option of taking all measures necessary." He blamed "interference by outside forces" (meaning the United States) and a "few separatists seeking 'Taiwan independence,'" for any troubles.

Xi spoke like the modern-day emperor he has now become. As we read his strident work report, we should remember that its author will be the most powerful Chinese leader in history — whose response to China's sagging economy and international isolation is full speed ahead.

Trump won't answer the subpoena. That reveals plenty.

BY JOSH GOHLKE

The Sacramento (Calif.) Bee

Donald Trump's logorrheic response to the Jan. 6 committee's vote to subpoena him begins by all but acknowledging his culpability with a caps-lock reiteration of the lie that fueled the insurrection.

"Dear Chairman [Bennie] Thompson," Trump politely addresses the Mississippi Democrat leading the panel before executing an abrupt tonal shift: "THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 2020 WAS RIGGED AND STOLEN!"

From that unorthodox opening, the twice-impeached ex-president belches forth 14 pages of the sort of what-aboutist conspiracy theorizing and schoolyard name-calling any casual observer of his career might expect. What can't be found among any of the letter's nearly 3,000 words, however, is an answer to the committee's unanimous and succinct request that he testify under oath.

Some of Trump's remaining cronies did pepper the press with meaningless assurances of his eagerness to testify, which reporters dutifully transcribed. But those claims carry about as much weight as his overwrought, under-edited letter.

The former president's testimony, such as it is, will likely remain confined to such entré-size word salads, anonymously sourced hear-

say and Orwellian outbursts on his troubled social network. But he won't willingly testify in a forum where truths are sworn to and lies have legal repercussions.

All the credulous musing over whether Trump may or may not testify relies on a curious collective amnesia. A few long years ago, Trump pretended to be considering the prospect of cooperating with special counsel Robert Mueller's star-crossed investigation. Mueller later acknowledged negotiating for an interview with Trump for over a year and considering a subpoena before concluding that it would lead only to further delay. He ultimately gave up on grilling Trump with nothing to show for his efforts.

Last summer, after White House aide Cassidy Hutchinson offered damning testimony that Trump lunged at a driver who refused to take him to the riot, anonymous sources challenged her account in the press. But last week, committee member Pete Aguilar, D-Calif., said another witness has since corroborated Hutchinson's story, adding that the panel has evidence of an attempt to obstruct testimony about the incident.

Trump's inevitable refusal to voluntarily testify is in contrast to the cooperation of a host of Republicans. They range from relatively low-level functionaries such as Hutchinson to ranking figures such as former White House Counsel Pat Cipollone. As Thompson noted

last week, most of the committee's evidence has come from Republicans.

Trump's posture is also at odds with his criticisms of others who have clammed up under pressure. He has equated invoking the Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination to an admission of guilt typical of a tight-lipped mobster. While the ex-president is no legal scholar, that view isn't without support in more expert circles. The Supreme Court has found that "adverse inferences" may be made about parties refusing to testify or otherwise produce evidence in civil matters.

During a court-ordered deposition in August, however, Trump told New York Attorney General Letitia James that he had finally come to understand the value of constitutional protection. Probably not coincidentally, he responded to most of the deposition, concerning allegations that he fraudulently inflated his wealth, by taking the Fifth more than 400 times.

Given the Department of Justice's spotty recent record of enforcing congressional subpoenas, even that unproductive exchange may be more than the Jan. 6 committee can expect from Trump. His missing testimony says more than a mountain of words meant to distract us from its absence.

Josh Gohlke is Deputy California Opinion Editor for McClatchy and The Sacramento Bee.

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Wednesday's score

SOUTH
Appalachian St. 42, Georgia St. 17

Schedule
Friday's games
EAST
LIU Brooklyn (0-6) at Wagner (0-6)
Princeton (5-0) at Harvard (4-1)
Tulsa (2-4) at Temple (2-4)

SOUTH
UAB (4-2) at W. Kentucky (4-3)

Saturday's games
EAST
Indiana (3-4) at Rutgers (3-3)
NC A&T (3-3) at Robert Morris (0-6)
Houston (3-3) at Navy (2-4)
Georgetown (1-5) at Colgate (1-5)
Bucknell (0-6) at Lehigh (1-6)
Louisiana-Monroe (2-5) at Army (2-4)
Duquesne (1-5) at CCSU (0-6)
Cornell (3-2) at Brown (2-3)
Rhode Island (4-2) at Monmouth (NJ) (4-3)
Toledo (5-2) at Buffalo (4-3)
Stonehill (3-1) at St. Francis (Pa.) (4-2)
Elon (5-2) at New Hampshire (5-2)
Yale (4-1) at Penn (5-0)
Delaware St. (4-2) at Howard (1-5)
Sacred Heart (4-2) at Merrimack (5-2)
Dartmouth (1-4) at Columbia (3-2)
Morgan St. (2-4) at Delaware (5-1)
Holy Cross (6-0) at Lafayette (2-4)
Albany (NY) (1-5) at Villanova (3-3)
Northwestern (1-5) at Maryland (5-2)
Maine (2-4) at Stony Brook (0-6)
William & Mary (5-1) at Towson (2-4)
Minnesota (4-2) at Penn St. (5-1)

SOUTH
Syracuse (6-0) at Clemson (7-0)
UT Martin (4-2) at Tennessee (6-0)
Duke (4-3) at Miami (3-3)
St. Thomas (Minn.) (5-1) at Presbyterian (1-6)
Furman (5-2) at VMI (1-5)
NC Central (5-1) at SC State (2-4)
Mercer (6-1) at Chattanooga (5-1)
SE Louisiana (3-3) at Jacksonville St. (6-1)
SE Missouri (5-1) at Northwestern St. (3-4)
Richmond (4-2) at Hampton (4-2)
Valparaiso (3-3) at Morehead St. (2-4)
The Citadel (1-5) at W. Carolina (3-4)
E. Illinois (2-4) at Tennessee St. (2-4)
Texas Southern (2-4) at Alcorn St. (3-3)
Rice (3-3) at Louisiana Tech (2-4)
Campbell (4-2) at Jackson St. (6-0)
North Alabama (1-5) at E. Kentucky (3-3)
Tennessee Tech (1-5) at Kennesaw St. (2-4)
Mississippi (7-0) at LSU (5-2)
Memphis (4-3) at Tulane (6-1)
Marshall (3-3) at James Madison (5-1)
BYU (4-3) at Liberty (6-1)
Samford (5-1) at ETSU (3-4)
Boston College (2-4) at Wake Forest (5-1)
Georgia Southern (4-3) at Old Dominion (3-3)
FIU (2-4) at Charlotte (1-6)
McNeese St. (1-5) at Nicholls (1-6)
Bethune-Cookman (1-5) at MVSU (0-7)
Arkansas St. (2-5) at Louisiana-Lafayette (3-3)
Va. Lynchburg (0-5) at Southern U. (4-2)
Gardner-Webb (2-5) at Charleston Southern (1-5)
Mississippi St. (5-2) at Alabama (6-1)
Texas A&M (3-3) at South Carolina (4-2)
UCF (5-1) at East Carolina (4-3)
Pittsburgh (4-2) at Louisville (3-3)

MIDWEST
Iowa (3-3) at Ohio St. (6-0)
Akron (1-6) at Kent St. (2-5)
Illinois St. (4-2) at Indiana St. (1-5)
Stetson (3-2) at Dayton (4-2)
Bowling Green (3-4) at Cent. Michigan (2-5)
Marist (2-4) at Butler (4-2)
E. Michigan (4-3) at Ball St. (4-3)
N. Illinois (2-5) at Ohio (4-3)
Murray St. (0-7) at Lindenwood (Mo.) (4-2)
Davidson (5-2) at Drake (0-7)
UNLV (4-3) at Notre Dame (3-3)
S. Illinois (5-2) at South Dakota (1-5)
Purdue (5-2) at Wisconsin (3-4)
W. Michigan (2-5) at Miami (Ohio) (3-4)
Vanderbilt (3-4) at Missouri (2-4)
Youngstown St. (3-3) at W. Illinois (0-6)
S. Dakota St. (6-1) at North Dakota (4-2)
Missouri St. (2-4) at N. Iowa (3-4)

SOUTHWEST
Kansas (5-2) at Baylor (3-3)
Cincinnati (5-1) at SMU (3-3)
Houston Baptist (2-4) at Texas A&M Commerce (4-2)
Faulkner (0-0) at Incarnate Word (6-1)
West Virginia (3-3) at Texas Tech (3-3)
Texas (5-2) at Oklahoma St. (5-1)
North Texas (4-3) at UTSA (5-2)
FAU (3-4) at UTEP (3-4)
Prairie View (3-3) at Lamar (0-6)
Southern Miss. (3-3) at Texas State (3-4)
SW Baptist (0-0) at Tarleton St. (4-2)
Kansas St. (5-1) at TCU (6-0)

FAR WEST
Portland St. (2-4) at Idaho (4-2)
UC Davis (2-4) at N. Colorado (2-5)
Stephen F. Austin (4-3) at S. Utah (3-4)
N. Arizona (2-5) at Idaho St. (1-6)
Weber St. (6-0) at Montana St. (6-1)
UCLA (6-0) at Oregon (5-1)
Hawaii (2-5) at Colorado St. (1-5)
Arizona St. (2-4) at Stanford (2-4)
San Jose St. (4-2) at New Mexico St. (2-5)
Fresno St. (2-4) at New Mexico (2-5)
Boise St. (4-2) at Air Force (5-2)
Colorado (1-5) at Oregon St. (5-2)
E. Washington (1-5) at Cal Poly (1-5)
Sam Houston St. (3-2) at Utah Tech (1-5)
Utah St. (3-4) at Wyoming (4-3)
Washington (5-2) at California (3-3)
San Diego St. (3-3) at Nevada (2-5)
Montana (5-1) at Sacramento St. (6-0)

