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STARS AND STRIPES®

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Shaky relations

ROSE GUDEX/U.S. Air Force

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jean Lassalle Hernandez provides security for rescue specialists to assess and treat simulated patients during a training event at Air Base 201, Agadez, Niger, on Nov. 1.

US struggles in African nations amid military leaders meeting

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

GABORONE, Botswana — The forced U.S. troop withdrawals from bases in Niger and Chad and the potential to shift some troops to other nations in West Africa will be key issues as the top U.S. military officer meets with his counterparts this week at a chiefs of defense conference.

Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Botswana Monday as the U.S. faces a critical inflection point in Africa. Increasingly, military juntas that overthrew democratic governments in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger are reassessing their ties to the U.S. and the West and turning instead to mercenaries linked to Russia for security assistance.

Speaking to reporters as he traveled to Gaborone, Brown said

SEE SHAKY ON PAGE 8

US soldier in German mass grave for 80 years buried in Normandy

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

COLLEVILLE-SUR-MER, France — A Jewish American soldier who was killed in France during World War II and mistakenly buried in a mass grave for German soldiers has finally joined his fallen comrades in Normandy.

The remains of 1st Lt. Nathan Baskind were interred at the Normandy American Cemetery on Sunday, 80 years to the day when he died in combat at age 28. His coffin was lowered into the earth under a Star of David grave marker, and he received full military honors.

"He was an American hero," said consul Elizabeth Webster, who represented the U.S. government at the burial. "He will at last rest with his American brothers and sisters in arms who fought alongside him to defeat fascism and restore democracy."

Baskind, the son of Lithuanian and Russian immigrants who settled in Pittsburgh, was 26 when he was drafted into the Army in 1942.

On D-Day, he landed on Utah Beach, about 13 miles from the cemetery's location, and led four M-10 tank destroyers in the Army's 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

On June 23, 1944, during the Battle of Cherbourg, German soldiers ambushed Baskind and his driver, who were conducting a reconnaissance mission behind enemy lines.

The driver managed to escape and described how Baskind had been hit by machine gun fire, according to the National Archives. He was presumed dead and listed as missing in action on July 13, 1944.

Nearly eight decades later, in 2022, an American genealogist visiting a cemetery in Normandy for German soldiers noticed Baskind's name on a mass grave, raising his suspicions.

He later contacted Operation Benjamin, a group whose main

SEE BURIED ON PAGE 8

PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN/Stars and Stripes

A photo of Army 1st Lt. Nathan Baskind is displayed at his burial ceremony Sunday, at Normandy American Cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer, France.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Apple accused of breaking digital market rules

Associated Press

LONDON — European Union regulators accused Apple on Monday of breaking new rules on digital competition by imposing rules in its App Store marketplace that prevent software developers from steering users to other venues.

The European Commission said that according to the preliminary findings of its investigation, the iPhone maker had breached the 27-nation bloc's Digital Markets Act.

The rulebook, also known as the DMA, is a sweeping set of regulations aimed at preventing tech "gatekeepers" from cornering digital markets.

The commission, the bloc's executive arm, said Apple's rules for its App Store "prevent app developers from freely steering consumers to alternative channels for offers and content."

Apple now has a chance to respond to the findings, which the commission will assess. It must make a final decision on Apple's compliance by March 2025.

The commission also kept up the pressure on Apple, simultaneously opening a new investigation into the company's compliance with the DMA looking at new contractual terms that Apple has offered app developers.

Apple Inc. said over the past several months, it "has made a number of changes to comply with the DMA in response to feedback from developers and the European Commission."

"We are confident our plan complies with the law," the company said.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (June 25)	$1.05
British pound (June 25)	$1.23
Japanese yen (June 25)	155.00
South Korean won (June 25)	1354.00

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
Britain (Pound)	1.3663
Canada (Dollar)	1.3093
China (Yuan)	7.2580
Denmark (Krone)	6.9449
Egypt (Pound)	48.3022
Euro	0.9311
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8077
Hungary (Forint)	367.24
Israel (Shekel)	3.7185
Japan (Yen)	159.46
Kuwait(Dinar)	0.3066
Norway (Krone)	10.5439
Philippines (Peso)	58.72
Poland (Zloty)	4.00
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7516
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3519
South Korea (Won)	1386.96
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8928
Thailand (Baht)	36.62
Turkey (NewLira)	32.9050

(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	8.50
Interest Rates Discount rate	6.00
Federal funds market rate	5.33
3-month bill	5.37
30-year bond	4.40

WEATHER OUTLOOK

TUESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

TUESDAY IN EUROPE

WEDNESDAY 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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PACIFIC

Seoul: N. Korea resumes trash balloon launches

By Hyung-jin Kim
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea resumed launches of balloons likely carrying trash toward South Korea on Monday night, South Korea's military said, in the latest round of a Cold War-style campaign on the Korean Peninsula.

The launches came days after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a major defense deal that observers worry could embolden Kim to direct more provocations at South Korea.

A statement from South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the North Korean balloons were moving south. It said earlier Monday that the military was closely monitoring North Korean moves because northerly or northwesterly winds, favorable for the balloon launches, were forecast.

The statement asked South Korean citizens not to touch North Korean balloons and report them to military and police authorities. The military didn't say how it would respond to new balloon launches.

Starting in late May, North Korea launched a series of balloons that dropped manure, cigarette butts, scraps of cloth, waste batteries and vinyl in various parts of South Korea. No highly dangerous materials were found. North Korea said its balloon campaign was a tit-for-tat action against South Korean activists who flew political leaflets critical of its leadership across the border.

Im Sun-suk, Yonhap/AP

A balloon presumably sent by North Korea is seen in a paddy field in Incheon, South Korea, on June 10.

Kim's influential sister, Kim Yo Jong, suggested Friday that North Korea would resume its balloon campaign in retaliation for South Korean civilian groups' new round of leaflet activities. A South Korean group said it sent 20 balloons carrying 300,000 propaganda leaflets, 5,000 USB sticks with South Korean pop songs and TV dramas and U.S. one-dollar bills across the border on Thursday night.

"When you do something you were clearly warned not to do, it's only natural that you will find yourself dealing with something you didn't have to," Kim Yo Jong said.

In reaction to North Korea's earlier balloon campaign, South Korea's military on June 9 redeployed gigantic loudspeakers along the border for the first time in six years and resumed anti-North Korean propaganda broadcasts. The broadcasts reportedly included hits by K-pop sensation BTS such as "Butter" and "Dynamite," weather forecasts and news on Samsung, the biggest South Korean company, as well as criticism of North Korea's missile program and its crackdown on foreign videos.

North Korea views front-line South Korean broadcasts and civilian leafleting campaigns as a grave provocation because it bans access to foreign news for most of its 26 million people. North Korea has reacted to past South Korean loudspeaker broadcasts and civilian balloon activities by firing rounds across the border, prompting South Korea to return fire, according to South Korea.

Earlier Monday, South Korea, the United States and Japan issued a joint statement strongly condemning expanding military cooperation between Russia and North Korea. It said the North Korean-Russian moves should be of "grave concern" to efforts to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula, the global non-proliferation regime and support for the Ukraine people.

During a meeting in Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, last Wednesday, Kim Jong Un and Putin struck a deal requiring each country to provide aid if attacked and vowed to boost other cooperation. Observers said the accord represents the strongest connection between the two countries since the end of the Cold War. The U.S. and its partners believe North Korea has been providing Russia with much-needed conventional arms for its war in Ukraine in return for military and economic assistance.

The South Korea-U.S.-Japan statement said the three countries reaffirmed their intention to further boost diplomatic and security cooperation to cope with North Korean threats and prevent an escalation of the situation. It said U.S. commitments to the defense of South Korea and Japan "remain ironclad."

Last Saturday, a nuclear-powered U.S. aircraft carrier arrived in South Korea for a three-way Seoul-Washington-Tokyo military exercise that is expected to begin this month.

North Korea has previously called such joint U.S. military drills an invasion rehearsal and responded with missile tests. North Korea maintains that U.S. hostility forced it to pursue nuclear weapons in self-defense.

Japan alleges five days of intrusions from China coast guard around Senkaku Islands

By Keishi Koja
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Four Chinese coast guard vessels since Thursday have repeatedly entered the 12-mile territorial limit around the Senkaku chain, a potential flashpoint approximately halfway between Okinawa and mainland China, according to the Japan coast guard.

The last intrusion, the 23rd of the year, occurred Sunday when two Chinese vessels passed the 12-mile limit between 3:16 p.m. and 3:17 p.m., both vessels were still sailing in Japanese waters Monday, according to a Japan coast guard news release Sunday.

Three other Chinese vessels were in and out of the territorial limit since Thursday, according to the Japan coast guard.

Japan's Foreign Affairs Ministry has lodged multiple complaints since Thursday with the Chinese Embassy in Japan and with the Chinese government in Beijing, a ministry spokesman said Monday.

"We asked them to leave the area," the spokesman said. Some government officials in Japan are required to speak to the media only on condition of anonymity.

The Senkakus — five uninhabited islets and three rocks 105 miles east of Taiwan — are administered by Japan but claimed by China and Taiwan, who refer to them as the Diaoyu and Tiaoyutai, respectively. The area reportedly holds a wealth of natural resources, including fish, oil and natural gas.

The first Chinese vessel Sunday passed the territorial limit south-southwest of Uotsurijima, followed by a second vessel south of the same island, according to the release. Both were trailing a Japanese fishing boat.

The Chinese ships were met by a larger contingent of Japanese coast guard vessels, a Japan coast guard spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone Monday. The Japanese ships positioned themselves between the fishing boat and the Chinese vessels and warned the Chinese by radio and electronic message boards to leave the area.

Chinese ships came within 12 miles of the Senkakus 34 times and remained for a total of 42 days in 2023, the coast guard spokesman said. The record is 2013, when Chinese vessels entered the territorial limits 52 times and remained there for 54 days.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, during a November visit to a Chinese coast guard command in Shanghai, highlighted the necessity to "constantly strengthen" Beijing's claim on the islands, Kyodo News reported in December, citing unnamed sources.

U.S. Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel lambasted the plan in January in a post on X. "On New Year's Day [Chinese] leadership announced that they will keep ships in and around Japan's Senkaku Islands for 365 consecutive days, quite the New Year's resolution," he wrote.

Japan Coast Guard

Japan alleged that China Coast Guard vessel 2103, seen here in 2021, entered Japanese territorial waters in the East China Sea on Sunday.

Chinese vessels have been spotted sailing within Japan's exclusive economic zone near the Senkakus for 186 straight days, "the longest record ever," according to the coast guard spokesman.

A new Chinese law which took effect June 15 authorizes its coast guard to detain for up to 60 days foreign nationals who intrude into Chinese territorial waters.

Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister Yoko Kamikawa said Japan "has been monitoring with high concern the movements of China in maritime-related fields, including the details of the announcement," when was asked about the new law during a regular press conference held in Tokyo on May 31.

"The Government will continue to closely follow relevant developments to ensure that the enforcement of the regulations does not infringe upon the legitimate interests of the countries concerned, including Japan. We have also firmly communicated our intentions to China through diplomatic channels," she said in a clip posted to the ministry's website.

PACIFIC

Marines wrap up 6 weeks of drills in Philippines

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

American and Filipino marines recently concluded six weeks of coastal defense and aviation training in the Philippines, a 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing spokeswoman said Monday.

The forces conducted the Archipelagic Coastal Defense Continuum from May 12 to June 7 along with Marine Aviation Support Activity from June 3 until Friday, 1st Lt. Madison Walls said.

Around 2,200 U.S. troops and 590 Filipinos were training in the islands last week, she said.

Elements of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit and 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment, along with other units, were spread across the Philippines, Walls said.

They operated at Fort Bonifacio, in Manila; Clark and Cesar Basa air bases just north of the capital; Laoag, on northern Luzon; and El Nido, on the island of Palawan, she said.

The coastal defense continuum was a series of exchanges and training events between U.S. and Philippine marines aimed at bolstering the Philippines' coastal defense strategy, she said.

The Marine aviation activity is an annual Philippine-U.S. exercise, Walls said.

The drills allow the Marines to refine their operation in the region in a way "that can be focused and amplified through our ally's military assets and capabilities," Walls said.

The Marine aviation exercise was underway when an ongoing series of clashes between the Chinese and Philippine coast guard and Philippine navy escalated June 17 off the Philippines western coast.

Chinese boats intercepted Philippine boats attempting to resupply a grounded vessel that serves as a Philippine military outpost on the contested Second Thomas Shoal, according to the Philippine coast guard. A fight ensued between the boat crews.

This incident, in which at least one Filipino crew member was injured, prompted Secretary of State Antony Blinken to call his Philippine counterpart, Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo, and reassure him of the U.S commitment under the mutual defense treaty.

One Marine taking part in both exercises, Gunnery Sgt. Angelo Villaseran, a motor transport chief with Marine Wing Support Squadron 371, helped provide logistics at Clark for the past six weeks.

Marines at the former American air base have been working with the Philippine air force and contractors to offload planes and support the movement of forces around the islands, he said by phone June 15.

"We cover all the logistics support such as forklifts and tractor trailers and ground movements," he said.

The logistics Marines also helped improve a road at the Crow Valley Military Reservation north of Clark, where U.S. and Philippine forces often conduct live-fire training, he said.

Villaseran, who lived in Manila until age 12, also helped fellow Marines navigate local culture to build relationships, he said.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia

The U.S. Coast Guard reported rescuing 13 Chinese citizens off the coast of Guam on Sunday.

US Coast Guard saves 13 Chinese boaters adrift off coast of Guam

By Alex Wilson
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Coast Guard rescued 13 Chinese boaters over the weekend off the coast of Guam after their boat went adrift, according to a spokeswoman for the service.

The boaters called 911 on Sunday morning after their 23-foot-recreational vessel, the Helen, ran out of gas, according to a statement that day from Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sara Muir, spokeswoman for U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam.

Watchstanders dispatched a 45-foot medium response boat and crew from Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor and located the boaters about 15 miles north of Guam. Weather conditions were mild, with no watches or warnings in effect, according to Muir.

Coast Guardsmen took all 13 boaters — 10 women and three men — aboard the response boat and brought them to Hagatna. Several of the boaters were severely seasick, and one was severely dehydrated, but they all refused treatment from Guam Fire Rescue, according to the statement.

"Even with good weather conditions, having 13 people on a 23-foot boat can be risky. Our seamless collaboration with Guam Fire Rescue and other agencies ensured a swift and effective response," said Coast Guard Lt. Chelse Garcia, rescue coordinator, in the statement. "This incident highlights the necessity of having reliable communication devices and lifejackets aboard, as they can make all the difference in emergencies."

Once in Hagatna, agents from the U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service, Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Guam Police Department and Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency, met with the boaters and confirmed they were Chinese citizens, according to Muir.

Muir did not respond to an email request for additional details, including the boaters' intended destination, as of Monday afternoon.

Chinese citizens over the past several years have regularly used the island of Saipan, part of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth, as a gateway for illegal immigration into Guam, which is about 120 miles southwest of Saipan.

Guam Customs and Quarantine reported at least 118 unlawful or attempted unlawful entries to Guam by Chinese citizens since 2022, agency spokeswoman Alana Chargualaf-Afaisen said in February.

Saipan offers a visa waiver program that allows Chinese citizens to stay up to two weeks and citizens of other countries to stay up to 45 days.

Marine Corps plans new littoral regiment on Guam in a 'few years'

By Alex Wilson
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Marine Corps plans to establish a new littoral regiment on Guam in the next several years to "counter Chinese aggression" in the region, Japanese media reported over the weekend.

Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Eric Smith told reporters during a press conference in Washington, D.C., that the new regiment will be able to rapidly deploy into the Philippine Sea "in order to spread the battlespace out and to protect those strategic lines of communication that emanate from Japan, back to the Philippines, back to Hawaii," Kyodo News reported Saturday.

Smith

He did not specify a timeline but said it would be deployed to Guam in a "few years," according to the report.

Spokespeople for the III Marine Expeditionary Force on Okinawa and Marine Corps Camp Blaz on Guam referred all questions about the announcement to the Marine Corps' headquarters in Virginia.

The service had not responded to request for additional details.

The announcement comes less than a year after the Marines in November converted the 12th Marine Regiment on Okinawa into the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment. The 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment, the first in the Indo-Pacific, was established March 2022.

The Marines' restructuring initiative, first announced in 2020, has planned for a third regiment in the region and since at least 2023 has considered Guam as the likely location, according to a June 2023 report from the Congressional Research Service.

The Marines consider littoral regiments a key component of their planned Force Design transition that emphasizes island warfare and maritime maneuverability, according to the report.

The regiments typically consist of about 2,000 Marines and are intended to be able to rapidly deploy "to islands, coastlines, and observation posts along chokepoints," while also being easy to maintain, according to the report.

Guam, a 212-square-mile island already home to major military installations, including Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Base Guam, has undergone significant military expansion over the past several years.

Camp Blaz, the first new Marine Corps installation since 1952, activated in 2020 and is expected to host 1,300 members of the III MEF and another 3,700 additional Marines as a rotational force.

In May 2023, the Missile Defense Agency proposed a comprehensive, 360-degree missile defense system that is currently under consideration and going through its scoping process.

PACIFIC

Manhole covers get makeover at Yokosuka base

By Kelly Agee
Stars and Stripes

A piece of Japanese pop culture has found its way onto Yokosuka Naval Base, home of the U.S. 7th Fleet.

To find it, just look down.

"I was surprised to see all the positivity from people who are on- and off-base and how interested everyone was about this project," Satomi Furuno, a production control specialist at Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command said Thursday. "I was so happy to do a job that makes people smile."

Furuno designed the three manhole covers installed on the Navy base in May and June, with more coming soon. They are the first of 25 covers planned to replace worn covers over access holes into the subterranean sewage system.

The command would not disclose the cost to produce the manhole covers, according to an email Monday from naval base spokesman Justin Keller.

Designer manhole covers appeared on streets in Japan in the 1970s, according to Web Japan, a website maintained by the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The first covers were installed in Naha, the capital of Okinawa, in 1977, according to the website. The design is a happy fish in water that had been cleaned by the sewer system.

One of three distinctive manhole covers on Yokosuka Naval Base.

Japan started producing manholes in 1981 that are coated with colorful fluorescent paints. They have a practical role in firefighting activities and serve as guides at night.

Today, manhole covers are a "region-specific" art form that attract their own aficionados, according to Web Japan. Some covers depict popular Japanese icons like Hello Kitty, Astro Boy and Pokemon.

As evidence of their popularity, a Facebook group, Japan Manhole Cover Club, boasts 7,300 members.

At Yokosuka, the manhole cover, a heavy metal disk usually overlooked by traffic and passers-by, bears the naval base command crest with the Japanese hiragana character for "osui," or sewage, near the cover's edge. The base Public Works Department production team came up with the design, Furuno said.

Photos by Jennessa Davey/Stars and Stripes

A brand new, colorful manhole cover was put in place near the main gate at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on Sunday.

The hardest part of the project was getting the design just right, she said.

"I struggled a little bit with redesigning it because it is a very popular design, everyone knows what our logo looks like, so I tried to stay as close as the original design as possible," she said. "But it was fun to design and turned out beautiful."

The first manhole cover on the naval base was installed in May near the wastewater treatment plant on the edge of Mitscher Street. The monochromatic cover is on a narrow side street accessible only via E Street. The site is isolated and may be hard to find.

The second cover, installed June 12, is a colorful version near the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society and the Yokosuka Thrift Shop, Furuno said. This manhole will be easy for guests to see during events like Yokosuka Spring Festival and Yokosuka Friendship Day.

The third cover was installed Saturday just inside the naval base's main gate on King Street.

The remaining manholes will be installed as the older and damaged ones are identified, Furuno said.

The naval base Public Works Department "is proud to bring this Japanese cultural tradition to our base for the enjoyment and enrichment of our 26,000 tenants and visitors," public works officer Cmdr. Tyler Scharar said in a news release May 24. "This effort was led by our [public works] Japanese teammates who are totally committed to the success of the U.S. Navy and the many Sailors and families who get to call Yokosuka their home."

Okinawa memorials commemorate islands' WWII loss

By Keishi Koja
Stars and Stripes

ITOMAN, Okinawa — One World War II memorial was updated, and a new one created, ahead of the 79th anniversary of the culminating battle of the war.

Another 181 names, including those of 24 Okinawans and 157 from elsewhere in Japan, were added Wednesday to the Cornerstone of Peace at Okinawa Peace Memorial Park in time for a ceremony Sunday, a spokesperson for Okinawa prefecture Peace and Subnational Diplomacy Promotion Division said Friday.

Sunday marked the 79th anniversary of the end of fighting. The final action occurred in the Itoman area where the memorial park is today.

A memorial event takes place each year at the site.

