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Free AFN TV ends Sunday at Army housing in Germany

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

Free American Forces Network television broadcast via cable ends this weekend for U.S. soldiers and their families living on Army posts in Germany.

The end of the automatic AFN programming, which includes college and professional sports as well as popular stateside shows, comes after the Army in Europe decided this year not to renew a contract for the service in Germany, officials said.

Individual commands will evaluate whether they'll continue funding the service in the barracks for their soldiers, the Army said this year. As of Thursday, officials could not say whether any units planned to do so or how such a funding mechanism would work. Many units are working through the process, a U.S. Army Europe spokeswoman said.

Programming should end sometime Sunday, said Mark Heeter, a spokesman for Installation Management Command-Europe. That coincides with the end of a five-year, \$7.3 million contract between IMCOM-Europe and cable service provider TKS to pay for AFN television programming on post.

SEE AFN ON PAGE 3



Soldiers and families living on U.S. Army bases in Germany will stop receiving free American Forces Network television services as of Sunday.

U.S. Army

BREONNA TAYLOR



Anguish, again, in streets

Dismay over decision not to charge officers in woman's death pours into protests

By DYLAN LOVAN, PIPER HUDSPETH BLACKBURN
AND JOHN MINCHILLO
Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Anger, frustration and sadness over the decision not to charge Kentucky police officers for Breonna Taylor's death poured into U.S. streets as protesters lashed out at a criminal justice system they say is stacked against Black people. Violence seized the demonstrations in Taylor's hometown of Louisville as gunfire rang out and wounded two police officers.

Activists, celebrities and everyday Americans have been calling for charges since Taylor, an emergency medical worker, was shot multiple times by white officers after one of them was shot while bursting into her

A woman speaks during a protest Wednesday in Louisville, Ky. A grand jury indicted one officer on charges of warrant endangerment six months after Breonna Taylor was fatally shot by police.

JOHN MINCHILLO/AP

home during a narcotics investigation in March. The officers had a no-knock warrant but the investigation showed they announced themselves before entering, said state Attorney General Daniel Cameron, a Republican and the state's first Black top prosecutor.

A grand jury returned three charges of warrant endangerment Wednesday against fired Officer Brett Hankison over shooting into a home next to Taylor's with people inside.

Hundreds of demonstrators chanted Taylor's name and marched in cities including New York, Washington, Philadelphia, Las Vegas and Portland, Ore.

SEE ANGUISH ON PAGE 9

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel				
Germany	\$2.43	\$2.87	\$3.11	\$2.67	Azores	--	--	\$3.00
Change in price	-2.8 cents	-1.8 cents	-1.5 cents	-1.4 cents	Change in price	--	--	-1.5 cents
Netherlands	--	\$3.32	\$3.58	\$3.08	Belgium	--	\$2.58	\$2.51
Change in price	--	+3.7 cents	-4.0 cents	-3.4 cents	Change in price	--	No change	No change
U.K.	--	\$2.76	\$3.01	\$2.58	Turkey	--	--	\$2.91
Change in price	--	-1.8 cents	-1.5 cents	-1.4 cents	Change in price	--	No change	No change

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel				
Japan	--	\$2.89	--	\$2.46	South Korea	\$2.249	--	\$2.919
Change in price	--	-2.0 cents	--	-2.0 cents	Change in price	-1.0 cents	--	-1.0 cents
Okinawa	\$2.229	--	--	\$2.469	Guam	\$2.239**	\$2.659	\$2.909
Change in price	-2.0 cents	--	--	-2.0 cents	Change in price	-2.0 cents	-2.0 cents	-2.0 cents

* Diesel EFD ** Midgrade
For the week of Sept. 25 - Oct. 1

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		Switzerland (Franc)		0.9263
Euro costs (Sept. 25)	\$1.14	Thailand (Baht)		31.61
Dollar buys (Sept. 25)	60.8366	Turkey (Lira)		7.6338
British pound (Sept. 25)	\$1.24	(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.)		
Japanese yen (Sept. 25)	102.00			
South Korean won (Sept. 25)	1,140.00			
Commercial rates				
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771			
British pound	\$1.2744			
Canada (Dollar)	1.3398			
China (Yuan)	6.8297			
Denmark (Krone)	6.3947			
Egypt (Pound)	15.7601			
Euro	\$1.1640/0.8591			
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7502			
Hungary (Forint)	312.55			
Israel (Shekel)	3.4835			
Japan (Yen)	105.47			
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3064			
Norway (Krone)	9.5731			
Philippines (Peso)	48.55			
Poland (Zloty)	3.91			
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7507			
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3772			
South Korea (Won)	1,173.73			

INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.49
30-year bond	1.00

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.11
30-year bond	1.42

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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STARS AND STRIPES

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MILITARY



CHRISTOPHER LANGE/U.S. Navy

Army Lt. Col. Jason Hughes, commander of Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force-627, pins an award to a soldier under his command at Baptist Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, Sept. 3. The task force is made up of soldiers with various medical specialties from the 627th Hospital Center at Fort Carson, Colo., and deployed to support San Antonio hospitals during the coronavirus pandemic.

Hundreds of military personnel return home after battling virus

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — About 740 military troops serving on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic in Texas and California returned to their home duty stations during the past month as demand for their work decreased, military officials announced Wednesday.

Since July, members of the Army, Navy and Air Force have served at 23 hospitals in 18 cities at the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, according to a news release from U.S. Army North, which has overseen the mission for U.S. Northern Command's Joint Force Land Component Command.

Lt. Gen. Laura Richardson, commander of Army North and the Joint Force Land Component, said they remain "in constant coordination" with FEMA to moni-

tor coronavirus conditions in Texas and California.

"As demand for federal military support declines, so too can our presence as we reset for potential, future missions directed by the Department of Defense," she said.

The drawdown of personnel began about three weeks ago as these medical professionals and support staff were no longer required, according to the release. On Aug. 30, 100 Air Force personnel were the first troops to return to their home station after working at five California hospitals.

The next to end their mission were about 480 Army and Navy troops at 13 Texas hospitals. They returned to their units between Sept. 8-10. These soldiers and sailors were followed a few days later by 60 Air Force personnel who concluded operations at three California hospitals on

Sept. 12.

The last to leave were 100 Army and Navy service members who returned Wednesday from three Texas hospitals.

"The Department of Defense remains poised to provide capacity and capability when requested by FEMA, in support of local authorities, and is in the [coronavirus] fight for as long as needed," according to the news release.

Texas cities to receive the support were San Antonio, Houston, McAllen, Corpus Christi, Victoria, Harlingen, Edinburg, Del Rio, Eagle Pass and Rio Grande City.

In California, cities that received military support were Lodi, Rancho Mirage, Visalia, Fresno, Stockton, Hanford, Los Angeles and Torrance.

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AFN: Free service to continue in facilities

FROM FRONT PAGE

One of the factors driving the decision to discontinue the contract was the growing popularity of programming other than AFN, including streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, officials said.

This week, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart said more than 3,900 people in the Stuttgart military community could be affected by the change.

Soldiers and their families living on post in Germany who already subscribe to an easyTV package through TKS Cable will

continue to receive AFN and U.S. channels without interruption.

Residents can either purchase a set-top decoder box, or lease a box from TKS for about 10 euros a month, which will provide only AFN. An easyTV monthly service plan, which includes AFN, starts at about 28 euros a month, a TKS spokesman said.

The change doesn't affect off-post residents, who can watch AFN with a satellite dish and by leasing or purchasing a decoder box. A combination decoder box and DVR sold on the shopmyexchange.com website for \$229

Thursday.

Basic AFN programming will continue to be provided free to people living in Air Force-operated military family housing on Kapaun, Landstuhl, Ramstein and Vogelweh, all in the Kaiserslautern area, Ramstein officials said earlier this year.

Free service will also continue in common areas like fitness centers and dining facilities, and in Air Force dorm common rooms, but not in individual rooms.

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Duckworth's bill would ban use of camo by feds

By STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., introduced a bill Wednesday that would ban the use of camouflage uniforms by federal law enforcement following criticism during the summer that federal agents assigned to control racial protests looked like National Guard troops.

"The Trump administration's decision to deploy federal law enforcement officers outfitted in camouflage uniforms in response to those protesting the death of George Floyd and other Black Americans blurred the lines between military service members and law enforcement officers while causing even more fear and divisiveness," Duckworth said in a statement.

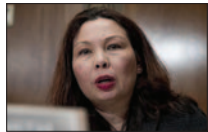
The Clear Visual Distinction Between Military and Law Enforcement Act would essentially outlaw camouflage for federal police. The measure does not apply to the military, including National Guard and military police troops supporting law enforcement during protests. There is an exception for federal agents who might need to wear camouflage to blend into their surroundings to conduct an operation. However, law enforcement officials would be required to explain each instance that federal agents wear camouflage in a biannual report to Congress.

Some activists and lawmakers have blasted law enforcement agencies for using camouflage in situations where there is no need to blend into any environment, such as when federal agents assigned to protect federal buildings in Portland, Ore., during civil unrest in the city this summer were wearing camouflage and looked like soldiers.

"Many troops and veterans are very frustrated with the way law enforcement have conflated themselves with the military, wearing uniforms that confuse the public and cause panic, fear and distrust," said Alexander McCoy, political director of Common Defense, a progressive veteran and foreign policy advocacy group.

McCoy, a Marine Corps veteran, said police making themselves look like soldiers only escalate already tense situations.

"The purpose of law enforcement is not to fight battles, and camouflage uniforms and other tactical gear only escalate situations, putting Americans at risk," he said. "We need a clear visual distinction between police and the military, and this bill is a step in the right direction."



ANDREW HARNIK/AP

Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., has been critical of militarized response to protests.

Acting Deputy Homeland Security Secretary Ken Cuccinelli told Congress that the agents in Portland eventually were ordered to stop wearing camouflage.

Officers using uniforms virtually identical to the Army also raised eyebrows at the Pentagon. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said in July that he was worried federal agents could be confused with military personnel.

"There are some law enforcement that wear uniforms that make them appear military in appearance. The secretary has expressed a concern of this within the [Trump] administration that we want a system where people can tell the difference," Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said last month. "I know [Esper] has expressed his concern that in some cases, law enforcement, appropriately performing law enforcement purposes, was misconstrued with military personnel who would not be appropriately doing those roles."

Duckworth, an Army National Guard veteran who lost both her legs in Iraq, has been a critic of the seemingly militarized response by some law enforcement to protests this year. On Friday the Government Accountability Office accepted her request for the federal watchdog to investigate the safety, appropriateness and effectiveness of less than lethal weapons intended for crowd control purposes such as tear gas and rubber bullets.

"I was deeply troubled to see 'less lethal' weapons used against peaceful protesters and journalists this past summer, which is why I'm thankful that the GAO is acting on my request for independent review," Duckworth said in a statement. "These weapons can cause significant injury, including deep bruises, broken bones and respiratory damage even though they are intended to only cause minimal harm."

The bill also has the backing of Sens. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Tim Kaine, D-Va.

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MILITARY

Congressional Gold Medal for Marauders awaits OK

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

House lawmakers approved a bill Tuesday that would award the Congressional Gold Medal to members of the famed Merrill's Marauders of World War II.

The Senate passed a version of the bill late last year, and supporters say they expect President Donald Trump will sign the legislation.

The Marauders were named for Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill, who led the Army unit as it fought behind Japanese lines in Burma during the war.

The Congressional Gold Medal would recognize the extraordinary service of the nearly 3,000 men of the 5307th Composite Unit, known as the Marauders.

The unit was tasked with capturing the Myitkyina airfield in northern Burma, which they did on May 17, 1944, after a 1,000-mile trek over the Himalayan foothills, through jungles and enemy resistance. Disease, exhaustion, malnutrition and the enemy winnowed them down to a handful by the time they seized the airfield.

"I feel like I'm floating on air," Robert Passanisi, a 96-year-old Marauder veteran, said in a statement after the bill passed Tuesday evening.

"It has been a long journey, and we've had to struggle through

three congressional sessions to obtain this great honor," said Passanisi, who emerged as the Marauders' spokesman and historian as the years have passed.

"My one regret is that only eight of us are alive to enjoy this historic honor," he said.

The House passed the bill one day after the 77th anniversary of 2,000 volunteers from the Caribbean and United States boarding the S.S. Lurline on Sept. 21, 1943, in San Francisco to ship out to New Caledonia. There, another 1,000 veterans from South Pacific battles joined them to head to a mission in Burma that not even they fully understood.

Some individual members of the Marauders have in the past received the Congressional Gold Medal. Second-generation Japanese-American soldiers, known as Nisei — some of whom worked as translators with the Marauders — were presented the medal in 2011. Members of the Office of Strategic Services, which was the forerunner to the Central Intelligence Agency, were given the medal in 2018. OSS members were among the Marauders.

But as an overall unit, Merrill's Marauders had been overlooked for what is perhaps the most prestigious award bestowed to civilians.

Jonnie Melillo Clasen, daughter of Vincent Melillo, a Marauder who died in 2015 at age 97, has spearheaded the effort for

congressional recognition of the Marauders' role in the war, which was tantamount to a suicide mission given what they faced.

She has served as an informal liaison to the still-living Marauders and their families after the group of surviving veterans became too old and too few to maintain an association and plan reunions.

It was her father who sparked the idea of seeking the Congressional Gold Medal for the 5307th.

After reading a newsletter about Roy Matsumoto, a friend of his who was among the Nisei awarded the gold medal in 2011, Melillo said to his daughter, "Why can't we get this for the rest of the guys?" Clasen told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

"And I thought, well, why not?" she said.

Passanisi and fellow Marauder veteran Gilbert Howland, 96, visited Congress three times during the current session to seek support from lawmakers of both chambers.

"It is a great honor for me and our unit," Howland said in the statement. "We all volunteered and came together as a team to complete our mission. I wish all those men were alive today to receive this honor."

"I fought in WWII, in Korea in the Pork Chop Hill sector and did two combat tours in Vietnam. But the worse fighting I experienced was in Burma with Merrill's



U.S. Army

Members of Merrill's Marauders, gaunt from disease and malnutrition, cross a bridge over Tanai River, Burma, on March 18, 1944. House lawmakers approved a bill Tuesday that would award the Congressional Gold Medal to the full unit.

Marauders."

With so few Marauders alive, supporters of the medal legislation have pressed ahead with a sense of urgency.

Twenty-eight were alive in 2016 when the first bill was introduced in the House; only eight now remain.

Marauder veteran Lester Holtenback, of Deltona, Fla., was the most recent loss, dying in July at

age 97.

Noting that the Nisei medals were not presented until a year after they were approved, Clasen said she hoped for a faster timeline.

"We've already lost one, and we're just hoping we don't lose any more," she said.

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Army vet who escaped Nazi Germany to receive military police honor

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

A 95-year-old retired Army colonel who survived the Holocaust era in Germany is slated to receive one of the top honors for military police.

Frank Cohn, of Alexandria, Va., will receive the Order of the Marchaussee from the Military Police Regimental Association on Sept. 29, an Army statement said Tuesday.

Born in 1925 in Breslau, Germany — now Wrocław in Poland — Cohn grew up during Adolf Hitler's rise to power and witnessed his neighbors grow increasingly hostile toward the Jewish community. Nazis picked his family's sporting goods store and the Gestapo arrived at their home to arrest his father, Cohn said.