PRO FOOTBALL

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE						
East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	5	1	0	.833	176	81
N.Y. Jets	4	2	0	.667	143	128
Miami	3	3	0	.500	131	155
New England	3	3	0	.500	141	113

South						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Tennessee	3	2	0	.600	96	118
Indianapolis	3	2	1	.583	103	121
Jacksonville	2	4	0	.333	138	114
Houston	1	3	1	.300	86	99

North						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	3	3	0	.500	158	141
Cincinnati	3	3	0	.500	138	115
Cleveland	2	4	0	.333	148	163
Pittsburgh	2	4	0	.333	97	146

West						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	4	2	0	.667	179	149
L.A. Chargers	4	2	0	.667	141	152
Denver	2	4	0	.333	91	99
Las Vegas	1	4	0	.200	125	130

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	6	0	0	1.000	161	105
N.Y. Giants	5	1	0	.833	127	113
Dallas	4	2	0	.667	110	98
Washington	2	4	0	.333	102	135

South						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Atlanta	3	3	0	.500	146	136
Tampa Bay	3	3	0	.500	121	103
New Orleans	2	4	0	.333	141	158
Carolina	1	5	0	.167	103	146

North						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Minnesota	5	1	0	.833	139	118
Green Bay	3	3	0	.500	107	123
Chicago	2	4	0	.333	93	118
Detroit	1	4	0	.200	140	170

West						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
L.A. Rams	3	3	0	.500	104	126
San Francisco	3	3	0	.500	122	89
Seattle	3	3	0	.500	146	163
Arizona	2	4	0	.333	114	142

Thursday's game

New Orleans at Arizona

Sunday's games

Atlanta at Cincinnati
Cleveland at Baltimore
Detroit at Dallas
Green Bay at Washington
Indianapolis at Tennessee
N.Y. Giants at Jacksonville
Tampa Bay at Carolina
Houston at Las Vegas
N.Y. Jets at Denver
Kansas City at San Francisco
Seattle at L.A. Chargers
Pittsburgh at Miami
Open: Buffalo, L.A. Rams, Minnesota, Philadelphia

Monday's game

Chicago at New England

NFL injury report

NEW YORK — The National Football League injury report, as provided by the league (OUT: Player will not play; DOUBTFUL: Player is unlikely to play; QUESTIONABLE: Player is not certain to play; DNP: did not practice; LIMITED: limited participation; FULL: Full participation):

Sunday

ATLANTA FALCONS at CINCINNATI BENGALS — ATLANTA: DNP: CB Dee Alford (hamstring), WR Jared Bernhardt (groin). LIMITED: DL Ta'Quon Graham (knee), OLF Ade Ogundeji (shoulder), CB A.J. Terrell (thigh), ILB Mykal Walker (groin). FULL: CB Isaiah Oliveer (shoulder). **CINCINNATI:** DNP: OT La'el Collins (NIR-resting player), DE Jeff Gunter (knee), DT Josh Tupou (calf) LB Logan Wilson (shoulder). LIMITED: LB Markus Bailey (shoulder), WR Ja'Marr Chase (hip), WR Tee Higgins (ankle), TE Hayden Hurst (groin).

CLEVELAND BROWNS at BALTIMORE RAVENS — CLEVELAND: DNP: G Joel Bitonio (NIR-resting player), DE Jadeveon Clowney (ankle), T Jack Conklin (ankle), WR Amari Cooper (NIR-resting player), LB Tony Fields (illness), DE Myles Garrett (shoulder/biceps), OL Joe Haeg (concussion), TE David Njoku (NIR-resting player), G Wyatt Teller (calf), CB Denzel Ward (concussion). FULL: DE Alex Wright (quadri-cep/glute). **BALTIMORE:** DNP: TE Mark Andrews (knee), DE Calais Campbell (foot), G Ben Cleveland (foot), RB J.K. Dobbins (knee), WR Devin Duvernay (NIR-resting player), T Morgan Moses (heel), CB Marcus Peters (NIR-resting player), FB Patrick Ricard (knee). LIMITED: WR Rashod Bateman (foot), OLB Justin Houston (groin), QB Lamar Jackson (hip), T Ronnie Stanley (NIR-resting player/ankle).

DETROIT LIONS at DALLAS COWBOYS — DETROIT: DNP: LB Chris Board (knee), WR D.J. Chark (ankle), T Taylor Decker (NIR-personal), DE Charles Harris (groin), S Ifeatu Melifonwu (ankle), T Matt Nelson (calf), CB Bobby Price (knee), WR Josh Reynolds (knee). LIMITED: DL John Cominsky (wrist), CB Will Harris (hip), C Frank Ragnow (foot), RB D'Andre Swift (ankle/shoulder). FULL: WR Amon-Ra St. Brown (ankle). **DALLAS:** LIMITED: WR CeeDee Lamb (hip). FULL: DT Quinton Bohanna (shoulder), DT Neville Gallimore (wrist), LB Devin Harper (achilles), T Jason Peters (chest), QB Dak Prescott (right thumb), TE Dalton Schultz (knee).

GREEN BAY PACKERS at WASHINGTON COMMANDERS — GREEN BAY: DNP: WR Randall Cobb (ankle), C Jake Hanson (biceps), QB Aaron Rodgers (right thumb), WR Christian Watson (hamstring). LIMITED: T David Bakhtiari (knee), G Elgton Jenkins (knee). FULL: LB Rashan Gary (toe). **WASHINGTON:** DNP: TE John Bates (hamstring), WR Dyami Brown (groin), CB William Jackson (back), TE Logan Thomas (calf), QB Carson Wentz (right finger), RB Jonathan Williams (knee). LIMITED: S Percy Butler (quadri-cep), CB Tariq Castro-Fields (knee), T Samuel Cosmi (finger), WR Jahan Dotson (hamstring).

HOUSTON TEXANS at LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — HOUSTON: DNP: DT Maliek Collins (knee), WR Brandin Cooks (NIR-resting player), DE Jerry Hughes (knee), WR Chris Moore (hip). LIMITED: WR Nico Collins (Achilles, wrist), T Austin Deculus (ankle), TE Brevin Jordan (ankle). **LAS VEGAS:** DNP: TE Darren Waller (hamstring). LIMITED: ILB Jayon Brown (hamstring), WR Mack Hollins (heel), TE Foster Moreau (knee).

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS at TENNESSEE TITANS — INDIANAPOLIS: DNP: WR Keke Coutee (concussion), CB Stephon Gilmore (NIR-resting player), C Ryan Kelly (NIR-resting player), DE Yannick Ngakoue (NIR-resting player), DE Kwity Paye (ankle). LIMITED: TE Kylan Granson (neck), LB Shaquille Leonard (concussion, nose, back), RB Jonathan Taylor (ankle). FULL: S Julian Blackmon (ankle), RB Nyheim Hines (concussion), RB Deon Jackson (quadri-cep). **TENNESSEE:** DNP: LB Zach Cunningham (elbow), LB Joseph Jones (knee). LIMITED: FB Tory Carter (neck), G Nate Davis (foot). FULL: LB Bud Dupree (hip), S Amani Hooker (concussion).

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS at SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — KANSAS CITY: DNP: DE Michael Danna (calf), DB Rashad Fenton (hamstr-

ing), G Joe Thuney (ankle). LIMITED: S Bryan Cook (concussion). FULL: CB L'Jarius Sneed (knee), K Harrison Butker (left ankle), WR Mecole Hardman (heel), G Trey Smith (pectoral). **SAN FRANCISCO:** DNP: DT Arik Armstead (foot/ankle), DE Samson Ebukam (achilles), S Taianoa Hufanga (concussion), Charvarius Ward (groin). LIMITED: DE Nick Bosa (groin), DE Drake Jackson (knee), S Jimmie Ward (hand), T Trent Williams (ankle). FULL: LB Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles (knee), TE Tyler Kroft (knee), TE Charlie Woerner (shoulder).

NEW YORK GIANTS at JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — NEW YORK GIANTS: DNP: DB Cor'Dale Flott (calf), WR Kenny Golladay (knee), DB Jason Pinnock (ankle), WR Kadarius Toney (hamstring), LB Oshane Ximines (quadri-cep). LIMITED: RB Saquon Barkley (shoulder), OL Jon Feliciano (groin), DE Azeee Ojulari (calf), OL Andrew Thomas (elbow). **JACKSONVILLE:** DNP: WR Jamal Agnew (knee), CB Shaquill Griffin (back). LIMITED: DL Folorunso Fatukasi (quadri-cep), DT DaVon Hamilton (foot), WR Marvin Jones Jr. (hamstring), LB Foye-sade Oluokun (calf).

NEW YORK JETS at DENVER BRONCOS — NEW YORK JETS: DNP: DE Jermaine Johnson (ankle). LIMITED: WR Braxton Berrios (back), T Duane Brown (shoulder), S Ash-tyn Davis (hamstring), LB Quincy Williams (ankle). **DENVER:** DNP: DB Essang Bassey (hamstring), ILB Josey Jewell (knee), NT D.J. Jones (ankle), G Quinn Melnerz (foot). LIMITED: WR Tyrie Cleveland (shoulder), DB Damarri Mathis (knee), S Caden Sterns (back), OT Billy Turner (knee), DB K'Waun Williams (wrist/elbow), QB Russell Wilson (hamstring). FULL: RB Melvin Gordon (neck/ribs), TE Eric Saubert (thigh).