The Cornerstone of Peace was built in 1995 on the battle's 50th anniversary. The monument holds the names of nearly 250,000 who died during the fighting: 14,010 Americans and 227,636 Japanese.

The newly added names, all Japanese, include sailors of the Imperial Navy who perished on the Yamato, for a time during World War II the largest battleship afloat, the spokesman said.

Some official spokespeople in Japan may speak to the media only on condition of anonymity.

The Battle of Okinawa began April 1, 1945, and lasted 82 days. More than 14,000 Americans, about 110,000 Japanese troops and at least 140,000 Okinawan civilians were killed during or after the fighting.

On Hateruma island, the southernmost inhabited island in Japan, a monument went up March 31 in memory of the island's wartime malaria victims. Hateruma, a part of Okinawa prefecture, is 132 miles east of Taiwan.

In the Yaeyama islands, where the U.S. troops did not land, many people were killed by bombardment and malaria, according to Yaeyama Peace Memorial Museum's website.

Keishi Koja/Stars and Stripes

Nearly 200 names were added this year to the Cornerstone of Peace at Okinawa Peace Memorial Park in Itoman, Okinawa, Japan.

Japanese soldiers forced the residents of Hateruma to evacuate to nearby Iriomote island in April 1945 as the Battle of Okinawa began. Of the evacuees, 1,587 contracted malaria and 477 died of the disease, according to a Yaeyama Peace Memorial Museum spokeswoman.

"There is a monument in Iriomote island, but we didn't have one here in Hateruma," Isao Uchihara, 75, director of the group that erected the monument, said Friday.

The 13-foot-tall monument stands on a hill with a view of Iriomote, according to Uchihara.

"We wanted to teach the preciousness of peace with this monument," Uchihara said.

About 250 people, including local students and relatives of the victims, attended a dedication ceremony June 16 at the memorial.

"June is the month of peace in Okinawa, the survivors teach about the war and the importance of peace in many schools," Uchihara said. "Many of them are getting older and it's getting difficult to teach about the victims of malaria, so we wanted to teach it through this monument."

MILITARY

Paralyzed guardsman petitions high court

Suit seeks recourse after spinal cord injury in Walter Reed surgery

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Staff Sgt. Ryan Carter walked into Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on April 6, 2018, for a common back surgery meant to alleviate chronic neck pain. He never walked again.

A former information technology airman for the Maryland Air National Guard, Carter has limited use of his left arm but is otherwise paralyzed from the chest down.

In the years since his surgery, he and his wife, Kathleen Cole, have fought two battles: Carter learning to live as a quadriplegic in need of round-the-clock care and suing the military hospital and surgeon for the trauma his spinal cord suffered during the operation that resulted in his paralysis.

Carter's attorney Christopher Casciano filed a petition June 5 with the Supreme Court to revisit a ruling that it made more than 70 years ago known commonly as the Feres Doctrine which bars service members from suing the Defense Department for injuries suffered while in the military. He's worked with Carter on six previous filings for administrative claims or civil suits that were required to get to the Supreme Court as the final stop for his case. Each was denied or dismissed.

The final dismissal came from the Fourth Circuit Court of Criminal Appeals, which heard oral arguments on the case in January. The three-judge panel cited a 1989 court decision that found Feres applies to service members on excess leave and receiving medical treatment from military doctors.

"I'm doing this because I got injured, obviously, but this is not just for me. We're doing this for everybody else, for people that come after me," Carter, 49, said during a call from his home in Tampa, Fla., where he and his wife moved in 2021 to be close to a Department of Veterans Affairs facility that specializes in spinal cord rehabilitation. He had previously spent time in a facility in Colorado and has never been able to return to his previous home in Baltimore.

The Feres Doctrine

The Feres Doctrine has been used to prevent military medical malpractice lawsuits since 1950 and has even limited the ability of people to bring military rape cases to civil courts for recourse. Congress in 2019 passed a law to allow service members to file malpractice claims through their service branch. If the service denies the claim, the service member cannot take their case to the courts.

The Federal Tort Claims Act, first established in 1946, is the means for people to take legal action against the federal government for negligence to its employees. However, the law leaves out "claims arising out of the combatant activities of the military … during time of war."

In its Feres v. the United States decision in 1950, the Supreme Court expanded interpretation of the statute to include injuries that are "incident to service," a broad description that has come to encompass nearly everything in military life.

Since the military began accepting medical malpractice claims in 2020, the Army has received 258 claims, the Navy and Marines have received 193, and the Air Force 134. Of those, the Army has approved 12, the Navy three and the Air Force six. They have denied 81, 103, and 71, respectively, while the rest remain pending or in appeal.

"That legislative effort to somehow deal with Feres is just absolute nonsense," Casciano said. "None of those service members or family members have access to the courts because all the government has to do is deny their claim. They can't appeal it. They can't file in the circuit court, and they're just sitting there. Those cases are just sitting there."

Our whole world changed

Cole, 57, said suing is "to have that acknowledgment of the fact that our whole world has changed."

Carter had just finished a seven-month activation with the Air Force on March 13, 2018, and decided to have an orthopedic spine procedure called an anterior cervical discectomy and fusion. Carter hoped it would help with his cervical spondylotic myelopathy, a neurological condition that frequently develops in adults as the spine compresses over time. The disease caused chronic pain in his neck, and numbness and tingling in his hands.

The surgery is common in the United States and is performed on average about 132,000 times a year, according to the Cleveland Clinic, a medical research and education facility in Ohio.

Carter weighed having surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore but instead chose Walter Reed in Bethesda, Md., he said because of the reputation of the military facility. Presidents go there for treatment, he said.

"There was nothing distinctively military about the surgery or the care provided to Mr. Carter," Casciano wrote in his Supreme Court petition.

Ryan Carter, a medically retired technical sergeant from the Maryland Air National Guard, was paralyzed during a 2018 surgery at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

During the procedure, Carter sustained an injury to his spinal cord. When he woke up afterward, he was unable to move his arms and legs. He underwent a second emergency operation the same day and was then sent to the intensive care unit where he was intubated and sedated.

After three weeks in intensive care at Walter Reed, Carter transferred to the Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, Va., where he would spend the next year in rehabilitation therapy for his spinal cord injury.

About once a month, members of Carter's unit would make the more than three-hour drive from Baltimore to visit with him. They would take Cole out for lunch and ask her how she was doing and what she needed.

During one of the visits, Guard members held a ceremony for Carter to promote him to technical sergeant. He had earned the qualifications prior to the surgery, but the moment came unexpectedly, he said.

"Oh, my goodness. It's hard thinking of [that day]," said Carter, who intended to serve until he was eligible for retirement. "They didn't have to do that."

While in Richmond, Carter's military status was changed, and Casciano said this might be the key to helping their case catch the attention of the Supreme Court. On June 27, 2018, the Air National Guard retroactively changed Carter from inactive duty to active duty, according to court documents. The orders backdated his active status to March 14, 2018.

"Mr. Carter was arguably more akin to a veteran than an active-duty service member," Casciano said. "He was inactive, no orders, no duties, no mission, and 82 days after his injury, the government retroactively changes his military status."

Photos provided by Christopher Casciano

Ryan Carter and his wife, Kathleen Cole, before his 2018 surgery.

Previous court filings on the case were all dismissed before evidence gathering, the attorney said, so he can only speculate why it was done. Active duty afforded financial and medical benefits to Carter, but it also has triggered the Feres Doctrine, Casciano said.

Maj. Ben Hughes, spokesman for the Maryland Air National Guard, said Friday that Carter was on medical continuation orders, which allow for medical coverage related to military service.

"We continue to send our sincere condolences to his family and all who knew him," he said.

2 questions in petition

Carter's petition asks the court to review two questions. Should Feres bar medical malpractice claims when the service member was not on active duty or was retroactively placed on active duty? Also, should Feres be clarified, limited or overruled?

In recent years, there often has been at least one case involving Feres among the roughly 8,000 petitions submitted to the Supreme Court for review, said Michael Wishnie, a professor at Yale Law School. Of all petitions, less than 100 are granted, and it is rare for the court to say why a petition wasn't selected.

However, in 2021, Justice Clarence Thomas wrote a short dissent when the court denied a petition from Wishnie regarding the case of a former cadet of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. The cadet said she was raped at the academy and sued over inadequate prevention policies.

"At a minimum, we should take up this case to clarify the scope of the immunity we have created. Without any statutory text to serve as a guide, lower courts are understandably confused about what counts as an injury 'incident' to military service," Thomas wrote.

The Supreme Court's lack of action on the Feres Doctrine could mean the court thinks if its ruling on that statute is wrong, Congress can act and fix by passing a law, Wishnie said.

Congress' actions on Feres have been limited exceptions for claims related to contaminated water at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and the administrative medical malpractice claims.

"The risk is that narrow congressional amendments may confirm the justices' view that when Congress has thought about injuries to service members recently, they have not done a wholesale rewrite to overturn Feres. They just made these technical adjustments, which, to some members of the court, may be evidence that Congress basically agrees with Feres," Wishnie said.

But in his view, Feres is wrong.

"It is lazy of the court to leave it to Congress to fix," Wishnie said. "If the court granted [a petition], I suspect a majority of the court would agree with Justice Thomas that Feres was wrongly decided."

Care challenges

Carter and Cole said they knew their legal battle would take years and would not be easy.

Living in Tampa, the couple are isolated from the network of family and friends developed over a lifetime in Baltimore. The VA affords him home health care workers, but industry staff shortages means there are days where Carter cannot get out of bed because there is no one able to help him.

With neither of them able to work, they can't afford a van to accommodate Carter's wheelchair. Cole can't travel anywhere because she has no backup support to stay with her husband.

"It's totally isolating at times," she said.

Part of Carter's care includes weekly mental therapy.

"When I was going through this initially, I thought about [my wife] and what she was going through," he said. "That's the main part of my [post-traumatic stress disorder]."

In the next month, Casciano said he's advocating for military organizations with an interest in Feres to get involved and submit letters to the court in support for the petition. Previous Feres cases have not gotten past this petition stage, so he hopes documented support can help.

Carter and Cole said their legal efforts to hold the military accountable for his injury has not created any animosity toward the service.

Rather, it's the opposite.

"I think they are special people that join the military and are willing to basically lose their lives or sacrifice their livelihood," Cole said.

EUROPE

Russia summons US ambassador over strike

Associated Press

The Russian Foreign Ministry summoned the American ambassador on Monday to protest what it says was the use of advanced U.S.-made missiles in a Ukrainian attack on Russian-annexed Crimea that reportedly killed four people and wounded more than 150.

Washington "has effectively become a party" to the war on Ukraine's side, the ministry said in a statement, adding, "Retaliatory measures will certainly follow." It did not elaborate.

There was no immediate comment from U.S. or Ukrainian officials. The Associated Press could not independently verify Russia's claims about the missiles used.

Kyiv's forces have relied heavily on Western-supplied weaponry since Russia's invasion more than two years ago. The military aid has been crucial in allowing Ukraine to hold the Kremlin's army at bay, with few major changes along the 620-mile front line in eastern and southern Ukraine for many months.

Some Western countries have hesitated over providing more — and more sophisticated — help for Kyiv's army because of concerns about potentially provoking the Kremlin. But as Ukraine has at times struggled to hold the line against Russia's bigger and better-equipped military, Western leaders have gradually relented and granted more support.

In the latest key development, the Pentagon said last week that Ukraine's military is being allowed to use longer-range missiles provided by the U.S. to strike targets inside Russia if it is acting in self-defense. Since the outset of the war, the U.S. had maintained a policy of not allowing Ukraine to use the weapons it provided to hit targets on Russian soil for fear of further escalating the conflict.

Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014 in a move that most of the world rejected as unlawful, long had been declared a fair target for Ukraine by its Western allies.

Russian authorities said that the dead in Sunday's attack included two children who were hit by falling debris from Ukrainian missiles that were shot down over a coastal area in Sevastopol, a port city in Crimea. It said cluster munitions, which critics say harm more civilians than combatants, were also used.

Russia said the missiles were U.S.-made ATACMS, a long-range, guided missile. It summoned U.S. Ambassador Lynne Tracy to the Foreign Ministry.

The targeting and "mission input" for such missile attacks is carried out by U.S. military experts, the ministry statement alleged, saying the United States bears "equal responsibility for this outrage" with the Ukrainian authorities.

It went on to say that "allowing strikes deep inside the Russian territory will not be left unanswered."

Meanwhile, the Russian Defense Ministry on Monday reported striking a "major logistical hub" of the Ukrainian military that held Western-supplied missiles and other weapons.

US Navy base in Sicily looks back on 65 years, ahead to NATO role

By Alison Bath
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — When Paolo Graziano arrived to work at Naval Air Station Sigonella in Sicily more than four decades ago, the base had only a handful of aircraft hangars.

Today, NAS Sigonella has grown to 1,300 acres and about 40 tenant commands, among them Space Force, Army, Marines and Air Force detachments. The military community of more than 6,000 also includes civilians, service member families and Italian workers, according to Navy figures.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet

An MQ-4C sits on the tarmac at NAS Sigonella, Italy, in May. The aircraft's arrival to the 6th Fleet area of operations marked the second forward-deployed detachment for the VUP-19 squadron.

Caine Storino/U.S. Navy

A U.S. sailor plays with a child evacuated from Afghanistan as they wait to check in after arrival at Naval Air Station Sigonella in Italy in August 2021.

NATO's Alliance Ground Surveillance main operating base, including all five of its RQ-4D Phoenix remotely piloted aircraft, also calls NAS Sigonella home.

Looking back on that growth as the base celebrated its 65th anniversary earlier this month, Graziano counted several construction and engineering projects, such as one replacing an aging JP-5 jet fuel facility around 1992. That facility also included a land purchase that doubled the size of the base's operations site, he said.

"We did a good job allowing NAS Sigonella to be open to new operations, new forces," said Graziano, an engineer and planner for Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, whose career at the base started in 1982.

The base now comprises an administrative site called NAS I and an operations site, NAS II, about 7 miles away. It also operates a support facility at a nearby NATO pier and a separate naval radio transmitter facility, according to the installation's website.

NAS Sigonella was established on June 15, 1959, primarily to house a P-2V Neptune patrol and anti-submarine unit that was stationed at a British air base in Malta.

Its location originally was an abandoned World War II Axis airfield that included communication tunnels, command structures and an ammunition dump that eventually were built over, the Navy said.

Construction on the base, then designated a naval air facility, began in September 1957, with its airfield ready for daylight flights in August 1959. By the end of November that year, there were 359 personnel assigned to the base. A further 234 were in deployed squadrons, according to the Navy.

When now-Capt. Aaron Shoemaker arrived at Sigonella in 2001 for a six-month deployment as a P-3 Orion pilot assigned to Patrol Squadron 26, or VP-26, the base's current commissary and exchange had not been built. Neither had a family housing complex now near NAS II, he said.

Now the NAS Sigonella commander, Shoemaker didn't make many observations of the base as a young pilot at the time. His focus was more on the busy operational tempo, which included missions related to conflict in Eastern Europe, he said.

But he did notice that the local Sicilian community treated U.S. personnel like family, an impression reinforced during a subsequent deployment in 2010 and again when Shoemaker took charge in April 2022.

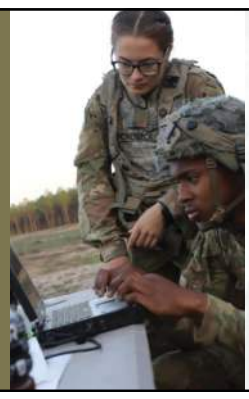
"It's as true now as it's ever been," he said.

Shoemaker believes that the relationship is rooted in the shared sacrifices of the Allied invasion of Sicily, or Operation Husky, nearly 81 years ago.

"There is an understanding of what things like liberty and democracy mean in a country that was once occupied by Nazi fascism," he said. "This continent dealt with occupation, and that is not something that the U.S. has ever had to contend with like the European theater has."

That context, along with NAS Sigonella's establishment some 10 years after the formation of NATO, is important in recognizing the base's milestone anniversary, as well as the installation's growing role within in the alliance, he said.

"There are things going on the world that want to challenge those ideals and values that NATO represents," said Shoemaker, alluding to Russia's military campaign in Ukraine, Houthi threats in the Red Sea and the Israel-Hamas war. "You can't assure those values if you aren't in the area where conflicts are happening, or you can't reach them."



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MILITARY

Buried: Star of David placed over grave site

FROM PAGE 1

mission is to identify Jewish soldiers at American military cemeteries who were mistakenly buried under crosses.

Working with the German War Graves Commission, Operation Benjamin learned through German military records that Nazi forces captured Baskind after he was shot and brought him to a German hospital in Cherbourg, where he died the same night.

German authorities allowed remains to be exhumed from the site in December. There were thousands of bone fragments in the grave, according to Operation Benjamin. Nevertheless, researchers managed to find remains that matched DNA samples provided by Baskind's surviving relatives.

On Sunday, Brig. Gen. Dirk Backen, secretary general of the German War Graves Commission, said at the ceremony that soldiers like Baskind helped liberate Germany, not just France, from tyranny.

"I wish Nathan B. Baskind could … see that all the bloodshed, the pain, the suffering here at the beaches of Normandy, it was not in vain," Backen said. "It would not have happened if men like Nathan B. Baskind had not crossed an ocean and went directly into furious battles and gave their days for our tomorrow."

Steward Sadowsky, left, and Samantha Baskind, relatives of 1st Lt. Nathan Baskind, lower the soldier's casket into the ground.

Rabbi Jacob Schacter, the president of Operation Benjamin, underscored the Germans' involvement in helping to identify Baskind's remains.

"The Jewish people were subjected to the worst inhumanity that could possibly be ever perpetrated by one people against another," Schacter said. "And today we meet in peace, with mutual respect, with admiration."

The German army handed over Baskind's remains to the U.S. at a ceremony at Ramstein Air Base in May.

PHOTOS BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN/Stars and Stripes

Samantha Baskind inserts a gold rosette at the Wall of the Missing by the name of 1st Lt. Nathan Baskind at Normandy American Cemetery on Sunday, signifying that her great-uncle's remains have been found.

Days before, Baskind's great-niece Samantha Baskind, an art history professor at Cleveland State University, received his Purple Heart from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. She hadn't known much about her uncle growing up but was involved with the recovery efforts.

Speaking at the burial ceremony, she shared the little information she knew about him, including that his middle initial stood for "Brother," as stated on his birth certificate.

His twin sister's legal middle name was "Sister," she said, suggesting that perhaps their immigrant parents were confused by the birth certificate forms they had to complete.

Nathan Baskind's mother and father died years ago without ever knowing what happened to their son. Samantha Baskind and family member Steward Sadowsky lowered Baskind's coffin into the ground Sunday.

The new grave adds to those of roughly 9,400 men and four women buried at Normandy American Cemetery. Baskind's name is among over 1,557 included on the cemetery's Wall of the Missing.

After his burial, his great-niece inserted a rosette into the wall next to his name, signifying he's been found.

"Nate's journey, and our journey, is complete," she said.

Shaky: US seeks to build relationships after losing ground in Niger, Chad

FROM PAGE 1

that as the U.S. pulls its 1,000 troops out of Niger, including from a critical counterterrorism and drone base there, other West African nations want to work with the U.S. and may be open to an expanded American presence.

The conference, he said, will give him a chance to speak with a number of his African counterparts, and listen to their objectives and concerns.

"There's other countries in the region where we already have either small presence or have relationships," Brown said. "Part of this is looking at how we continue to build on those relationships which may provide opportunities for us to posture some of the capabilities we had in Niger in some of those locations."

The U.S. needs to have a dialogue with those nations to see what type and size U.S. military presence they would want, he said, adding, "That's why this conference is important."

Brown and other defense officials say the conference is a chance to show African leaders that the U.S. can listen and accept local solutions. The U.S., said one defense official, has to adjust to the solutions that Africans have identified and not impose external Western ideals.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military relationships, said the Botswana meeting is an opportunity to foster military relationships throughout the continent.

The troop cuts at key bases in Africa's Sahel region raise questions about how to battle what has been a growing tide of violence by extremist groups, including those linked to the Islamic State group and al-Qaida.

The defense official said the U.S. is concerned about the spread of extremist activity from multiple groups into coastal West Africa in particular.

Niger's ruling junta ordered U.S. forces out of the country in the wake of last July's ouster of the country's democratically elected president by mutinous soldiers. French forces had also been asked to leave as the junta turned to the Russian mercenary group Wagner for security assistance.

Washington officially designated the military takeover as a coup in October, triggering U.S. laws restricting the military support and aid. The fracture has broad ramifications for the U.S. because it forced troops to abandon the critical drone base at Agadez that was used for counterterrorism missions in the Sahel.

SUSAN WALSH/AP

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown is meeting with African military officials this week.

The senior defense official said the withdrawal of U.S. forces and all the equipment from Niger is about 30% complete, and will be completed on Sept. 15 as required. The official said that the pace of the pullout will ebb and flow, as troops leave based on when their weapons systems and equipment are taken out. Roughly 600 troops currently remain there.