The family escaped in October 1938 to New York, where Cohn learned English from the radio and American films.

He was drafted during World War II into the U.S. Army, which

assigned him to work as an intelligence agent with the 12th Army Group, where he interrogated Nazis arrested for war crimes.

"When I left Germany, I was a victim," Cohn said in the Army statement. "When I came back, I was in charge. Whenever we captured Germans, [my job was] to communicate with them. For that reason, it felt pretty good to be back in Germany."

Cohn participated in the Battle of the Bulge, Germany's last major offensive on the Western Front. After the war, Cohn attended City College of New York and got married, then rejoined the Army as a military police officer. He deployed to Korea and Vietnam before retiring in 1978.

Cohn will be awarded the Order of the Marchaussee, which honors "exceptional dedication, competence, and contribution to the Military Police Corps Regiment," in a ceremony to be livestreamed on the U.S. Army Office of the Provost Marshal General's Facebook page Tuesday.



U.S. Army

Frank Cohn, 95, a retired Army colonel who survived Adolf Hitler's rise to power and anti-Jewish acts in Germany, is slated to receive one of the top honors for military police, the Order of the Marchaussee, from the Military Police Regimental Association.

Marchaussee is the historical French name for a guard corps, which was replaced by Gendarmerie after the French Revolution. It is still used in the

Netherlands, where the Royal Marchaussee serves as the paramilitary police.

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Report: 2 engine fires at Oceana base this month

Two Navy F/A-18 Super Hornets made separate emergency landings at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach, Va., this month following engine fires, Military.com reported Wednesday.

The first incident, at about 5:30 p.m. Sept. 10, involved a NAS Oceana-based Super Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron 103 that was training near the Virginia Capes, according to the report.

The second involved a Super Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron 11 that was forced to make an emergency landing at noon Monday, Naval Air Force Atlantic spokeswoman Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg told Military.com.

No one was injured in either incident, which are undergoing aviation mishap investigations, according to the report. It is unclear if there are connecting causes of the engine fires.

NAS Oceana is the Navy's East Coast master jet base for Super Hornets. About 10,500 active-duty sailors are assigned to the base, whose primary mission is to "support shore-based readiness, total-force readiness and maintain operational access of Oceana-based forces," according to its official Navy website.

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MILITARY

N. Koreans kill S. Korean man near border island

By KIM GAMEL
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean forces shot to death, then burned the body of a South Korean fisheries inspector who had gone missing from a patrol boat near a border island, officials said Thursday, condemning the “brutal act” and demanding that those responsible be punished.

President Moon Jae-in called it “a shocking incident that can’t be tolerated for any reason” and ordered the military to tighten its defensive posture.

“The North Korean authorities should take responsible measures regarding this case,” Moon said, according to the presidential office. His administration also demanded that the North Koreans apologize and provide an explanation.

The killing threatened to stoke tensions between the rival nations, which have seen a steady decline in relations since the collapse of U.S.-led talks aimed at persuading the North to abandon its nuclear weapons program.

The 47-year-old man, who was affiliated with the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, disappeared Monday while working on an inspection boat near the border island of Yeonpyeong off the western coast of the divided peninsula, according to the Defense Ministry.

“North Korea found the man in its waters and committed an act of brutality by shooting at him and burning his body,” the Defense Ministry said Thursday in a statement, citing an analysis of various intelligence, including surveillance equipment in the area.

“We also sternly warn North Korea that it is entirely responsible for this incident,” it said.

The military believes the man may have been trying to defect to the North, but the investigation was ongoing, a defense ministry official said separately.

The North Koreans spotted him floating in the water north of the de facto maritime boundary on Tuesday afternoon and fatally shot him after an interrogation about six hours later, according to the military.

South Korea’s Yonhap News Agency quoted an official as saying that the North Koreans donned gas masks before pouring oil over his body and setting it on fire.

“We believe that North Korea appears to have taken such measures ... as part of its COVID-19 quarantine guidelines,” a military official was quoted as saying.

The top U.S. commander in South Korea, Gen. Robert Abrams, said earlier this month that North Korea deployed spe-

cial operations forces and issued “shoot-to-kill orders” near the border with China as part of coronavirus prevention measures.

North Korea, which sealed its borders after the pandemic began late last year in China, claims it hasn’t had a single case of the coronavirus. Many experts have said that’s highly unlikely.

The Defense Ministry said it had sent a request for an explanation about the shooting to the North via communications channels on Wednesday but had received no response.

An official with the West Sea fisheries management service that employed the man said the crew of the patrol boat had reported his disappearance to the maritime police and the search continued until the Defense Ministry made its announcement on Thursday.

The man had exhibited no unusual behavior before he disappeared, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of department rules. The department largely targets illegal Chinese fishing boats in the area. Colleagues, however, told Yonhap that he had divorced several months ago and was suffering from financial problems.

More than 30,000 North Koreans have defected to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 war between the two countries.

A defection to the communist state is extremely rare, although a North Korean defector tried to cross back home in July. That prompted the North to lock down the border city of Kaesong due to fears that he may have been infected with the virus.

The western sea has been the site of many skirmishes between the two countries, including a 2010 North Korean artillery attack on Yeonpyeong Island that killed four people.

However, the last time a South Korean was shot to death in the North was in 2008 when a tourist was killed after wandering into a restricted zone at the Kumgang mountain resort.

The two Koreas agreed in 2019 to cease hostilities near their land, air and sea borders as part of a comprehensive military agreement during a summit before diplomatic talks were restarted.

Moon has been criticized by conservative rivals for his dogged efforts to promote peace with North Korea despite its constant rejections.

The opposition People Power Party urged the government to take stern action against the shooting. “The reason for the government’s existence is protecting its people and their property,” it said in a statement.

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ERICKA A. WOOLVER/U.S. Air Force

Two U.S. Air Force pilots from the 555th Fighter Squadron, Aviano Air Base, Italy, put on gear at Graf Ignatievo Air Base, Bulgaria, on Monday.

31st Fighter Wing hones skills during Bulgaria NATO exercise

By NORMAN LLAMAS
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Airmen and F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 31st Fighter Wing and other U.S. units are wrapping up a weeklong exercise with the Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian air forces along NATO’s southern flank.

The drills in Bulgaria are the latest in a series of exercises taking place across Europe, where the Air Force has conducted numerous show-of-force flights stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Some of the training has involved an Air Force bomber task force of B-52s, which are deployed in Europe to train with NATO allies.

The exercise at the Graf Ignatievo Air Base in central Bul-

garia — dubbed Thracian Viper 20 — kicked off Sept. 18 and ends Friday. It was designed to demonstrate the ability of the units to work with and fight alongside Bulgaria and other allies, officials said.

About 150 airmen and six F-16s from the 555th Fighter Squadron, known as the Triple Nickel, took part in the exercise. Also participating are other units from Aviano Air Base, and airmen assigned to the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing, from the 86th Airlift Wing, at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

During the exercise, the 555th Fighter Squadron conducted both air-to-air and air-to-ground training with other European partner nations, a 31st Fighter Wing statement said.

“The teams we have here on

both the Bulgarian side and U.S. side have been totally committed to the mission,” Air Force Lt. Col. Brian G. Lewis, the fighter squadron’s director of operations, said in a statement. “We are now launching Nickel jets and flying with our NATO partners, which is pretty cool to see.”

The U.S. has engaged in a series of exercises like Thracian Viper with Bulgaria since it joined NATO in 2004.

“The exercise is important because it gives us the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with Bulgaria and NATO,” Lewis said in a statement. “Additionally, we are learning how to take a limited amount of people to an unfamiliar location and conduct flying operations.”

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Soldier, civilian forgo appeals in robbery

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A U.S. soldier and a civilian cook who pleaded guilty to robbing an Okinawa currency exchange of nearly \$65,000 at knifepoint last spring have decided not to appeal their sentences to a higher court, Japanese officials said Thursday.

Army Pvt. Demetrius Moton Jr., 21, and Hassan Smith, 34, were sentenced Sept. 8 to 4½ years in prison with labor and 3½ years with labor, respectively, for their roles in the May 12 robbery near Camp Foster’s front gate.

Moton was stationed at Kadena Air Base at the time of the incident, where Smith also worked at the Child Development Center.

The men pleaded guilty July 13 in Naha District Court. They faced up to 20 years imprisonment, but prosecutors requested six years each.

They were given 14 days following sentencing to appeal the judges’ decision to the Fukuoka High Court, Chief Judge Hirobono Ono said at the time. That was extended one day due to a Japanese holiday. The deadline came and went Wednesday without an appeal being filed by attorneys for either man, a spokesman for

Naha District Court told Stars and Stripes by phone Thursday morning.

Moton and Smith received 50 days credit for time served.

The pair scouted the exchange before entering in masks, according to previous court testimony from both men. Moton went behind the counter, brandished a knife and threatened an employee.

He and Smith made off with \$64,700 in Japanese and U.S. currency, which the pair split between them.

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MILITARY

Marine Corps begins field-testing new pistol

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps has begun fielding its new service-wide 9-millimeter pistol, replacing handguns that the service had been using since the 1980s.

The Marine Corps Systems Command began fielding the Sig Sauer pistol, based on the company's Model P320, earlier this month, the Marine Corps said in a news release Wednesday.

The M18 "modular handgun system" will replace all other pistols in the Marine Corps inventory, including the M9, M9A1, M45A1 and M007, the statement said.

"All Marine Corps units with a pistol will receive an M18," said Brian Nelson, the M18 project officer at the Systems Command.

The Marine Corps collaborated with the Army's program that developed the compact M18 and the larger M17 pistols.

The Army began fielding the Sig Sauer pistols in 2017.

The Air Force has also made the switch to M18s, with field testing that began for some units early last year.

The first Marine Corps units to receive the M18 will be Formal Marksmanship Training Centers, Reconnaissance Battalions, Provost Marshall Offices and Marine Corps Security Forces, the statement said.

Fielding is slated to be com-



A Marine instructor shoots the M18 handgun at a firing range during training in June at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

DAVID JORDAN/U.S. Marine Corps

plete by Oct. 1, 2021.

The M18 offers greater flexibility and easier handling than pistols used until now by the Marine Corps.

The M9, the most widely used handgun in the Corps, has a steel frame, making it heavier than the M18.

The M9 has a single- and double-action trigger, meaning that in order to fire the first shot, the pull of the trigger first cocks the hammer and then fires the round.

Subsequent rounds are fired as a single action.

The M18 always fires with single action.

"For some Marines, having two trigger pulls, like with the M9, is difficult to get used to because different forces are acting upon the gun," Sgt. Randall McClellan, pistol program manager with the Weapons Training Battalion at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., said in the statement. "With



TESSA CORRIK/U.S. Air Force

The Sig Sauer M18 handgun.

the M18, the trigger is going to be the same weight every time."

The M18 is versatile, featuring interchangeable components to fit small, medium or large hands, the statement said.

An accessory rail will allow users to attach lights or lasers beneath the barrel, such as a red-dot sight once that has been approved for the pistol, the statement said.

Requirements for qualifying with a pistol will not change with the new pistol, the statement said.

"The only thing changing in the qualification course now is the verbiage in regard to single action/double action and the de-cocking," said Nelson, the M18 project manager.

The Weapons Training Battalion will hold a marksmanship symposium later this year to review data and decide whether the entire course will need to be changed, he said.

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US troops, civilians win shopping sprees at Camp Humphreys

By MATTHEW KEELER
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea—Fifteen troops and civilians affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea filled their shopping carts at the post exchange Thursday after each won a \$10,000 shopping spree.

The prizes were part of a \$2 million Sip, Rip, Ultimate Trip sweepstakes sponsored by Subway that began on July 1 to honor the 125th anniversary of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, which runs exchanges and other stores on military bases worldwide.

Army Sgt. Justin Moore, assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division, stopped to eat on Aug. 12 at a Subway before picking up a friend on the way to a basketball game. He peeled a game piece off his 30-ounce drink that came with his order and made a game-changing discovery. "I decided to eat, and I just happened to get lucky," Moore said. "First thing that happened when I read it was, I just lied out 'no way' and everybody looked at me funny."

Moore said the winnings would allow him and his wife, Leona, to buy things they didn't necessarily need, but have wanted, and get items for their children that will make their lives better.

U.S. service members, family members and others authorized to use the exchange are eligible to participate in the contest on bases in the United States, Germany, Italy, Kosovo, South Korea, Japan, Puerto Rico, Honduras and Kwajalein.

In a stroke of enormous luck, one family walked away with two winning tickets, on the same day, at the same Subway location, totaling \$20,000.

Spc. Chris Kimmenau and his wife, Laura, struggled to figure out how to spend their winnings, even with multiple children. "We have been going through our list since we won in August and I told our neighbors Christmas is on us this year," Laura Kimmenau said. "We don't need electronics, so we are looking at furniture, but we also have to make sure we are not overweight when we leave Korea."

Laura first picked out a kitchen



MATTHEW KEELER/Stars and Stripes

Fifteen winners of a \$10,000 shopping spree celebrate at the post exchange on Camp Humphreys, South Korea, on Thursday.

mixer she had wanted, an iPad for her 5-year-old, and Chris secured a home theater projector along with a gaming computer.

The casual event didn't affect normal operations at the exchange. The winners were permitted to shop at their pace, some requesting to return at a later time with their families.

Sixteen people won in South Korea after pulling the lucky game pieces from Subway cups, said Staff Sgt. Mark Kauffman, an AAFES public affairs officer. One of those winners already did his shopping.

In all, only 33 of the 100 exchange shopping sprees have been won worldwide. Other

prizes included family vacations, gift cards and free meals at the world's largest fast-food chain.

The sweepstakes will continue through Oct. 31 and can be redeemed no later than Dec. 31, according to the sweepstakes website.

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MILITARY

Many installations lifting travel restrictions

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — More than half of U.S. military installations worldwide have lifted travel restrictions put in place to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, according to the Pentagon.

As of Monday, 117 of 231 installations, or about 51%, have lifted travel restrictions, meaning they have met specific criteria including the base's health protection condition is below "Charlie" and

essential services are available, according to a Pentagon document posted Wednesday.

Travel restrictions were put into place in March to try to prevent the spread of the virus within the Defense Department. Defense Secretary Mark Esper signed a memorandum May 22 that laid out the conditions needed for locations to allow for travel to and from bases. The restrictions have impacted the military moves of service members and

their families during the past several months, causing backlogs during the busiest moving season for the military.

The Air Force, which has the most installations on the list at 79, has only 22 installations that still have travel restrictions in place. The Army has 68 installations on the list and 42 still have restrictions. The Navy has a similar situation, with 63 installations on the list and 43 that still have restrictions. The Marine Corps has 17

installations on the list and only four still have travel restrictions.

The Pentagon on Wednesday also posted the latest numbers of the coronavirus among the military population. The military has had 43,851 coronavirus cases as of Wednesday morning, an increase of 1,892 cases during the past seven days.

The Army has had the most cases by far among the military services at 16,010, an increase of 818 cases since last week, ac-

cording to the Pentagon's data. The Navy has had 9,950 cases, an increase of 319 cases since last Wednesday, and the Marine Corps has had 5,476, an increase of 237 during the past week.