PITTSBURGH STEELERS at MIAMI DOLPHINS — PITTSBURGH: DNP: DT Larry Ogunjobi (knee), WR Steven Sims (hamstring). LIMITED: OL Mason Cole (foot/ankle), OL James Daniels (ankle), S Minkah Fitzpatrick (knee), LB Myles Jack (ankle), CB Cam Sutton (hamstring), CB Ahkello Witherspoon (hamstring), DL Chris Wormley (ankle). FULL: TE Pat Freiermuth (concussion), QB Kenny Pickett (concussion), CB Levi Wallace (concussion). **MIAMI:** DNP: T Terron Armstead (toe), CB Keion Crossen (knee), LB Melvin Ingram (NIR-resting player), DE Emmanuel Ogbah (back), DT Christian Wilkins (hand). LIMITED: LB Jerome Baker (hip), CB Xavier Howard (NIR-resting player), CB Kader Kohou (oblique), RB Raheem Mostert (knee), DL Zach Sieler (hand), TE Durham Smythe (hamstring), QB Skylar Thompson (right thumb), WR Jaylen Waddle (shoulder). FULL: DB Elijah Campbell (foot), TE Tanner Conner (knee), T Greg Little (achilles).

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS at LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — SEATTLE: DNP: WR Penny Hart (hamstring), G Gabe Jackson (knee/hip), WR Tyler Lockett (hamstring), CB Artie Burns (groin), CB Isaiah Dunn (hamstring), OLB Uchenna Nwosu (NIR-rest). LIMITED: TE Noah Fant (illness), NT Al Woods (knee), S Ryan Neal (ankle), DE Quinton Jefferson (foot). FULL: WR Marquise Goodwin (knee/back), T Abraham Lucas (elbow), RB Kenneth Walker III (knee). **LOS ANGELES CHARGERS:** DNP: TE Gerald Everett (illness), K Dustin Hopkins (right hamstring), RB Joshua Kelly (knee), WR Josh Palmer (concussion), TE Donald Perham (concussion). LIMITED: WR Keenan Allen (hamstring), C Will Clapp (quadri-cep), DT Sebastian Joseph-Day (ankle), C Corey Linsley (illness), OT Trey Pipkins (knee). FULL: MLB Kyle Van Noy (back), G Zion Johnson (ankle).

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS at CAROLINA PANTHERS — TAMPA BAY: DNP: TE Cameron Brate (neck), DT Akiem Hicks (foot), WR Julio Jones (knee), G Shaquille Mason (ankle), CB Sean Murphy-Bunting (quadri-cep). LIMITED: CB Carlton Davis (hip), DE Logan Hall (abdomen, groin). FULL: S Mike Edwards (elbow). **CAROLINA:** DNP: C Pat Elfein (hip), CB C.J. Henderson (concussion), CB Donte Jackson (ankle), QB Baker Mayfield (ankle), RB Christian McCaffrey (NIR-resting player). LIMITED: DE Henry Anderson (elbow), S Sean Chandler (hamstring), CB Jaycee Horn (ribs), DT Matt Ioannidis (neck), LB Cory Littleton (groin), LB Frankie Luvu (shoulder), WR Laviska Shenault (hamstring).

DEALS

Sean Jackson to the practice squad.
CAROLINA PANTHERS — Designated QB Sam Darnold and DT Bravynn Roy to return from injured reserve. Signed DB Gavin Hesplo to the practice squad.
CINCINNATI BENGALS — Announced LB Joe Bachie has been cleared to practice from the physically unable to perform (PUP) list.
CLEVELAND BROWNS — Released S Richard LeCounte from the practice squad.
DALLAS COWBOYS — Designated DE Tarell Basham to return from injured reserve.
DETROIT LIONS — Signed WR Stanley Berryhill to the practice squad. Placed CB Saivion Smith on the practice squad injured list.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Designated WR Sammy Watkins to return from injured reserve. Signed WR Kawaan Baker to the practice squad.
LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Designated DB Anthony Averett and WR D.J. Turner to return from injured reserve.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Signed RB La'Mical Perine to the practice squad. Placed LB Trey Flowers and CB Nik Needham on injured reserve.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Signed OLB Benton Whitley to the active roster from the

PRO SOCCER

MLS playoffs

First Round
Saturday, Oct. 15
Cincinnati 2, New York Red Bulls 1
LA Galaxy 1, Nashville 0
Sunday, Oct. 16
Real Salt Lake 2, Austin 2, Austin wins 3-1 on penalty kicks
Montreal 2, Orlando 0
Monday, Oct. 17
New York City 3, Miami 0
Minnesota 1, Dallas 1, Dallas wins 5-4 on penalty kicks

Second Round
Thursday, Oct. 20
Cincinnati at Philadelphia
LA Galaxy at Los Angeles FC
Sunday, Oct. 23
New York City at Montreal
Dallas at Austin

Semifinals
Sunday, Oct. 30
Philadelphia-Cincinnati winner vs. New York City-Montreal winner
Los Angeles-LA Galaxy winner vs. Dallas-Austin winner

Championship
Saturday, Nov. 5
Semifinal winners

TENNIS

Guadalajara Open

Wednesday
At Panamerican Tennis Center
Guadalajara, Mexico
Purse: \$2,697,000
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Women's Singles
Round of 32
Danielle Collins (14), United States, def. Magdalena Frech, Poland, 6-3, 6-4.
Jelena Ostapenko (12), Latvia, def. Eugenie Bouchard, Canada, 7-5, 2-6, 6-1.
Liudmila Samsonova, Russia, def. Aryna Sabalenka (2), Belarus, 6-4, 2-6, 6-2.
Martina Trevisan, Italy, def. Katerina Siniakova, Czech Republic, 6-0, 4-6, 6-3.
Coco Gauff (5), United States, def. Elisabetta Cocciaretto, Italy, 7-6 (1), 6-3.
Anna Kalinskaya, Russia, def. Elise Mertens, Belgium, 6-4, 0-6, 7-5.
Veronika Kudermetova (8), Russia, def. Donna Vekic, Croatia, 6-4, 7-5.
Jessica Pegula (3), United States, def. Elena Rybakina, Kazakhstan, 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (8).
Marie Bouzkova, Czech Republic, def. Camila Osorio, Colombia, 6-3, 6-1.
Sloane Stephens, United States, def. Belinda Bencic (10), Switzerland, 6-4, 6-4.
Madison Keys (13), United States, def. Ajla Tomljanovic, Australia, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3.

European Open

Wednesday
At Lotto Arena
Antwerp, Belgium
Purse: Euro 648,130
Surface: Hardcourt indoor
Men's Singles
Round of 32
Manuel Guinard, France, def. Geoffrey Blancaneaux, France, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5.
Sebastian Korda, United States, def. Marcos Giron, United States, 6-3, 6-7 (0), 6-4.
Dominic Thiem, Austria, def. Michael Geerts, Belgium, 6-4, 6-0.
Round of 16
Daniel Evans (5), Britain, def. Constant Lestienne, France, 6-2, 6-1.
Richard Gasquet, France, def. Dominic Stephan Stricker, Switzerland, 7-6 (6), 7-5.
Yoshihito Nishioka (8), Japan, def. Jaume Munar, Spain, 6-1, 7-6 (3).
Hubert Hurkacz (1), Poland, def. Jack Draper, Britain, 7-6 (5), 6-7 (5), 6-1.

lotte (AHL).
MINNESOTA WILD — Reinstated LW Jordan Greenway from injured reserve and added him to the active roster. Signed F Michael Milne to a three-year, entry-level, contract and assigned him to Iowa (AHL) on loan. Loaned LW Mason Shaw to Iowa (AHL).
PITTSBURGH PENGUINS — Reassigned G Taylor Gauthier to Wheeling (ECHL) from Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (AHL).
SAN JOSE SHARKS — Reassigned G Zachary Emmond to San Jose (AHL) from Wichita (ECHL).
TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS — Recalled D Filip Kral from Toronto (AHL). Loaned D Axel Rindell to Toronto.
WASHINGTON CAPITALS — Recalled LW Beck Malenstyn from Hershey (AHL).
SOCCER
Major League Soccer
MLS DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE — Fined Real Salt Lake M Rubio Rubin for failure to leave the field in a timely manner in a match against Austin FC on Oct. 16.
D.C. UNITED — Announced that they have parted ways with general manager/head of technical recruitment and analysis Lucy Rushton and first team performance director Victor Lonchuk.

NHL

Study: 84% of workforce is white

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The NHL for the first time has done an internal demographic study of its staff and all 32 teams, and the results show that hockey has a lot of work to do to increase diversity at all levels.

The report released Tuesday found that 83.6% of the NHL's workforce is white and that men make up nearly 62% of the total, based on the 4,200 people who participated in a voluntary and anonymous survey (about 67% of all employees).