Soon afterward, Chad ordered U.S. forces out of Adji Kossei Air Base near N'Djamena. About 75 U.S. Army special forces relocated to Europe, and about 20 troops remain in the country along with Marine security forces assigned to the U.S. Embassy.

The U.S. has described the troop cuts in Chad as temporary and could be revisited now that the presidential election there is over. And Brown said that the U.S. will work with the embassy leadership in Chad to take a look at what the future U.S. presence there will be.

Some African nations have expressed frustration with the U.S. for forcing issues, such as democracy and human rights, that many see as hypocrisy, given Washington's close ties to some autocratic leaders elsewhere. Meanwhile, Russia offers security assistance without interfering in politics, making it an appealing partner for military juntas that seized power in places like Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso in recent years.

A key element in any U.S. discussions with African leaders is to recognize that America must calibrate what it asks and expects of those governments and their militaries, said Mvemba Dizolele, director of the Africa Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

"Security and defense policy makers in the United States should not approach Africa thinking that deep inside every African military officer is an American officer waiting to come out," said Dizolele. "That's just not realistic. Every African officer is an officer who's trying to do the best within the conditions that they've been dealt.'"

He said the U.S is not always ready to engage with some African countries because of various obstacles such as the Leahy Law that prohibits certain military assistance to foreign forces that violate human rights, and congressional spending restrictions that limit aid to countries whose leadership was overturned in a coup.

Meanwhile, other countries such as Russia and China will provide any military aid and equipment that the African countries can afford to buy, said Dizolele.

NATION

Rail bridge collapses amid Midwest floods

Associated Press

NORTH SIOUX CITY, S.D. — A railroad bridge collapsed during flooding in the Midwestern U.S. that has led to water rescues, evacuations and at least one death and has brought additional misery during a vast and stubborn heat wave.

The bridge connecting North Sioux City, S.D. with Sioux City, Iowa, collapsed into the Big Sioux River late Sunday, an emergency manager said. Images from local media showed a large span of the steel bridge partially underwater as floodwaters rushed over it.

Some of the trusses collapsed, Jason Westcott, an emergency manager in Union County, South Dakota, told KCAU-TV.

There were no reports of injuries from the collapse, which occurred around 11 p.m. The bridge's owner, BNSF Railway, had stopped operating it as a precaution during the flooding, spokesperson Kendall Sloan said. Trains are being rerouted.

Floodwaters have risen over days of heavy rain in South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska. More rain is forecast, and many streams may not crest until later this week as the floodwaters slowly drain to the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

Deb Kempema lost her home decor store, First Impressions, after a river levee broke in northwestern Iowa's Rock Valley, forced evacuations and destroyed shops.

It was "7,000 square feet of very pretty, pretty things. And it's all gone," she told KELO-TV. "But I like to reinvent myself, so we're going to come back better."

The Big Sioux River stabilized Monday morning at around 45 feet, over 7 feet higher than the previous record, Sioux City Fire Marshal Mark Aesoph said. Evacuations have begun for homes at low elevations, and more are expected as waters rise.

"It's just been difficult to predict what's going to happen when levels are this high when we have no history with it," he said.

Thirteen rivers flooded in that part of Iowa, said Eric Tigges of Clay County emergency management. Entire neighborhoods, and at least one whole town, were evacuated, and the Iowa town of Spencer imposed a curfew Sunday for a second night after flooding that surpassed a record set in 1953.

"When the flood gauge is underwater, it's really high," Tigges said at a news conference.

JOSH JURGENS/AP

People embark on Falls Park in Sioux Falls, S.D., as water rose quickly Saturday after days of heavy rain led to flooding in the area.

Gov. Kim Reynolds declared a disaster for 21 counties in northern Iowa, including Sioux County. In drone video posted by the sheriff, no streets were visible, just roofs and treetops poking above the water.

National Guard troops helped with water rescues and carted needed medications lost in flooding.

"Businesses are shuttered. Main streets have been impacted," Reynolds said. "Hospitals, nursing homes and other care facilities were evacuated. Cities are without power, and some are without drinkable water."

Emergency management officials in the small South Dakota community of Dakota Dunes urged evacuations Sunday for roughly 4,000 residents. Dakota Dunes is near the Nebraska and Iowa borders and is sandwiched between the Missouri and Big Sioux rivers.

Emergency management officials there warned residents that a mandatory evacuation could come quickly if flood barriers are breached.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem declared an emergency after severe flooding in the southeastern part of her state. Several highways were closed. At least one person died, Noem said Sunday, without providing details.

Areas south of Sioux Falls, the state's largest city, had an estimated 10 to 15 inches of rain over three days, weather service hydrologist Kevin Low said.

Parts of Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa received eight times the typical average rainfall, said National Weather Service meteorologist Donna Dubberke.

Minor to moderate flooding was expected along the Missouri River, according to officials with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Elsewhere, the heat remained the biggest worry, even as temperatures moderated at the start of the week in the Northeast and some other parts of the U.S. that have sweltered for days.

Public officials cautioned residents about the dangers of excessive heat and humidity. Forecasters said the heat wave will continue early in the week in the Southeast, portions of the South and the Plains.

Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Philadelphia all saw record heat over the weekend.

Court to weigh bans on gender-affirming care for minors

BY MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday jumped into the fight over transgender rights, agreeing to hear an appeal from the Biden administration seeking to block state bans on gender-affirming care.

The justices' action comes as Republican-led states have enacted a variety of restrictions on health care for transgender people, school sports participation, bathroom usage and drag shows. The administration and Democratic-led states have extended protections for transgender people, including a new federal regulation that seeks to protect transgender students.

The case before the high court involves a law in Tennessee that restricts puberty blockers and hormone therapy for transgender minors. The federal appeals court in Cincinnati allowed laws in Tennessee and Kentucky to take effect after they had been blocked by lower courts. (The high court did not act on a separate appeal from Kentucky.)

"Without this Court's prompt intervention, transgender youth and their families will remain in limbo, uncertain of whether and where they can access needed medical care," lawyers for the transgender teens in Tennessee told the justices.

Actor Elliot Page, the Oscar-nominated star of "Juno," "Inception" and "The Umbrella Academy," was among 57 transgender people who joined a legal filing in support of Supreme Court review.

Arguments will take place in the fall.

Last week, South Carolina became the 25th state to adopt a law restricting or banning gender-affirming medical care for transgender minors, even though such treatments have been available in the United States for more than a decade and are endorsed by major medical associations.

Most of the state restrictions face lawsuits. The justices had previously allowed Idaho to generally enforce its restrictions, after they had been blocked by lower courts.

At least 24 states have laws barring transgender women and girls from competing in certain women's or girls' sports competitions. At least 11 states have adopted laws barring transgender girls and women from girls' and women's bathrooms at public schools, and in some cases other government facilities.

The nation's highest court has only rarely taken up transgender issues. In 2020, the justices ruled that a landmark civil rights law protects gay, lesbian and transgender people from discrimination in employment.

In 2016, the court had agreed to take up the case of a transgender student, backed by the Obama administration, who was barred from using the boys' bathroom in his Virginia high school. But the court dropped the case after a directive advising schools to allow students to use the bathroom of their chosen gender, not biological birth, was scrapped in the early months of the Trump administration. The directive had been a key part of an appeals court ruling in favor of the student, Gavin Grimm.

In 2021, the justices declined to get involved in Grimm's case after the appeals court again ruled in his favor. At the time, Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas noted they would have taken up the school board's appeal.

NATION

Breaking down Trump's contenders for VP

BY JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Donald Trump has narrowed his vice presidential shortlist to a handful of contenders as he prepares to announce his pick in the days before — or perhaps even at — next month's Republican National Convention.

He told reporters Saturday that he already has made his decision and that the person will be in attendance Thursday night in Atlanta at the first debate of the general election campaign against Democratic President Joe Biden.

Trump's choice would likely become the immediate front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination four years from now if Trump were to win a second term, the constitutional limit. But that No. 2 will be under immense pressure from Trump and his allies to show loyalty at all times.

Trump turned on his first vice president, Mike Pence, after Pence rebuffed his boss' efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, based on false theories promoted by the then-president after his loss to Biden.

Pence has declined to endorse Trump this time around.

Trump has said his top consideration for a vice president is whether someone is qualified to take over as commander in chief.

Other factors at play: Who can raise money? Who performs well on television? Who will be most effective on the debate stage against Vice President Kamala Harris? Who risks overshadowing Trump, as a lame-duck if he is elected in November, with talk soon of 2028? And who has "the look"?

Trump's campaign has repeatedly cautioned that anyone "claiming to know who or when President Trump will choose his VP is lying, unless the person is named Donald J. Trump."

And given Trump's penchant for unpredictability and drama, the best-laid plans could change.

A look at the top contenders heading into the convention in Milwaukee that will begin July 15.

■ **Doug Burgum:** Trump likes rich people. North Dakota's two-term governor is most definitely rich.

Before his time as governor, Burgum led a software company that was acquired by Microsoft for more than $1 billion. He also has worked in real estate development and venture capital and spent millions on his own White House bid.

Burgum had initially run against Trump for the 2024 nomination, but the little-known governor from a sparsely-populated state gained little traction. When Burgum dropped his bid, he quickly endorsed the former president. Since then, Burgum has become one of Trump's most visible defenders, appearing frequently on television, joining him at fundraisers, and traveling to New York for Trump's criminal trial.

REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., speaks at a campaign rally, in November 2022 in Miami.

But more than that, Trump and Burgum have hit it off personally.

Burgum

Burgum and his wife, Kathryn, are said to get along especially well with Trump and his team — the kind of rapport that has particular currency in Trump's orbit. It does not hurt that Trump thinks Burgum looks the part — a "central casting" pick.

Selecting Burgum would, in some ways, echo Pence: a staid, uncontroversial governor with lesser national name recognition. Burgum, 67, would be unlikely to compete with Trump for the spotlight or to immediately overshadow him with 2028 talk.

Burgum also brings money and rich friends to the table.

But does the Republican Party want two older white guys atop the ticket?

■ **JD Vance:** Swept to national prominence by his bestselling memoir, "Hillbilly Elegy," Vance has held office for less than two years. But during his short time in the Senate, the former venture capitalist from Ohio has established himself as one of the fiercest defenders of Trump's "Make America Great Again" agenda, especially when it comes to foreign policy, trade and immigration.

Despite his early criticism of Trump, Vance has become personally close with the former president and his son Donald Trump Jr. Vance has become a fixture of the conservative media circuit, frequently spars with reporters on Capitol Hill and has appeared with Trump at recent fundraisers and at court.

At 39, Vance, would inject some millennial energy into a race that features an 81-year-old (Biden) and a 78-year-old (Trump) at the top of the major parties' tickets. And a debate with Harris would certainly be heated.

But will Trump be able to get over Vance's record of past insults, which he mentions still?

In 2016, Vance was one of Trump's fiercest critics, casting the then-reality TV star as "a total fraud" and "moral disaster" and calling him "America's Hitler."

Vance has said he was proved wrong by Trump's performance in office and the senator now castigates liberals who made his book a bestseller as they sought a window into understanding Trumpism.

■ **Marco Rubio:** If picking Vance would excite Trump's base, choosing the Florida senator might expand the ticket's appeal, particularly among deep-pocketed donors and more establishment-minded and moderate Republicans turned off by Trump's rhetoric and extremism.

Rubio, once seen as a GOP hotshot, is now a well-respected voice on foreign policy and national security issues in his party. The son of Cuban immigrants, he speaks Spanish and could help Trump win over the Hispanic voters that his campaign is eagerly courting.

Rubio is also seen as a skilled debater who could hold his own against Harris.

Running alongside Trump might once have seemed an unlikely possibility, given that the two were bitter rivals in 2016 for the GOP nomination and viciously attacked one another. Trump belittled Rubio as "Little Marco," mocked him for drinking water during speeches and called him a "nervous basket case," who was "disgusting." Rubio said Trump was a "con man" who tried to "swindle" the Republican Party and Rubio tried to question Trump's manhood.

"You know what they say about men with small hands," Rubio quipped at one point during that campaign.

But then there is Rubio's Florida "problem," as Trump has called it.

The Constitution says two candidates from the same state cannot run as president and vice president, meaning Rubio would need to change his residency — something he is reportedly willing to do.

But does he really want the job? Rubio has been noticeably less present, publicly, than some of the others vying to be Trump's No. 2 and did not appear with Trump at his criminal trial.

■ **Tim Scott:** The only Black Republican in the Senate, the South Carolinian would bring racial and stylistic diversity to the GOP ticket as well as a preacher's touch. The self-described "born-again believer" often quotes Scripture in political speeches that often reach a crescendo of call-and-response.

Scott and Trump worked closely together while Trump was in the White House on policy issues including Trump's tax cuts, opportunity zones, and criminal justice reform legislation.

Scott

Though Scott ran against Trump for the nomination this year, the senator largely declined to criticize the former president. After failing to gain traction despite millions spent on his behalf by high-profile donors, Scott endorsed Trump over fellow South Carolinian Nikki Haley, Trump's U.N. ambassador, and immediately began enthusiastically campaigning on Trump's behalf.

He continues to make frequent appearances on television and recently launched a $14 million campaign to win over minority voters in seven key swing states.

Trump has often joked that Scott has made a far better surrogate than he did a candidate.

But that has also raised questions about how Scott might perform on a debate stage with Harris later this year.

■ **Elise Stefanik:** The only woman on his shortlist, the New York congresswoman could help Trump win over skeptical college-educated and suburban women who sided with Biden in 2020.

Stefanik was once an aide to former House Speaker Paul Ryan and served in President George W. Bush's White House, working for two Republicans now shunned by Trump loyalists. But she transformed during Trump's four years in office into a fully-fledged Trump acolyte.

She defended him vigorously in both of his impeachment trials and railed against his criminal indictments. In 2022, Stefanik was the first member of Republican House leadership to endorse Trump's campaign, and did so before he had even announced.

She saw her profile rise after her aggressive questioning in December of a trio of university presidents over antisemitism on campus that led to two of their resignations. Trump has repeatedly praised that performance.

Stefanik

Stefanik has spent years ingratiating herself with Trump and positioning herself as one of his most trusted allies and confidantes on Capitol Hill. And at 39, she would bring new energy to the ticket.

But is the leap from House member to VP too big?

■ **Ben Carson:** Relationships and trust matter to Trump. Carson, who served as secretary of housing and urban development during Trump's administration, has developed a strong bond with the former president over the years, despite a contentious start as 2016 rivals.

A soft-spoken former renowned neurosurgeon, Carson, 72, could help Trump win over minority voters as the first Black person to be named to a Republican presidential ticket. Given Carson's age and demeanor, there is little chance of him overshadowing Trump or stealing the spotlight.

But Carson also has a history of controversial comments on abortion, guns and other issues that could cause headaches for the ticket.

■ **Byron Donalds:** The Florida congressman has become one of Trump's most prominent conservative Black supporters and a reliable surrogate on television and at events.

His selection could help bolster Trump's appeal with Black voters, especially the younger Black men that the campaign has been courting as it tries to eat into Biden's 2020 coalition.

At 45, Donalds is also the kind of fresh face who would serve a marked contrast to the men at the top of both parties' tickets.

But like Rubio, Donalds would likely need to move to join the ticket. And he, too, has a history of controversial statements, including at a recent "Congress, Cognac, and Cigars" event in Philadelphia, where he seemed to reflect favorably on the Jim Crow era as he talked about "the reinvigoration" of the Black family.

"You see, during Jim Crow, the Black family was together. During Jim Crow, more Black people were not just conservative — Black people always have been conservative-minded — but more Black people voted conservatively," Donalds said, according to audio from the Philadelphia Inquirer.

NATION

RICH PEDRONCELLI/AP

A for sale sign is posted in front of a home in Sacramento, Calif., on March 3, 2022.

Yellen reveals steps to boost housing supply as high prices create crunch

BY FATIMA HUSSEIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is announcing new steps to increase access to affordable housing as still-high prices on groceries and other necessities and high interest rates have dramatically pushed up the cost of living in the post-pandemic years.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen planned to promote the new investments on Monday during a visit to Minneapolis. The investments include providing $100 million through a new fund over the next three years to support affordable housing financing, boosting the Federal Financing Bank's financing of affordable housing and other measures.

The increased attention to home prices comes as the housing crunch becomes an increasing issue in this year's general election campaign.

"We face a very significant housing supply shortfall that has been building for a long time," Yellen says in prepared remarks. "This supply crunch has led to an affordability crunch."

Yellen says the Democratic administration is "pursuing a broad affordability agenda to address the price pressures that families have been feeling."

Both homebuyers and renters are facing increasing housing costs that skyrocketed after the pandemic. According to the Case-Shiller 20-City Composite Home Price Index, home prices increased by 46% between March 2020 and March 2024. A new Treasury analysis shows that over the past two decades, housing costs have been rising faster than incomes.

Meanwhile, sales of previously occupied U.S. homes fell in May for the third straight month as rising mortgage rates and record-high prices discouraged many prospective homebuyers during what's traditionally the housing market's busiest period of the year.

For low-income Americans, statistics from the National Low Income Housing Coalition show there is a national shortage of more than 7 million affordable homes for the more than 10.8 million extremely low-income U.S. families. And there is no state or county in the country where a renter working full-time at minimum wage can afford a two-bedroom apartment, according to the group.

In her speech, Yellen is set to call on Congress to pass Biden's proposed budget, released in March.

The budget calls on Congress to provide a tax credit for first-time homebuyers and includes a plan to build more than 2 million homes. It would expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

Cyberattacks lead car dealerships to use pens, paper

BY WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Car dealerships in North America continue to wrestle with major disruptions that started last week with cyberattacks on a software company used widely in the auto retail sales sector.

CDK Global, a company that provides software for thousands of auto dealers in the United States and Canada, was hit by back-to-back cyberattacks Wednesday. That led to an outage that has continued to impact operations.

For prospective car buyers, that may mean delays at dealerships or vehicle orders written up by hand, with no immediate end in sight.

On Monday, Group 1 Automotive Inc., a $4 billion automotive retailers, said that it continued to use "alternative processes" to sell cars to its customers.

What is CDK Global?

CDK Global is a major player in the auto sales industry. The company, based just outside of Chicago in Hoffman Estates, Ill., provides software technology to dealers that helps with day-today operations — like facilitating vehicle sales, financing, insurance and repairs.

CDK serves more than 15,000 retail locations across North America, according to the company. Whether all of these locations were impacted by the cyberattacks is unclear.

What happened?

CDK is investigating a Wednesday "cyber incident" and the company shut down all of its systems out of an abundance of caution, according to spokesperson Lisa Finney.

"We have begun the restoration process," Finney said over the weekend in a prepared statement. "Based on the information we have at this time, we anticipate that the process will take several days to complete, and in the interim we are continuing to actively engage with our customers and provide them with alternate ways to conduct business."

The company has warned customers about "bad actors" posing as members or affiliates of CDK to try to obtain system access by contacting customers. It urged them to be cautious of any attempted phishing.

Are sales still going?

Several major auto companies — including Stellantis, Ford and BMW — confirmed to The Associated Press that the CDK outage had impacted some of their dealers, but that sales operations continue.

In light of the ongoing situation, a spokesperson for Stellantis said many dealerships had switched to manual processes to serve customers. That includes writing up orders by hand.

A Ford spokesperson said the outage may cause "some delays and inconveniences at some dealers and for some customers." Many Ford and Lincoln customers, however, are still getting sales and service support through alternative routes being used at dealerships.

Group 1 Automotive Inc., which owns 202 automotive dealerships, 264 franchises, and 42 collision centers in the U.S. and the United Kingdom, said Monday that the incident has disrupted its business applications and processes in its U.S. operations that rely on CDK's dealers' systems.

All Group 1 U.S. dealerships will continue to conduct business using alternative processes until CDK's dealers' systems are available, the company said Monday. Group 1's dealerships in the U.K. don't use CDK's dealers' systems and are not impacted by the incident.

Planned Parenthood to spend $40M ahead of November's election

BY WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Planned Parenthood will spend $40 million ahead of November's elections to bolster President Joe Biden and leading congressional Democrats, betting that voters angry at Republican-led efforts to further restrict access to abortion can be the difference in key races around the country.

The political and advocacy arms of the nation's leading reproductive health care provider and abortion rights advocacy organization shared the announcement with The Associated Press before its wider release Monday.

The group will initially target eight states: Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, where Biden is seeking to defend 2020 victories, as well as North Carolina, which the Democratic president's campaign hopes to flip after Republican Donald Trump won it four years ago, and Montana, New Hampshire and New York, which have races that could help determine control of the Senate and House.

The push will try to reach voters with volunteer and paid canvassing programs, phone banking and digital, TV, and mail advertising.