As of Wednesday, the Air Force has had 6,882 cases, an increase of 280 cases from last week. The National Guard has had 5,187 cases, an increase of 230 cases during the past week.

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Travel restrictions force tough decisions for military families

By JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

Air Force Master Sgt. Joshua Archambo, a flight chief for the 569th U.S. Forces Police Squadron in Kaiserslautern, Germany, has not seen his three children in more than a year, thanks largely to the coronavirus pandemic.

Due to restrictions the Defense Department imposed to curb the spread of the virus, Archambo cannot travel to the United States, and his children — two girls and a boy living in Oklahoma with their mother, Casey Archambo — are barred from visiting Germany, he told Stars and Stripes recently via text message.

"My command's policy is for non-official travel you have to have a reason to go back to the States," he said.

Thousands of service members serving abroad, separated from their families by oceans and time zones, are making tough decisions about whether to fly stateside and see their spouses or children during the pandemic.

More than 56,000 soldiers, airmen and Marines are serving overseas apart from their families, according to statements provided to Stars and Stripes by each service. That number includes married couples with or without children and active-duty spouses at separate duty stations. The Navy declined to answer a request for its numbers.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper imposed a "stop movement" order in March that halted all but essential military travel due to the pandemic. Eventually, service members were allowed to resume their moves to new duty stations, for example, while most other travel is still restricted.

Exceptions are permitted, but travel policies vary between service branches and individual commands. The level of risk for coronavirus transmission at a specific U.S. destination is one factor; host nation policies are another.

Service members planning personal travel across interna-



Courtesy of Mike Courson

Marine Cpl. Mike Courson, a KC-130 mechanic stationed in Japan, and his wife, Taylor Courson, chose to get married by proxy this year.

tional borders may face a month or more in quarantine, 14 days in isolation in the United States, 14 days in the host nation and another 14 days at their duty stations. Some of that time is taken from their leave balances, and the cost to isolate themselves off base in a hotel room or other lodging comes out of their pockets.

"The authority to review risk, health conditions, safety, and approve leave, was delegated to installation commanders for out of area leave such as overseas travel," said Maj. Holly Hess, an Air Force spokeswoman, in an email Sept. 18. "Leave approval is a local decision based on mission need and local health conditions."

DOD allows service members to accrue and retain an additional leave balance of up to 120 days until the end of fiscal year 2023, she said.

Revisiting plans

In Japan, Cpl. Mike Courson, an aircraft mechanic with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152 at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, faced a worrisome situation as the pandemic unfolded.

The Illinois native and his then-fiancée planned a July wedding in Tennessee after he proposed in May 2019, he told Stars and Stripes.

Thinking six months' notice would suffice for planning purposes, Courson told his squad-

A flight takes off from Haneda International Airport in Tokyo in March.

ron higher-ups in January of his plan to use the 30 days of leave he earned for extending his tour at Iwakuni for his wedding, he said.

In February, nearly a month after Japan reported its first coronavirus case, Courson and his fiancée discussed moving or postponing the wedding. They decided to stay the course, believing international travel restrictions would be lifted by June.

"As the pandemic got progressively worse and worse, it was basically like trying to play the lottery about whether I was going to be allowed to go or not," he said.

First, Courson had to apply for an exception to the stop-movement order, which permits travel for extreme hardship, humanitarian reasons and essential missions.

"These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and scrutinized for [coronavirus] risk mitigation and host nation policy compliance before being forwarded to a general officer for approval or denial." Capt. Marco Valenzuela, a spokesman for Marine Aircraft Group 12, told Stars and Stripes in a Sept. 3 email. Courson's squadron is part of the group.

As the wedding date approached, Courson's squadron leaders explained he faced six weeks in quarantine to minimize his risk of acquiring or spreading

the virus.

"I was going to have to [quarantine] for two weeks before I could see my family, at which point we would have missed the wedding date," he said. "And then on the way back, I would have had to fly into Tokyo and ROM for two weeks, before taking a flight to [MCAS Iwakuni] and having to ROM here for another two weeks, some of which would have had to come out of my leave."

Helping out

Individual commanders try to mitigate issues like those Courson faced, according to Valenzuela.

Each unit in the aircraft group has a representative to help Marines and sailors plan their travel so that they arrive on a military aircraft at the air station, Valenzuela said. That reduces their travelers' exposure to the virus, their time in quarantine and the associated costs.

All travelers arriving in Japan via a commercial airliner at a Japanese airport must go directly to an approved location nearby, such as a hotel, to serve 14 days of quarantine, unless their installation is nearby.

For example, service members at bases near Tokyo can schedule with their chain of command to be picked up. At MCAS Iwakuni, they can work with their leadership to fly into Osaka, where they

can be retrieved by car.

Upon arrival to their duty stations, military personnel serve another 14 days in isolation and must test free of the virus before exiting.

For service members at MCAS Iwakuni, their quarantine period on base is typically not charged to their leave balance, Valenzuela said, because Iwakuni is their home station.

"The safety and security of our personnel and surrounding communities continues to be a top priority during this pandemic," he said. "In accordance with policy, we make every effort to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spread, while also avoiding extreme impacts to our operations and personnel."

Eventually, Courson was allowed to travel for the wedding under a humanitarian exception, but after calculating the time and expense involved, he and his fiancée called off their plans.

Instead, they were married by proxy, which Montana allows if either would-be spouse is in the military. Two strangers made the vows on the couple's behalf on July 17.

Courson extended his tour in Iwakuni and will join his wife stateside next year after completing his enlistment in the Marine Corps.

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AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

VETERANS

VA denies most burn pit disability claims

By STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs has denied about 78% of disability claims related to toxic exposure, as thousands of veterans seek care from the agency for illnesses that they believe were caused by serving overseas near burn pits, an agency official said Wednesday.

Between 2007 and 2020, VA approved disability claims related to burn-pit exposure for 2,828 veterans out of 12,582, according to Laurine Carson, deputy executive director of policy and procedures for VA.

The gap in veterans who are approved for benefits drew the ire of lawmakers who argued the VA should give presumptive care for veterans, saying the agency does not have clear guidelines for who gets burn-pit compensation.

"Many people are saying this is the Agent Orange of the post-9/11 generation," Rep. Elaine Luria, D-Va., chairwoman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs subpanel on disability assistance and memorial affairs, said Wednesday during a hearing on the matter.

"We are now seeing young veterans in their 20s or 30s suddenly debilitated by cancers they would not reasonably contract unless they were heavy smokers or deep into old age," Luria said. "We may not have all the answers on burn-pit exposure, if ever. What we do know is that it's making people very sick. I can't tell these people to sit down to wait another 10 years because quite frankly,



JULIANNE SHOWALTER/U.S. Air Force

An airman tosses unserviceable uniform items into a burn pit at Balad Air Base, Iraq, in March 2008.

some of them might not have another 10 years."

Through the 1990s and the post-9/11 wars, the military used open-air pits in order to burn garbage, jet fuel, paint, medical waste, plastics—and in the cases of some small combat outposts, human waste. Veterans contracting cancers, respiratory issues and lung diseases at young ages largely have blamed exposure to toxic fumes for the illnesses. However, the VA has contended there is not sufficient evidence to support those claims. The agency also has said if burn-pit care were expanded, the volume of patients would create enormous costs.

"We're still in the process of study," Carson told lawmakers.

Carson said one of the prime reasons veterans are being reject-

ed for disability related to toxic exposure is the time between their service and when they try to make a claim.

"They come with a respiratory condition today, but they served 10 years ago," Carson said. "Some of the challenges are finding the link between that service event and their current condition because there are all types of intervening issues or exposures that may have happened as well."

Officials have said the VA confirms disability claims with the Defense Department on whether they served near burning garbage. However, it is unclear how DOD decides that. More than 200 burn pits have been used around the world for decades, and it is unlikely that all burn pits on

small outposts in places such as Afghanistan or makeshift burn pits are cataloged.

It is also unclear how much further research the VA needs to make a concrete policy on burn-pit care and compensation. Dr. Patricia Hastings, deputy chief consultant of post-deployment health services for the VA, said veterans won't have to "wait 40 years" for action like the battle for benefits that Vietnam War veterans fought for disability related to exposure to Agent Orange.

A new report sponsored by the VA published earlier this month by the National Academic of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found there is insufficient evidence to determine whether U.S. troops' exposure to burn pits in combat zones is linked to respiratory issues and stated there need to be further studies.

Veteran advocates, some lawmakers, and former VA secretary David Shulkin have urged the VA to make it easier for veterans by giving presumptive care, meaning if a veteran operated around a burn pit and later contracts an illness related to toxic exposure such as cancer, chronic bronchitis or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, they would get disability benefits and care.

"The scientific evidence everywhere is clear, these [burn pits] are a health hazard. Why is it so difficult for us to get the VA to understand," said Rep. Mike Boat of Illinois, the ranking Republican on the House VA subpanel. "We have the evidence over and over and I feel we're beating a dead horse ... we're continuing down

this rat hole when we should already be in the situation of taking care of veterans. The VA says they aren't sure. Everybody else in the world is sure."

Kristen Rouse, who is an Afghanistan War veteran and president and founding director of the NYC Veterans Alliance, an advocacy group, said she served multiple deployments during which she was exposed to toxic fumes from burning garbage. However, an emergency room doctor at a VA in the Bronx, N.Y., in 2015 told her that he had never heard of burn pits when she arrived at the hospital struggling to breathe.

She encountered a similar issue at a VA in Brooklyn, N.Y., when her primary care doctor also had little information on burn pits.

"I explained to the provider what a burn pit is, what the health effects are—essentially gave her my spiel that I've given to legislative staff who are new to the issue," said Rouse, 47.

Last week, Jon Stewart, the former host of "The Daily Show," backed a bill from Rep. Raul Ruiz, D-Calif., and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., that would streamline the process of obtaining VA benefits for burn-pit and toxic exposure through presumptive care for any veteran who deployed to parts of the Middle East, Southwest Asia and Africa since 1990. Presumptive care would lift the burden of proof for veterans because proving burn-pit exposure for some veterans could be difficult.

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Congress approves major bill aiming to prevent veteran suicides

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The House passed sweeping bipartisan legislation Wednesday that would give up to \$74 million during the next five years to state and local organizations that provide suicide-prevention services to veterans and their families.

The House approved the bill without objection. It now goes to the White House, where President Donald Trump is expected to sign it into law.

The bill, titled the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act, gained the support of the White House, the Department of Veterans Affairs, dozens of veterans service organizations and Republican and Democratic lawmakers.

Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., the ranking Republican on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, said it was the "most significant" bill regarding veteran's mental health care to come out of the committee.

"While this legislation puts in place critical care, services and support that will save veterans' lives, my hope is it will also serve as a signal to our veterans, service members and families that they are never alone," he said on the Senate floor.

In part, the Hannon act creates a grant program that would allow up to \$750,000 to be awarded to community organizations.

The legislation includes dozens of measures in addition to the new grant program. One requires the VA to establish a plan for boosting its mental health staff, and another creates a scholarship program to increase staff at Vet Centers.

There are several measures to increase research into mental health problems and suicide. The VA will be asked to research hyperbaric oxygen therapy, as well as the possibility that living at high altitudes increases suicide risk.

The bill also mandates the Government Accountability Office and the VA Office of Inspector General to initiate investigations into a host of issues, including one on the VA mental health workforce and others on VA Vet Centers and the effectiveness of the agency's suicide-prevention outreach. The watchdog agencies are also being asked to look at how the department handles veterans who are at risk for suicide, as well as a possible link between prescription medication and suicide.

Another measure requires the VA to create a website that can be a centralized source for female veterans about the benefits and health care services available to them.

Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., who sponsored the bill with Moran, said he hoped the bill's passage sent a message to all Americans "that Congress can come together during politically turbulent times to do the right

thing and support those who have sacrificed on our behalf."

The Hannon act was named for a retired Navy commander who died by suicide in 2018 at age 46.

"My family is overjoyed that this critical bill has been passed by the House," Kim Parrott, Hannon's

sister, said in a statement Wednesday. "Not only does this honor my brother's legacy, it provides closure for my family. Most importantly, this legislation is a beacon of light to so many more veterans and their families on their journey home from military service to civilian life."

The House approved the legislation as part of a deal with the Senate. In exchange for passing the Hannon act, the House is expecting the Senate to approve one of its bills — the Veterans COMPACT Act.

The COMPACT Act includes nine provisions, one of which orders the VA to provide free care to all veterans in mental health crises. The bill creates an education program for families and caregivers of veterans with mental health issues, and it requires the VA police force to undergo de-escalation and crisis-intervention

training.

The legislation also orders the department to study how and where women are using the VA and how much assistance the agency is providing to homeless female veterans. It also establishes the Interagency Task Force on Outdoor Recreation at the VA, which would collaborate with public land agencies to increase veterans' access to outdoor spaces.

The House sent the bill to the Senate on Wednesday. In addition, the House approved three separate measures for veterans, all of which still must go to the Senate for consideration.

One bill aims to limit restrictions on the VA for how it spends money during a public health emergency. It aims to provide flexibility to VA Secretary Robert Wilkie in caring for homeless veterans during the coronavirus pandemic, including providing more money for food, transportation and cellphones.

Another bill, the Equal Access to Contraception for Veterans Act, would eliminate copayments for female veterans when they receive their birth control through the VA — extending them the same benefit available to most women through public and private insurers. The measure could save female veterans a total of \$400,000 each year, according to VA estimates.

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Hannon

NATION

In Taylor case, legal limits overshadow demands for justice

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER

Associated Press

"Arrest the cops who killed Breonna Taylor" became a rallying cry this summer, emblazoned on T-shirts worn by celebrities and sports stars while protesters filled the streets demanding police accountability. In the end, none of the officers were charged with Taylor's killing, although one was indicted for shooting into a neighboring home that had people inside.

The outcome demonstrates the vast disconnect between widespread public expectation of justice and the limits of the law when police use deadly force.

"Criminal law is not meant to respond to every sorrow and grief," Attorney General Daniel Cameron, the first African American elected to the job in Kentucky, told reporters after the grand jury announced its decision on Wednesday. "And that is, that is true here. But my heart breaks for the loss of Miss Taylor."

Taylor, a 26-year-old Louisville emergency medical worker studying to become a nurse, was shot several times in her hallway after three plainclothes narcotics detectives busted down the door of her apartment after midnight on March 13. The officers entered the home as part of an investigation into a suspect who lived across town. No drugs were found at Taylor's home.

Taylor's boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, was with her at the apartment and fired a shot at Louisville police Sgt. Jonathan Mattingly after the door was broken down. Walker has said he fired because he feared he was being robbed or that it might be an ex-boyfriend of Taylor's trying to get in. Mattingly was struck in the leg and returned fire, along with other officers who were outside the apartment.

But the officers who opened fire on Taylor were determined by prosecutors to be justified in using force because they acted in self-defense. The officer who shot into a neighbor's apartment was the one who was charged with a felony. Brett Hankison faces up to five years in prison on each of the three wanton endangerment charges.

The grand jury's decision was swiftly condemned by activists, celebrities and others as a shocking miscarriage of justice. Minutes after the announcement, demonstrators began to march down a Louisville thoroughfare, chanting "No justice, no peace."