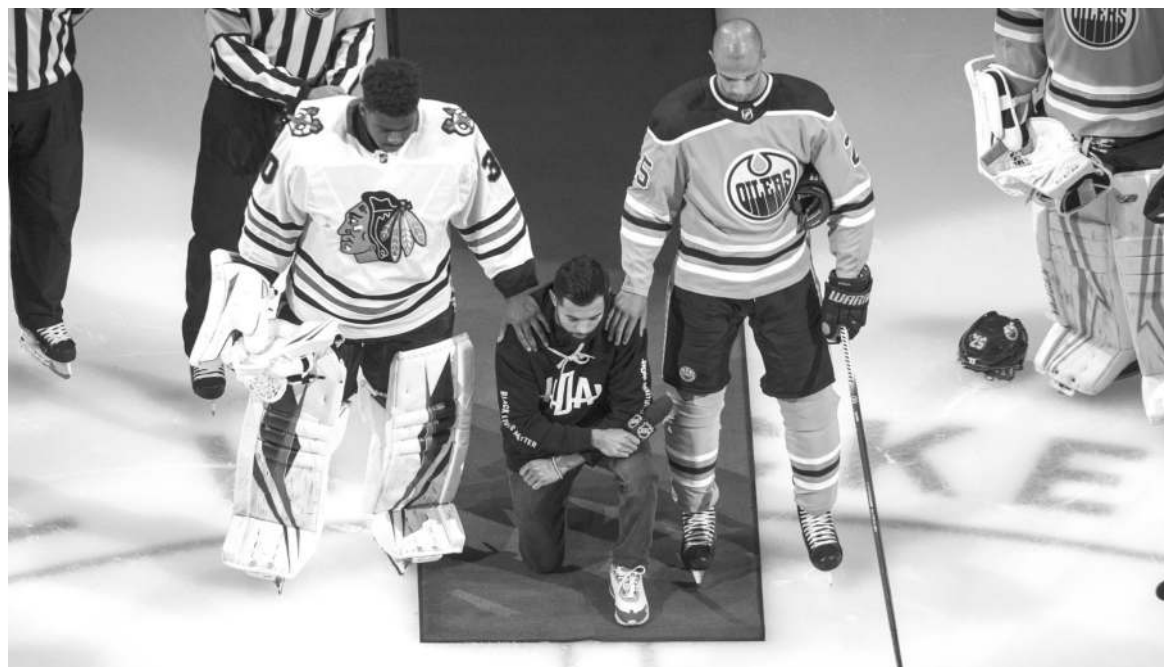
That nearly mirrors the situation on the ice, where more than 90% of players and nearly all coaches and officials are white.

"The whole purpose behind doing a workforce study is to provide a baseline: a fact-based baseline so that you can begin to develop very intentional and specific strategies around where you need to hire, how you need to hire, how you need to improve your brand," said Kim Davis, the NHL's executive vice president of social impact, growth and legislative affairs. "This is a good start, but there's a ways to go."

One of the next steps is turning the data into a race and gender report card produced by the University of Central Florida's Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, which has graded sports leagues on hiring practices for years.

In the 24-page report, which was presented to the league's Board of Governors and distributed to multiple internal committees, Commissioner Gary Bettman said the data will shape policies "that will produce the greatest impacts in the years to come."

The results are not surprising for a sport that for many reasons, from socioeconomic to geographic and more, has remained predominantly white. While the NHL has made efforts to bolster diversity efforts from youth hockey to the front of-



JASON FRANSON, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

The Minnesota Wild's Matt Dumba takes a knee flanked by the Chicago Blackhawks' Malcolm Subban, left, and the Edmonton Oilers' Darnell Nurse before a game in Edmonton, Alberta, on Aug. 1, 2020.

office, change has been slow.

Davis said it is not as simple as recruiting people of color to work for the NHL, that it starts with improving how underrepresented communities see and feel about the sport itself. The NHL, eager to diversify its fan base, mapped out seven courses of action, from education and community initiatives to marketing and partnerships.

"A number of those steps are already in progress," Davis said. "You can't expect to recruit (Black, Indigenous and people of color) folks to work in the league if you don't at the same time have your stadium fan code of conduct underway so people feel like the sport is really serious about growing the fan base. You also have to make sure that you are reaching out to the communities from a youth participation perspective, so all of those efforts are underway."

Some of the NHL's players have wondered why it took so long. The

league hired Davis in 2017 to spearhead diversity and inclusion efforts, which picked up in 2019 when Nigeria-born player Akim Aliu revealed a coach used racist language toward him a decade earlier in the minors. That sparked a broader conversation and led to the formations of several league committees focused on the subject even before the racial reckoning in the summer of 2020, when a handful of current and former minority players founded the Hockey Diversity Alliance.

One of those members, Minnesota's Matt Dumba, said recently he still sees racism in hockey, adding he's sick of "the old boys' club and them dictating who is and who isn't welcome." He and Davis spoke last week about the topic.

"We talked about (how) there may be different ways of thinking about this work, but at the end of the day we are all in service of the same outcome and that is to grow the sport and to make sure that folks

that look like him and me feel comfortable and welcomed in the sport," said Davis, who is Black. "We both agreed that that was the goal."

Racism still occurs at various levels of hockey. As recently as January, a minor league player was suspended for 30 games for directing a racist gesture at an opposing player who is Black.

Davis acknowledged such incidents hurt the NHL brand even if they don't happen in the league itself. She said she also hopes people see progress being made, including teams hiring nine people of color for C-suite positions since the report was taken and San Jose hiring Mike Grier as the league's first Black general manager.

"Change can feel uncomfortable," she said. "There are going to be moments that are very, very uncomfortable, but we have to have a plan of action. We have to keep moving in that direction."

Avs captain Landeskog out after knee surgery

Associated Press

DENVER — Colorado Avalanche captain Gabriel Landeskog will be sidelined about 12 weeks after undergoing arthroscopic knee surgery.

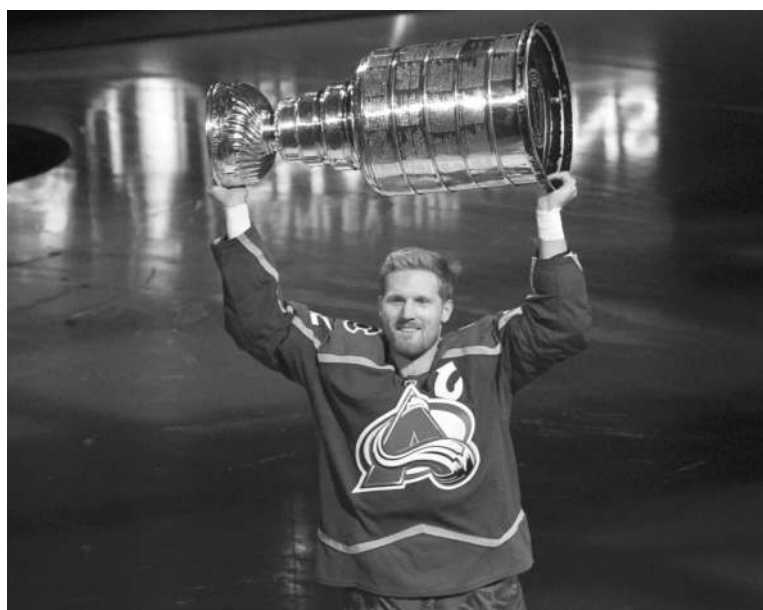
Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said after morning skate Wednesday that Landeskog had the procedure performed in Minneapolis the day before. Landeskog missed the opening three games of this season with what the team described as a lower-body injury.

"Started bugging him when he started training and getting back on the ice," said Bednar, whose team hosted Winnipeg on Wednesday night. "So they had it looked at,

images taken. Decided on surgery."

Landeskog sat out the final 23 regular-season games last season after undergoing knee surgery. He returned in time for the playoffs, where he had 11 goals and 11 assists to help the Avalanche win the franchise's third Stanley Cup title.

The 29-year-old Landeskog is in his 12th NHL season and his 11th as captain of the Avalanche. He was the youngest captain in NHL history at the time he earned the role (19 years, 286 days) on Sept. 4, 2012. He held that distinction until Connor McDavid was named captain by the Edmonton Oilers on Oct. 5, 2016, at 19 years, 266 days.



JACK DEMPSEY/AP

Colorado Avalanche left winger and captain Gabriel Landeskog hoists the Stanley Cup for fans during a game against the Chicago Blackhawks on Oct. 12 in Denver. Landeskog is out for 12 weeks.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	4	3	1	0	6	21	15
Florida	4	3	1	0	6	14	12
Detroit	3	2	0	1	5	12	7
Buffalo	3	2	1	0	4	11	7
Toronto	4	2	2	0	4	11	12
Montreal	4	2	2	0	4	8	11
Ottawa	3	1	2	0	2	10	12
Tampa Bay	4	1	3	0	2	10	14

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	3	3	0	0	6	11	3
N.Y. Rangers	4	3	1	0	6	17	12
Philadelphia	4	3	1	0	6	14	10
Pittsburgh	3	2	0	1	5	14	7
N.Y. Islanders	3	2	1	0	4	13	6
Washington	4	2	2	0	4	13	13
New Jersey	3	1	2	0	2	8	12
Columbus	4	1	3	0	2	9	17

Western Conference

Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	3	3	0	0	6	13	3
Colorado	4	2	1	1	5	17	14
Nashville	5	2	2	1	5	12	16
St. Louis	2	2	0	0	4	9	5
Winnipeg	3	2	1	0	4	9	8
Chicago	3	1	2	0	2	7	8
Arizona	3	1	2	0	2	9	14
Minnesota	3	0	3	0	0	12	20

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Calgary	3	3	0	0	6	12	8
Vegas	4	3	1	0	6	12	8
Los Angeles	5	3	2	0	6	20	21
Seattle	5	1	2	2	4	14	20
Edmonton	3	1	2	0	2	10	11
Anaheim	4	1	3	0	2	12	21
Vancouver	4	0	3	1	1	12	18
San Jose	5	0	5	0	0	8	19

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Wednesday's games

Florida 4, Philadelphia 3
Winnipeg 4, Colorado 3, OT
St. Louis 4, Seattle 3, OT

Thursday's games

Anaheim at Boston
Arizona at Montreal
Dallas at Toronto
Los Angeles at Pittsburgh
Nashville at Columbus
San Jose at N.Y. Rangers
Washington at Ottawa
New Jersey at N.Y. Islanders
Vancouver at Minnesota
Carolina at Edmonton
Buffalo at Calgary
Winnipeg at Vegas

Friday's games

Tampa Bay at Florida
Detroit at Chicago
Seattle at Colorado

Saturday's games

Minnesota at Boston
San Jose at New Jersey
Arizona at Ottawa
St. Louis at Edmonton
Dallas at Montreal
Los Angeles at Washington
N.Y. Islanders at Tampa Bay
Pittsburgh at Columbus
Toronto at Winnipeg
Philadelphia at Nashville
Buffalo at Vancouver
Carolina at Calgary
Colorado at Vegas

Sunday's games

Seattle at Chicago
Anaheim at Detroit
Columbus at N.Y. Rangers
N.Y. Islanders at Florida
San Jose at Philadelphia

Monday's games

Dallas at Ottawa
Washington at New Jersey
Pittsburgh at Edmonton
St. Louis at Winnipeg
Toronto at Vegas
Carolina at Vancouver

Scoring leaders

Through Wednesday

	GP	G	A	PTS
Artemi Panarin, NYR	4	2	8	10
Mikko Rantanen, COL	4	3	6	9
Nathan MacKinnon, COL	4	2	6	8
David Pastrnak, BOS	4	3	5	8
Mika Zibanejad, NYR	4	4	4	8
Valeri Nichushkin, COL	4	5	3	8
Gabriel Vilardi, LA	5	4	3	7
Steven Stamkos, TB	4	6	1	7

11 tied with 6 pts.