"Abortion will be the message of this election, and it will be how we energize voters," said Jenny Lawson, executive director of Planned Parenthood Votes. "It will be what enables us to win."

The spending plan is not an election cycle record for the group. It spent $45 million ahead of Biden defeating Trump in 2020 and $50 million before the 2022 midterms.

That's when Planned Parenthood's advocates focused on pouring money into contests where access to abortion was on the ballot months after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 case that created a constitutional right to have an abortion, a decision handed down two years ago Monday.

"We continue to see the devastation that comes when anti-abortion politicians have power," Lawson said of the years since. "It's just gotten worse."

In November, voters in several other states, including battleground Arizona and Nevada, will have abortion referendums on the ballot, as will Florida, a onetime presidential bellwether that has gotten increasingly Republican in recent cycles but where Biden's campaign is hoping turnout for the abortion ballot initiative can make things closer.

MIDEAST

US military leader warns over Israeli offensive into Lebanon

By Lolita C. Baldor
Associated Press

ESPARGOS, Cape Verde — The top U.S. military officer warned on Sunday that any Israeli military offensive into Lebanon would risk an Iranian response in defense of the powerful Hezbollah militant group there, triggering a broader war that could put U.S. forces in the region in danger.

Air Force Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Iran "would be more inclined to support Hezbollah." He added that Tehran supports Hamas militants in Gaza, but would give greater backing to Hezbollah "particularly if they felt that Hezbollah was being significantly threatened."

Brown spoke to reporters as he traveled to Botswana for a meeting of African defense ministers.

Israeli officials have threatened a military offensive in Lebanon if there is no negotiated end to push Hezbollah away from the border. Just days ago, Israel's military said it had "approved and validated" plans for an offensive in Lebanon, even as the U.S. works to prevent the months of cross-border attacks from spiraling into a full-blown war.

Netanyahu said Sunday he hoped a diplomatic solution could be achieved but said he would solve the problem "in a different way" if needed. "We can fight on several fronts and we are prepared to do that," he said.

U.S. officials have tried to broker a diplomatic solution to the conflict. The issue is expected to come up this week as Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant visits Washington for meetings with U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other senior U.S. officials.

President Joe Biden's senior adviser, Amos Hochstein, met with officials in Lebanon and Israel last week in an effort to deescalate tensions. Hochstein told reporters in Beirut on Tuesday that it was a "very serious situation" and that a diplomatic solution to prevent a larger war was urgent.

Brown also said the U.S. won't likely be able to help Israel defend itself against a broader Hezbollah war as well as it helped Israel fight off an Iranian barrage of missiles and drones in April. It is harder to fend off the shorter-range rockets that Hezbollah fires routinely across the border into Israel, he said.

Asked if the U.S. has changed its force posture in the region to better assure troops are protected, he said the safety of the force has been a priority all along and noted that no U.S. bases have been attacked since February.

Brown said the U.S. continues to talk with Israeli leaders and warn against widening the conflict.

Netanyahu says he won't agree to deal that ends war

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — The viability of a U.S.-backed proposal to wind down the 8-month-long war in Gaza was cast into doubt on Monday after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he would only be willing to agree to a "partial" cease-fire deal that would not end the war, comments that sparked an uproar from families of hostages held by Hamas.

In an interview broadcast late Sunday on Israeli Channel 14, a conservative, pro-Netanyahu station, the Israeli leader said he was "prepared to make a partial deal — this is no secret — that will return to us some of the people," referring to the roughly 120 hostages still held in the Gaza Strip. "But we are committed to continuing the war after a pause, in order to complete the goal of eliminating Hamas. I'm not willing to give up on that."

Netanyahu's comments did not deviate dramatically from what he has said previously about his terms for a deal. But they come at a sensitive time as Israel and Hamas appear to be moving further apart over the latest cease-fire proposal, and they could represent another setback for mediators trying to end the war.

Netanyahu's comments stood in sharp contrast to the outlines of the deal detailed late last month by President Joe Biden, who framed the plan as an Israeli one and which some in Israel refer to as "Netanyahu's deal." His remarks could further strain Israel's ties to the U.S., its top ally, which launched a major diplomatic push for the latest cease-fire proposal.

The three-phased plan would bring about the release of the remaining hostages in exchange for hundreds of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. But disputes and mistrust persist between Israel and Hamas over how the deal plays out.

Hamas has insisted it will not release the remaining hostages unless there's a permanent cease-fire and a full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

But Netanyahu says Israel is still committed to destroying Hamas' military and governing capabilities.

STARS AND STRIPES SERVICE DIRECTORY
The Daily Guide to Navigating The Military Business Market

Transportation 944

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WORLD

2 Russian cities mourn after Islamic militant rampage

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia's southern region of Dagestan held the first of three days of mourning Monday following a rampage by Islamic militants who killed 20 people, mostly police, and attacked Christian and Jewish houses of worship in assaults in two cities.

Sunday's violence in Dagestan's regional capital of Makhachkala and nearby Derbent was the latest that officials blamed on Islamic extremists in the predominantly Muslim region in the North Caucasus. It was also the deadliest in Russia since March, when gunmen opened fire at a concert in suburban Moscow, killing 145 people.

The affiliate of the Islamic State in Afghanistan that claimed responsibility for March's raid quickly praised the attack in Dagestan, saying it was conducted by "brothers in the Caucasus who showed that they are still strong."

The Washington-based Institute for the Study of War argued that ISIS' North Caucasus branch, Vilayat Kavkaz, likely was behind the attack, describing it as "complex and coordinated."

Dagestan Gov. Sergei Melikov blamed members of Islamic "sleeper cells" directed from abroad, but didn't give any other details.

He said in a video statement that the assailants aimed at "sowing panic and fear," and attempted to link the attack to Moscow's military action in Ukraine — but also provided no evidence.

President Vladimir Putin had sought to blame the March attack on Ukraine, again without evidence and despite the claim of responsibility by the ISIS affiliate. Kyiv has vehemently denied any involvement.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Putin has received reports on Sunday's attacks and efforts to help the victims.

The Investigative Committee, the country's top state criminal investigation agency, said all five attackers were killed. Of the 20 people killed, at least 15 were police.

Among the dead was the Rev. Nikolai Kotelnikov, a 66-year-old Russian Orthodox priest at a church in Derbent. The attackers slit his throat before setting fire to the church, according to Shamil Khadulayev, deputy head of a local public oversight body. The attack came as the Orthodox faithful celebrated Pentecost, also known as Trinity Sunday.

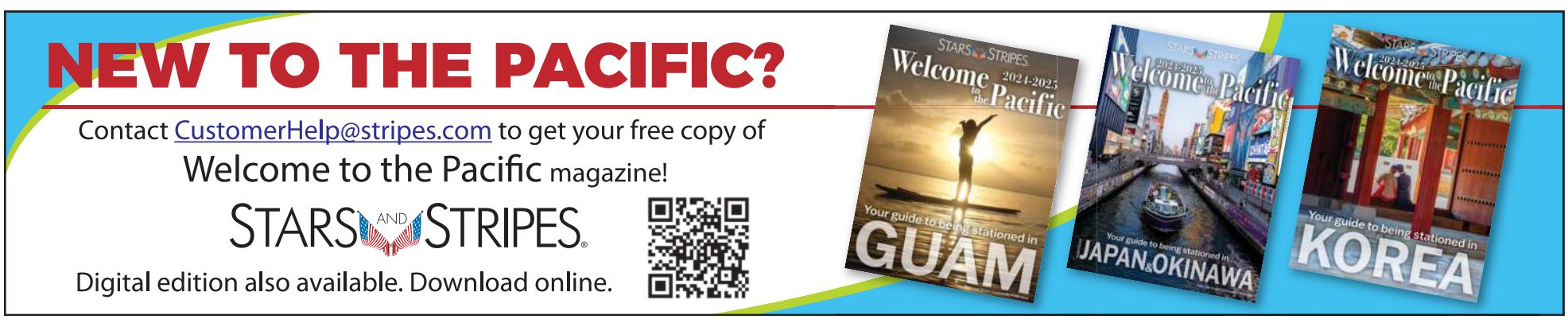
The Kele-Numaz synagogue in Derbent also was set ablaze.

Shortly after the attacks in Derbent, militants fired at a police post in Makhachkala and attacked a Russian Orthodox Church and a synagogue there before being hunted down and killed by special forces.

Russian news reports said the attackers included the two sons and a nephew of Magomed Omarov, the head of the main Kremlin's party United Russia's regional branch in Dagestan. Omarov was detained by police for interrogation, and United Russia quickly dismissed him from its ranks.

Harold Chambers, political and security analyst specializing in the North Caucasus, noted the authorities' response to Sunday's attack "was significantly more than we have seen in the past, but still lacking, particularly with response time."

"They were definitely caught off guard by this attack," he said. "What we're seeing here is still this disconnect between Russian counterterrorism capability and what the terrorists capability is inside of Russia."



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Firefighters rescue hiker clinging to tree on cliff

HI HONOLULU — A hiker who ventured off a trail above Sunset Beach Elementary was rescued by Honolulu firefighters as he clung to a tree on a cliff.

According to a Honolulu Fire Department summary, rescuers responded to a 911 call reporting a hiker in distress near the Ehukai Pillbox Trail. HFD sent four units with 13 personnel and the first unit arrived 10 minutes after the call.

Rescuers were told that a 21-year-old man was hiking alone on the trail when he left the trail "for unknown reasons, " HFD officials said.

Personnel aboard the HFD's Air 1 helicopter located the hiker and lowered a rescuer on a rope, officials said. He was secured in a harness with the rescuer, and they were flown safely to the landing zone.

Paul Pelosi's attacker convicted of kidnapping

CA SAN FRANCISCO — A man sentenced to 30 years in federal prison in the attack against former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband was convicted of aggravated kidnapping, a conviction that mandates life behind bars without the possibility of parole.

A San Francisco jury found David DePape also guilty of first-degree burglary, false imprisonment of an elder, threatening a family member of a public official and dissuading a witness.

The convictions on the additional charges in the state trial come weeks after a federal judge sentenced DePape, 44, for the 2022 attack against Paul Pelosi.

DePape's public defender Adam Lipson said he was disappointed with the verdict and plans to appeal it. He called the prosecutors' decision to file a kidnapping for ransom charge "vindictive."

AG to give funds to groups combating drug addiction

KY FRANKFORT — Kentucky will distribute more than $12 million in the latest round of funding to groups at the front lines of combating drug addiction, state Attorney General Russell Coleman said.

Several dozen organizations will share in the latest influx of funding to bolster prevention, treatment and enforcement efforts statewide, the Republican attorney general said. It comes as Kentucky achieves some progress in an addiction epidemic that's far from over.

The Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission is funneling the money to an array of programs. The commission is responsible for distributing Kentucky's share of nearly $900 million recovered in settlements with opioid companies. Half of Kentucky's settlement will flow directly to cities and counties. The commission oversees the state's half.

CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP

A different perspective

A person swings on an attraction at Worlds of Fun theme park on the first full day of summer Friday, in Kansas City, Mo.

Officer on life support after shot in the neck

PA PHILADELPHIA — A Philadelphia police officer was shot in the neck after a traffic stop and was in critical condition, officials said.

The 31-year-old officer is being treated at Temple University Hospital, Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel said during a news conference outside the hospital.

Mayor Cherelle Parker said in a social media post that the officer, who has been on the force for 6 1/2 years, was "on life support" on a breathing machine.

The officer and his partner had stopped a car with four people inside. The officers saw a person with a gun holster and the suspect fled, firing three times at the officers, Bethel said.

Ramon Rodriguez Vazquez, 36, of Philadelphia, has been charged with attempted murder and also faces charges that include aggravated assault and home invasion.

The shooting suspect and all the people who were in the car are in custody, Bethel said.

State Senate passes bill curtailing use of plastics

MA BOSTON — The state Senate in Massachusetts has passed a wide-ranging bill curtailing the use of plastics, including barring the purchase of single-use plastic bottles by state agencies.

The bill also bans carry-out plastic bags at retailers statewide and requires stores to charge 10 cents for recycled paper bags. It also requires straws and plastic-ware to be available only by request and creates a program to recycle large items like car seats. It now heads to the House.

Communities representing 70% of the state's population already have bans.

It also codified an executive order signed last year by Gov. Maura Healey, which she said made Massachusetts the first state to ban the purchase of single-use plastic bottles by state agencies.

State settles climate change suit filed by youths

HI HONOLULU — The governor and lawyers for youth plaintiffs announced they settled a lawsuit alleging Hawaii violated the state constitution by operating a transportation system that harmed the climate and infringed upon the children's right to a clean and healthy environment.

The settlement reached in Navahine v. Hawaii Department of Transportation recognizes children's constitutional rights to a life-sustaining climate, Gov. Josh Green and attorneys at the public interest law firms Our Children's Trust and Earthjustice said in separate statements.

The agreement confirms the department's commitment to plan and implement changes to reach the state's goal of net-negative emissions by 2045, the governor said.

The plaintiffs were aged 9 through 18 at the time the lawsuit was filed in June 2022. Their complaint said the department consistently prioritized building highways over other types of transportation.

Judge: State prisons defy solitary confinement rules

NY ALBANY — New York's state prison system has been holding inmates in solitary confinement for too long, in violation of state law, a state judge ruled.

State Supreme Court Justice Kevin Bryant said that the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision did not provide sufficient evidence to refute allegations that it has failed to follow the limits on solitary confinement enshrined in state law in 2021.

State law limits solitary confinement in most cases to three consecutive days, or six days in any given 30-day period.

But prisoners can be confined alone for longer periods for specified "heinous and destructive" acts, such as injuring someone or acquiring a deadly weapon. In those cases, the "extended segregation" limit is 15 consecutive days, or 20 days in a 60-day period.

The advocacy groups argued in their lawsuit that the corrections department was holding people in extended segregation even though they don't meet the narrow criteria spelled out in the law.

Dems to delay health care minimum wage increase

CA SACRAMENTO — Democrats in California have agreed to delay a minimum wage increase for about 426,000 health care workers to help balance the state's budget.

The agreement between Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders is part of a larger plan to close an estimated $46.8 billion shortfall — the second year in a row the nation's most populous state has had a multibillion-dollar deficit.

Health care workers were supposed to get a raise July 1, part of a plan to gradually increase their pay to $25 per hour over the next decade. Now, if approved by the Legislature, they could get that raise Oct. 15 — but only if California's revenues between July and September are at least 3% higher than what officials have estimated.

If that doesn't happen, the raise won't start until Jan. 1 at the latest.

From wire reports

FACES

‘Inside Out 2’ still feeling lots of love

Disney-Pixar sequel scores $100M in second weekend

DISNEY-PIXAR/AP

Other studio executives might understandably be envious of the $724.4 million global take of Disney-Pixar’s “Inside Out 2” after just a week and a half.

BY JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Weekend number two was just as joyous for “Inside Out 2.”

The Pixar sequel collected $100 million in ticket sales in its second weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday, setting a new record for an animated movie in its follow-up frame in theaters. The previous best second weekend for an animated title was the $92 million for “The Super Mario Bros. Movie.” Only six movies ever have had better second weekends.

In just a week and a half, “Inside Out 2” has become 2024’s highest-grossing film to date with $724.4 million globally, including $355.2 million in U.S. and Canadian theaters. That passes the $711.8 million worldwide total of “Dune: Part Two.” “Inside Out 2” will likely blow through the $1 billion mark in about a week, which would make it the first film since “Barbie” to do so.

The extent of the “Inside Out 2” success startled Hollywood, which had grown accustomed to lower expectations as the film industry watched ticket sales this year slump about 40% below pre-pandemic totals, according to data firm Comscore, before “Inside Out 2” came along.

The record haul for “Inside Out 2,” though, recalled past years when $1 billion grosses were more commonplace for the Walt Disney Co. It is also a much-needed blockbuster for Pixar, which after experimenting with direct-to-streaming releases, reconsidered its movie pipeline and approach to mass-audience appeal.

Now, “Inside Out 2,” which dipped a mere 35% from its $154 million domestic debut, is poised to challenge “The Incredibles 2” ($1.2 billion) for the all-time top grossing Pixar release. It could also steer the venerated animation factory toward more sequels. Among its upcoming films is “Toy Story 5,” due out in 2026.

For theater owners, “Inside Out 2” could hardly have been more needed. But it also reminded exhibitors of how feast-or-famine the movie business has become in recent years. Since the pandemic, movies like “Barbie,” “Spider-Man: No Way Home” and “Top Gun: Maverick” have pushed ticket sales to record heights, but fallow periods in between box-office sensations have grown longer. Ticket sales over the Memorial Day weekend were the worst in three decades.

Some of 2024’s downturn can be attributed to release-schedule juggling caused by last year’s writers and actors strikes. The biggest new release over the weekend was Jeff Nichols’ motorcycle gang drama “The Bikeriders,” a film originally slated to open in 2023 before the actors strike prompted its postponement.

“The Bikeriders,” starring Jodie Comer, Austin Butler and Tom Hardy, came in on the high side of expectations with $10 million in its opening weekend. The film, which cost about $35 million to produce, was originally to be released by Disney before New Regency took it to Focus Features last fall.

The strong business for “Inside Out 2” appeared to raise ticket sales generally. Sony Pictures’ “Bad Boys: Ride or Die” held well in its third week of release, collecting $18.8 million. It remained in second place. The “Bad Boys” sequel, starring Will Smith and Martin Lawrence, has grossed $146.9 million domestically thus far.

Kevin Costner’s ‘Yellowstone’ ride officially over, actor says

Kevin Costner, currently promoting the film series “Horizon: An American Saga,” says he’s shifting focus away from TV commitments.

EVAN AGOSTINI, INVISION/AP

BY ALEXANDRA DEL ROSARIO
Los Angeles Times

Still holding out hope that Kevin Costner might return to “Yellowstone”? Let John Dutton set the record straight.

Costner, who starred in the hit Paramount series for five seasons, revealed on social media that his time with “Yellowstone” is officially over. Amid the release of his film “Horizon: An American Saga,” the actor-director said June 20 on Instagram, “I just realized that I’m not going to be able to continue.”

The Oscar winner, 69, put to rest speculation about a return more than a year after news of his departure broke. Reports about Costner’s exit first surfaced in February 2023. In September, he mentioned negotiation issues with the studios behind the beloved series.

In May 2023, Paramount announced that the blockbuster series was to end, with its episodes split into two batches. Costner says now that a return for “season 5B or into the future” is unlikely.

“Yellowstone,” created by Taylor Sheridan, premiered in 2018 and became a hit for the network. Costner starred as the Dutton family patriarch who owns Montana’s largest ranch. In 2023, he earned a Golden Globe Award for his performance.

In his Instagram video directed at fans, Costner said of “Yellowstone,” “It was something that really changed me. I loved it and you loved it and I just wanted to let you know that I won’t be returning.”

Costner released his statement as he promotes “Horizon,” which was reportedly one reason he decided to leave “Yellowstone.” Last year, the Hollywood Reporter reported that Costner and Sheridan were at odds over the former’s “Horizon” schedule and how it allegedly complicated his “Yellowstone” commitments.

“His movie seems to be a great priority to him and he wants to shift focus,” Sheridan told the Hollywood Reporter last June. “I sure hope [the movie is] worth it — and that it’s a good one.”

“Horizon: An America Saga,” the first in a four-film series, is in theaters on Friday.

‘Hawaii Five-0’ fan favorite, former UFC fighter Wily dies

Taylor Wily, a former sumo wrestler who became known for his role as confidential informant Kamekona Tupuola on both “Hawaii Five-0” and “Magnum P.I,” has died, his friend and a “Hawaii Five-0” showrunner both said on June 21. He was 56.

Wily

“Hawaii Five-0” showrunner Peter M. Lenkov confirmed his death to The Associated Press and shared multiple tributes to the actor on Instagram, writing “I am devastated. Heartbroken” in a caption of a photo of the two.

Lenkov said it was hard to describe how “special” Wily was and lauded the actor for his skills.

“Despite the fact that a lot of his ‘Hawaii Five-0’ and ‘Magnum’ scenes featured his comedy skills, he was an incredible dramatic actor, as well,” Lenkov said.

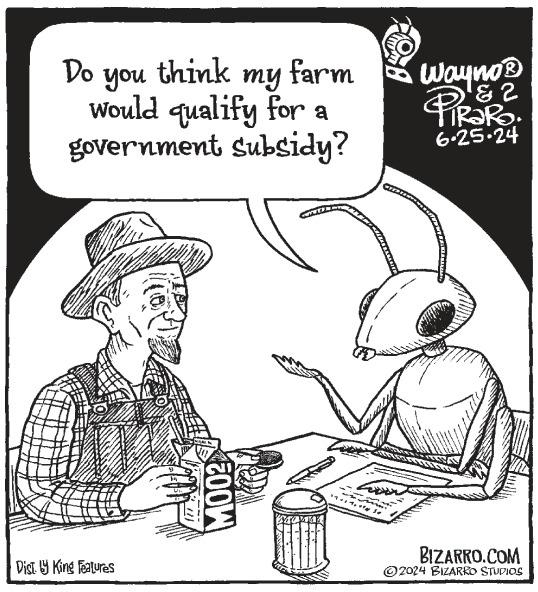
Wily played Kamekona on “Hawaii Five-0” from 2010-2020 and became a fan favorite. He continued in the same role with the reboot of “Magnum P.I.” and made a memorable appearance as a hotel worker in the 2008 comedy “Forgetting Sarah Marshall.”