"The rallying cries that have been echoing throughout the nation have been once again ignored by a justice system that claims to serve the people," said attorney

Ben Crump, who is representing Taylor's family. "But when a justice system only acts in the best interest of the most privileged and whitest among us, it has failed."

The long-awaited decision came amid calls for police reform across the U.S., spurred by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and other Black Americans by law enforcement. The backdrop now includes a divisive election season, with a fight over an open Supreme Court seat and repeated comments from President Donald Trump portraying demonstrators as violent mobs.

The outcome came as no surprise to legal experts, who said murder charges would never stand up in court because the officers were fired at first. Police are shielded by laws and long-standing court rulings giving them wide latitude to use deadly force to protect themselves or others.

As it takes rare to charge police with crimes in the death of civilians, and winning a conviction is harder.

"You can't get justice from a tragedy. What we have is a series of events that culminated in the use of self-defense" both by Taylor's boyfriend and the officers, said Jan Waddell, a Louisville defense attorney. "Just because Breonna was in the middle of that and she was the victim of a shooting doesn't mean that either one of those parties engaged in criminal activity," he said.

The fact that the officers were not only fired upon first but had a warrant allowing them to legally enter the apartment would have provided them with a powerful defense, experts said. That made Taylor's case less clear cut than other recent killings that have stirred outrage, like that of Floyd, who died in May after a Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee into his neck for several minutes.

Prosecutors will likely even face challenges in securing a conviction against Hankison for wanton endangerment, observers said. The FBI is still investigating potential violations of federal law in the case.

"We see this over and over again where an officer is a criminal defendant in one of these cases ... and when they take the witness stand it seems that juries are very reluctant to second guess the split-second life or death decisions of police officers in potentially violent encounters," said Philip Stinson, a former police officer and criminologist at Bowling Green State University. "I think that's going to be a difficult case for the prosecution to prevail on if this goes to trial," he said.



DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

Protesters chant near police Wednesday in Louisville, Ky., after the decision not to charge Kentucky police officers for Breonna Taylor's death was announced.

Anguish: 2 officers shot, over 120 arrested in response to lack of charges in Taylor's death

FROM FRONT PAGE

People gathered in downtown Chicago's Millennium Park, chanting demands for justice as drivers on Michigan Avenue honked their horns. Police in Atlanta unleashed chemical agents and made arrests after some protesters tried to climb on a SWAT vehicle. In Minnesota and Wisconsin, marchers peacefully blocked highway traffic.

In Louisville, police said they arrested 127 people after what began as peaceful protests. Officers declared an unlawful assembly after they said fires were set in garbage cans and several vehicles were damaged. A police statement also described the "looting" of several stores.

Interim Police Chief Robert Schroeder also said a suspect was detained in the shooting of two officers. Jail records later confirmed that Larynzo D. Johnson, 26, was charged with two counts of assault on a police officer and multiple charges of wanton endangerment of police officers. Mayor Greg Fischer said one officer was treated and released with leg wound, while the other was shot in the abdomen and doing well after surgery.

"I'm asking everyone to reject violence," Fischer said. "The question obviously is what do we do with that pain."

Taylor's case has exposed the wide gulf between public opinion on justice for those who kill Black Americans and the laws under which those officers are charged, which regularly favor police and do not often result in steep criminal accusations.

Carmen Jones has protested in downtown Louisville every day for nearly three months. She said she feels despair after the grand jury's decision and doesn't know what's coming.

"We're tired of being hashtags. We're tired of paying for history

in our blood and our bodies and being told to respond to this violence and aggression with peace," she said. "We did it the Martin way for the entire summer, and it got us nowhere. Maybe it's time to do things the Malcolm way," referring to the nonviolent vs. at-all-costs philosophies of 1960s civil rights leaders Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.

Jones said she still hopes their demonstrations will lead to systematic change in the U.S., but the decision in Taylor's case makes her feel like her life doesn't matter in America.

"I don't think I'll sleep the same ever again, cause it would happen to any of us," she said. "The system does not care about Black people. The system chews Black people up and spits us out."

Along with George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis in May, Taylor's name became a rallying cry during nationwide protests that called attention to entrenched racism and demanded police reform. Her image is painted on streets, emblazoned on protest signs and silk-screened on T-shirts worn by protesters.

The FBI is still investigating potential violations of federal law in connection with the raid at Taylor's home March 13.

After the announcement, Ben Crump, a lawyer for Taylor's family, denounced the decision as "outrageous and offensive." Protesters shouting, "No justice, no peace!" took to the streets, while others sat quietly and wept.

Morgan Julianna Lee, a high school student in Charlotte, N.C., watched the announcement from her home.

"It's almost like a slap in the face," the 15-year-old said over the phone. "If I, as a Black woman, ever need justice, I will never get it."

Authorities themselves ex-

pressed dismay. At a news conference, Cameron, the attorney general, said, "Criminal law is not meant to respond to every sorrow and grief."

"But my heart breaks for the loss of Miss Taylor ... My mother, if something was to happen to me, would find it very hard," he added, choking up.

Cameron, however, said the officers acted in self-defense after Taylor's boyfriend fired at them. Kenneth Walker told police he heard knocking but didn't know who was coming in and fired in self-defense.

The warrant was connected to a suspect who did not live there, and no drugs were found inside. The city has since banned such warrants.

According to Kentucky law, the use of force by (Officers Jonathan) Mattingly and (Myles) Cosgrove was justified to protect themselves," Cameron said. "This justification bars us from pursuing criminal charges in Miss Breonna Taylor's death."

President Donald Trump read a statement from Cameron, saying "justice is not often easy." He later tweeted that he was "praying for the two police officers that were shot."

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his running mate, Kamala Harris, called for policing reform.

Biden said that while a federal investigation continues, "we do not need to wait for the final judgment of that investigation to do more to deliver justice for Breonna." He said that the country should start by addressing excessive force, banning chokeholds and overhauling no-knock warrants.

"We must never stop speaking Breonna's name as we work to reform our justice system, including overhauling no-knock warrants," Harris said on Twitter.

NATION

Despite Trump remark, proper transfer vowed

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional leaders from both parties, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, swiftly pushed back Thursday after President Donald Trump declined to commit to a peaceful transfer of power if he loses the Nov. 3 presidential election.

Trump said during a Wednesday news conference, "We're going to have to see what happens," responding to a question about committing to the results. "You know that I've been complaining very strongly about the ballots, and the ballots are a disaster."

By Thursday, the White House sought to clarify Trump's words.

"The president will accept the results of a free and fair election," said Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany. But she said Trump does want to "get rid of mass, mail-out voting," which he claims without evidence will lead to massive fraudulent ballots.

Reaction to Trump's comments was strong and negative from Capitol Hill. Lawmakers from both parties — including leaders of Trump's Republican Party —

had no hesitation in committing to an orderly transfer if he loses.

"The winner of the November 3rd election will be inaugurated on January 20th," McConnell said in a tweet. "There will be an orderly transition just as there has been every four years since 1792."

Democrat Pelosi said it was "very sad" the president of the United States was even raising this question. "What would our founders think?" she asked.

"Calm down, Mr. President," Pelosi said at a news conference.

She reminded Trump the U.S. is not North Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia or other countries with strongman leaders he openly admires.

"You are in the United States of America. It is a democracy," she said. "So why don't you just try for a moment to honor our oath of office to the Constitution of the United States."

Pelosi said she has confidence in American voters to cast their votes and choose the president.

Hardly any GOP lawmakers came to the president's defense. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Trump ally and chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, told "Fox &



JOSE LUIS MAGANA/AP

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., speaks during a news conference Thursday, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Friends" on Thursday, "If Republicans lose we will accept the result. If the Supreme Court rules in favor of Joe Biden, I will accept that result."

Rep. Liz Cheney of Wyoming, a member of the House GOP leadership, tweeted: "The peaceful transfer of power is enshrined in our Constitution and fundamental to the survival of our Republic. America's leaders swear an oath to the Constitution. We will uphold that oath."

Longtime Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama, chairman of the Appropriations Committee said, "Well, we've always had a peaceful transfer of power. That's one of the hallmarks. And I think this year will be no exception."

It is highly unusual that a sitting president would express less than complete confidence in the American democracy's electoral

process. But Trump also declined four years ago to commit to honoring the election results if his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, won.

Biden, his current Democratic challenger, was asked about Trump's comment after landing in Wilmington, Del., on Wednesday night.

"What country are we in?" Biden asked incredulously, adding: "I'm being facetious. Look, he says the most irrational things. I don't know what to say about it. But it doesn't surprise me."

In a July interview, Trump similarly refused to commit to accepting the results.

"I have to see. Look ... I have to see," Trump told Chris Wallace during the latest interview on "Fox News Sunday." "No, I'm not going to just say yes. I'm not going to say no, and I didn't last time either."

Trump niece sues, says cheated out of millions

NEW YORK — Donald Trump's niece followed up her best-selling, tell-all book with a lawsuit Thursday alleging that the president and two of his siblings cheated her out of millions of dollars over several decades while squeezing her out of the family business.

Mary L. Trump sought unspecified damages in the lawsuit, filed in a state court near New York City.

"Fraud was not just the family business — it was a way of life," the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit alleged the president, his brother Robert, and a sister, the former federal judge Maryanne Trump Barry, portrayed themselves as Mary Trump's protectors while secretly taking her share of minority interests in the family's extensive real estate holdings. Robert Trump died last month.

Mary Trump and her brother, Fred Trump III, inherited various real estate business interests when her father, Fred Trump Jr., died in 1981 at 42 after a struggle with alcoholism. Mary Trump was 16 at the time.

According to the lawsuit, Donald Trump and his siblings devalued Mary Trump's interests, which included a share of hundreds of New York City apartments, by millions of dollars even before Donald Trump's father, Fred Trump Sr., died on June 25, 1999.

As they pressured Mary Trump to accept a settlement and relinquish all interests in the Trump businesses, the uncles and aunt provided fraudulent accounting and financial statements that misrepresented the value of their father's estate at \$30 million or less, the lawsuit said.

From The Associated Press

Former military, civilian leaders sign letter supporting Biden

By KAREN DEYOUNG
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Nearly 500 retired senior military officers, as well as former Cabinet secretaries, service chiefs and other officials, have signed an open letter in support of former vice president Joe Biden, the Democratic presidential nominee, saying that he has "the character, principles, wisdom and leadership necessary to address a world on fire."

The letter, published Thursday morning by National Security Leaders for Biden, is the latest in a series of calls for President Donald Trump's defeat in the November election.

"We are former public servants who have devoted our careers, and in many cases risked our lives, for the United States," it says. "We are generals, admirals, senior noncommissioned officers, ambassadors and senior civilian national security leaders. We are Republicans and Democrats, and Independents. We love our country."

Unfortunately, we also fear for it."

The letter has been signed by

'[It is] imperative that we stop Trump's assault on our nation's values.'

Letter from National Security Leaders for Biden

489 people.

Not all of those Republicans who previously have broken ranks with Trump have called for Biden's election, although the numbers are growing. Last month, more than 60 former national security officials who served in Republican administrations, including Trump's, signed a statement calling him "unfit to serve as President." Noting that some of them held different policy positions from Biden, they nonetheless called for his election, saying it was "imperative that we stop Trump's assault on our nation's values and institutions and reinstate the moral foundations of our democracy."

Other former Trump officials, including retired Gen. Jim Mattis, who served as defense secretary, and former national security adviser John Bolton, who have been sharply critical of Trump, have neither signed any of the

missives nor said they would vote for Biden.

Retired Air Force Gen. Charles G. Boyd, who signed the new letter, recorded a video for the group's Twitter account.

"I spent 36 years in the United States Air Force, almost seven of those as a prisoner of war in Vietnam," he said in the video. "Since my return, I've been a Republican, but quietly."

"I fervently believe that military officers should not be involved in presidential politics, even when retired," said Boyd, who is the only former POW to have reached four-star rank, and served as deputy commander of the U.S. European Command. "But this year is different. Donald Trump's assault on the rule of law that makes a democracy possible has been so egregious I've decided to speak out... We need to vote for Joe Biden this year. I'm going to vote for him. I hope you

do, too."

Trump has spoken often of what he believes is his support from the military, although earlier this month he said that some leaders at the Pentagon probably weren't "in love with me." Some military leaders, he said, "want to do nothing but fight wars so that all of those wonderful companies that make the bombs and make the planes, they make everything else stay happy."

The troops, he indicated, were happy with him. His remarks came at a White House news conference after an article in the Atlantic quoted unnamed senior administration officials as saying Trump had called American troops "suckers" and "losers" for dying in battle.

A poll of active-duty service members conducted last month by Military Times, in conjunction with the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, indicated a drop in military support for Trump. It showed Biden with a 41% to 37% advantage over the president, with remaining active-duty service members saying they were planning either not to vote or to

support a third-party candidate. A similarly timed survey by the Military Times in 2016 gave Trump a two-to-one advantage over Hillary Clinton.

The new letter, addressed "To Our Fellow Citizens," says that Trump "has demonstrated he is not equal to the enormous responsibilities of his office; he cannot rise to meet challenges large or small. Thanks to his disdainful attitude and his failures, our allies no longer trust or respect us, and our enemies no longer fear us."

"Climate change continues unabated, as does North Korea's nuclear program. The president has ceded influence to a Russian adversary who puts bounties on the heads of American military personnel, and his trade war against China has only harmed America's farmers and manufacturers."

Biden, it says, "has the character, principles, wisdom, and leadership necessary to address a world on fire. That is why Joe Biden must be the next President of the United States; why we vigorously support his election; and why we urge our fellow citizens to do the same."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Jobless claims at 870K as fraud and backlogs cloud data

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of people seeking U.S. unemployment aid rose slightly last week to 870,000, a historically high figure that shows that the viral pandemic is still squeezing restaurants, airlines, hotels and many other businesses six months after it first erupted.

The figure coincides with evidence that some newly laid-off Americans are facing delays in receiving unemployment benefits as state agencies intensify efforts to combat fraudulent applications and clear their pipelines of a backlog of jobless claims.

California has said it will stop processing new applications for two weeks as it seeks to reduce backlogs and prevent fraudulent claims. Pennsylvania has found that up to 10,000 inmates are improperly receiving aid.

The Labor Department said Thursday that the number of people who are continuing to receive unemployment benefits declined to 12.6 million. The steady decline in that figure over the past several months reflects that some of the unemployed are being rehired. Yet it also indicates that others have exhausted their regular jobless aid, which lasts six months in most states.

In addition to those receiving aid on state programs, about 105,000 others were added last week to an extended jobless-benefits program which provides an additional 13 weeks of aid. This program, established in the economic relief package Congress passed earlier this year, is now paying benefits to 1.6 million people.

Applications for jobless aid soared in the spring after the viral outbreak suddenly shut down businesses across the country, which cost tens of millions of jobs and triggered a deep recession.

Since then, as states have slowly reopened their economies, about half the jobs that were initially lost have been recovered.

Yet job growth has been slowing, and unemployment remains elevated at 8.4%. In most sectors of the economy, employers appear reluctant to hire new workers in the face of deep uncertainty about the course of the virus. Most economists say it will be hard for the job market or the economy to sustain a recovery unless Congress enacts another rescue package for individuals, businesses and states. Ultimately, an effective vaccine will likely be needed for the economy to fully regain its health.