NBA

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	1	0	01.000	—
Toronto	1	0	01.000	—
New York	0	1	.000	1
Philadelphia	0	1	.000	1
Brooklyn	0	1	.000	1
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	1	0	01.000	—
Charlotte	1	0	01.000	—
Atlanta	1	0	01.000	—
Orlando	0	1	.000	1
Miami	0	1	.000	1
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	1	0	01.000	—
Detroit	1	0	01.000	—
Milwaukee	0	0	.000	½
Cleveland	0	1	.000	1
Indiana	0	1	.000	1
Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New Orleans	1	0	01.000	—
Memphis	1	0	01.000	—
Dallas	0	1	.000	1
Houston	0	1	.000	1
San Antonio	0	1	.000	1
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	1	0	01.000	—
Minnesota	1	0	01.000	—
Portland	1	0	01.000	—
Oklahoma City	0	1	.000	1
Denver	0	1	.000	1
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	1	0	01.000	—
Phoenix	1	0	01.000	—
L.A. Clippers	0	0	.000	½
Sacramento	0	1	.000	1
L.A. Lakers	0	1	.000	1

Wednesday's games
 Detroit 113, Orlando 109
 Washington 114, Indiana 107
 Atlanta 117, Houston 107
 New Orleans 130, Brooklyn 108
 Toronto 108, Cleveland 105
 Chicago 116, Miami 108
 Memphis 115, New York 112, OT
 Charlotte 129, San Antonio 102
 Minnesota 115, Oklahoma City 108
 Utah 123, Denver 102
 Portland 115, Sacramento 108
 Phoenix 107, Dallas 105

Thursday's games
 Milwaukee at Philadelphia
 L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers

Friday's games
 Chicago at Washington
 New Orleans at Charlotte
 San Antonio at Indiana
 Boston at Miami
 Detroit at New York
 Orlando at Atlanta
 Toronto at Brooklyn
 Memphis at Houston
 Utah at Minnesota
 Denver at Golden State
 Phoenix at Portland

Saturday's games
 San Antonio at Philadelphia
 Boston at Orlando
 Detroit at Indiana
 Cleveland at Chicago
 Houston at Milwaukee
 Toronto at Miami
 Memphis at Dallas
 Oklahoma City at Denver
 L.A. Clippers at Sacramento

Sunday's games
 Portland at L.A. Lakers
 Charlotte at Atlanta
 Utah at New Orleans
 Washington at Cleveland
 Minnesota at Oklahoma City
 Sacramento at Golden State
 Phoenix at L.A. Clippers

Scoring leaders
 Through Wednesday

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
DeRozan, CHI	1	14	7	37	37.0
Tatum, BOS	1	13	7	35	35.0
Brown, BOS	1	14	3	35	35.0
Harden, PHI	1	9	12	35	35.0
Doncic, DAL	1	10	13	35	35.0
Morant, MEM	1	11	9	34	34.0
Curry, GS	1	10	9	33	33.0
Fox, SAC	1	12	4	33	33.0



AARON GASH/AP

The Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo drives to the basket against the Brooklyn Nets' Nic Claxton during a preseason game.

Failure fuels Antetokounmpo

Bucks center driven by seven-game playoff loss to Celtics last season

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
 Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Giannis Antetokounmpo is motivated by winning. In his mind, he didn't do enough of that last season.

The Milwaukee Bucks forward spent the NBA offseason working on his game and body — while also representing his country — as he makes a run at another championship.

It is what drives the 27-year-old two-time MVP.

Sure, he is flattered to be thought of as the world's greatest basketball player, but Antetokounmpo says that title belongs to the best player hoisting the NBA championship trophy. That wasn't Antetokounmpo and the Bucks.

Antetokounmpo considers Golden State's Stephen Curry the best in the world by virtue of the Warriors' status as reigning champions.

"Do I believe I'm the best player in the world? No," Antetokounmpo said. "I think the best player in the world is the person that is the last one standing, is the person that takes his team to the final, to the finish line and helps them win the game, win games and become champion."

That explains how Anteto-

"I think the best player in the world is the person ... that takes his team to the final, to the finish line and helps them ... become champion."

Giannis Antetokounmpo

Bucks center, who says he was jealous of the NBA champion Warriors

kounmpo's 10th NBA season is different from the rest as the Bucks prepare for their opener Thursday night at Philadelphia.

After spending much of his career chasing his first title before leading the 2020-21 Bucks to their first championship in a half-century, he now understands what it's like to have that crown wrested from him. Antetokounmpo doesn't want to feel that way again.

"I kind of got jealous of Golden State and seeing them in the parade and the ESPYs," Antetokounmpo said. "You know that feeling now. You know what is getting stripped away from you."

Antetokounmpo certainly wasn't to blame for the Bucks' seven-game loss to the Boston Celtics in the Eastern Conference semifinals. He averaged 29.6 points, 14.7 rebounds and 7.1 as-

sists against Boston to become the first player to record 200 points, 100 rebounds and 50 assists in a playoff series.

That followed a regular season in which Antetokounmpo averaged a career-high 29.9 points and surpassed Kareem Abdul-Jabbar as the Bucks' all-time leading scorer.

"He's an amazing player that does amazing things," Milwaukee coach Mike Budenholzer said. "I think that's why people turn on their TVs. That's why people buy the tickets. They want to come in and see something special or different that they can talk about that night or the next day. Giannis probably does as many or more of those things than anybody in the world."

But that's not enough — not for Antetokounmpo.

Milwaukee is counting on Antetokounmpo to lead a roster that returns virtually intact from last season, with a nucleus featuring three-time All-Star Khris Middleton, Jrue Holiday and Brook Lopez. Middleton underwent surgery on his left wrist this summer and won't be ready for the start of the season.

The Bucks' biggest change is a greater defensive emphasis on containing three-point shooters than they've shown in previous seasons. The Celtics made 22 three-pointers in their Game 7 victory over the Bucks.

"At the end of the day, defense is all about effort," Antetokounmpo said. "If the effort is not there, whatever you come with, whatever scheme, whatever plan you have, it's not going to work."

Antetokounmpo doesn't believe his busy summer will wear him down as he goes through the grind of an NBA season. He expects his EuroBasket experience this summer will make it even tougher for NBA defenses to contain him. Antetokounmpo joined his brothers — Bucks teammate Thanasis Antetokounmpo and Chicago's Kostas Antetokounmpo — on the Greek team that reached the quarterfinals.

NFL

Source: Panthers would be open to trading McCaffrey

BY STEVE REED
Associated Press

670

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Carolina Panthers are considering trading 2019 All-Pro running back Christian McCaffrey if they get something significant in return, according to a person familiar with the situation.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Wednesday because no trade is imminent.

It's unclear how many other NFL teams have inquired about McCaffrey, who has been productive this season after missing 23 games over the previous two seasons with various injuries.

The Panthers are 1-5 this season and have struggled to find stability at the quarterback position.

The Panthers traded Robbie Anderson to the Arizona Cardinals this week for two late-round draft picks after he was involved in a sideline argument with an assistant coach and sent to the locker room.

The Panthers are not expected to have a fire sale, despite having lost 12 of their past 13 games.

McCaffrey is one of the few bright spots on the league's 32nd-ranked offense.

He has 670 yards from scrimmage, which ranks fourth in the NFL behind only Saquon Barkley, Tyreek Hill and Nick Chubb. McCaffrey and Chubb are the only

Yards from scrimmage this season for Carolina Panthers running back Christian McCaffrey, which ranks fourth in the NFL behind Saquon Barkley, Tyreek Hill and Nick Chubb. McCaffrey and Chubb are the only players in the league who have five games with at least 100 yards from scrimmage.

SOURCE: Associated Press

players in the league with five games with at least 100 yards from scrimmage.

McCaffrey said Wednesday that he's trying to stay focused on Sunday's game even as trade rumors swirl around the 2017 first-round draft pick.

"That's out of my control," McCaffrey said. "I'm trying to control everything I can control. Right now I'm a Carolina Panther and giving it all to this place."

When asked if he would like to be kept in the loop regarding trade talks, McCaffrey responded, "if they keep me in the loop, great. If not, it doesn't matter. To me, I am focused on playing against the Bucs this weekend and doing everything I can to prepare for them."

McCaffrey did not practice Wednesday as that is his normal rest day.



ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

Carolina Panthers running back Christian McCaffrey said he is trying to stay focused on Sunday's game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers even though trade rumors swirl around him.

Pro Football Hall of Famer, Heisman runner-up Trippi dies at 100

BY PAUL NEWBERRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Charley Trippi, a runner-up for the Heisman Trophy at Georgia who went on to lead the Cardinals to their most recent NFL championship in 1947, died Wednesday. He was 100.

The University of Georgia announced that Trippi died peacefully at his Athens, Ga., home.