Before he began acting, Wily, born Teila Tuli, was a sumo wrestler and UFC 1 fighter. He became the first knockout victim in UFC history in 1993 when opponent Gerard Gordeau’s kick knocked a tooth out of Wily’s mouth, ending the fight after 26 seconds.

Wily is survived by his wife, Halona, and their two children.

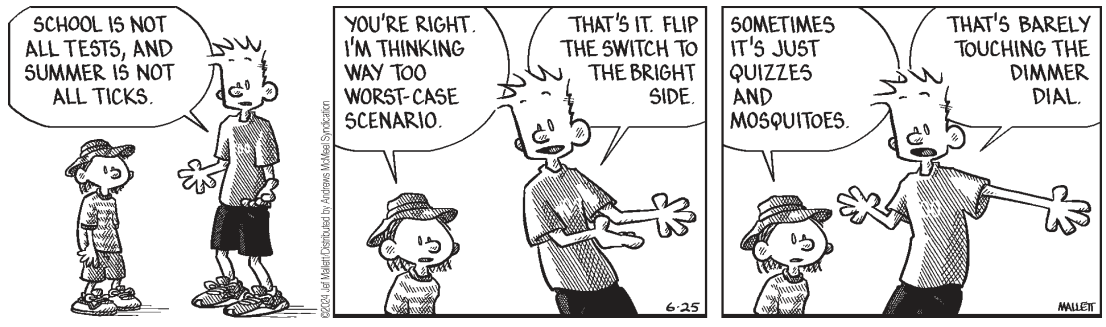
From The Associated Press

Bizarro

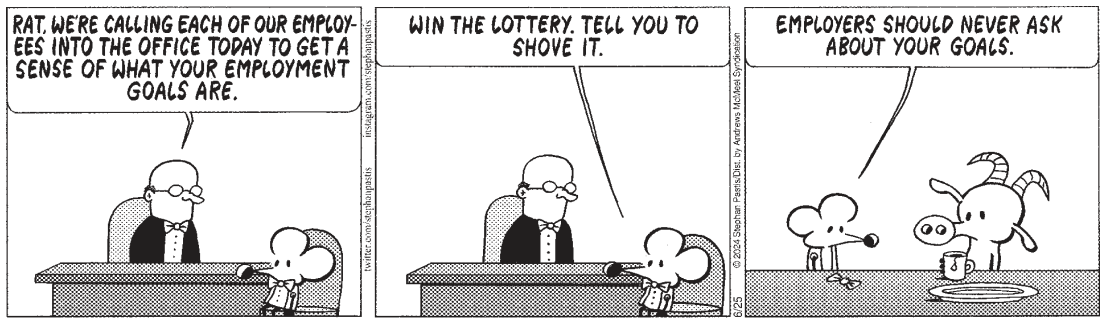


Loose Parts

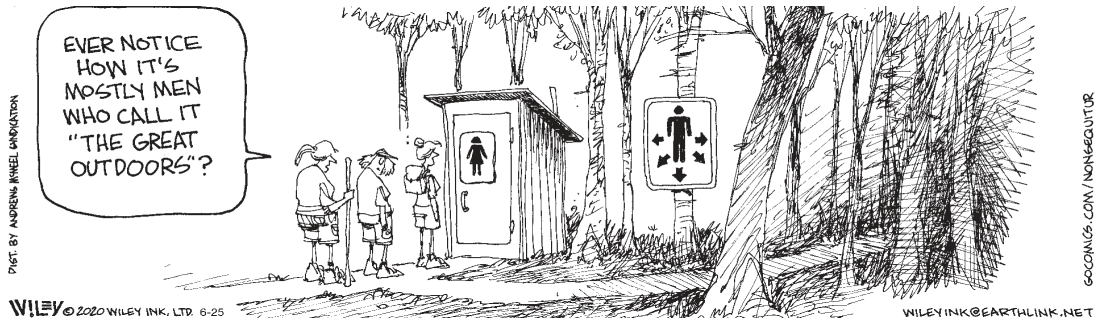
Frazz



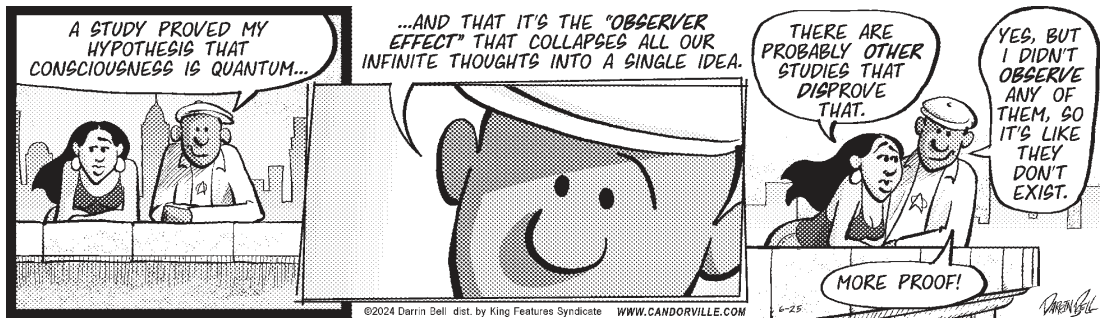
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur

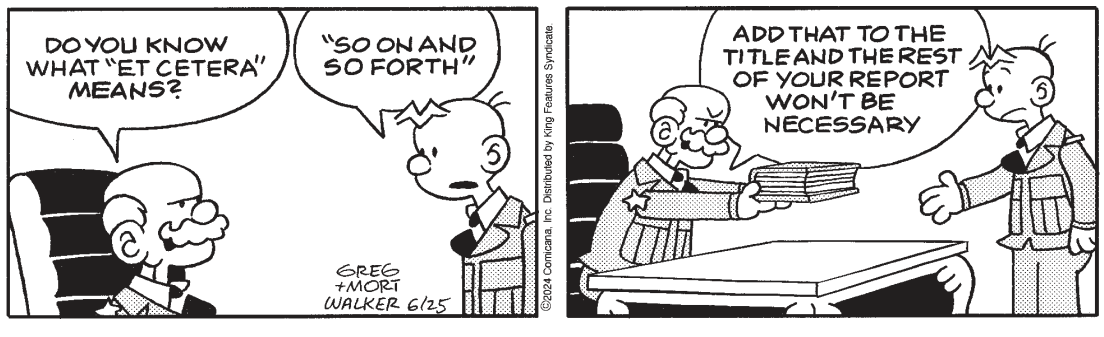


Candorville

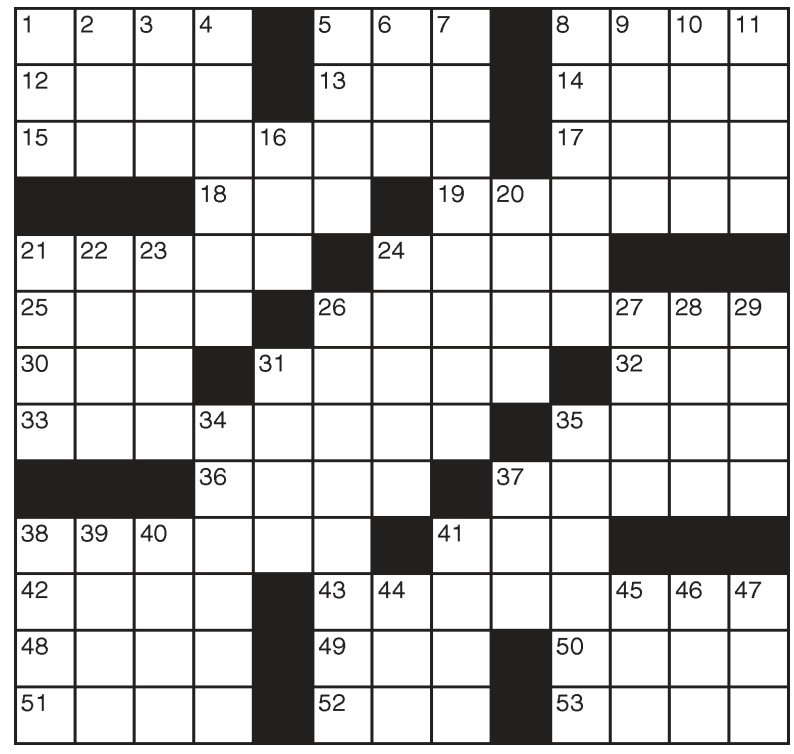


Carpe Diem

Beetle Bailey



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

1 John Irving hero
5 Auction action
8 "— boy!"
12 "The Time Machine" people
13 Aussie hopper
14 Former Chicago mayor Emanuel
15 Chinese-born concert pianist
17 Beagle's bane
18 Actor Cariou
19 Wee amounts
21 Called a strike?
24 Rude dude
25 Passion
26 Frilly ornamentation
30 Bonn conjunction
31 Wooden box
32 Billboards
33 Top-secret
35 Squeezes (out)
36 Alsace assents
37 Asparagus unit
38 Fantasized
41 Kung — chicken
42 Bring up
43 Curly-tailed dog
48 Pismires
49 Boom times
50 Roll call reply
51 Audio equipment brand
52 Calif. clock setting
53 Feeder filler

DOWN

1 Solidify
2 In the style of
3 Darling of baseball
4 Pooh's pal
5 Muffin choice
6 Charged bit
7 Canine
8 "Bow-wow!"
9 Body powder
10 Biblical pronoun
11 You love (Lat.)
16 Guided
20 Libertine
21 "Nope!"
22 Bistro handout
23 Cushions
24 Army bigwigs
26 Healthy dessert
27 Yard tool
28 Classic theaters
29 Cold War initials
31 Pal
34 Raspy
35 Geological periods
37 Cutting tool
38 Sans pizzazz
39 Gambling city
40 Diner sign
41 Blog entry
44 Some printers
45 Haw preceder
46 Mine matter
47 Marry

Answer to Previous Puzzle

I	S	P		S	T	R	U	M		C	V	S
N	E	A		M	A	D	R	E		R	E	L
K	I	L	L	E	R	A	B	S		I	R	A
			A	L	G		A	S	I	M	O	V
S	U	B	T	L	E		N	E	V	E		
A	N	A		S	T	Y		S	A	L	E	S
R	I	C	H		S	E	T		N	A	C	L
A	S	K	E	D		N	U	N		B	R	A
		S	A	R	I		R	I	G	S	U	P
M	I	T	T	E	N		F	A	R			
A	R	A		S	N	O	W	C	R	A	B	S
G	A	B		S	I	N	A	I		C	O	Y
I	Q	S		Y	E	A	R	N		T	A	R

6-25 CRYPTOQUIP

ERQY IQNIBQ XJQ LNPIBQSQBU XWJXVG NW QBQAXSNJO, V JQLCNY SRQU EVBB SXCQ OSQIO SN XANVG SRQP.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: VERY BIG MAMMAL THAT IS DRESSING UP IN A TIE-DYED T-SHIRT AND LOVE BEADS: A HIPPIE-POTAMUS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals P

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OPINION

Unleash K-pop balloons on North Korea

By Bruce W. Bennett
Los Angeles Times

North Korea has signaled an escalation in its "balloon war" with South Korea over the past month, sending hundreds of inflatables southward with payloads of trash and manure.

A worthy South Korean response could involve using balloons to deliver upbeat news and K-pop music deep into the North — not just blasting it over loudspeakers at the border.

With the goal of reining in North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's ongoing pursuit of nuclear weapons, South Korea could launch a balloon-borne offensive to deliver a greater quantity of positive information about conditions in the outside world and especially in South Korea, along with the optimistic strains of K-pop and the sagas of K-dramas.

Once the South has shown Kim that it is willing and able to flood the North with such content, threats of a continuing deluge could inspire him to rethink his nuclear plans.

Here's why. In the recent past, Kim has become paranoid about his people being exposed to outside information, particularly details about cultural touchstones and lifestyle advances in South Korea.

North Korea is an impoverished and distressed country without freedoms, in contrast to its neighbor South Korea, a modern, globally engaged country with a population that enjoys freedom, opportunity and wealth. Showing the North Korean people how their counterparts to the south live would at the very least be destabilizing for the regime. Kim's recent behavior suggests that he is concerned that outside information is already contributing to instability in the North that could one day threaten his rule.

A new balloon offensive could threaten to repeatedly target Pyongyang with payloads of a million or so USB drives, each loaded with South Korean music and TV shows and with messages to the North Korean elite. The necessary inflatable delivery technology already exists: South Korean activists have developed "smart balloons" that could target USB drops over specific parts of Pyongyang and also carry speakers.

AP

North Korean defector Park Sang-hak, left, and a member of Fighters For A Free North Korea hold balloons bearing anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets in Paju, near the border with North Korea in South Korea last week.

Such an offensive could prod North Korea toward shutting down one or more of its nuclear weapon production facilities or abandoning plans for a seventh nuclear weapon test — and South Korea should reward either move by ending the media bombardment. As long as Pyongyang refuses to yield in such meaningful ways, the drops should continue and expand.

A few years ago Kim called K-pop a "vicious cancer" corrupting the young in the North. His state media have warned that if left unchecked, it would make North Korea "crumble like a damp wall." And what could be more scary to a third-generation dictator like Kim than having his regime crumble?

Kim apparently hopes that by portraying South Koreans as enemies of the North Korean people and imposing severe penalties on those consuming things from South Korea, he will be able to stop his people from learning about the outside world.

But these steps may only be delaying the inevitable: Many North Koreans don't buy the Kim regime's indoctrination, which risibly portrays North Korea as being a " utopia surrounded by a hellish outside world."

Threatening an offensive featuring K-pop and other information deployed via balloons could be an important component of a campaign to influence the North Korean regime. In addition to million-drive airdrops, South Korea and the United States could use their media resources to support Korean-language reports about North Korean regime failures and human rights violations and the suffering of the North Korean people.

Washington and Seoul could also increase broadcasts into the North in ways that would circumvent or overwhelm North Korean jamming. And they could threaten to continue and even increase the recently restarted broadcasts along the Demilitarized Zone, which Kim would find objectionable in part because many of the North Korean soldiers in that area are from elite families who live in Pyongyang, families Kim particularly wants to isolate from outside information.

Information efforts could also be increased elsewhere. For example, South Korea and the United States could distribute information and K-pop to North Korean diplomats and business people overseas, to North Korean front companies in various other countries, and to North Korean soldiers who are most likely on the Russian front lines supporting the use of North Korean artillery and missiles against Ukraine.

With survival of his regime on the line, the threat of an ongoing information campaign that relies on balloon drops, followed by the use of other technologies, could help prod Kim to step back from immediate plans such as another nuclear test and to rethink his overall nuclear ambitions. South Korea and the United States could tell Kim that if he does not accept a freeze on nuclear weapons production, his regime should be prepared to be rocked by a vast information offensive.

There is power in information, and Kim has repeatedly signaled that he is terrified by it. South Korea and the United States have few levers to apply against the North. Delivering information that could destabilize the regime is clearly one they should use.

Bruce W. Bennett is a senior international and defense researcher at Rand Corp., a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institution.

Disappearance of Yankee Republicans, Blue Dogs

By Scott Klug
The Fulcrum

Two congressional districts will tell you all you need to know about how much American politics has shifted in recent years and, sadly, how the political middle has been squeezed.

Wrapping around a dramatic coastline, Kennebunkport, Maine, had been the ancestral home of the Bush family since the turn of the 20th century. George H.W. Bush grew up there as the quintessential Yankee Republican. Public service and good manners were built into his DNA. His father had been an investment banker and a senator from Maine.

Geographically, Hope, Ark., is a few thousand miles away, but economically and culturally it is a world away. Bill Clinton grew up with a single mother in the small, hardscrabble Southern town. The state was solidly Democratic, but with a conservative bent. Republicans were a curiosity.

A quick read of the "Almanac of American Politics " will quickly convince you that those two snapshots represent a bygone era.

Neither George Bush nor Bill Clinton could come close to winning his home county today. In 2020, Trump won Hempstead County, Ark., with 65% of the vote. Meanwhile, in Maine, Biden won Kennebunkport with the same share of the vote.

Yet the important story is not what happened in those counties, but what has happened regionally. The moderates in both parties have been wiped out.

In 2010 Barack Obama could count on 71 Blue Dog Democrats to get his health care package passed. Today there are only 13 of them left in Congress and its leaders are not from Dixie but from Hawaii and New York.

There is not a single New England Republican in the House. And in the upcoming presidential election there are few battleground states in those two regions. New Hampshire is still unpredictable. Georgia and North Carolina are swing states.

If you look back at our history, those kinds of shifts are not uncommon.

"No matter what you do, as a political party you're going to make some portion of your coalition angry. Because we are a giant transcontinental nation, diverse in all sorts of ways, and there is no way to govern in a way that makes everyone happy," says Sean Trende, editor of Real Clear Politics.

"So one group comes into the coalition. It makes some other group in that coalition angry. They go to the other party. They're joining up makes some members of that party angry. And so, they leave. And it's just a story that goes on."

Klug served in the House of Representatives from 1991 to 1999. He hosts the political podcast "Lost in the Middle: America's Political Orphans."

SCOREBOARD

AUTO RACING

Spanish Grand Prix

Formula 1
Sunday
At Catalunya Circuit
Barcelona, Spain
Lap length: 4.00 kilometers
(Start position in parentheses)

1. (2) Max Verstappen, Netherlands, Red Bull Racing, 66 laps, 1:28:20.227, 25 points.
2. (1) Lando Norris, Great Britain, McLaren, 66, +2.219 seconds, 19.
3. (3) Lewis Hamilton, Great Britain, Mercedes, 66, +17.790, 15.
4. (4) George Russell, Great Britain, Mercedes, 66, +22.320, 12.
5. (5) Charles Leclerc, Monaco, Ferrari, 66, +22.709, 10.
6. (6) Carlos Sainz Jr, Spain, Ferrari, 66, +31.028, 8.
7. (9) Oscar Piastri, Australia, McLaren, 66, +33.760, 6.
8. (11) Sergio Perez, Mexico, Red Bull Racing, 66, +59.524, 4.
9. (7) Pierre Gasly, France, Alpine, 66, +1:02.025, 2.
10. (8) Esteban Ocon, France, Alpine, 66, +1:11.889, 1.
11. (13) Nico Hulkenberg, Germany, Haas, 66, +1:19.215.
12. (10) Fernando Alonso, Spain, Aston Martin, 65, +1 lap.
13. (15) Guanyu Zhou, China, KICK Sauber, 65, +1 lap.
14. (14) Lance Stroll, Canada, Aston Martin, 65, +1 lap.
15. (18) Daniel Ricciardo, Australia, Racing Bulls, 65, +1 lap.
16. (12) Valtteri Bottas, Finland, KICK Sauber, 65, +1 lap.
17. (16) Kevin Magnussen, Denmark, Haas, 65, +1 lap.
18. (20) Alexander Albon, Thailand, Williams, 65, +1 lap.
19. (17) Yuki Tsunoda, Japan, Racing Bulls, 65, +1 lap.
20. (19) Logan Sargeant, USA, Williams, 64, +2 laps.

Driver standings

1. Max Verstappen, Netherlands, Red Bull Racing, 219 points.
2. Lando Norris, Great Britain, McLaren, 150.
3. Charles Leclerc, Monaco, Ferrari, 148.
4. Carlos Sainz Jr, Spain, Ferrari, 116.
5. Sergio Perez, Mexico, Red Bull Racing, 111.
6. Oscar Piastri, Australia, McLaren, 87.
7. George Russell, Great Britain, Mercedes, 81.
8. Lewis Hamilton, Great Britain, Mercedes, 70.
9. Fernando Alonso, Spain, Aston Martin, 41.
10. Yuki Tsunoda, Japan, Racing Bulls, 19.
11. Lance Stroll, Canada, Aston Martin, 17.
12. Daniel Ricciardo, Australia, Racing Bulls, 9.
13. Oliver Bearman, Great Britain, Haas, 6.
14. Nico Hulkenberg, Germany, Haas, 6.
15. Pierre Gasly, France, Alpine, 5.
16. Esteban Ocon, France, Alpine, 3.
17. Alexander Albon, Thailand, Williams, 2.
18. Kevin Magnussen, Denmark, Haas, 1.