The growing concerns about fraudulent applications have focused mainly on a new program, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. This program made self-employed people, gig workers and contractors eligible for jobless aid for the first time.

But the program has been targeted for fraud in many states and has also doubled-counted many beneficiaries. Last week, California cut in half the number of people receiving benefits under PUA, likely after purging double-counts. It now says 3.4 million people are receiving the aid, down from 6.4 million the previous week.

And first-time applications for benefits, which generally reflect the pace of layoffs each week, often include leftover claims from previous weeks.

Christopher Thornberg, a founder of Beacon Economics, an economic consulting firm, says all the new programs to provide aid have taxed most states' unemployment agencies and made the data less reliable.

"It's kind of the Wild West," Thornberg said. "I have just largely dismissed this data."



No HAN GUAN/AP

A worker passes by the logo outside the SinoVac vaccine factory in Beijing on Thursday.

Chinese company says vaccine should be ready by early 2021

By SAM McNEIL

Associated Press

BEIJING — A Chinese pharmaceutical company said Thursday that the coronavirus vaccine it is developing should be ready by early 2021 for distribution worldwide, including the United States.

Yin Weidong, the CEO of SinoVac, vowed to apply to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to sell CoronaVac in the U.S. if it passes its third and final round of testing in humans. Yin said he personally has been given the experimental vaccine.

"At the very beginning, our strategy was designed for China and for Wuhan. Soon after that, in June and July, we adjusted our strategy, that is to face the world," Yin said, referring to the city where the virus first emerged.

"Our goal is to provide the vaccine to the world including the U.S., EU and others," Yin said.

Stringent regulations in the U.S., European Union, Japan and Australia have historically

blocked the sale of Chinese vaccines. But Yin said that could change.

SinoVac is developing one of China's top four vaccine candidates along with state-owned SinoPharm, which has state-owned private firm CanSino.

More than 24,000 people are currently participating in clinical trials of CoronaVac in Brazil, Turkey and Indonesia, with additional trials scheduled for Bangladesh and possibly Chile, Yin said. SinoVac chose those countries because they all had limited research and development capacity, serious outbreaks and large populations, he said.

He spoke to reporters during a tour of a SinoVac plant south of Beijing. Built in a few months from scratch, the plant is designed to enable SinoVac to produce half a million vaccine doses a year. The bio-secure facility was already busy Thursday filling tiny bottles with the vaccine and boxing them. The company projects it will be able to produce

a few hundred million doses of the vaccine by February or March of next year.

SinoVac is also starting to test small doses of CoronaVac on children in the three countries because of the high rate of infection among young people there.

Yin said the company would prioritize distribution of the vaccine to countries hosting human trials of CoronaVac.

While the vaccine has not yet passed the phase 3 clinical trials, a globally accepted standard, SinoVac has already injected thousands of people in China under an emergency use provision.

Yin said he was one of the first to receive the experimental vaccine months ago along with researchers after phase one and two of human trials showed no serious adverse effects. He said that self-injecting showed his support for CoronaVac.

"This is kind of a tradition of our company," Yin said, adding that he had done the same with a hepatitis vaccine under development.

Examining the differences between the flu and COVID-19

Associated Press

It's impossible to tell the difference between influenza and COVID-19 without a test. They have such similar symptoms, you may need to get tested to know what's making you miserable.

Body aches, sore throat, fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue and headaches are symptoms shared by the two.

One difference? People with the flu typically feel sicker during the first week of illness. With COVID-19, people may feel the worst during the second or third week, and they may be sicker for

a longer period.

Another difference: COVID-19 is more likely than the flu to cause a loss of taste or smell. But not everyone experiences that symptom, so it's not a reliable way to tell the viruses apart.

That leaves testing, which will become more important as flu season ramps up this fall in the Northern Hemisphere. Doctors will need to know test results to determine the best treatment.

It's also possible to be infected with both viruses at the same time, said Dr. Daniel Solomon, an infectious diseases expert at

Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston.

Whether you get tested for one or both viruses may depend on how available tests are and which viruses are circulating where you live, he said.

"Right now we are not seeing community transmission of influenza, so widespread testing for the flu is not yet recommended," Solomon said.

Both the flu and coronavirus spread through droplets from the nose and mouth. Both can spread before people know they are sick.

The flu has a shorter incubation period — meaning after infection, it can take one to four days to feel sick — compared to the coronavirus, which can take two to 14 days from infection to symptoms.

On average, COVID-19 is more contagious than the flu. But many people with COVID-19 don't end up spreading the virus to anyone, while a few people spread it to many others. These "super-spreader events" are more common with COVID-19 than flu, Solomon said.

Preventing the flu starts with an annual flu shot tailored to

the strains of the flu virus that are circulating. Health officials would like to see record numbers of people get flu shots this year so hospitals aren't overwhelmed with two epidemics at once.

There's no vaccine yet for COVID-19, although several candidates are in the final testing stages.

Precautions against COVID-19 — masks, social distancing, hand-washing — also slow the spread of the flu, so health officials hope continued vigilance could lessen the severity of this year's flu season.

WORLD

Pleas for coronavirus vaccine fill UN summit

By CARA ANNA
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG — If the United Nations was created from the ashes of World War II, what will be born from the global crisis of COVID-19?

Many world leaders at this week's virtual U.N. summit hope it will be a vaccine made available and affordable to all countries, rich and poor. But with the United States, China and Russia opting out of a collaborative effort to develop and distribute a vaccine, and some rich nations striking deals with pharmaceutical companies to secure millions of potential doses, the U.N. pleas are plentiful but likely in vain.

"Are people to be left to die?" Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez, a COVID-19 survivor, said of the uncertain way forward.

More than 150 countries have joined COVAX, in which richer countries agree to buy into potential vaccines and help finance access for poorer ones. But the absence of Washington, Beijing and Moscow means the response to a health crisis unlike any other in the U.N.'s 75 years is short of truly being global. Instead, the three powers have made vague pledges of sharing any vaccine they develop, likely after helping their own citizens first.

This week's U.N. gathering could serve as a wake-up call, said Gayle Smith, president of the ONE Campaign, a nonprofit fighting preventable disease that's developing scorecards to measure



ESKINDER DEBEBE, UNITED NATIONS/AP

The pre-recorded message of Tommy Esang Remengesau Jr., president of Palau, is played during the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday at U.N. headquarters in New York.

how the world's most powerful nations are contributing to vaccine equity.

"It's not enough for some G20 countries to realize that an equitable vaccine is the key to ending this virus and reopening the global economy," she said.

With weeks remaining before a deadline for countries to join COVAX, which is co-led by the U.N.'s World Health Organization, many heads of state are using the

U.N. meeting as a high-profile chance to wheedle, persuade and even shame.

Ghana's president, Nana Akufo-Addo, pointed out the illusory nature of borders and wealth: "The virus has taught us that we are all at risk, and there is no special protection for the rich or a particular class."

The president of the COVID-19 Free Pacific island nation of Palau, Tommy Remengesau Jr., warned

against selfishness: "Vaccine hoarding will harm us all."

And Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame, appealed to the universal desire for a return to normal: "Ensuring equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics will speed up the end of the pandemic for everyone."

Just two days into nearly 200 speeches by world leaders, it was clear the urgent need for a vaccine would be mentioned by al-

most everyone. Considering the mind-popping challenges ahead, that's no surprise.

"We've never dealt with a situation where 7.8 billion people in the world are needing a vaccine at almost the same time," John Nkengasong, head of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said this month.

That has led to difficult questions: Who will get vaccine doses first? Who is making private deals to get them? This week's speeches make clear that such questions have existential meaning.

The vaccine quest must not be a "purely mercantile act," Iraq said. Nor "an issue of competition," Turkey said.

"We must take the politics out of the vaccine," Kazakhstan said. "We need true globalization of compassion," Slovakia said.

The Dominican Republic deployed all-caps in a statement: "WE DEMAND this vaccine be available to all human beings on the planet." More gently, Mozambique warned that "nationalism and isolationism in the face of a pandemic are, as far as we are concerned, a prescription for failure."

No matter their reputation at home or on the global stage, leaders are finding a shred of common ground as the world rears a staggering 1 million confirmed deaths from the pandemic.

"The COVID-19 vaccine must be considered a global public good. Let us be clear on this," said Rodrigo Duterte, president of the Philippines.

Taiwan: China sends planes to island 3 consecutive days

Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Taiwan said Thursday that China sent two military surveillance planes toward the island for three straight days and it dispatched patrols in response.

Tensions have risen in the Taiwan Strait as the United States has stepped up its official engagement with the self-ruled island

that China considers part of its national territory.

Separately on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, the Chinese People's Liberation Army sent two planes, according to statements from Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense. In response, the Taiwanese side tracked the planes and dispatched air patrols, the ministry said.

Last week, China sent a total

of 37 warplanes, including bombers and fighter jets, across the Taiwan Strait in a warning as a high-level U.S. State Department official visited the island.

Taiwan's President, Tsai Ing-wen, has remained defiant of these actions, visiting a military base Tuesday and encouraging the soldiers, in particular pilots and crew.

Taiwan's foreign minister, Jo-

seph Wu, said in July that Chinese military exercises have become increasingly frequent, and have become "virtually a daily occurrence."

China has increased its diplomatic and military pressure on Tsai's government over her refusal to agree to China's insistence that the island be considered a part of Chinese territory. The vast majority of Taiwanese

reject the prospect of political union with China under the "one country, two systems" framework used for Hong Kong.

Following Tsai's election in 2016, China cut off contact with the Taiwanese government and has sought to isolate her government, siphoning off the island's diplomatic allies while ratcheting up political, military and economic pressure.

Nearly 500 pilot whales stranded in Australia with at least 380 dead

Associated Press

HOBBART, Australia — More pilot whales were found stranded on Wednesday, raising the estimated total to nearly 500, including 380 that have died, in the largest mass stranding ever recorded in the country.

Authorities had already been working to rescue survivors among an estimated 270 whales found Monday on a beach and two sand bars near the remote coastal town of Strahan on the southern island state of Tasmania.

Another 200 stranded whales were spotted from a helicopter on Wednesday less than 6 miles

to the south, Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service Manager Nic Deka said.

All 200 had been confirmed dead by late afternoon.

They were among 380 whales that had died overall, 30 that were alive but stranded and 50 that had been rescued since Tuesday, Deka said.

"We'll continue to work to free as many of the animals as we can," he said. "We'll continue working for as long as there are live animals."

About 30 whales in the original stranding were moved from the sandbars to open ocean Tuesday, but several got stranded again.

About a third of the first group had died by Monday evening.

Tasmania is the only part of Australia prone to mass strandings, though they can also occur on the Australian mainland.

Australia's largest mass stranding had been 320 pilot whales near the Western Australia state town of Dunsborough in 1996.

The latest stranding is the first involving more than 50 whales in Tasmania since 2009.

Marine Conservation Program wildlife biologist Kris Carlyn said that the latest mass stranding was the biggest in Australia "in terms of numbers stranded and died."

Why the whales ran aground remains a mystery. The pod may have been drawn into the coast to feed or by the misadventure of one or two whales, which led to the rest of the pod following, Carlyn said.

"It's really likely this was the one stranding event of a big group. This would have been one big group offshore," he said.

Marine scientist Vanessa Pirrotta said there were a number of potential reasons why whales might become beached, including navigational errors.

"They do have a very strong social system, these animals are closely bonded and that's why we

have seen so many in this case unfortunately in this situation," Pirrotta said.

And rescuing them doesn't always work "because they are wanting to return back to the pod, they might hear the acoustics for the vocalizations of the sounds that the others are making, or they're just disoriented and in this case extremely stressed, and just probably so fatigued that they in some cases don't know where they are," she added.

In neighboring New Zealand, more than 600 pilot whales washed up on the South Island at Farewell Spit in 2017, with more than 350 dying.

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WORLD

China auto show forging ahead under virus limits

By Joe McDonald
Associated Press

BEIJING — The first event for the CEO of Swedish electric car brand Polestar at this month's Beijing auto show: A two-week quarantine in a hotel.

The auto show, the first major in-person sales event for any industry since the coronavirus pandemic began, opens Saturday in a sign the ruling Communist Party is confident China has contained the disease. Still, automakers face intensive anti-virus controls including quarantines for visitors from abroad and curbs on crowd sizes at an event that usually is packed shoulder-to-shoulder with spectators.

"The car show will indeed be different from any other car show," said Thomas Ingelnath of Polestar, owned by China's Geely Holding, by phone from his hotel room in Tianjin, east of Beijing.

The automakers' willingness to tackle the show's logistical challenges highlights the importance of China, their biggest market. Chinese sales have rebounded to pre-pandemic levels while U.S. and European demand is weak and the industry struggles to reverse multibillion-dollar losses.

"China is the only hope for many global car makers," said John Zeng of LMC Automotive



MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

Visitors wearing face masks to protect against the coronavirus look at Tesla vehicles on display at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) in Beijing, on Sept. 5.

Consulting. "They are really counting on China to help their bottom line."

Ford Motor Co., General Motors Co., BMW AG and other brands are going ahead with global and China debuts of electric SUVs, luxury coupes and futuristic concept cars. Some are broadcasting events online to reach wider audiences.

CEO Makoto Uchida of Nissan Motor Co. and other executives plan to appear by video from their

home countries. Most brands are relying on Chinese employees or foreign managers who work in the country full-time to operate their displays while keeping contact with spectators to a minimum.

The Beijing city government has told automakers to limit the number of guests they invite but has yet to say how many people will be allowed into the 2.2 million-square-foot exhibition center.



NARDUS ENGELBRECHT/AP

A baboon, named Kataza by locals, eats from discarded waste from stores in Tokai, Cape Town, South Africa, on Sept. 17.

S. African baboon evicted after team raided homes

Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Kataza already had a lengthy rap sheet with Cape Town authorities, so when he organized a band of others to raid a series of suburban homes, he was captured. Now he sleeps at a local prison, although there is a social media campaign for him to be returned to his old stomping grounds.

Kataza is a baboon, one of a few hundred urban baboons who live around Cape Town and are often a nuisance when they invade properties looking for food. They knock over trash cans, steal fruit and vegetables from gardens, and generally cause trouble.

Kataza's story is the latest in

Cape Town's ongoing dilemma over how to deal with the baboons, who live in the craggy mountains that surround the city but often jump at the chance to roam through residential areas and scavenge for anything edible. After he was captured, rangers relocated him to the nearby area of Tokai, hoping that he would integrate with another, better-behaved troop and stop his mischief.

Activists, however, want him to be taken home and reunited with his own troop. "#Bring-BackKataza" reads a sign posted by a road in Kommetjie. There's a Facebook page calling for his safe return.

First Kosovar Albanian arrested on war crimes charges from '98-'99 war

Associated Press

PRISTINA, Kosovo — A Special international court said Thursday that a former commander of the separatist fighters in Kosovo's 1998-99 war has been arrested as part of a war crimes and crimes against humanity investigation stemming from the conflict with Serbia.

The Kosovo Specialist Chambers, based in The Hague, said former Kosovo Liberation Army commander Salih Mustafa was arrested based on a "warrant, transfer order and confirmed indictment issued by a pre-trial judge." The court's statement didn't identify the charges on

which he was indicted.

The court said Mustafa would be transferred to its detention facilities in The Hague and "appear before the pre-trial judge without undue delay." He is the first ethnic Albanian to be arrested on war crimes charges arising from the 1990s conflict.