Trippi was one of football's most versatile players, lining up at multiple positions on offense, defense and special teams. He is the only member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame to have 1,000 yards rushing, receiving and passing in his career.

The son of a Pennsylvania coal miner, Trippi had a simple explanation for his dazzling array of skills.

"In those days, the more things a player did, the more pay he could demand," Trippi said, ac-



AP

Georgia halfback Charley Trippi prepares to throw a pass during a 1946 practice. After a Hall of Fame college career with the Bulldogs, Trippi led the NFL's St. Louis Cardinals to a championship in 1947.

ording to his bio at the Pro Football Hall of Fame. "I could run, kick, pass and catch, and that made me a valuable property."

Trippi played his college football at Georgia in the 1940s, his career interrupted by a stint in the

military during World War II.

Trippi led the Bulldogs to a Rose Bowl victory, finished second to Glenn Davis for the 1946 Heisman Trophy, and was a No. 1 overall draft pick by the Cardinals, who then called Chicago home.

He went on to star in the "Dream Backfield" for the Cardinals, leading the franchise to the 1947 NFL championship. The team, which moved to St. Louis in 1960 and then to its current home in Arizona in 1988, has yet to win another title.

"Charley Trippi was one of the greatest Bulldogs of all time!" Georgia athletic director Josh Brooks wrote on Twitter. "It was an honor to get to know him! God Bless the Trippi family."

Charles Louis Trippi was born in Pittston, Pa., just as America was embarking on a golden era of sports in the 1920s.

According to an often-repeated story, Trippi's family could not afford to buy him football cleats but he punted so well in his regular shoes that his high school coach, Paul Shebby, stepped in to make the purchase. One day in punt formation, after the snapper sailed the ball over Trippi's head, he ran back to pick it up and weaved his

way to a touchdown that showed he was far more than a one-dimensional player.

Trippi received a scholarship to play for the Bulldogs through his connections to a Coke bottler — who also was a Georgia alum — in nearby Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

As a sophomore in 1942, he starred on a Georgia team led by Heisman Trophy winner Frank Sinkwich. In a 75-0 rout of rival Florida, Trippi ran for two touchdowns, threw for another, and scored a fourth on an interception return. Georgia finished 11-1 and was picked as national champion in several polls, though the Bulldogs were No. 2 in The Associated Press rankings behind Ohio State.

Georgia capped the season with a 9-0 victory over UCLA in the Rose Bowl. Trippi carried 27 times for 115 yards, also handled passing and punting duties, and was retroactively named the game's most valuable player when the award was created in 1953.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Here: Dykes' father is a Texas coaching legend

FROM PAGE 48

But the Texas-born son of a coaching legend — Spike Dykes was in the Lone Star State for 38 of his 41 years, coaching at several levels — was then offered the job at SMU. The younger Dykes led the Mustangs to 30 wins in their best four-season stretch since being the only program ever shut down by the so-called NCAA death penalty three decades earlier.

The Frogs went 23-24 over that same span following their Big 12 runner-up finish and 10-3 record in 2017. Patterson, the winningest coach in school history, and TCU mutually parted ways eight games into his 21st season last October. Dykes replaced him after the regular season.

“Just full of good energy” is how Newton, a transfer from Louisiana-Monroe, described Dykes.

“He’s done a great job, him and whole staff. ... They just pump us full of confidence,” sixth-year offensive lineman Wes Harris said. “They’ve instilled a lot of confidence in us, and it’s rolling right now.”

Harris said he could sense everybody coming together as a team for Dykes from the start of 5 a.m. offseason workouts and through spring practice. And their confidence grows as they keep winning games.

The Frogs overcame a two-touchdown deficit in the fourth quarter last week against No. 11 Oklahoma State, and won 43-40 after bruising running back Kendre Miller’s game-ending 2-yard touchdown run in the second overtime.

TCU has the Big 12’s best offense and ranks third nationally with 526.7 total yards and 45.8 points a game.

Senior quarterback Max Duggan lost the starting job going into the season, but has thrown for 1,564 yards and a Big 12-high 16

touchdowns, with only one interception, in his five starts since Chandler Morris got hurt in the opener. Duggan has also run for 237 yards and four more scores.

Miller has run for a TD in every game, and three 100-yard rushing games the past four weeks. Quentin Johnston, the 6-foot-4 receiver Dykes said was banged up early in the season, has 22 catches for 386 yards the last two games, after 12 for 114 before that.

The Frogs play three of their next four games on the road after Kansas State, then finish the regular season at home against Iowa State.

“When we look at this season after it’s all done, obviously we’ll remember what happens here over the next six, seven, eight weeks, and how that plays out,” Dykes said. “That will determine really how we feel about this whole thing.”

This is the fourth season in a row that Dykes’ teams have gotten to the halfway mark of the regular season without a loss. SMU was 8-0 in 2019 on the way to a 10-3 finish, and 5-0 in the pandemic-shortened 2020 season that ended 7-3.

The Mustangs were 7-0 last season before back-to-back losses at Houston and Memphis, which happened about the same time as Patterson’s departure from TCU. They lost four of their last five games overall.

Dykes has said some of those teams didn’t have the depth needed as injuries mounted during the season. He said these Frogs keep getting stronger in the weight room, instead of a usual decline during the grind of the season, and focus on each day rather than talking about rankings, potential bowl games or more.

“I’ve been here before enough to know that when it doesn’t end the right way, it takes all those happy feelings away,” Dykes said. “We’ve just got to keep grinding.”



PHOTOS BY NAM Y. HUH/AP

Stanford quarterback Tanner McKee, left, recovers a fumble next to Notre Dame defensive lineman Jayson Ademilola during the first half of Saturday’s game in South Bend, Ind.

Home field hasn’t been an advantage for Irish

BY ANDREW MENTOCK
Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Notre Dame coach Marcus Freeman understands the problem. The Fighting Irish have lost their home-field advantage.

Finding the solution has been a challenge.

In Freeman’s first season as head coach, Notre Dame (3-3) is an inexplicable 1-2 in South Bend despite entering each game as a double-digit favorite, according to FanDuel Sportsbook. And the Irish easily could be 0-3.

“There’s not just one answer because if there were, we’d fix it,” Freeman said. “It’s truly an evaluation of everything that goes into it and why we haven’t been able to execute here at Notre Dame Stadium.”

From 2017-21, the Irish went 31-2 on their home turf under former coach Brian Kelly, with both losses coming against teams that made the College Football Playoff.

Things certainly have changed mightily this season.

Last weekend, Notre Dame lost to Stanford (2-4), the Cardinal’s first win over an FBS opponent in more than a year, and in Freeman’s home debut the Irish were upset by Marshall (3-3). The Thundering Herd only have one win since then, against Gardner-Webb.

Somehow, though, the Irish gave No. 2 Ohio State (6-0) a serious challenge in Columbus, Ohio, and they produced their two best showings of the season at North



The Irish are 1-2 at home under first-year head coach Marcus Freeman, with losses to both Marshall and Stanford.

Carolina (6-1) and against then-No. 16 BYU (4-3) in Las Vegas.

Freeman believes there’s not much difference between Notre Dame’s pregame routine regardless of the venue.

But he has made one change this season: Players attend mass at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart before making the walk to the stadium with fans lining their path and cheering. Freeman brought back mass at the Basilica after Kelly moved the pregame service to a less public setting, such as a residence hall or another private on-campus location.

Otherwise, the team still stays at an off-campus hotel before games, just like on the road, though it avoids what can be tiresome flights. Pregame mass also is offered on road trips, usually some-

where close to the stadium.

But the numbers tell a different story. At home, the Irish average just 19.7 points and 316.3 yards, with both in the bottom 10 among 131 FBS programs. Outside South Bend, they’re scoring 27.7 points and producing 441.7 yards, both of which rank in the top 60.

Slow starts also have been an issue. Notre Dame has been shut out in the first quarter of all three home games, leading to first-half averages of 4.7 points and 127.3 yards.

Quarterbacks Tyler Buchner and Drew Pyne have struggled early, too, completing just 22 of 44 throws for 68.3 yards and just one total TD through the first two quarters at Notre Dame Stadium.

Notre Dame’s next chance to turn things around comes Saturday when UNLV (4-3) visits. The Irish are 25½-point favorites, their largest spread this season. They’ll finish the home schedule against No. 5 Clemson on Nov. 5 and Boston College on Nov. 19 and need to sweep all three to finish with a winning home record.

Then again, Kelly’s early teams struggled at home, too. He went 3-4 in his first season, losing to Navy and Tulsa, and lost the next season’s opener against South Florida.

“I can’t build on what’s been done in the past,” he said. “What coach Kelly did here was tremendous, the wins and the success he had here. But I can’t come in here and say, ‘I have to be Brian Kelly.’ I’ve got to be Marcus Freeman.”



SAM HODDE/AP

TCU defensive lineman Tymon Mitchell closes in on Oklahoma State quarterback Spencer Sanders during the second half of Saturday’s game in Fort Worth, Texas. TCU won 43-40 in double overtime.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

No. 9 UCLA's offensive line prepares for No. 10 Oregon

By DAN GREENSPAN
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Antonio Mafi understands UCLA's long, slow road to success under coach Chip Kelly better than most.

"All I know is we started off 0-5 my freshman year, and now we're 6-0, so definitely, like I took the time to realize how far we've come as not just my class but the program in general," Mafi said. "But obviously, we're on to the next. You know, the main focus is to go 7-0."

90

Combined career starts for UCLA offensive linemen Antonio Mafi, Duke Clemens, Jon Gaines II, Raiqwon O'Neal and Garrett DiGiorgio, counting O'Neal's four seasons at Rutgers before transferring.