Manufacturers standings

1. Red Bull Racing, 330.
2. Ferrari, 270.
3. McLaren, 237.
4. Mercedes, 151.
5. Aston Martin, 58.
6. Racing Bulls, 28.
7. Alpine, 8.
8. Haas, 7.
9. Williams, 2.
10. KICK Sauber, 0.

USA Today 301

NASCAR Cup Series
Sunday
At New Hampshire Motor Speedway
Loudon, N.H.
Lap length: 1.06 miles
(Start position in parentheses)

1. (4) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 305 laps, 57 points.
2. (23) Chase Briscoe, Ford, 305, 35.
3. (10) Josh Berry, Ford, 305, 43.
4. (19) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 305, 37.
5. (15) Chris Buescher, Ford, 305, 32.
6. (12) Tyler Reddick, Toyota, 305, 33.
7. (13) Ricky Stenhouse Jr, Chevrolet, 305, 30.
8. (28) John H. Nemechek, Toyota, 305, 29.
9. (7) Martin Truex Jr, Toyota, 305, 42.
10. (8) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 305, 31.
11. (31) Ryan Preece, Ford, 305, 26.
12. (16) Todd Gilliland, Ford, 305, 30.
13. (32) Erik Jones, Toyota, 305, 24.
14. (27) Harrison Burton, Ford, 305, 23.
15. (25) Michael McDowell, Ford, 305, 22.
16. (18) Ty Gibbs, Toyota, 305, 21.
17. (20) Carson Hocevar, Chevrolet, 305, 20.
18. (1) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 305, 29.
19. (29) Austin Cindric, Ford, 305, 18.
20. (36) Ty Dillon, Chevrolet, 305, 0.
21. (11) Daniel Suárez, Chevrolet, 305, 16.
22. (35) Kaz Grala, Ford, 305, 15.
23. (26) Corey LaJoie, Chevrolet, 305, 14.
24. (14) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 305, 27.
25. (2) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 305, 25.
26. (3) William Byron, Chevrolet, 305, 11.
27. (21) Noah Gragson, Ford, 305, 10.
28. (9) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 305, 9.
29. (24) Justin Haley, Ford, 305, 8.
30. (34) Zane Smith, Chevrolet, 304, 7.
31. (33) Daniel Hemric, Chevrolet, 303, 6.
32. (6) Joey Logano, Ford, 302, 22.
33. (22) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, accident, 268, 4.
34. (17) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, accident, 265, 3.
35. (30) Kyle Busch, Chevrolet, accident, 222, 2.
36. (5) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, engine, 142, 2.

Race statistics

Average speed of race winner: 84.833 mph.
Time of race: 3 hours, 48 minutes, 14 seconds.
Margin of victory: 1.104 seconds.
Caution flags: 14 for 85 laps.
Lead changes: 6 among 5 drivers.
Lap leaders: C.Elliott 0-41; C.Bell 42-125; T.Gilliland 126-144; D.Hamlin 145-187; C.Bell 188; T.Reddick 189-241; C.Bell 242-305
Leaders summary (driver, times led, laps led): C.Bell, 3 times for 149 laps; T.Reddick, 1 time for 53 laps; D.Hamlin, 1 time for 43 laps; C.Elliott, 1 time for 41 laps; T.Gilliland, 1 time for 19 laps.
Wins: K.Larson, 3; D.Hamlin, 3; C.Bell, 3; W.Byron, 3; C.Elliott, 1; T.Reddick, 1; R.Blaney, 1; B.Keselowski, 1; D.Suárez, 1; A.Cindric, 1.
Top 16 in points: 1. K.Larson, 620; 2. C.Elliott, 620; 3. D.Hamlin, 580; 4. M.Truex, 572; 5. T.Reddick, 560; 6. C.Bell, 555; 7. W.Byron, 548; 8. R.Blaney, 526; 9. R.Chastain, 510; 10. B.Keselowski, 507; 11. T.Gibbs, 499; 12. A.Bowman, 476; 13. C.Buescher, 467; 14. J.Logano, 430; 15. B.Wallace, 417; 16. C.Briscoe, 405.

Firestone Grand Prix of Monterey

IndyCar Series
Sunday
At Weathertech Raceway Laguna Seca
Monterey, Calif.
Lap length: 2.238 miles
(Start position in parentheses)

1. (1) Alex Palou, Dallara-Honda, 95 laps, Running.
2. (4) Colton Herta, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
3. (5) Alexander Rossi, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
4. (8) Romain Grosjean, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
5. (2) Kyle Kirkwood, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
6. (10) Scott Dixon, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
7. (15) Will Power, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
8. (9) Pato O'Ward, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
9. (17) Santino Ferrucci, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
10. (18) Marcus Ericsson, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
11. (3) Felix Rosenqvist, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
12. (23) Nolan Siegal, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
13. (21) Christian Rasmussen, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
14. (24) Pietro Fittipaldi, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
15. (6) Christian Lundgaard, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
16. (12) David Malukas, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
17. (16) Linus Lundqvist, Dallara-Honda, 95, Running.
18. (13) Agustin Canapino, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
19. (14) Josef Newgarden, Dallara-Chevrolet, 95, Running.
20. (25) Sting Ray Robb, Dallara-Chevrolet, 94, Running.
21. (7) Scott McLaughlin, Dallara-Chevrolet, 93, Running.
22. (11) Marcus Armstrong, Dallara-Honda, 93, Running.
23. (22) Kyfinn Simpson, Dallara-Honda, 86, Did not finish.
24. (19) Graham Rahal, Dallara-Honda, 86, Did not finish.
25. (26) Jack Harvey, Dallara-Honda, 82, Did not finish.
26. (20) Rinus VeeKay, Dallara-Chevrolet, 72, Did not finish.
27. (27) Luca Ghiotto, 34, Did not finish.

Race statistics

Average speed of race winner: 102.740 mph.
Time of race: 02:04:09.8545.
Margin of victory: 1.9780 seconds.
Cautions: 5 for 14 laps.
Lead changes: 7 among 5 drivers.
Lap leaders: Kirkwood 1-24, Palou 25-26, Rossi 27-36, Palou 37-55, Herta 56-63, Palou 64-69, Newgarden 70-74, Palou 75.
Points: Palou 285, Power 262, Dixon 253, Herta 217, Kirkwood 210, O'Ward 208, Rossi 198, McLaughlin 188, Newgarden 181, Rosenqvist 176.

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	15	3	.833	—
Connecticut	13	3	.813	1
Atlanta	6	9	.400	7½
Chicago	6	9	.400	7½
Indiana	7	11	.389	8
Washington	4	13	.235	10½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	13	3	.813	—
Seattle	10	6	.625	3
Las Vegas	8	6	.571	4
Phoenix	8	8	.500	5
Los Angeles	4	13	.235	9½
Dallas	3	13	.188	10

Saturday's games

Washington 97, Dallas 69
New York 98, Los Angeles 88
Minnesota 73, Phoenix 60

Sunday's games

New York 96, Atlanta 75
Seattle 72, Connecticut 61
Washington 92, Dallas 84
Chicago 88, Indiana 87

Monday's games

No games scheduled.

Tuesday's games

Minnesota at New York

Wednesday's games

No games scheduled.

COLLEGE BASEBALL

College World Series

At Omaha, Neb.
(Double Elimination)
Friday, June 14

North Carolina 3, Virginia 2
Tennessee 12, Florida St. 11

Saturday, June 15

Kentucky 5, NC State 4, 10 innings
Texas A&M 3, Florida 2

Sunday, June 16

Florida St. 7, Virginia 3, Virginia eliminated
Tennessee 6, North Carolina 1

Monday, June 17

Florida 5, NC State 4, NC State eliminated
Texas A&M 5, Kentucky 1

Tuesday, June 18

Florida St. 9, North Carolina 5, North Carolina eliminated

Wednesday, June 19

Florida 15, Kentucky 4, Kentucky eliminated
Tennessee 7, Florida St. 2, Florida St. eliminated
Texas A&M 6, Florida 0, Florida eliminated

Championship Series
(Best-of-three)

Saturday: Texas A&M 9, Tennessee 5
Sunday: Tennessee 4, Texas A&M 1
Monday: Tennessee vs. Texas A&M

PRO HOCKEY

NHL playoffs

STANLEY CUP FINAL
(Best-of-seven)
Florida 3, Edmonton 3

Florida 3, Edmonton 0
Florida 4, Edmonton 1
Florida 4, Edmonton 3
Edmonton 8, Florida 1
Edmonton 5, Florida 3
Edmonton 5, Florida 1
Monday: at Florida

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Inter Miami CF	12	3	5	41	46	29
Cincinnati	12	4	3	39	32	23
New York	9	4	7	34	34	25
Charlotte FC	9	6	5	32	23	20
Columbus	8	3	6	30	29	17
NYCFC	9	8	2	29	26	23
Nashville	6	5	8	26	23	23
Toronto FC	7	10	3	24	28	35
Atlanta	5	8	6	21	26	24
Orlando City	5	8	6	21	23	31
Philadelphia	4	7	8	20	31	31
New England	6	10	1	19	17	30
D.C. United	4	9	7	19	26	37
CF Montréal	4	8	7	19	26	41
Chicago	4	9	6	18	23	34

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LAFC	11	4	4	37	38	23
Real Salt Lake	10	3	7	37	40	23
LA Galaxy	10	3	7	37	38	27
Colorado	9	7	4	31	38	32
Minnesota	8	6	5	29	31	29
Portland	7	7	6	27	36	33
Houston	7	6	6	27	26	23
Austin FC	7	7	6	27	23	28
Vancouver	7	7	4	25	26	24
Seattle	6	7	7	25	27	25
FC Dallas	5	9	5	20	27	31
St Louis City	3	6	10	19	24	31
Sporting KC	3	12	5	14	31	44
San Jose	3	14	2	11	29	51

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Saturday, June 22

New England 2, Cincinnati 1
Columbus 4, Sporting Kansas City 0
Houston 4, D.C. United 1
New York 3, Toronto FC 0
Orlando City 4, Chicago 2
Charlotte FC 2, Philadelphia 0
Austin FC 1, Minnesota 0
Nashville 1, New York City FC 0
Atlanta 1, St Louis City 1, tie
Colorado 4, CF Montréal 1
LA Galaxy 1, Real Salt Lake 0
Los Angeles FC 6, San Jose 2
Portland 2, Vancouver 0
Seattle 3, FC Dallas 2

Friday's game

Orlando City at New York City FC

Saturday's games

Toronto FC at Atlanta
Philadelphia at CF Montréal
Columbus at New England
D.C. United at New York
Cincinnati at FC Dallas
Charlotte FC at Houston
Austin FC at Sporting Kansas City
Miami at Nashville
St Louis City at Vancouver
Colorado at Los Angeles FC
Minnesota at Portland
LA Galaxy at San Jose
Chicago at Seattle

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	9	0	5	32	37	20
Orlando	9	0	5	32	27	11
Washington	10	3	1	31	29	17
Gotham FC	8	3	3	27	16	11
Portland	7	5	2	23	26	20
North Carolina	6	7	1	19	16	16
Chicago	5	7	2	17	19	22
Louisville	3	4	7	16	20	18
San Diego	3	5	6	15	12	13
Angel City	4	7	3	15	15	21
Bay FC	5	9	0	15	18	25
Houston	3	6	5	13	11	20
Seattle	2	9	3	9	14	26
Utah Royals FC	2	11	1	7	7	27

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Saturday, June 22

San Diego 0, Houston 0
Bay FC 1, Angel City 0

Sunday's games

Washington 2, Gotham FC 0
Kansas City 4, Portland 1
Louisville 1, Seattle 1
North Carolina 3, Chicago 1

Friday's games

Houston at Kansas City
Chicago at San Diego

DEALS

Sunday's transactions

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball

MLB — Suspended Toronto INF Orelvis Martinez 80-games for violation of Major League Baseball's Joint Drug Prevention and Treatment Program.

American League

CHICAGO WHITE SOX — Reinstated OF Eloy Jimenez from the 10-day IL. Optioned OF Oscar Colas to Charlotte (IL).

NEW YORK YANKEES — Placed OF Giancarlo Stanton on the 10-day IL. Transferred RHP Nick Burdi to the 60-day IL. Acquired 3B J.D. Davis from Oakland in exchange for cash considerations and SS Jordan Groshans. Recalled SS Oswald Peraza from Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL). Optioned ONF Oswald Peraza to Scranton/Wilkes/Barre.

OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Selected the contract of RHP Aaron Brooks from Las Vegas (PCL). Placed RHP Dany Jiménez on the 15-day IL, retroactive to June 20.

TEXAS RANGERS — Reinstated RHP Max Scherzer from the 60-day IL. Optioned RHP Yerry Rodriguez to Round Rock (PCL).

TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Placed SS Orelvis Martinez on the restricted list. Selected the contract of INF Steward Berroa from Buffalo (IL). Claimed RHP Jose Cuas off waivers from the Chicago Cubs.

National League

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS — Optioned LHP Tommy Henry to Reno (PCL). Recalled LHP Brandon Hughes from Reno.

CHICAGO CUBS — Recalled RHP Luke Little from Iowa (IL). Placed RHP Mark Leiter Jr. on the 15-day IL.

CINCINNATI REDS — Designated C Austin Wynns for assignment. Sent OF Conner Capel outright to Louisville (IL). Recalled SS Livan Soto from Louisville.

COLORADO ROCKIES — Reinstated LHP Kyle Freeland from the 60-day IL. Designated LHP Austin Kitchen for assignment.

MIAMI MARLINS — Placed LHP Braxton Garret on the 15-day IL, retroactive to June 20. Optioned RHP Shaun Anderson to Jacksonville (IL). Selected the contracts of RHP Kyle Tyler and LHP Kent Emanuel from Jacksonville.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Placed RHP Taijuan Walker on the 15-day IL, retroactive to June 22. Recalled RHP Michael Mercado from Lehigh Valley (IL).

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Placed RHP David Bednar on the 15-day IL, retroactive to June 20. Recalled LHP Justin Bruihl from Indianapolis (IL).

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Sent LHPs Blake Snell and Robbie Ray and OF LaMonte Wade Jr. to Sacramento (PCL) on rehab assignments.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League

SAN JOSE SHARKS — Acquired F Egor Afanasyev from Nashville in exchange for F Ozzy Wiesblatt.

GOLF

Travelers Championship

PGA Tour
Sunday
At TPC River Highlands
Cromwell, Conn.
Purse: $20 million
Yardage: 6,835; Par: 70
Final Round
(x-won on first playoff hole)

x-S. Scheffler, $3,600,000	65-64-64-65—258	-22
Tom Kim, $2,160,000	62-65-65-66—258	-22
Tom Hoge, $1,160,000	69-63-66-62—260	-20
Sungjae Im, $1,160,000	67-64-63-66—260	-20
Akshay Bhatia, $702,500	64-65-64-69—262	-18
Patrick Cantlay, $702,500	68-65-64-65—262	-18
Tony Finau, $702,500	65-67-64-66—262	-18
Justin Thomas, $702,500	68-63-65-66—262	-18
Wyndham Clark, $520,000	66-68-66-63—263	-17
Brian Harman, $520,000	67-69-65-62—263	-17
Shane Lowry, $520,000	69-62-65-67—263	-17
Cameron Young, $520,000	72-66-59-66—263	-17
Collin Morikawa, $400,000	66-63-66-69—264	-16
Xander Schauffele, $400,000	65-65-64-70—264	-16
Tommy Fleetwood, $360,000	67-67-66-65—265	-15
Robert Macintyre, $310,000	70-62-66-68—266	-14
Matthieu Pavon, $310,000	71-65-62-68—266	-14
Patrick Rodgers, $310,000	65-68-67-66—266	-14

LIV Golf Nashville

Sunday
At The Grove
College Grove, Tenn.
Purse: $20 million
Yardage: 7,290; Par: 71
Final Round

Tyrrell Hatton, $4,000,000	65-64-65—194	-19
Sam Horsfield, $2,250,000	67-68-65—200	-13
B. Dechambeau, $1,000,000	67-66-68—201	-12
Jon Rahm, $1,000,000	70-63-68—201	-12
Lee Westwood, $1,000,000	69-66-66—201	-12
Joaquin Niemann, $1,000,000	70-69-62—201	-12
John Catlin, $562,500	66-66-70—202	-11
Sebastian Munoz, $562,500	67-70-65—202	-11
Carlos Ortiz, $396,875	68-66-69—203	-10
Cameron Smith, $396,875	69-65-69—203	-10
Richard Bland, $396,875	70-67-66—203	-10
Paul Casey, $396,875	70-68-65—203	-10
Louis Oosthuizen, $340,000	70-70-64—204	-9
Brendan Steele, $310,000	71-67-67—205	-8
Pat Perez, $310,000	72-69-64—205	-8
Harold Varner III, $277,500	71-64-71—206	-7
Matthew Wolff, $277,500	72-67-67—206	-7
Jason Kokrak, $230,000	71-65-71—207	-6
Euginio Chacarra, $230,000	67-70-70—207	-6
Kieran Vincent, $230,000	71-66-70—207	-6

Women's PGA Championship

LPGA Tour and PGA of America
Sunday
At South & North Combined
Sammamish, Wash.
Purse: $10 million
Yardage: 6,731; Par: 72
Final Round

Amy Yang, $1,560,000	70-68-71-72—281	-7
Jin Young Ko, $702,478	72-68-73-71—284	-4
Lilia Vu, $702,478	75-70-68-71—284	-4
Miyuu Yamashita, $702,478	71-70-70-73—284	-4
Ally Ewing, $378,447	72-70-72-71—285	-3
Lauren Hartlage, $378,447	73-69-69-74—285	-3
Mao Saigo, $267,437	70-76-73-67—286	-2
Hinako Shibuno, $267,437	70-70-73-73—286	-2
Linn Grant, $192,046	73-74-70-70—287	-1
Caroline Inglis, $192,046	70-74-69-74—287	-1
Hae-Ran Ryu, $192,046	74-67-75-71—287	-1
Sarah Schmelzel, $192,046	71-67-74-75—287	-1
Lexi Thompson, $192,046	68-72-73-74—287	-1
Esther Henseleit, $150,871	74-73-69-72—288	E
Gaby Lopez, $150,871	73-72-69-74—288	E
Hye Jin Choi, $131,531	75-70-72-72—289	+1
Charley Hull, $131,531	70-73-72-74—289	+1
Hyo Joo Kim, $131,531	71-76-72-70—289	+1
Celine Boutier, $116,057	70-73-75-72—290	+2

Dick's Sporting Goods Open

Champions Tour
Sunday
At En-Joie GC
Endicott, N.Y.
Purse: $2.1 million
Yardage: 6,994; Par: 72
Final Round

Padraig Harrington, $315,000	68-65-68—201	-15
Mike Weir, $184,800	68-67-67—202	-14
Ken Duke, $126,000	69-66-68—203	-13
Mark Hensby, $126,000	70-67-66—203	-13
Ken Tanigawa, $126,000	68-65-70—203	-13
Steve Allan, $71,400	65-69-70—204	-12
Stephen Ames, $71,400	64-69-71—204	-12
Billy Andrade, $71,400	69-67-68—204	-12
Miguel Angel Jimenez, $71,400	68-68-68—204	-12
Doug Barron, $50,400	68-71-66—205	-11
Bob Estes, $50,400	70-64-71—205	-11
Robert Karlsson, $50,400	70-71-64—205	-11
David Bransdon, $39,900	68-67-71—206	-10
K.J. Choi, $39,900	69-68-69—206	-10
Ernie Els, $39,900	67-73-66—206	-10
Notah Begay, $32,603	68-68-71—207	-9
David Duval, $32,603	68-70-69—207	-9
Paul Stankowski, $32,603	67-67-73—207	-9
Y.E. Yang, $32,603	71-68-68—207	-9

WNBA/NBA DRAFT

Reese, Clark deliver in latest showdown

Stars turn out to watch Sky edge Fever

BY ANDREW SELIGMAN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Angel Reese had just pulled off the best performance of her young career to help the Chicago Sky rally past the Indiana Fever and old college rival Caitlin Clark on Sunday.

There was one more thing to do before leaving the court. She shared an embrace with Naismith Hall of Famer Sheryl Swoopes, a big supporter of hers and one of several celebrities in a sellout crowd.

Clark

"She talked to me before I even entered my name into the draft, and she told me she believed in me," Reese said. "Being able to have that person in my corner is something I've always needed. She understands me, she knows what I've been through, what I'm going through."

A game featuring some of the WNBA's brightest young stars delivered in a huge way on a national stage.

Reese had her best outing, scoring a career-high 25 points to go with 16 rebounds to help the Sky rally from 15 down to beat the Fever 88-87. She extended her WNBA rookie record streak of double-doubles to eight games.

She is the first rookie since A'ja Wilson with 25-plus points and 15-plus rebounds in a single game, and she and Wilson are the only players in the league this season to have multiple games with at least 15 points and 15 rebounds.