The Kosovo Liberation Army was made up of ethnic Albanian rebels who wanted Kosovo's independence from Serbia. Mustafa oversaw fighters in the Llap area, 20 miles north of the capital, Pristina.

He later served as intelligence chief of the Kosovo Security Forces, military troops created in

2009 as a transitional unit before becoming a regular army.

The Kosovo Specialist Chambers and an attached Special Prosecutor's Office, or SPO, was established five years ago to look into allegations that KLA members committed war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The association has said it anonymously received thousands of confidential files during the last two months, which contain names of witnesses and also draft charges against former top KLA commanders. It wasn't clear whether the files were stolen or leaked by someone involved in the investigation.



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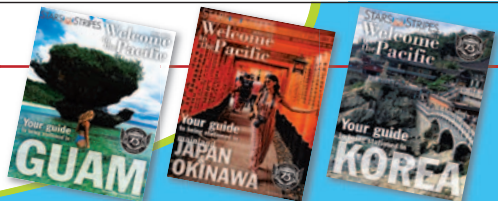
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WORLD

Volkswagen unleashes newest electric SUV for mass markets

Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany — Volkswagen is unveiling a battery-powered sport-utility vehicle that is headed for global markets including the United States and China, as the company takes a major step forward in its campaign to make electric cars a mass-market choice.

The ID.4 combines the battery drive favored by environmental rules in Europe and China with the compact SUV design that has drawn many consumers away

from hatchbacks and sedans.

The new model comes close on the heels of the German company's first vehicle built on its electric-only platform, the ID.3 compact, that went on sale in September. The ID.3 is not, however, coming to the United States, where larger vehicles such as SUVs increasingly rule the market.

The ID.4 is by contrast "designed as a world car," according to Volkswagen brand head Ralf Brandstätter. It will launch

in the U.S. early next year, with Volkswagen offering three years free unlimited charging on 470 stations belonging to the Electrify America fast-charging network.

The company says prices start at \$39,995 before the potential \$7,500 U.S. federal tax credit. The first edition will have a range of 250 miles, charging to full in 7.5 hours at home, or up to 80% in 38 minutes at a fast-charging station. Volkswagen says eventually it will have a lower-cost \$35,000 version with less range.



SEBASTIAN KAINERT, DPA/AP

A VW ID.4 stands in front of the Frauenkirche on the occasion of a Volkswagen vehicle presentation on the Neumarkt in Dresden, Germany, on July 29.

Scott Keough, CEO of Volkswagen in America, said Tesla's all-electric Model Y, which now starts at \$49,990, is a competitor,

but Volkswagen sees most of its customers coming from conventional compact SUVs such as the Toyota RAV4 and Honda CR-V.

Europe takes on biggest shift yet in financing greener growth

Bloomberg

The European Union will unleash as many green bonds as the world issued last year, testing the level of investor interest in financing a shift toward cleaner economies.

The bloc plans to create up to \$266 billion of green debt, which will propel it from a debut issuer to the largest player in the nascent market in coming years. With no set definition on what makes a green bond,

its criteria are likely to set a benchmark standard for others to follow.

The plans are undoubtedly a big win for the industry — just four years after the first sovereign green bond issuance. Yet its efforts will gauge whether such assets can attract mainstream funds outside Europe, or find demand limited to an enthusiastic but specialized group of investors.

"From a market point of view, a development point of view and a climate change point of view," the EU's offerings are

"going to alter the landscape," said Mitch Reznick, head of sustainable fixed income at Hermes Fund Managers. "From a value point of view, this works best for thematic funds, where value isn't necessarily the primary driver."

The huge issuance plan is the latest to fund pandemic rescue packages, leading to a surge in global debt. So far there's been no shortage of demand for green assets, thanks to a boom in environmentally-conscious investing. These specialized funds

helped Germany's debut green bond this month attract five times as many orders as the debt available.

The number of sustainable index mutual funds and exchange-traded funds and their assets of \$250 billion have both doubled in the past three years, according to Morningstar. Frans Timmermans, the EU's climate chief, sees this deeper pool of investors as an opportunity for the bloc to fund change.

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WEEKEND

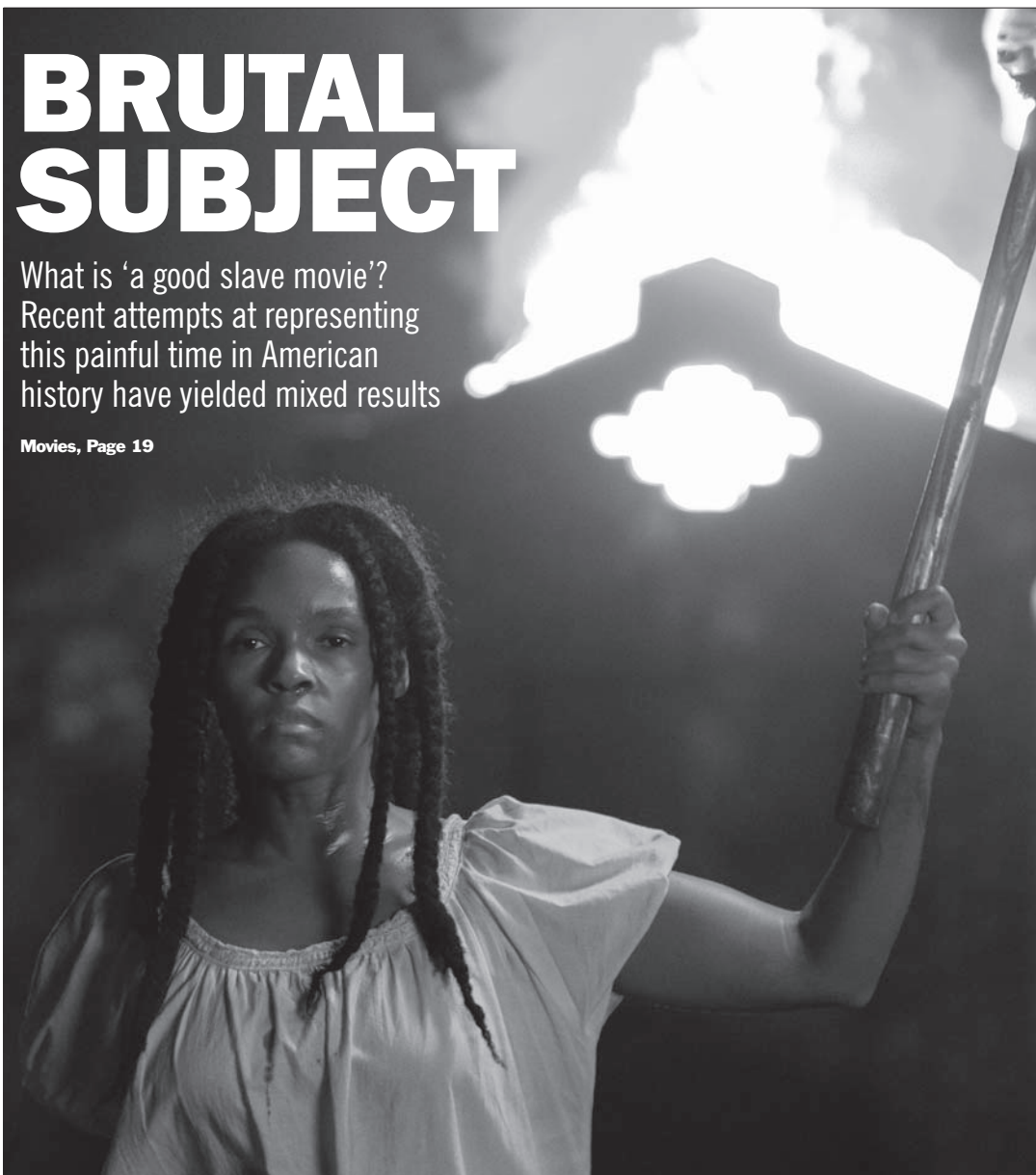


Keith Urban keen
on collaboration
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BRUTAL SUBJECT

What is 'a good slave movie'?
Recent attempts at representing
this painful time in American
history have yielded mixed results

Movies, Page 19



WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



KARL MERTON FERRON, THE BALTIMORE SUN/TNS

Jennifer Berg Gaither, the librarian at Baltimore City College, uses TikTok in her teaching. She poses with one of her former students, Melia Scott.

The clock is ticking

Teens rally around popular app TikTok amid criticism

By JEFF BARKER
The Baltimore Sun

In candid moments, teens may concede they spend too many hours scrolling on TikTok, and acknowledge that the wildly popular app can feel frivolous.

But TikTok — a video sharing app for a generation that keeps little to itself — is inspiring ardent loyalty from users who say its dance videos and candid expressions of teen reality help them feel connected during the socially limiting coronavirus pandemic.

President Donald Trump's recent move to ban the app set off what Melia Scott, 18, of Baltimore, calls "a rebellion" among her age group.

"They are definitely fighting it," said Scott, who attends Baltimore City Community College.

There are "Save TikTok" and "Ban Trump" hashtags on the app, along with plenty of users showing off unflattering Trump impressions. Tens of thousands of people have signed any of a half-dozen online petitions to preserve TikTok, and some users say they would explore loopholes or hacks to try to get around a ban.

"TikTok is the language they use," Jennifer Berg Gaither, the librarian at Baltimore City College high school, said of her students. She makes TikTok videos — including some in which she dances with students — to heighten their interest in education. "I don't think anyone wants TikTok to go away," she said.

"We use TikTok during the pandemic to literally express how we feel," said Nakiyann Johnson, 18, who graduated this year from City College. "I want to still be able to communicate with people."

The app invites users to share videos up to 60 seconds. People lip-synch popular songs, dance, pull pranks on friends, show off stunts or athletic skills, provide cooking tips or open up about deeply personal issues such as depression or sexual orientation.

Millennials and post-millennials talk about body-image insecurities, breakups and the general awkwardness and tribulations of being a teenager or young adult. Analysts say the app is particularly good at finding users' comfort zones and feeding them videos of interest by their age or location.

TikTok says on its website that it collects "information contained in the messages you send through our platform and information from your

phone book, if you grant us access to your phone book on your mobile device."

TikTok claims 100 million American users. It has been downloaded more than 2 billion times globally, according to Sensor Tower, an analytics firm.

Trump's executive order last month would bar Americans from "any transaction" with ByteDance Ltd., TikTok's China-based parent company. The order said TikTok's ability to capture information about users — including online activity, location data and search histories — "threatens to allow the Chinese Communist Party access to Americans' personal and proprietary information." ByteDance says the order would "destroy an online community" and has challenged the ban's legality with a lawsuit in federal court in California.

TikTok is also home to political action. Users learned on TikTok about making fake ticket requests for a Trump campaign rally in Oklahoma in June, seeking to inflate expected attendance estimates with a goal of embarrassing the president.

Like an infinity pool, TikTok — with its videos endlessly looping, one displaying after the next — creates the sensation of going on forever. Many have a goofy, irreverent quality.

In addition to the volume of time young people spend on TikTok, some parents worry the app creates a sexualized environment for kids, particularly girls.

"Parents are a little bit wary because they think about kids shaking their booty in crop tops," said Leticia Barr, a Montgomery County middle school teacher who blogs about technology, education and parenting.

"Like any social platform, we need to be mindful of what our kids are using," Barr said. "We can talk to our kids about being safe, but we're never sure of what other kids who use that platform are putting out in the world."

TikTok says users must be at least 13. It offers a scaled-down experience for kids under 13 that doesn't permit sharing personal information.

In its lawsuit against Trump, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and the Commerce Department, ByteDance said the administration was "impermissibly banning TikTok." The company said it stores user data outside China and its security measures are "more than sufficient to address any conceivable U.S. government privacy or national security concerns."

GADGET WATCH

A sleek smart frame for sharing your best photos

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Earlier this year, Nixplay came out with an all-new lineup of their industry-leading Wi-Fi smart photo frames. Now with better resolution, bigger screen sizes, and advanced functionality, they made a great product even better.

If you're not familiar with Nixplay frames, you need to be, especially with the holiday shopping season upon us (hint!). With a private username and password, the modern-looking Nixplay frames have Wi-Fi connectivity, displaying digital images and videos that you or anyone can remotely upload to the frame.

Setup is simple. All you need is Wi-Fi and a secure account login with the Nixplay companion app (iOS and Android). Once the account and frame are set up, it's up to you to share the login information and invite others to stock family memories.

With the app, it's as easy as turning it on, selecting photos, hitting the upload button, choosing the playlist and hitting send. The playlist is just like a music playlist; you can divide it by family, event or just keep all the images in one. From the app, you have controls to turn the frame on or off, invite friends to share images, view and delete the playlists.

Frame size options range between 9.7 and 15.6 inches. All frames have a pair of 2-watt speakers to allow audio to accompany videos.

Each frame has Nixplay's patented stand, which is built into the power cord and is now detachable to reveal a hidden wall mount.

Inside is 8GB of storage, which is a ton of space. The frame is built with an integrated Hu-Motion Sensor so the frame turns on and off automatically when motion is near.

The Nixplay app also has a tab for the Nixplay print shop to order prints, cards, and even picture smartphone cases. All this can be ordered directly from the images loaded on the frame or from your smartphone's camera roll. Subscriptions are available to Nixplay Plus for up to 80% off the products.

Yearly membership is \$49.99, or month to month for \$4.99. The frames have gotten smarter, working with Amazon Alexa,

Google Assistant and Google Photos. A magnetic remote is included. Stored social media albums in Dropbox, Facebook, Google Photos, Instagram and Verizon Cloud can be uploaded to the frame for viewing.

Online: Nixplay.com; Smart Photo Frames start at \$179.99 and go up to \$319.99 (15.6-inch). Wall hardware is included.

EarFun Air True Wireless Earbuds are another great, affordable choice with great sound and every added feature you'd want.



EarFun Air True Wireless Earbuds

Instead of testing the sound with music, I used the EarFun Air Trues for a few NFL games. With the pumped-in crowd noise constantly coming in along with the announcers, I felt like they gave me a great audio experience. After the game, I switched to my playlist and, just as promised, the crystal-clear sound was delivered along with a nice touch of distortion-free bass. Every type of music I switched to had sound with great consistency without needing adjustments.

The ergonomic fit is a big deal, especially since many earbuds I've tried were uncomfortable for long-term use. The EarFun's stayed in place for hours comfortably. Having a single earbud mode allows for just a single ear to play at a time. When you take both earbuds out, the audio will pause and then resume when they are back in place.

Included is Bluetooth 5.0, a 35-hour battery life with the wireless and USB-C charging case. On a full charge, you should get 7 hours of playtime and an additional 28 hours with the case. Fast charging for 10 minutes will produce about two hours of playtime.

Touch-sensitive controls on the outside of the earbuds were responsive for controlling music selections and calls.

Online: myearfun.com; \$59.99 or \$49.99 at Amazon, available in black or white



NIXPLAY/TNS

Nixplay frames have 8GB of storage.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Left: The critically acclaimed film "12 Years a Slave," starring Michael Fassbender, from left, Lupita Nyong'o and Chiwetel Ejiofor, tells the true story of Solomon Northup, a free black man who was kidnapped in New York and sold into slavery.