Associated Press

Going into their third straight game against a ranked opponent at No. 10 Oregon on Saturday, it will be up to left guard Mafi and rest of the No. 9 Bruins' offensive line to handle the most intimidating and inhospitable stadium in the Pac-12.

The Ducks' Autzen Stadium, which is expected to attract another beyond capacity crowd of more than

54,000 fans, represents the second road test of the season for UCLA (6-0, 3-0 Pac-12).

Their first, a comfortable 45-17 early afternoon victory at a flailing Colorado on Sept. 24, was a far cry from the hostile reception they will receive from the Ducks (5-1, 3-0), with the intensity ratcheted up by a visit from ESPN's "College GameDay."

"It's going to be loud in there, especially on third downs, so we've got the crowd noise pumping out here at practice trying to emulate that, but you never really know how it is until you're in it," UCLA quarterback Dorian Thompson-Robinson said.

Mafi said the key to handling such an environment is communication, verbal and non-verbal. Asked to describe what the latter looks like, Mafi said: "Oh, just like eye contact, you know. Like if you're looking at me and I'm saying something to you, I'm assuming you can hear me."

However that dialogue happens, the front five has been able to put it into action successfully. The Bruins rank second in the conference in yards per carry (5.49) and yards rushing per game (211.5).

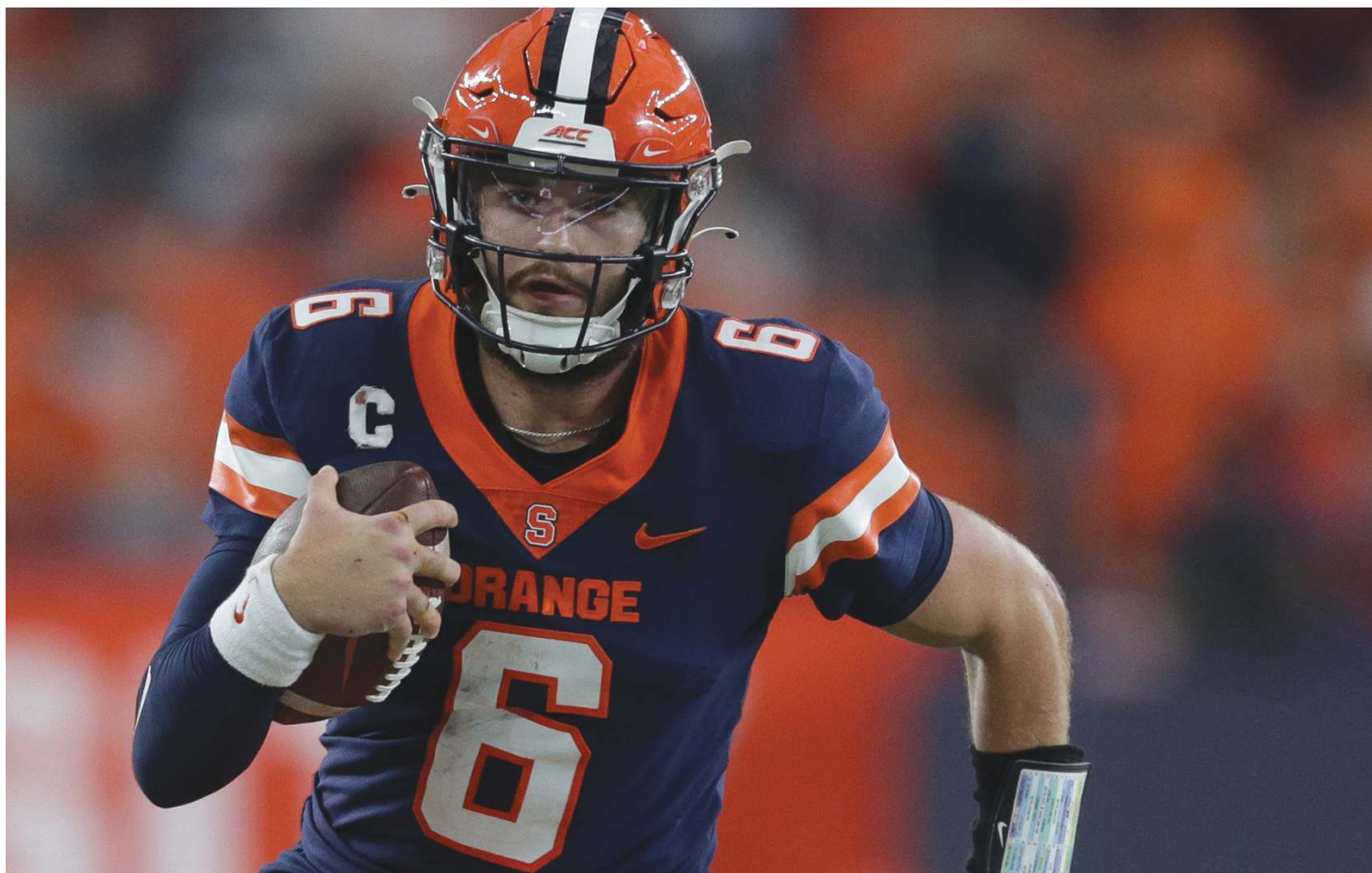
The Ducks have the Pac-12's stingiest run defense, allowing 98 yards per game.

"I have full faith and trust in the guys here with how smart our O-line is and the rest of the guys on the offense, I have no worries we're going to go in there and we're going to do our thing," Thompson-Robinson said.

That confidence comes from the continuity of an offensive line that has started every game together. Mafi, center Duke Clemens, right guard Jon Gaines II and left tackle Raiqwon O'Neal have combined for 83 career starts, counting O'Neal's four seasons at Rutgers before transferring.

Mafi has another 14 career starts from his time as a defensive lineman to draw from.

The least experienced player on the line is right tackle Garrett DiGiorgio, who has seven career starts as a redshirt freshman.



JOSHUA BESSEX/AP

Syracuse quarterback Garrett Shrader almost led the Orange to a victory over Clemson last season, and his strength and elusiveness could be a problem for the Tigers if they don't clean up recent defensive lapses.

No. 5 Clemson, No. 14 Syracuse battle for control of ACC Atlantic

By PETE IACOBELLI
Associated Press

CLEMSON, S.C. — There is always time to make history for Clemson coach Dabo Swinney.

The two-time national championship coach will lead the fifth-ranked Tigers against No. 14 Syracuse (6-0, 3-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) on Saturday, the first-ever matchup at Death Valley between two teams 6-0 or better. And if Clemson (7-0, 5-0) stays perfect, it will have the ACC record with its 38th consecutive win at home.

"We've had 81 years at Death Valley and there's never been a matchup like this," said Swinney, who's won six ACC titles and two national titles in his 14 full seasons.

It's one of the most important showdowns in Swinney's career. The winner is the clear-cut favorite in the ACC Atlantic.

Clemson and Syracuse are among nine undefeateds left in college football, something Orange coach Dino Babers told his players to savor.

"You should cherish it and understand this moment and not let it just go past you," Babers said. "You should look at it and be proud."

Should the Orange keep it going with their first victory at Memorial Stadium, they'd have won seven straight for the first time since 2001.

Clemson reached 7-0 for the sixth time in eight seasons, but had a slow start and some fourth-quarter breakdowns on defense at

No. 14 Syracuse (6-0, 3-0 ACC)
at No. 5 Clemson (7-0, 5-0)

AFN-Atlantic

6 p.m. Saturday CET; 1 a.m. Sunday JKT



Swinney

Florida State last week in a 34-28 win after entering the final period up 34-14.

Swinney counted 24 missed tackles from his team at Florida State. The Tigers escaped Syracuse 17-14 last season despite several defensive lapses. Swinney said they missed six tackles behind the line of scrimmage and three sacks due to Orange quarterback Garrett Shrader's strength and elusiveness.

If that happens this time around, given Syracuse's level of play, Clemson likely won't be as lucky.

"We have to clean that up, especially with as poorly as we played" at Florida State a week ago, Swinney said.

Records in play

Clemson has won 37 straight at home, dating to November 2016 and a 43-42 loss to Pitt. A victory would break a tie for the ACC's longest such streak that Florida State set from 1992-2001. The Tigers also hold the longest winning streak in FBS at 13 after ending last season with six straight victories.

Noise factor

Syracuse knocked off NC State 24-9 at home last Saturday and the deafening roars of the capacity crowd of 49,705 inside the JMA Wireless Dome made it difficult for the Wolfpack. Now the shoe's on the other foot for the Orange at Death Valley. Or is it?

"Luckily, we play in the Dome," Orange linebacker Mikel Jones said. "I love the noise. ... Our communication, I feel, will be on point."

Defensive struggles

Clemson stumbled on defense at Florida State, even though standout starters in end Xavier Thomas and tackle Bryan Bresee had returned to the lineup. Thomas returned at Boston College two weeks ago and earned ACC lineman of the week for two sacks in six snaps. He played 32 snaps against the Seminoles. Bresee has missed three of seven games, the last two absences from dealing with a kidney infection.

Optimistic underdog

Syracuse is a big underdog, something the Orange have become accustomed to almost on a weekly basis.

"We take it as a team as an opportunity to be the underdog and go ruin their party. You've got to be confident," offensive lineman Matthew Bergeron said. "I'm really excited for that. We don't want to lose. I feel like this team has got a little bit addicted to winning."

No sliding

Quarterback DJ Uiagalelei has been a big part of Clemson's running game, but don't look for him to slide when defenders close in. The 6-foot-4, 230-pound Uiagalelei would rather run around or into defenders because he believes a slide leaves him open to big hits from opponents. He tried hurdling a defender in high school.

"But that didn't go well," he said.

MLB PLAYOFFS

Astros win ALCS opener behind Verlander's 11 Ks

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
Associated Press

HOUSTON — When Justin Verlander was laboring and needed 45 pitches to get through two innings, Astros manager Dusty Baker was worried he'd have to go to his bullpen early.