Clark, meanwhile, finished with 17 points and a franchise-record 13 assists. She made five 3s and grabbed six rebounds, but the Fever couldn't hang on after winning their previous four games.

It was 84-all when Reese scored in the post to put Chicago on top for good with just under a minute remaining following a timeout, drawing a big roar from the crowd.

"I think people are just really excited to see this matchup and anticipate it," Clark said. "Obviously, it's two WNBA teams right in the Midwest, where I grew up. I think people in this area are just really excited about this matchup. You could just feel it driving up in the bus."

Clark saw lines of fans — many wearing her Iowa or Indiana jerseys — outside the arena hours before tipoff.

Courtside seats were going for $5,000 on Ticketmaster an hour before tipoff, and Chicago native Chance The Rapper, comedian Jason Sudeikis and New York Knicks star Jalen Brunson were all part of the sellout crowd. Swoopes got a standing ovation prior to the fourth quarter.

The first month of the season saw the WNBA draw its highest attendance since the league's second season in 1998. Some games have been moved to bigger arenas to accommodate the increased demand. Ratings across ABC, ESPN, ESPN2, CBS, ION and NBA TV were at an all-time high, averaging 1.32 million viewers and nearly tripling last season's average of 462,000.

EILEEN T. MESLAR/AP

Sky forward Angel Reese is interviewed after her team defeated the Indiana Fever 88-87 Sunday in Chicago. Reese scored a career-high 25 points to go with 16 rebounds to help the Sky rally from 15 down.

"I love it," Reese said. "I love it for women's sports because they haven't sold out crowds in a long time. Being able to do this and being able to be here in this moment, continue to grow women's basketball is most import to me."

Clark and Reese met in the NCAA Tournament the past two seasons, with LSU beating Iowa in the championship game and the Hawkeyes getting payback in the Elite Eight this year. Their first two games as pros were marked by a different kind of drama than the one that unfolded on Sunday.

There was the hip check by guard Chennedy Carter on Clark away from the ball on an inbound play during Indiana's 71-70 win on June 1. Clark got knocked to the floor. Carter was called for a foul that resulted in one free throw, and the league later upgraded it to a flagrant-1.

Clark wound up on the ground again just over two weeks later, this time courtesy of Reese. Her right arm struck Clark's head on a drive to the basket, immediately resulting in a flagrant-1.

Both players brushed it off afterward as a basketball play, though Reese also bemoaned "calls that weren't made" and said "I guess some people get a special whistle."

Market: Basketball has never been more popular in France

FROM PAGE 24

grab a ball and find a court to shootaround or play in a pickup game.

Basketball — "le Basket" — has never been more popular here, sports historian Lindsay Krasnoff points out.

"On all the courts I pass now, there is always someone playing," said Krasnoff, author of "Basketball Empire."

Seeing teenagers around Paris wearing NBA jerseys and a basketball under their arm is now a common sight, she added.

One popular spot can be found behind Halle Carpentier — Jemmapes — where the nearby high-rise flats tower over the courts near the popular Saint-Martin canal. Players sit on the sidelines, waiting their turn, as 4-on-4 games take place — first to 21 points win, or first to 16 on more crowded days.

Harnessing talent

France has a proud history when it comes to basketball.

The country boasts of holding the first recorded basketball game in Europe during the 1890s at the Trévise court, near Paris' famed Pigalle nightlife spots.

But the foundation of the country's talent pipeline can be traced back to 1975 when the Paris-based National Institute of Sport, Expertise, and Performance — known as INSEP — started training elite athletes across several sports.

Basketball was among them.

Parker went from being INSEP's rising star to NBA Finals MVP in 2007. Ten years earlier, Parker's ability left coaches awestruck.

"We all said 'this guy is not from the same planet,'" Bernard Faure, a junior teams coach at INSEP, told The AP. "Leadership, athleticism, precision. He had everything."

Detroit Pistons guard Evan Fournier and former NBA players Boris Diaw and Ronny Turiaf also came through INSEP — as did the 18-year-old Salaün, a 6-foot 9-forward.

"Our system has proved itself," said Gilles Thomas, INSEP's basketball director. "Exceptional players are discovered very early. Our system of grid detection makes it really rare for us to miss a talent."

Players graduate from INSEP and can start competing professionally for French teams while still in their teens.

"The ideal path to the NBA is (playing) in France. Our talents play against professionals at a very young age," Faure said.

INSEP scours the country and its overseas territories to bring in the top 36 boys and 36 girls for training camps. Around 20 teenagers are selected.

INSEP's model has also helped club academies better develop young players.

Wembanyama's formative club, Paris-based Nanterre, occasionally loaned him to INSEP's team. Wembanyama then went to ASVEL near Lyon — where Parker is club president — before joining Paris-based Metropolitans 92.

Style of play

The 19-year-old Risacher won the French league's best young player award last season while playing for JL Bourg.

The team's coach, Frédéric Fauthoux, says the French brand of basketball "is very athletic," which can ease the transition to the NBA or college basketball in the U.S.

"That's what separates us from our European rivals and connects us to the style played in America," he said. "We know how to develop them into tall and versatile players that the NBA craves. ... Young French players experience the French championship, which is very rough and athletic, and play against European teams who are much more tactical."

David Kahn agrees. The 62-year-old American is the president at Paris Basketball club and was formerly president of the NBA's Timberwolves.

Risacher stands out, Kahn said, because he has "a more modern skillset with an NBA frame."

Kahn believes basketball's popularity in France may soon rival soccer — a tall task with the likes of superstar Kylian Mbappé leading Les Bleus.

"Some kids that might have grown up thinking about playing football now start thinking about basketball," Kahn told The AP at his team's offices. "This will continue year after year with French basketball producing this kind of talent."

The upcoming Paris Games will provide a huge opportunity for French basketball enthusiasts to win over even more fans — and future players.

France narrowly lost the last Olympic men's final while the women took home the bronze at the Tokyo Games.

MLB

ROUNDUP

Valdez leads Astros to sweep of O's

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Framber Valdez pitched seven solid innings and Jeremy Peña and Yainer Diaz had three RBIs apiece to give the Houston Astros an 8-1 win over the Baltimore Orioles on Sunday and complete a three-game sweep.

"That's Astros baseball right there," manager Joe Espada said. "That's what we expect from our team. ... We did so many things so well. That was a series we needed as a club."

It's just the second time the Orioles have been swept this season after losing three in a row to the Cardinals from May 20-22.

Valdez (6-5) allowed six hits and a run with seven strikeouts in seven innings to bounce back after consecutive losses.

Jose Altuve hit a leadoff homer as the Astros jumped on Albert Suárez (3-2) for four runs in the first. Alex Bregman had a season-high four hits for Houston, which extended its winning streak to five games.

"They're a great ballclub and they've got a great pitching staff," Bregman said. "But we swung the bat really well today and all series long and was very proud of the effort and the preparation of the guys and we've got to keep that rolling."

Jordan Westburg homered for a second straight game to extend Baltimore's franchise-record streak of games with a home run to 22. But the Orioles couldn't do much else offensively as they managed just one run for a second straight game.

MICHAEL WYKE/AP

Astros starting pitcher Framber Valdez delivers against the Baltimore Orioles during the first inning Sunday in Houston. Valdez gave up one run and struck out seven in seven innings to earn the win.

Phillies 4, Diamondbacks 1: Cristopher Sánchez (5-3) tossed seven scoreless innings a day after receiving a new contract, Bryce Harper doubled and singled, and NL-best Philadelphia beat visiting Arizona.

David Dahl hit a two-run single, and Bryson Stott and Nick Castellanos also had RBIs for the Phillies. Philadelphia took two of three in the series that was a rematch of last season's NL Championship Series, won by Arizona.

Braves 3, Yankees 1: Max Fried shut down New York for five innings before tiring on a blistering afternoon, Jarred Kelenic drove in two runs and visiting Atlanta got the victory for its eighth win in 10 games following a five-game losing streak.

Fried (7-3) allowed three singles in the first five innings, then gave up three hits in the sixth that included Anthony Volpe's RBI double. Fried improved to 4-1 in his last six starts, giving up six hits in six innings with four strikeouts and no walks.

Mets 5, Cubs 2: Luis Severino (5-2) tossed six shutout innings, Francisco Lindor and Brandon Nimmo hit back-to-back homers and visiting New York topped Chicago after closer Edwin Díaz was ejected in the ninth before throwing a pitch.

Díaz came on to try to seal the victory, but was tossed for having a foreign substance after umpires inspected his hands and glove. He is now facing up to a 10-game suspension.

Rays 3, Pirates 1: Yandy Díaz hit a home run off the first pitch from Paul Skenes before leading off a two-run eighth inning with a single, sparking a win for visiting Tampa Bay over Pittsburgh.

Díaz opened the first inning by driving Skenes' near-100 mph first-pitch fastball off the right-field foul pole. He was 3-for-4 with two hits off Skenes, stretching his hit streak to 16 games.

Tigers 11, White Sox 2: Colt Keith and Akil Baddoo homered in a five-run first inning and Riley Greene cleared the fences in a four-run second, lifting host Detroit to a win over Chicago.

The Tigers scored more runs in two at-bats on Matt Vierling's leadoff triple and Keith's two-run homer than in any of the previous six games, and they were just getting warmed up in the series-winning rout.

Marlins 6, Mariners 4: Nick Gordon and Jesús Sánchez homered as host Miami beat Seattle.

Jazz Chisholm Jr. had two hits and an RBI for the Marlins, who clinched the three-game series against the AL West-leading Mariners.

Red Sox 4, Royals 0: Connor Wong and Rob Refsnyder each hit two-run homers as visiting Boston took the series from Cincinnati with a victory.

The Red Sox improved to 24-16 on the road, fourth-best in the majors. Boston has won seven of eight and is now a season-best six games over .500.

Rangers 4, Royals 0: Three-time Cy Young Award winner Max Scherzer retired 15 of the 16 batters he faced over five scoreless innings in his season debut, rookie Wyatt Langford extended his RBI streak to five games and host Texas beat Kansas City to complete a three-game series sweep.

José Ureña pitched the final four innings for his first save and extended the Rangers' consecutive scoreless innings pitched streak to a season-high 22, their longest since 23 in a row in September 2016.

Cardinals 5, Giants 3: Sonny Gray (9-4) allowed one hit over seven innings, Alec Burleson drove in two runs and host St. Louis completed a three-game sweep with a win over San Francisco.

Brendan Donovan and Matt Carpenter also drove in runs for the Cardinals, who have won five of seven.

Guardians 6, Blue Jays 5: Steven Kwan and Josh Naylor hit solo homers as AL Central-leading Cleveland scored five straight runs in the third and fourth innings, helping it beat visiting Toronto.

The Guardians won their fifth straight and are a season-high 23 games over .500. Cleveland and rookie manager Stephen Vogt have the best home record in the majors at 26-9 and extended its divisional lead to eight games over Minnesota.

Brewers 6, Padres 2: Rookie Tobias Myers continued his terrific June by winning his fourth straight start and Blake Perkins highlighted a five-run second inning with a two-run single as NL Central-leading Milwaukee beat host San Diego to avoid a four-game sweep.

Myers (5-2) held the Padres to one run and five hits in five innings, with three strikeouts and no walks. He allowed one or no earned runs for the fourth time in his June starts — all Brewers wins — and won his fifth straight decision dating to May 21.

Twins 3, Athletics 0: Pablo López took a perfect game into the sixth inning and matched a career high with 14 strikeouts in eight scoreless innings as visiting Minnesota beat Oakland in the rubber match of a three-game series.

López (7-6) limited Oakland to two singles and a walk, retiring the first 17 batters he faced before Lawrence Butler singled on a line drive to right with two outs in the sixth.

Nationals 2, Rockies 1: Lane Thomas doubled in the tying run and Joey Meneses singled to drive in the go-ahead run as visiting Washington rallied in the ninth inning to beat Colorado, taking the three-game series.

Down 1-0 heading into the top of the ninth and held to one hit by starter Kyle Freeland and reliever Nick Mears, the Nationals finally broke through against reliever Jalen Beeks (4-4).

Scoreboard

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	52	28	.650	—
Baltimore	49	28	.636	1½
Boston	42	36	.538	9
Tampa Bay	38	40	.487	13
Toronto	35	42	.455	15½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	49	26	.653	—
Minnesota	43	35	.551	7½
Kansas City	42	37	.532	9
Detroit	36	41	.468	14
Chicago	21	58	.266	30

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	45	35	.563	—
Houston	38	40	.487	6
Texas	37	40	.481	6½
Los Angeles	30	46	.395	13
Oakland	29	51	.363	16

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	51	26	.662	—
Atlanta	43	32	.573	7
Washington	38	39	.494	13
New York	37	39	.487	13½
Miami	27	50	.351	24

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	45	33	.577	—
St. Louis	39	37	.513	5
Pittsburgh	37	40	.481	7½
Chicago	37	41	.474	8
Cincinnati	36	41	.468	8½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	48	31	.608	—
San Diego	41	41	.500	8½
Arizona	38	40	.487	9½
San Francisco	36	42	.462	11½
Colorado	27	51	.346	20½

Sunday's games

Atlanta 3, N.Y. Yankees 1
Tampa Bay 3, Pittsburgh 1
Miami 6, Seattle 4
Detroit 11, Chicago White Sox 2
Boston 7, Cincinnati 4
Houston 8, Baltimore 1
Texas 4, Kansas City 0
Cleveland 6, Toronto 5
Minnesota 3, Oakland 0
Philadelphia 4, Arizona 1
St. Louis 5, San Francisco 3
Washington 2, Colorado 1
Milwaukee 6, San Diego 2
N.Y. Mets 5, Chicago Cubs 2

Monday's games

Cleveland at Baltimore
Philadelphia at Detroit
Seattle at Tampa Bay
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati
Toronto at Boston
Atlanta at St. Louis
L.A. Dodgers at Chicago White Sox
Miami at Kansas City
Texas at Milwaukee
Oakland at L.A. Angels
Washington at San Diego
Chicago Cubs at San Francisco

Tuesday's games

Cleveland (Allen 8-3) at Baltimore (Irvin 6-3)
Philadelphia (Suárez 10-1) at Detroit (Skubal 8-3)
Seattle (Castillo 6-8) at Tampa Bay (Littell 2-5)
Pittsburgh (Keller 8-4) at Cincinnati (Greene 5-2)
N.Y. Yankees (Cole 0-0) at N.Y. Mets (Peterson 3-0)
Toronto (Gausman 5-6) at Boston (Bello 7-4)
Atlanta (López 5-2) at St. Louis (Gibson 5-2)
Colorado (Gomber 1-4) at Houston (Brown 4-5)
L.A. Dodgers (Miller 1-1) at Chicago White Sox (Flexen 2-6)
Miami (Chirinos 0-0) at Kansas City (Lugo 10-2)
Texas (Heaney 2-8) at Milwaukee (Wilson 4-3)
Oakland (Spence 4-3) at L.A. Angels (Anderson 6-7)
Minnesota (Ryan 5-5) at Arizona (Pfaadt 3-6)
Washington (Gore 6-6) at San Diego (Darvish 4-3)
Chicago Cubs (Hendricks 1-4) at San Francisco (TBD)

Calendar

July 12-16 — All-Star Week at Arlington, Texas.
July 14-16 — MLB Draft at Arlington, Texas.

COLLEGE WORLD SERIES/AUTO RACING

REBECCA S. GRATZ/AP

Tennessee's Cal Stark celebrates after hitting a two-run home run against Texas A&M in Game 2 of the College World Series finals in Omaha, Neb., on Sunday.

Tennessee forces 3rd game with clutch win

BY ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Tennessee's prodigious home run prowess arrived too late in Game 1 of the College World Series finals.

It showed up right on time in Game 2.

Tennessee's Dylan Dreiling hit the go-ahead homer in the seventh inning, Cal Stark went deep in the eighth and after Nate Snead turned back a scoring threat by Texas A&M in the bottom of the ninth, the Volunteers had forced a deciding third game with a 4-1 victory Sunday.

One of the teams won its first national title in baseball and became the fifth straight champion from the Southeastern Conference when they met Monday night.

"I felt we were more true to who we were today in pregame, in the dugout, during the game," Vols coach Tony Vitello said. "It's easy to say that because we end up doing OK on the scoreboard. But I'd rather go into battle with that group the way they showed up today, and hope they do the same (Monday)."

Tennessee (59-13) is trying to become the first No. 1 national seed to win the championship since Miami in 1999.

This will be the fifth CWS finals since 2018, and second straight, to go three games.

"To think you're going to roll right through it in two games would be ... That would have been nice," Aggies coach Jim Schlossnagle said. "We get to play the last college baseball game of the season, and that's awesome."

The Vols, who lost the finals opener 9-5 Saturday, haven't dropped consecutive games since March 16-17 at Alabama.

Bell takes NASCAR race on rain tires

BY DAN GELSTON
Associated Press

LOUDON, N.H. — Christopher Bell raised a broom over his head and clutched a 24-pound lobster in victory lane all because he earned his third Cup win of the season in an outcome that would have been impossible before this NASCAR season.

Heck, it still looked pretty grim for most of Sunday at a rainy track.

Once the skies cleared, NASCAR busted out its latest creation it had saved for a rainy day — wet weather Goodyear tires that allowed the race at New Hampshire Motor Speedway to continue all the way to a thrilling end.

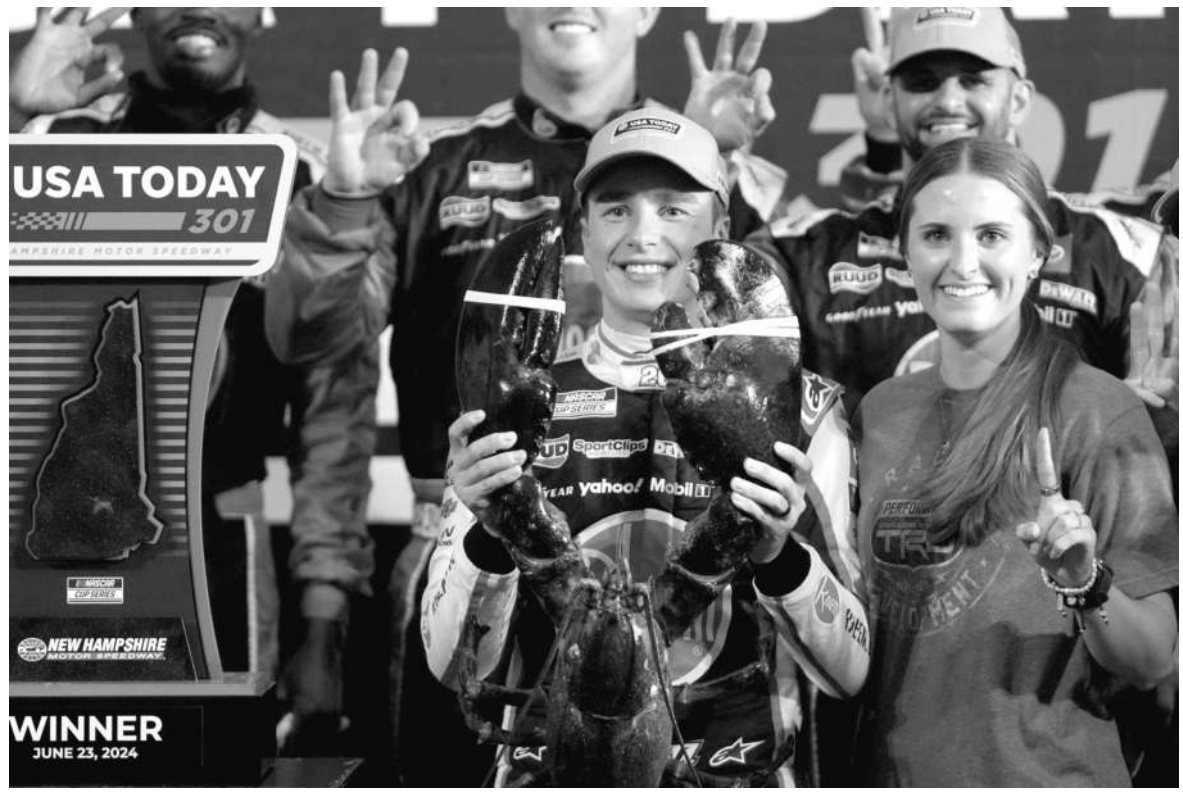
Bell mastered the Cup Series' first race that ended with cars running on rain tires and pulled away after a 2-hour, 15-minute weather delay to beat darkness and the field and win Sunday at New Hampshire.

He also swept the weekend at New Hampshire following Saturday's win in the Xfinity Series.

"Hopefully that was entertaining because it was something different, something new and nobody knew what to expect and what to do," Bell said. "The guys that figured it out the quickest were the most successful."

On Friday, Bell spoiled the reveal that Chase Briscoe is joining him at Joe Gibbs Racing in 2025. Then he ruined Briscoe's best shot at his first win of the season, holding him off over the final two laps of the overtime finish.