Fox Searchlight Pictures

Right: Cynthia Erivo gave cinematic life to Harriet Tubman in 2019's "Harriet," but there are many more revolutionary women's tales to tell onscreen.

Focus Features



Depicting slavery

Films tackling topic have an uphill battle to climb with critics, historians and audiences

BY HELENA ANDREWS-DYER
The Washington Post

What makes a good slave movie? The very question can feel too light considering the two-ton subject matter, but it's top of mind this week with the release of "Antebellum," a thriller by the producers of "Get Out" that uses the horrors of slavery as an allegory for America's long-overdue racial reckoning.

It's a lot — and yet, not enough.

The film stars Janelle Monáe in overlapping roles as a 21st-century professional smartly named Veronica and an enslaved woman named Eden who is forced into labor on a cotton plantation. With its time-blending narrative, the film attempts to reframe the hard-to-watch scenes of sexual violence, kidnapping and whippings so common in movies about slavery with a plot twist most will see coming from a country mile.

Why would the filmmakers even go there? Slavery is in right now. In 2017, "Get Out" — Jordan Peele's directorial debut and Oscar winner for best original screenplay — employed the themes of bondage and stolen humanity to weave a modern horror story about race and racism that felt different but still familiar. The film ushered in a new wave of cinematic explorations of slavery with a twist. Peele's sophomore effort "Us" and next year's "Candyman" have also drilled into layers of oppression to examine society's ills. "Antebellum" appeared to be following suit.

Led by first-time directors Gerard Bush and Christopher Renz, the film is the latest addition to a complicated canon that includes movies as problematic as "Gone with the Wind," as fantastical as "Django Unchained," and as revered as "12 Years a Slave."

"You have to be really careful and responsible with [this topic]," Bush said in an interview.

Because like the films that came before it, "Antebellum" isn't just a movie. It can't be. Films about slavery have an uphill battle to climb with critics, historians and audiences. There is a responsibility lurking behind each reel: A dialogue should be sparked; perspectives should be shifted. It's an incredibly tall order for any piece of art but represents the peculiar conundrum of films about what Bush called "this country's original sin."

According to the reviews, "Antebellum" doesn't hit the mark.

Washington Post chief film critic Ann

Hornaday called it a "muddled misfire of a fantasy-horror film." Entertainment Weekly was similarly unimpressed by the "underbaked slavery fable" which, according to the Hollywood Reporter, "is shallow, more interested in making a Big Point than digging meaningfully into its subject." The Globe and Mail took the entire genre to task: "At the end of the day, if this is what contemporary slave narratives are belatedly evolving into, I'm not sure that the genre is worth rehabilitating."

So, the big question still remains: What makes a good slave movie? Or, perhaps more important, what makes a bad one? For the experts — researchers, teachers, writers, actors — the answer lies somewhere between holding on to the past and pushing the narrative forward.

When historian Dexter Gabriel saw "12 Years a Slave" in 2013 at a Brooklyn theater, his reaction was simple: "Finally."

"It was the first time, as far as a major

Hollywood film, where you had a Black writer who was a descendant of slaves," said Gabriel, who teaches a course on slavery and film at the University of Connecticut.

Before "12 Years a Slave" — written by John Ridley and directed by Steve McQueen, who are both Black men — major studio films about slavery were almost exclusively written, directed and produced by white men, and it showed.

Though Steven Spielberg's "Amistad," released in 1997, was one of the first big-budget films to depict the horrors of the Middle Passage on screen, it is, at its core, a courtroom drama starring white men. "Glory," a 1989 movie about one of the first Black regiments of the Union Army, which garnered Denzel Washington his first Oscar, focuses much of its narrative on the struggles of Col. Robert Gould Shaw, played by Matthew Broderick.

Gabriel's syllabus begins in 1915 with D.W. Griffith's wildly popular racist propaganda film "The Birth of a Nation" and moves up through the decades to include such films as "Glory" and "Get Out," as well as older films such as "The Little Rebel" (1935), "Gone with the Wind" (1939) and "Mandingo" (1975), examining each for its historical accuracy, cultural context and entertainment value.

"I ruin movies for my students, even ones I like," he said.

But "12 Years a Slave" is one Gabriel likes. The Oscar-winning film is based on the 1853 memoir of Solomon Northup, a free man from New York who was kidnapped and enslaved in D.C. McQueen's big-screen adaptation consistently gets gold stars from American historians because the film is based on actual events,

centers on the story of a Black man and depicts both the stark brutality and ordinary day-to-day lives of the enslaved.

Other films from the 2010s such as "Django Unchained," "The Birth of a Nation" and "Harriet" have their moments, but don't quite rise to the top of most experts' list. "Django Unchained" was Quentin Tarantino's shoot-'em-up fantasy. "The Birth of a Nation," about the revolt led by Nat Turner, was overwrought.

"Harriet," about the American hero Harriet Tubman, could have told the fascinating and lesser-known tale of her work as a Union Army spy.

"All of these movies try to reinforce the notion that slavery was bad, which we all already know," said Alexis Wells-Oghoghomeh, a historian focusing on the intersections of gender, religion and slavery.

"What I would like for us to do with these films is to get to a place where we valorize the work of the people who lived and died" on plantations, said Wells-Oghoghomeh. "Those are the vast majority of the ancestors of people who call themselves African Americans."

For Joy Banner, the director of marketing at the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana, one of the few such historic sites in the country that centers on the experience of those enslaved there (and not Pinterest weddings), the goal of any good movie about slavery should be to humanize the people this country considered chattel.

"We created something beautiful out of it — our bonds, our networks. That is not captured enough," said Banner, a descendant of the plantation for which she works.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Confronting the pain

Horrors of slavery at center of Monae's 'Antebellum'

By JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

Janelle Monae says she "felt so much rage and anger" when she stepped onto a former slave plantation for the first time to film the psychological thriller "Antebellum."

In the movie, the pop star and actress plays a successful modern-day author who finds herself trapped in alternate time periods, including the terrifying reality of a runaway slave. Remembering the moment she arrived on that plantation set, she becomes visibly emotional.

"My ancestors were stolen. They didn't steal slaves or servants. They stole doctors. They stole mothers. They stole musicians. They stole mothers, fathers. Humans that mattered," she said.

Much of the horror of "Antebellum" is in its unflinching depiction of the violence inflicted on slaves. Monae hopes the film acts as a catalyst for discussions about systemic racism in a politically divided nation. She says it's essential to "confront the pain" of the past in order to understand the present state of Black Americans — and address police brutality and social injustice.

"You cannot talk about the present and everything we're dealing with the police without knowing the past and understanding that in the South during the Civil War that the first police institution was the same slave patrol meant to control, meant to monitor free slaves, meant to kill, meant to discriminate against free slaves," Monae said.

The movie grew out of a literal nightmare that co-writer-director Gerard Bush had after his father died. He awoke remembering "this woman, Eden, that was screaming desperately for help that felt like cross-

dimensional in a sense."

"I was really emotional from the experience. And I took out my notepad and took all of the notes from the nightmare," Bush said.

Bush and filmmaking partner Christopher Renz say they used 1970s horror films as inspiration. They hope to unsettle audiences when depicting terrors of the pre-abolition South. The Oscar-winning 1939 film "Gone With the Wind" became a touchstone. Bush describes it as both a "horror film" and "a piece of really effective propaganda."

"We went so far as to obtain the lenses from 'Gone with the Wind' to shoot our movie so that we could take that same weaponry that was intended to misinform, to correct the record," Bush said.

In addition to Monae, the cast also includes Jack Huston, Eric Lange, Kiersey Clemons, Gabourey Sidibe and Jena Malone.

Like many films this year, the pandemic has led to multiple delays in releasing "Antebellum." Bush notes the significance of the settled

final date: "We didn't do it deliberately. But it just so happens that the date of September 18th is the anniversary of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850," he said.

Bush said he realizes that audiences watching the film, but he believes that unsettling time calls for unsettling art.

"We need to catalyze a national dialogue or advance the dialogue around this country's original sin. I think that we're going to need to confront it head on and dismantle the scaffolding that keeps these inequities in place so that we can build something new, more equitable for everyone," Bush said.

FROM PAGE 19

Banner's thoughts on the subject aren't just academic. She is currently working on her own script about a little-known African American hero. It's a spycraft story set against the backdrop of the American Civil War. Her personal character, and artistic struggle, is to tell "a story that is a relief from the trauma that also does justice to the trauma."

What's missing from so many films about the institution of slavery is variety, said Banner. There aren't just more stories to be told, but different stories — nuanced narratives that depict the vast experiences of those who were enslaved in America from 1619 through the end of the Civil War. Not every slave narrative is cotton fields, barefoot escapes through the woods, barking dogs and torn flesh.

Who's telling the tale of Robert Smalls, who in 1862 commandeered a Confederate ship, picked up his family and then sailed to freedom? Or the story of Ellen Craft, whose skin was fair enough that she passed for white and, in 1848, dressed up as a wealthy male planter, pretended to be her husband William's owner, and escaped with him to Philadelphia, traveling most of the way in luxury?

"There are more cathartic stories to be told," said Banner.

Looking at the past decade, one would be forgiven for thinking that movies about slavery are plentiful. Since the 2012 releases of "Django Unchained" and "Lincoln," there has been a steady stream of slave films. Besides 2013's "12 Years a Slave," the following years brought "Freedmen" (2014), "Free State of Jones" (2016), "The Birth of a Nation" (2016) and "Harriet" (2019) to theaters. "Emperor" premiered in March, and "Antebellum" will be on video on demand Friday.

But despite the uptick in titles, movies about slavery are "still exceedingly rare," said Gabriel.

The dearth of films about the subject is a double-edged sword. Because there are so few, each film that does address it usually attempts to do too much.

"Every film has to be the film about all slavery, and it can't," said Gabriel.

This is the reason some question the very value of films about it. Why make them if the bar is so high and so often missed?

For actor Djimon Hounsou, whose first major role was starring in "Amistad," the opportunity could not be missed to bring to the masses the tale of a group of kidnapped Africans who revolted against their captors.

"I was completely invested to my bones in playing this character," said Hounsou, who won an NAACP Image Award for playing Cinque, the real-life Mende tribesman who led a revolt on the slave ship La Amistad in 1839. "I have never been more alive than when I was playing that role. I was so connected. I was so gone. It's difficult to articulate."

When "Amistad" was released, it sparked a renewed dialogue about race in America that the

country is still struggling with today.

"I think it's painful for America to keep avoiding the conversation because a decade later, you're going to find yourself here again having to deal with similar issues," said Hounsou. "You do need to talk about it. You need to regularly remind the new generation where they came from, who their ancestors were."

"Imagery is the way that people conquer the world these days. If you can't tell your story, you're done."

Especially because, he added, the other side will continue to tell theirs.

That lesson — that history, cinematic or otherwise, belongs to the storytellers — is one that "Antebellum" directors Bush and Renz had hoped to bring home with their film.

Their opening tracking shot is directly inspired by "Gone with the Wind." Using the very same lenses as the 1939 film, the first scenes of "Antebellum" depict an idyllic plantation in all its southern-filtered glory, complete with lush greenery and stately big houses. Then the camera leads viewers past all that ill-gotten beauty to the brutality happening behind the scenes.

The directors' goal was to "correct the record using the same weaponry that was used to create this false narrative of the noble antebellum South," said Bush. "I don't know that I would even consider 'Antebellum' within the category of those movies just based on what it is. It's something entirely different."

Well, not exactly. It is a film that uses slavery, and specifically the pre-Civil War time period consistently portrayed on-screen, as a plot device. Slavery is the point. As such, "Antebellum" is expected to do several things at once: educate, inspire, activate. And while valiant efforts are made to do something different — the plot centers on an enslaved, empowered Black woman's story, and notably doesn't let white women off the hook — the film falls short of rejuvenating the genre.

So what makes a good slave movie? One that tells a different tale. One that tries to squeeze a centuries-long saga into one or two hours. And one that gives audiences something to leave the theater with besides trauma, especially in a time when brutal images of Black bodies aren't just in history books, but on the 6 o'clock news.

Because good movies about slavery are still important tools in shifting cultural tide.

"When it comes to the history of people of African descent in the U.S., we are still in a moment where we need to be humanized. We see over and over the consequences of us not being understood as human," said Wells-Oghoghome, the historian.

Gabriel's hope is that the next wave of films released about the topic are written, directed and produced by Black people.

"That's going to push the direction we see these films take," he said. "There are umpteen stories to tell."



INVISION/AP

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

A provocative idea that doesn't quite work

A modern-day author finds herself enslaved on a plantation in thriller 'Antebellum'

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

The new film "Antebellum" begins with a famous William Faulkner quote: "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

This is a very literal introduction to a film about the evils of de facto and de jure oppression of Black people in America that's crafted as a high-concept nightmare. Essentially, a modern-day woman finds herself trapped and enslaved on a plantation and must find a way to escape and reclaim her identity. Perhaps the overused quote was a warning about the journey we were about to go on. Because while the concept is certainly intriguing, the execution falls woefully short of its potential. In other words, this is no "Get Out," although it would like to be.

Written and directed by Gerard Bush and Christopher Renz (in their feature debut), the film begins on the plantation. The camera floats over familiar images of Southern hypocrisy as a little white girl in a sunny yellow dress skips over to her mother on the steps of their grand estate while enslaved Black people work around them and Confederate soldiers march through the grounds. Janelle Monae is introduced as one of these enslaved people, Eden. And it's not long before the brutality starts — branding, lynching, assault.

We're in this "past" for more than 30 minutes before the film essentially stops and reboots itself in a modern setting where Monae is now Veronica Henley, a famous writer who is going on a work trip. She has a picture-perfect life: A loving husband and a beautiful daughter, a magazine-worthy apartment, professional success and confidence. In an alternate reality, this could be a rom-com setup.

But things are a little off here, and the audience, along with Veronica, begins to see the cracks in this so-called progressive society where she is subjected to dehumanizing microaggressions and bigger slights over the course of a day. There's the concierge at the hotel who takes a call



LIONS_GATE/AP

A successful author (Janelle Monae, right) finds herself trapped in a horrifying reality that forces her to confront the past, present and future before it's too late in "Antebellum," co-starring Kiersey Clemons, left.

instead of helping her. There's the host at the restaurant who seats her and her friends by the kitchen when other tables are open. And there's the woman (Jena Malone) whose compliments of Veronica ooze with degrading condescension.

Malone is in the "past" too, perusing the slaves for purchase. And the film comes to reveal that the plantation is neither the past nor a dream, but a very real place where Black people are kidnapped and taken so that white supremacists can

"play" at living in the antebellum South.

The machinations of the plot are not subtle, and the film seems more interested in showcasing torture rather than illuminating the racism that lives on today.

Monae said in an interview with Entertainment Weekly that most films about racism are white savior films — even some that she's been part of. It is a failing of cinema and storytelling when an experience is only shown through a certain lens that helps absolve and even make

the oppressors feel good. "Antebellum" is supposed to be a rebuke to that. But it just doesn't come close to delivering on all of its big ideas, despite Monae's powerful performance.

In the end, "Antebellum" will inspire conversation, just probably not the one the filmmakers anticipated.

"Antebellum" is rated R for disturbing violent content, language and sexual references. Running time: 105 minutes.