Instead, the veteran ace buckled down and found a groove, striking out 11 in six strong innings to lead Houston over the New York Yankees 4-2 in their AL Championship Series opener Wednesday night.

"This guy, he has mental toughness," Baker said. "When he's down and out and it looks like you got him in trouble, this guy, he can dial it up."

Yuli Gurriel launched a tie-breaking homer for Houston in the sixth. Chas McCormick and Jeremy Peña also went deep as the AL West champions improved to 4-0 in the playoffs after going 106-56 during the regular season.

The Astros are in their sixth consecutive ALCS, looking to reach the World Series for the fourth time in that span, against a New York team in the LCS for the first time since being eliminated by Houston in 2019.

The game was tied 1-1 when Gurriel connected off reliever Clarke Schmidt for a solo shot into the left-field seats to put Houston on top. Two batters later, McCormick sent a sinker from Schmidt into right field to make it 3-1.

"I didn't do my job today," Schmidt said.

Verlander set a major league

Scoreboard

Playoffs

LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES
(Best-of-seven)
(x-if necessary)
American League
(All Games on TBS)
Houston 1, New York 0

Wednesday: Houston 4, New York 2

Thursday: at Houston

Saturday: at New York, AFN-Sports, 11 p.m. Saturday CET; 6 a.m. Sunday JKT

Sunday: at New York, AFN-Sports, 1 a.m.

Monday CET; 8 a.m. Monday JKT

x-Monday: at New York

x-Tuesday: at Houston

x-Wednesday, Oct. 26: at Houston

National League

Philadelphia 1, San Diego 1

Philadelphia 2, San Diego 0

Wednesday: San Diego 8, Philadelphia 5

Friday: San Diego (Musgrove 10-7) at Philadelphia (Suarez 10-7), AFN-Sports, 1:30 a.m. Saturday CET; 8:30 a.m. Saturday JKT

Saturday: at Philadelphia, AFN-Sports, 1:30 a.m. Sunday CET; 8:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

Sunday: at Philadelphia, AFN-Sports, 8:30 p.m. Sunday CET; 3:30 a.m. Monday JKT

x-Monday: at San Diego

x-Tuesday: at San Diego

record with his eighth double-digit strikeout game in the postseason. He passed Clayton Kershaw (213) to become the career leader in postseason strikeouts with 219.

"As the game's going along, you just gain more confidence as you start making better pitches," Verlander said. "Once I started being able to execute my pitches the way I wanted, I feel like my confidence just kind of built upon that."

New York whiffed 17 times in all to only two for the Astros — the largest difference ever in a postseason game.

"They're obviously really dynamic," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "Outstanding starting

pitching, but can shorten the game with the best of 'em. So we've got to find a way to break through against them."

Peña, whose 18th-inning home run completed a sweep of the Mariners in the ALDS, belted a homer off Frankie Montas to start the seventh and extend the lead to 4-1. Montas was pitching for the first time since Sept. 16 because of a shoulder injury that kept him off the Division Series roster.

Anthony Rizzo homered off Rafael Montero with two outs in the eighth to get the Yankees within two. Giancarlo Stanton singled before Josh Donaldson walked, spurring Baker to bring in closer Ryan Pressly.

He struck out Matt Carpenter to end the inning and pitched a 1-2-3 ninth to get the four-out save.

Carpenter, back recently from a broken foot, fanned all four times up.

"The way (Verlander) threw the ball tonight, I could have played for the last two months and it would have been a tough day," he said.

After struggling in Game 1 of the ALDS against Seattle, Verlander looked shaky early in this one, giving up a second-inning homer to Harrison Bader that put the Yankees up 1-0. It was Bader's fourth home run in six playoff games — his first four long balls with New York.

But the Astros tied it in the bottom half on an RBI double by Martin Maldonado.

The Astros had a few days off af-



KEVIN M. COX/AP

Starting pitcher Justin Verlander struck out 11 over six innings in the Astros' 4-2 victory over the New York Yankees in Game 1 of the AL Championship Series on Wednesday in Houston.

ter eliminating Seattle on Saturday. The Yankees dealt with a quick turnaround after winning a rain-postponed Game 5 over the Guardians at home Tuesday before heading to Houston.

They had runners at second and third with one out in the third after a double by Stanton, but Verlan-

der struck out Donaldson and Carpenter to escape the jam.

"I thought early we had our chances. I don't think he was real sharp early, but then he kind of dialed it in," Boone said. "He started really executing, staying away from trouble. I thought he spun the ball really well."

Drury, Padres rally to beat Phillies, even NLCS

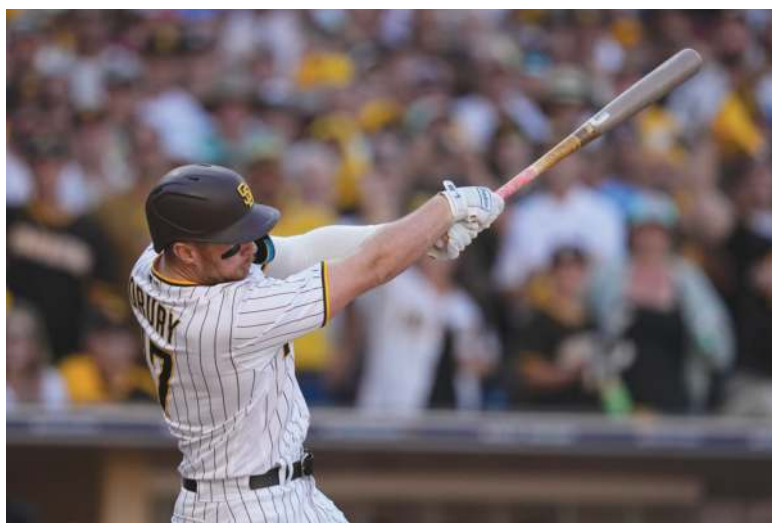
By BERNIE WILSON
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The scrappy San Diego Padres, largely rebuilt at the trade deadline, are finding their identity at just the right time.

In danger of heading to Philadelphia down 0-2 in the NL Championship Series, the Padres produced another huge rally in front of their rowdy fans to put some punch into the all-wild card matchup.

Brandon Drury hit a go-ahead, two-run single during a five-run outburst in the fifth inning and San Diego stunned Aaron Nola and the Phillies 8-5 on Wednesday to tie the NLCS at one game apiece.

"You go into their place, which is probably going to be as spirited as ours is, down 2-0 and that's an uphill battle," said veteran manager Bob Melvin, who has brought a calming presence in his first



BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

The Padres' Brandon Drury hits a two-run single during the fifth inning of Game 2 of the NL Championship Series against the Philadelphia Phillies on Wednesday in San Diego. Drury also hit a home run.

year as San Diego's skipper.

The Padres weren't rattled when they fell behind 4-0 in the

second inning after getting just one hit during a 2-0 loss in the series opener Tuesday.

"We go into Philly for three and it's a big game," Drury said. "We've got to fight and we did. It's huge."

The fifth-inning surge started with Padres catcher Austin Nola hitting an RBI single off his younger brother that brought the sellout, towel-twirling crowd of 44,607 to life. Three innings earlier, the Phillies took a 4-0 lead with a rally that included bloop hits, a sun-aided double on a gorgeous, 92-degree afternoon and some shoddy Padres defense.

On Saturday night, spurred by the bottom of the order, the Padres broke loose for five runs in the seventh inning of a 5-3 win that eliminated the 111-win Los Angeles Dodgers.

Wednesday's rally was similar. "We need to continue to build that confidence," said Austin Nola, the No. 9 batter. "That's what we talked about all year. That

identity is never giving up, never giving in. Every inning we're putting pressure on the other team to score and it's paying off."

Drury and Josh Bell hit back-to-back homers for the Padres, and Manny Machado went deep late.

The series shifts to Philadelphia for three games beginning Friday night. The Phillies, trying to reach their first World Series since 2009, outscored Atlanta 17-4 in two home Division Series games last weekend to dispatch the defending World Series champion Braves.

Manager Rob Thomson said the Phillies need to approach this situation like they did the NLDS.

"We went into Atlanta, won the first one, lost the second one. Disappointing game. We had a day off and came back home in front of 46,000 raucous people and played really well. I expect to do the same thing," he said.

SPORTS



Houston grabs lead in ALCS

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL



RON JENKINS/AP

TCU quarterback Max Duggan, right, and teammate Quentin Johnston celebrate Duggan's second-half touchdown against Oklahoma on Oct. 1 in Fort Worth, Texas. TCU won 55-24.

Here come the Frogs

Eighth-ranked TCU unbeaten in first year under Dykes

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
Associated Press

Sonny Dykes and TCU have gotten halfway through their first regular season together still undefeated, a fact the coach succinctly put into perspective.

"It's been a good half of the season so far," Dykes said.

The eighth-ranked Horned Frogs (6-0, 3-0 Big 12) have won three consecutive games over ranked opponents for the first time in school history, the last two against

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teams that were also without a loss. A win over No. 17 Kansas State (5-1, 3-0) at home on Saturday night would put TCU alone atop the conference standings.

"We've got a long way to go," said cor-

nerback Josh Newton. "We could be even more special, way more special."

This is the deepest TCU has gotten into a season without a loss since a 7-0 start in 2017, when Dykes was in an off-the-field role as an offensive analyst for Gary Patterson and even pondered whether he was going to stay in coaching. He had spent the previous four seasons as head coach at California, a Pac-12 program in turmoil before he got there, after three at Louisiana Tech.

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First-year coach Sonny Dykes has the Horned Frogs sitting at 6-0 and ranked eighth in the latest Associated Press Top 25.

SAM HODDE/AP

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