With darkness falling, Bell cruised past Josh Berry and Briscoe and remained the driver to beat at New Hampshire. He has four wins in the Xfinity Series at Loudon and won a Cup race at the track for a second time.



STEVEN SENNE/AP

Christopher Bell holds up a lobster while standing with his wife Morgan as they celebrate after he won the NASCAR Cup Series race at New Hampshire Motor Speedway on Sunday in Loudon, N.H.

This time, he won with 86 laps raced on the new tires.

"It was dark. It was very, very dark. That was creeping up in a hurry to being too dark to race," Bell said. "Certainly there were dry parts on the track, but there were still a lot of wet parts on the track, too. I can't tell you how far away it was, but in my opinion I didn't think it was ready for the dry tires yet."

Bell was used to the rain — he won last month's rain-shortened Coca-Cola 600 with 151 laps left in the race.

New Hampshire actually needed four extra laps. Briscoe finished second and Berry was third. Kyle Larson and Chris Buescher completed the top five.

"I think we could have probably started with the track a little bit wetter," Briscoe said. "The beginning was pretty fun. We were all over the place. Five wide at times and slipping and sliding around."

Even with the start of the race bumped up a half-hour, New Hampshire was a mess about from the moment the green flag was dropped. The race was marred by wrecks that wiped some of NASCAR's biggest stars out of contention — all while the rest of the field tried to remain in contention and beat the looming rain that hovered over the entire weekend.

Tyler Reddick, who won at Talladega this season, held the lead when the race was red-flagged because of rain with 82 laps left in the scheduled 301-lap race.

Fans fled the grandstands and drivers went back to their motorhomes with seemingly no chance of a return as the gloomy weather worsened. New Hampshire and NASCAR waited out a tornado watch, nearby lightning strikes and a severe thunderstorm warning before it could resume the race after a delay of more than 2 hours — and after crew members swept standing water off pit road — and cars all hit the 1.058-mile track on new tires.

Palou wins at Laguna, reclaims IndyCar lead

Associated Press

MONTEREY, Calif. — Two-time IndyCar champion Alex Palou reclaimed the lead in the points standings by winning from the pole Sunday at Laguna Seca Raceway.

Palou, now a two-time winner on the permanent road course, has finished on the podium in all four of his career starts at the California track. His win there in the 2022 season finale was believed to be the catalyst for him changing his mind to leave Chip Ganassi Racing for a move to Arrow McLaren Racing.

It is the second win of the season for the Spaniard, not counting his victory in the $1 million exhibition race in March. He wasn't able to explain his dominance on the 11-turn, 2.238-mile jewel of a road course.

"I wish I knew, that way hopefully I could try and analyze and see if I could do the same in other tracks where I'm not as fast," Palou said. "I love this track. When you love a track so much, I think you get something extra that helps everything. The fact that we had really good cars here helps a lot.

"I would say it's a proper track. You cannot really do any mistakes," he continued. "It allows you to push really hard. It's the most beautiful place we go to, for sure."

Palou

Palou lost the lead exiting the first turn of the race to Kyle Kirkwood, but reclaimed it through strategy. He then had to hold off Colton Herta, who was in fuel-saving mode at the end of the race, through three late cautions.

Palou ultimately led 48 of 95 laps.

"I did a mistake and lost the lead. I was not really happy with myself at the beginning and the team had to do a really risky strategy, too risky," Palou said. "It was too risky, but it worked out."

Herta finished second for Andretti Global and Alexander Rossi finished third to earn his first podium of the season — and only his second overall since joining Arrow McLaren.

"It was a good result for us. Obviously it's frustrating not to win here, being from California," Herta said. "We had a lot of pace and it sucks not to win here. I really want to win here, but I'm happy with a podium."

Rossi, who is also from California, led 10 laps. Herta led eight.

"We'll take a lot of positives out of the weekend," said Rossi, who is in a contract year with McLaren. His seat is the only of the three at McLaren yet to be locked down for 2025.

Romain Grosjean was fourth in his best finish since joining Juncos Hollinger Racing this year. It was the best finish ever for a JHR driver.

Kirkwood of Andretti faded to fifth. He was followed by Scott Dixon of Ganassi and then Will Power of Team Penske. Power had held a five-point lead over Palou in the standings prior to Sunday's race.

It was an OK Arrow McLaren debut for 19-year-old Palo Alto native Nolan Siegel, who was just hired for the seat earlier this week. The youngest driver on the grid spun off the track and into the gravel to draw a full-course caution on a restart midway through the race.

"Sorry about that," he radioed. "I'm really sorry."

He finished 12th after starting 23rd and was the "biggest mover of the race."

"All done with my first race at Arrow McLaren. Overall, I think it was a successful day," Siegel said. "It wasn't without its challenges, but everyone pushed through and kept at it all race long. We were able to make up a ton of spots at the end there. I'm grateful for my crew and can't wait to work with them more in the future."

GOLF/SOCCER

Scheffler outlasts Kim after drama on 18 for 6th victory

By Jimmy Golen
Associated Press

CROMWELL, Conn. — Scottie Scheffler had to wait out a climate protest on the 18th green and Tom Kim's tying birdie on the last hole of regulation.

Those events only delayed what seems to be inevitable on the PGA Tour this season: the best golfer in the world walking off with the trophy.

Shrugging off a protest that interrupted the tournament on the 72nd hole while the leaders were lining up their putts, Scheffler won the Travelers Championship on the first hole of sudden death on Sunday for his sixth win of the year, the most in one season on the PGA Tour since Tiger Woods had six in 2009.

"When something like that happens, you don't really know what's happening, So it can kind of rattle you a little bit," Scheffler said.

"That can be a stressful situation, and you would hate for the tournament to end on something weird happening because of a situation like that," he said. "Tom and I both tried to calm each other down so we could give it our best shot there on 18."

Scheffler closed with a 5-under 65 and a 22-under 258 total at the TPC River Highlands, and Kim matched him with a final-round 66.

Tom Hoge and Sungjae Im tied for third, two shots back, with Patrick Cantlay, Tony Finau, Justin Thomas and Akshay Bhatia tied for fifth at 18 under. Bhatia was also in the final group that was disrupted by the protest.

"I was scared for my life," he said. "I didn't even really know what was happening. ... But thankfully the cops were there and kept us safe, because that's, you know, that's just weird stuff."

Seth Wenig/AP

Scottie Scheffler, right, walks away on the 18th green as protesters run onto the course in the final round of the Travelers Championship.

It was Scheffler's fourth victory of the year in the tour's $20 million, limited-field signature events, earning him a payday of $3.6 million. He also won the Masters and The Players Championship. And Scheffler still has two months to go.

"As much as I love him, I would have loved to take that away from him," said Kim, who shares a birthday and a friendship with Scheffler. "But I'm happy for him, and after I tapped out, after he tapped out, he said some really nice words and it meant a lot to me."

Scheffler had a one-stroke lead heading to the 18th green on Sunday when six people stormed the course, waving smoke bombs that left a red and white powdery residue on the putting surface. Some wore white T-shirts with the words "NO GOLF ON A DEAD PLANET" in black lettering.

They were tackled by police and taken off.

The activist group Extinction Rebellion, which has a history of disrupting events around the world, claimed responsibility for the protest. In a statement emailed to The Associated Press, the group blamed climate change for an electrical storm that injured two people at a home near the course on Saturday.

After a delay of about five minutes, when tournament officials used towels and blowers to remove the powder and any other marks that might affect play, Scheffler left a 26-foot putt from the fringe on the edge of the cup and tapped in for par.

Kim then made a 10-foot birdie putt for a 66 to match Scheffler.

The hole location on the 18th was moved for the playoff to avoid the parts of the green affected by the protesters.

Scheffler hit his approach in the playoff to 11 feet while Kim found a greenside bunker. Kim's blast from a plugged lie ran 36 feet past the hole, leaving Scheffler with an easy two-putt par for the victory.

Yang breaks through for 1st major

By Tim Booth
Associated Press

SAMAMMISH, Wash. — Standing in the 18th fairway, Amy Yang leaned over to caddie Jan Meierling and acknowledged the anxiety and nerves she carried for the previous 17 holes.

"This has been the longest 18 holes I've ever played in my career," Yang told Meierling.

After years of near-misses in the majors, Yang finally enjoyed the celebration she'd long sought: standing on the 18th green, doused in Champagne by her peers as a major champion.

"At one point I thought, 'Will I ever win a major championship before I retire?'" Yang said. "And I finally did it and it's just amazing."

Steady over four days at demanding, tree-lined Sahalee, Yang built a huge lead and survived a couple of late mistakes to win her long-awaited major title on Sunday, a three-shot victory in the KPMG Women's PGA Championship.

Yang closed with an even-par 72 to finish at 7-under 281. She was nearly flawless for the first 15 holes and reached 10 under for the tournament for a seven-shot lead before running into a little bit of trouble. But none of her pursuers was able to mount a significant charge.

Yang

At age 34, Yang is the oldest major winner on the LPGA Tour since Angela Stanford won the 2018 Evian Championship at age 40. Anna Nordqvist had recently turned 34 when she won the Women's British Open in 2021.

This was Yang's 75th major start, the most before a player's first major title since Stanford, who was playing her 76th.

Nine times, Yang finished second, third or fourth in a major without a title. Until now.

"Golf is really just like a fight against myself. I think I proved myself that I can compete and I can do this," she said.

Lilia Vu and Jin Young Ko each shot 71 to tie for second at 4 under. Vu shot three rounds under par, but couldn't overcome a 75 in the first round.

Julio Cortez/AP

Christian Pulisic celebrates after scoring the United States' opening goal against Bolivia during a Copa America Group C match on Sunday.

Pulisic goal, assist lead US in opener

By Schuyler Dixon
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Christian Pulisic spread his arms wide with a big smile, then wanted to find the coach in the stands who drew up the fastest goal for the U.S. against a South American team.

Plenty of emotion against an overmatched opponent, in a tournament the Americans call their biggest test ahead of co-hosting the 2026 World Cup.

Pulisic scored in the third minute and assisted on Folarin Balogun's goal in the 44th as the United States cruised past Bolivia 2-0 in their Copa America opener on Sunday night.

"I feel like I'm always pretty excited after I score," Pulisic said. "This is a big moment. It's a major tournament."

Pulisic joined Clint Dempsey as the only U.S. players with a goal and an assist in a Copa America match and reached 30 goals in 69 international appearances, the fewest among Americans.

"We came out flying with a lot of intensity. Obviously, that early goal helped us a lot," Pulisic said. "All around, a pretty dominant performance. I think we could have put it away and had more goals there."

Among six invited guests to South America's championship, the U.S. is expected to advance from Group C to the quarterfinals along with Uruguay.

"It's a start that's massive for us. Build the confidence," American defender Antonee Robinson said. "If we were being picky, we could have been a lot more clinical. We could have put another two, three goals away."

Bolivia lost its 13th straight Copa America match dating to 2015 and has one win in its last 31.

"I'm not happy because I think we can deliver more. We had a match against an opponent that had a better physical performance," Bolivia coach Antônio Carlos Zago said through a translator. "Minute three there was a goal, and it was downstream from there."

The 11th-ranked U.S. plays Panama on Thursday in Atlanta and closes the group against Uruguay on July 1.

A crowd of 47,873 attended the match under the retractable roof at 80,000-seat AT&T Stadium, which will host a World Cup semifinal in 2026. It was 97 degrees Fahrenheit outside the home of the Dallas Cowboys at kickoff but air-conditioned inside.

Playing a day before his 30th birthday, goalkeeper Matt Turner had three saves in his 25th international shutout. The U.S. improved to 6-0 at AT&T as the Americans opened their fifth Copa America appearance, the first since reaching the semifinals as host in 2016.

The U.S. had 18 touches inside the attacking penalty area in the first half to Bolivia's none.

"I'm happy with the performance," U.S. coach Gregg Berhalter said. "A lot of guys got their first Copa America game, first Copa America win, first Copa America shutout. And we're in a good position."

Pulisic put the U.S. ahead 2:23 in, the fastest American goal in 34 competitive matches against South American opponents. He played a short corner kick to Tim Weah and ran toward the penalty area. Weah returned the ball to Pulisic, who took a touch and from just inside the area curled a right-foot shot off the outstretched fingertips of goalkeeper Guillermo Viscarra and into the far upper corner.

OLYMPICS

Lyles shows flash, speed in winning 100

BY EDDIE PELLS
Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. — The bright red running suit, the white pearls and the gold medal said it all.

Noah Lyles is the flashiest, and the fastest, sprinter in the United States — maybe even the world.

We'll all get to find out later this summer in Paris thanks to a come-from-behind victory for Lyles in the 100 meters at the U.S. track trials Sunday — a 9.83-second sprint that secured his spot at an Olympics where he has his sights set on electrifying his sport.

"This was basically the plan, and the plan is working right now," Lyles said.

Lyles came from the back half of the field to match his best time ever in the sprint that crowns the Fastest Man in the World.

He beat 200-meter specialist Kenny Bednarek by .04. Fred Kerley, the 2022 world champion, finished in third and will also go to Paris. Christian Coleman, the 2019 world champ, was in the lead with about 30 meters left but finished fourth.

The Lyles win makes the American sprint favorites 2-for-2 after three days of these trials. It comes a day after Sha'Carri Richardson also lived up to expectations and won the women's 100 to earn her trip to Paris.

Both of these sprinters shine in their own way. Lyles is on a mission to lift up an entire sport that has been dimmer ever since Usain Bolt exited stage right after the Olympics in 2016.

CHARLIE NEIBERGALL/AP

Noah Lyles celebrates after winning the men's 100-meter final during the U.S. Track and Field Olympic Team Trials on Sunday in Eugene, Ore. Lyles secured his spot at the Olympics with a 9.83-second sprint.

In keeping with that theme, the 26-year-old Lyles showed up to Hayward Field in a neatly tailored sports coat and pants and was handed a briefcase containing his freshly pressed racing uniform. He wore white pearls for the race, and when he was introduced, he leaped and jumped about 30 yards down the track, imploring the crowd to get on its feet.

Snoop Dogg was in the house and has taken in some of the action with Lyles' mother, who is almost as entertaining to watch as her son; up in the stands, she fell to her knees after Noah reeled in Kerley to his right, then Coleman and Bednarek to his left.

"Every step I took felt more powerful than the last," Lyles said. "I was like 'I got this race.' I told myself I wasn't going to ease up."

But he did, lifting his index finger in the air just before the line and beating his chest after he crossed it.

This marks the second national title in the 100 for Lyles, who has three 200-meter world titles but reimagined his goals after a disappointing third-place finish at the Tokyo Games in that race. Last summer, the world saw the work start to pay off.

Lyles won the world championship at 100, 200 and the 4x100 relay last year in Budapest. His 100 time on a cool, still night in Eugene matched the mark he ran to win worlds. If he can pull off the triple again, he would be in company with Bolt, the Jamaican great who went 3-for-3 all three times he raced at the Olympics.

"He's the package," Lyles' coach Lance Brauman said. "That doesn't mean that we don't have to do some things to get better and keep going forward. But he enjoys that part of it. He loves to be at the track. He loves to be at training. I mean, he loves the race. It's just who he is."

Lyles, who races next weekend for a spot in the 200, might even be in the mix to win four medals. No. 4 could come in the 4x400, and if he does that, he would be in the company of the likes of Carl Lewis and even Jesse Owens.

Manuel wins 50 freestyle to earn individual event

BY PAUL NEWBERRY
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Simone Manuel was feeling a bit down as she prepared for her final shot to swim an individual event at the Paris Olympics.

So she pulled out some video of her greatest hits.

Talk about a confidence boost.

The first Black female swimmer to win an individual gold medal at the Olympics, Manuel earned an individual spot on the final night of the U.S. swimming trials with a victory in the 50-meter freestyle Sunday.

Coming back from overtraining syndrome, which hampered her preparations leading up to the Tokyo Games, Manuel won the frantic dash from one end of the pool to the other in 24.13 seconds.

She looked a bit surprised when she saw the "1" beside her name on the scoreboard, pumping her fist emphatically. She kept shaking her head as she walked across the deck.

"I wasn't feeling real confident after last night," said Manuel, who was only the fourth-fastest qualifier in the semifinals, nearly a half-second behind Gretchen Walsh. "I spent a lot of time watching races where I won. I wanted to channel that Simone because I know I'm a winner."

Speaking of winners, Bobby Finke will head to the Olympics looking to defend his titles in the two longest freestyle events.

He won the final event of the trials, blowing away the field in the 1,500 freestyle with a time of 14 minutes, 40.28 seconds. He already had qualified in the 800 free, the other event he won in Tokyo.

The real race was for the final spot on the Olympic team between David Johnston and Luke Whitlock. They were neck and neck nearly the entire race, before Johnston started to pull away with six laps remaining.

Manuel had already clinched a spot at her third Olympics on the 4x100 freestyle relay, but now she's got an event all to herself. Walsh claimed the second spot in Paris at 24.15, beating out Abbey Weitzeil (24.26) and Torri Huske (24.33).

Manuel will try to add to an already impressive résumé, highlighted by her starring role at the the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games when she captured two gold medals and two silvers.

Manuel's times began to slip ahead of the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Games. After she stunningly failed to qualify in the 100 freestyle, she revealed that she had been diagnosed with overtraining syndrome.

After the games, Manuel was ordered by her doctor to shut down all physical activity until her body healed. She finally returned to the pool in early 2023, but didn't event attempt to qualify for the world championships last summer.

But a move to Arizona, where she trained under Michael Phelps' longtime coach Bob Bowman began to pay dividends.

DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

Simone Manuel won the 50-meter freestyle finals with a time of 24.13 seconds on Sunday at the U.S. Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis.

Now, she's got another Olympic race to show for it after coming up short in the 100 free with a fourth-place showing.

When she made the team in the 50 free three years ago, it felt like the longest lap of her life.

She had that same feeling again Sunday, her arms churning and legs kicking in swimming's most hectic event.

"I wanted it bad. I really wanted to swim an individual event," Manuel said. "It wasn't that I was shocked that I could win because I know the work I put in and the racer that I am. It's more excitement. I'm glad it happened today, that I was No. 1 to touch the wall."

Finke will head to the Olympics with much higher expectations than he faced in 2021, when he stunningly claimed the 800-1,500 double.

Now, he's the guy with the target on his back.

SPORTS

Fastest man in America

Lyles earns ticket to Paris by winning men's 100 meters ›› Olympics, Page 23

NBA DRAFT

Tapping an exploding market

French basketball quickly becoming pipeline for potential pro superstars

By Jerome Pugmire and Tom Nouvian
Associated Press

PARIS — Darius Pollock is hitting 3-pointers on a court behind the centuries-old Saint Paul church near Place de la Bastille and its famed column.

The 20-year-old Parisian is one of many players who can be found on courts around the French capital any day of the week. And at the center of basketball conversations in the country is Victor Wembanyama's rise to NBA stardom.

Kahn

"It has unlocked something in France," Pollock said.

He's not wrong.

Basketball's popularity is rising — it could skyrocket during the Paris Olympics with the anticipation surrounding the French men's team. More kids are signing up for teams as the country churns out top NBA Draft picks.

France has produced NBA players before, the most famous being point guard Tony Parker — a four-time NBA champion whose No. 9 jersey was retired by the San Antonio Spurs. Minnesota Timberwolves center Rudy Gobert was this season's NBA Defensive Player of the Year.

But now it's in overdrive.

Last year there was Wembanyama — a generational talent who as expected went No. 1 in the draft. Two more young Frenchmen — Zaccharie Risacher and Alexandre Sarr — are expected to be top picks Wednesday. They might even go Nos. 1 and 2. A third, Tidjane Salaün, is projected to be selected high in the first round.

"I'm very proud of them. It makes it seem like the NBA dream is possible," Antonin Guezel, a local basketball player in Paris, told The Associated Press. "Some of these talents grew up here, Victor is from the Paris area."

Female French players haven't yet had the same impact on the WNBA, but they are trending up. In April's draft, two French players were selected — Carla Leite (No. 9, Dallas) and Leila Lacan (No. 10, Connecticut).

The 21-year-old Guezel hones his skills at Glacière, a court crammed under an overhead subway station in the 13th arrondissement (district), and one of many outdoor courts scattered around Paris.

There are about 750,000 people registered with basketball clubs in France — nearly 70,000 more than two years ago and an increase of 170,000 since 2014. And that's just the official count. Like in the United States, plenty of hoopers just

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Rick Bowmer, above, file photo, left/AP

Above: San Antonio center Victor Wembanyama has spurred a groundswell of interest in basketball back home in France after winning NBA Rookie of the Year honors. Left: Zaccharie Risacher is expected to be among the top picks in Wednesday's NBA Draft, where a French player might be taken No. 1 overall again.

Tennessee forces third game for title

›› College World Series, Page 21

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