'Residue' is a deeply personal look at Black identity, the role of art

By ANN HORNADAY
The Washington Post

Merawi Gerima makes a stunning feature debut with "Residue," a moving homage to the Washington, D.C., neighborhood where he grew up. Drenched in sadness, anger, steadfast love and poetic imagery, this alternately dreamy and damning film won the audience award at Slamdance earlier this year, before making its international debut at Venice this month. It lives up to that impressive provenance, introducing a thoughtful new cinematic voice at a time when it couldn't be more needed.

"Residue" chronicles the prodigal return of Jay (Obinna Nwachukwu), who has been studying film in Los Angeles and comes back to Q Street to make a film about his childhood friends; what he finds is a place oddly disconnected from his past, where his family and neighbors who nurtured him have moved away,



ARRAY RELEASING/Netflix

In "Residue," starring Obinna Nwachukwu, right, a filmmaker returns to his childhood home in Washington, D.C., to write a script.

and where White millennials are rapidly taking over. "Welcome to the neighborhood," an upstairs neighbor says condescendingly, unaware that they're both living in the house where Jay grew up. Like "Blindspotting" and "The Last Black Man in San Francisco," "Residue" is nominally concerned with the resentments and contradictions of gentrification: In one particularly vivid scene, a group of young white women joke about crack houses over cocktails while blood pools under their feet. That kind of magical-

realist imagery pervades a film that moves effortlessly between the world as it is, and the world as it feels to someone who can't seem to find his footing between a quickly receding past and an unrecognizable present.

That dislocation is especially painful when it comes to Jay's friends, a once-tight group that has now scattered. When he manages to find them, they're either wary, hostile or, in the case of a character named Demetrius, mysteriously elusive. The suspense surrounding the friend's whereabouts lends "Residue" its narrative drive, but the plot is secondary to Gerima's gift for visualizing interior experience, whether it's grounded in unresolved trauma or the exquisite joys of lifelong connection.

As Jay finds his way back home — wherever that is, and whatever that means — "Residue" becomes a fascinating study in the navigation of social space: who belongs where, who

gets to do what, whose histories are given primacy, and the unspoken but violently enforced codes that define those boundaries. The faces of white interlopers are rarely seen in "Residue," a conceit that helps make it a thoroughly subjective portrait of Jay's own personhood and psychic autonomy.

To the degree that this film reflects Gerima's own journey — he is the son of filmmaker and Howard University film professor Haile Gerima — it is a poignant, deeply personal statement of a filmmaker wrestling with art's proper place in a troubled and unjust world. Even more profoundly — and universally — "Residue" is a delicately layered depiction of the dance between alienation and belonging. In this moving portrait, it's a dance that is defined by struggle, grief and undiminished grace.

"Residue" is rated TV-MA for obscenity, drug use and sexual reference. Available on Netflix. Running time: 50 minutes.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



A transportive EXPERIENCE

Action-adventure game Raji highlights ancient India and the culture it birthed

By TODD MARTENS
Los Angeles Times

I played an hour of Raji: An Ancient Epic before I stopped and restarted. While it's not uncommon for players to reboot a game after learning its basic controls, that wasn't what made me want to begin again. Raji: An Ancient Epic reminded me of a sensation I hadn't thought about much during the pandemic: the feeling of exploring and discovering a new place.

Raji: An Ancient Epic isn't a replacement for a vacation, of course — no video game or virtual reality experience is yet that transportive — but it sparked a desire to analyze, to examine and to understand the in-game surroundings and its inspirations. A game that could be completed in a weekend wrenched down a full week as I began writing down the names of deities such as Mahishasura and Kali for further research.

On the surface, Raji: An Ancient Epic is an action-adventure game.

Its tale of a young woman rescuing her brother from forces of the underworld can be told with many backdrops across numerous cultures. But Raji: An Ancient Epic, a labor of love that was often a struggle to get made by its small team, has a rather specific design intent. Beyond asking players to tackle its demonlike monsters with acrobatic fight moves, the game seeks to highlight a place — ancient India — and the culture it birthed.

Thus, as I advanced through Raji: An Ancient Epic and dedicated myself to mastering the game's relatively robust combo-based fighting system, I discovered a decorative, lush world. The way

Raji mixes and matches game genres is slickly done — running, jumping and climbing through ruins requires precision and concentration. But for all of its sense play, the game also seems to possess an understanding of history. Its interactive text is built on mythologies that have gone largely unexplored in modern Western media, especially games, where an America obsession tends to dominate.



Raji: An Ancient Epic made me feel like a traveler called to dig deeper, to learn more outside the game about the Hindu and Balinese legends, stories and settings that are interwoven into the project. One area of the game was directly inspired by the golden sandstone prevalent in the Indian city of Jaisalmer, home to the famed fortress whose tiered walls seem ripe for video game leaps. The intricate carvings of the Ajanta Caves served as inspiration, too, as our hero, Raji, traverses ruins with larger-than-life animal carvings.

"From the very beginning, we wanted to do a game that represents Hindu culture. We didn't see any game that was made from India that had that," says Shruti Ghosh, cofounder of the Pune, India-based Nodding Heads Games, whose founders had jobs at the Indian outposts of major game studios before going independent in 2017. "We had not seen a game made with this mythology. So we just went for it."

While the game uses religious iconography, seeking to re-create Indian

temples and their patiently painted murals of Hindu legends, Raji: An Ancient Epic itself is an original good-versus-evil story.

The gods and demons are shown in art throughout and the game is narrated by the deities Durga and Vishnu. The small team uses the stories more to illustrate a lineage, to create the sensation that the player-led character is creating a new myth. Great pains, however, were taken to show reverence.

"Smudging the image of any god was a big no. Even small things, like in Hindu culture, your feet cannot point toward a god," says studio cofounder Avichal Singh.

"This is a rule," he continues. "Your feet shouldn't be pointing toward gods. It's disrespectful. If you have gods on your table, you can't put your feet up there. We've taken care of such small things. There was a moment where Raji was doing a wall-run over a particular statue, and we could not do that. The story of the game is the gods are watching you and blessing you, so there's no reason to have any kind of offense toward a god. It helped the game."

Completing the game, which is currently available for the Nintendo Switch and coming to the PC, PlayStation 4 and Xbox One in October, became something of a mission for the team. For Ghosh, the more she studied the art of medieval India, the more she saw the game as a way to showcase traditions that are being lost — a point that was underlined when she and the studio's third cofounder, Ian Maude, were in Bali and learned about passed-down mask-making traditions.

She crafted the game's hand-painted art style, including many of the murals that dot the digital rockwork. Occasionally, as Raji runs past them, they spring to life, becoming more animated as the narration tells of the bygone but venerable myths of the Hindu gods. Scaled down to the game's miniature art style, it's a Pahari-inspired look that wouldn't be out of place in an ancient manuscript.

"In India, all these art forms are slowly dying," Ghosh says. "Nobody wants to learn this anymore. Where are they going to be used? This is the reason

I wanted to pay tribute to that style. It's so beautiful. It's so intriguing, and the amount of hard work, the exact patience you need to do this kind of art, is mind-blowing. But it's going to be lost with time. So for people to see that there is something like this, and it can result in another art form, is something I wanted to bring to the game."

Ghosh also orchestrated the game's interstitial scenes, which take their look from Balinese shadow puppetry. Here, the orange-yellow backdrops contrast the fragility of the paper-like cutouts with a sinister tone. And for those paying extra close attention, Singh says the fighting combos that players can piece together specifically recall martial arts moves that originated in India.

All this detail was helped in part by the time it took to make the game, even if the team was in a panic after a 2017 campaign on crowdfunding site Kickstarter failed. "We used all our savings," says Maude. While the team eventually linked with investor Super.com and also received in 2018 an Unreal Dev Grant from Epic Games, they were at one point asking their families for grocery money. "We were desperate for money," says Maude. "Shruti sold her apartment. But our families could see how important this project was to us. We were literally using all our funds to keep a roof over our heads. Us three weren't taking a salary."

Of course, it helped, says the team, that when they went to family seeking cash, they were working on a game that was encouraging them to discover a history that, as children, they sometimes rolled their eyes at.

"We've learned so much about things that we didn't know about our own gods," Ghosh says. "I was calling my mother going, 'Is this true? Is this actually true?' I come from a part of India where goddess Durga is worshipped the most, and my family has been worshipping goddess Kali since who knows when. For me, to read all this stuff has been eye-opening because I didn't care much when growing up. This has been formative for us too."

Platforms: PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch
Online: rajithegame.com

Set in ancient India, the action-adventure game Raji: An Ancient Epic follows a young girl chosen by the gods to stand against the demonic invasion of the human realm.

NODDING HEADS GAMES/TNS

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



A stream runs through Aukammmtal park in Wiesbaden, Germany. The park also includes several play areas for children and a variety of vibrant flowers in late summer. And unlike some German parks, entry is free.

PHOTOS BY DAVID EDGE/Stars and Stripes



A water fountain in Aukammmtal park. Nearby are the city's famed thermal baths, which reopened in June.



This statue is a monument to nature.

A spot of green

Aukammmtal park is an oasis in Wiesbaden's urban jungle

By DAVID EDGE
Stars and Stripes

In the heart of Wiesbaden, there's a green gem that offers hours of pleasure in the great outdoors for little or no cash.

Aukammmtal park is less than a five-minute drive from the Army's Hainerberg installation. It's part of several interconnected parks and open spaces in Wiesbaden, including the Kurpark and the Apotheker Garten. The city describes them on its webpage as a "green lung" and "lovingly cared-for oases" in the middle of an urban area.

Unlike parks in some German cities, like Mannheim's Luisenpark, entrance to the Aukammmtal, and other green spaces in Wiesbaden, is free.

A paved running and cycling trail runs around the park, next to a small stream, which when I was there in September had ducks swimming in it and nesting on shore. Don't get too close to them, though, because they'll chase you.

Every once in a while, the trail goes past a stately home, while some of the thermal baths that gave the city its name are also nearby. The baths reopened in June, although the saunas remain closed due to coronavirus safety measures.

Wiesbaden means, roughly translated, "meadow baths," and the city has been known for centuries for the curative properties of its hot springs. Once used as recreation pools for Roman army horses, the thermal springs were first mentioned in "Naturalis Historia,"



A boy climbs a tree in Aukammmtal park, not far from the Army's Hainerberg housing area.

an encyclopedic work by the ancient Roman writer and military commander Pliny the Elder.

There are several play areas for children in the parks, offering lots of room to run and enjoy themselves. In the evening, groups of locals often gather in the park to do yoga and other exercises.

And if all that walking or running or cycling makes you hungry, downtown Wiesbaden and its many shopping and dining options is just steps away.

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ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: Am Warmen Damm, 65191
From the Army's Hainerberg area, take New York Strasse and make a right on to Moeltkerring. Continue on a slight right to Fichtenstrasse and take the first exit at the roundabout to Aukammallee.

COSTS

Park entry is free.

FOOD

Best purchased in the city or brought from home for a picnic.

INFORMATION

Online: tinyurl.com/yyzcnhbm
The website also has information on the thermal baths in English.

— David Edge

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Oslo can be charming, challenging for visitors

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

I've been visiting Oslo since I was a kid, thinking about it as both the home of my forefathers and as a model modern city.

I'm at the harborfront dock, where my old haunt, a Hurtigruten steamer, was once moored. In its prime, the romantic old postal boat linked Oslo with remote communities along the fjords and islands all the way north to the Arctic. It later became a hotel. My favorite room was its "writer's cabin," the only room on that old ship that lacked plumbing and was, therefore, affordable to me. The dock also marks the spot where my grandparents embarked for the U.S. They traded the old country for a new one, hoping to swap a dead-end economy for a land of promise.

Standing here today, I survey the modern, people-friendly promenade and think about how life has changed. I can now afford a room with a shower, but the ship is gone. And the relatives who stayed behind in Norway are now living better than many of the ones who left.

I'm surrounded by the white noise of pedestrian bliss. I can hear people talking and laughing, the birds, the breeze — but

no cars. A "congestion fee" keeps most cars from the center of town. An efficient tunnel diverts nearly all the traffic under the city. The old train station facing the fjord boat dock has become the Nobel Prize Center, thanks to a visionary man who dedicated the wealth he earned



Rick Steves

pay their steep taxes.

Norway is expensive for tourists — and also for Norwegians. The society is designed in a way that encourages people to consume less, to chew more slowly, and to sip rather than gulp. A glass of beer costs \$12. A cup of coffee can cost \$8 — and free refills are unheard of. I think Norwegians know they could make more money if they embraced the "big gulp" and started supersizing. But the collective decision is not based purely on what would be good for the economy. A big-box economy would just not be Norwegian.

In Scandinavia, tourists are sometimes

inventing dynamite to celebrate peace-makers. And towering high above the harbor action is Oslo's stately brick City Hall — where Nobel prizes are awarded. It's decorated inside and out with statues and murals featuring stoic Norwegians who seem more than willing to



Rick Steves

Oslo's City Hall has stirring murals and art that depict Norway's history.

put off by the many young beer-drinking revelers they see out on the streets, canalside and littering the parks. But alcohol consumption is no greater here than it is farther south. It's just that while pubs in Britain and beer halls in Germany are affordable, Scandinavia's bars come with extremely high alcohol taxes. So people start their evening with a drink at home or a friend's house before hitting a bar. Or they just B.Y.O.B. — buying cheap beers at a convenience store, then finding a pleasant perch outside for an impromptu gathering. For young Norwegians, "going out" literally means "going outside."

Walking through a light mist along the new harborfront development, I stop by a shrimp boat to buy a small bag of shrimp, pulled out of the fjord by a weather-beaten fisherman just hours ago.

The commotion of a festive celebration draws me farther along the harborfront. A hundred Norwegians are swing-dancing on the sturdy boardwalk. It's mostly American-style two-step to recorded oldies — familiar tunes with unfamiliar Norwegian lyrics — like a line dance without cowboy hats or much of a line.

Walking back to where my "writer's cabin" used to be, I get nostalgic for the long-ago joy of settling into my humble stateroom, gathering the experiences of the day, and weaving them into an article — hoping to share new insights into this capital city, which still charms and challenges me all at once.

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

Perfect October days in 2 idyllic southern locations

When conditions are again favorable, here are two great places for an October weekend getaway in southern Europe, and some interesting things to do once you get there.

Corfu, Greece

The second largest of the Ionian Islands lies just a few miles off of Greece's northwest coast. Within its 40-mile length and 20-mile width at its widest are mountains, green valleys and fertile plains, encircled by countless stunning beaches and coves. According to holiday-weather.com, travelers can anticipate average temperatures of 65 degrees Fahrenheit and seven hours of sunshine, with it likely to rain on 11 days of the month.

Day One: From your base in Corfu Old Town, set off in a rental car to explore the island. A half-hour drive northwest will take you to the village of Paleokastritsa on the west coast. If weather permits, you can catch some beach time before driving up to the bright yellow, bougainvillea-bedecked Monastery of the Virgin and its small museum with splendid Byzantine icons. A bottle of kumquat liquor made by monks makes a unique souvenir.

Next, head north to Sidari and the nearby Canal d'Amour Beach, a naturally-occurring channel of water in a sandstone cliff. Legend holds that couples who swim in its emerald waters will

stay in love forever. From here, a drive of slightly less than an hour takes one to the summit of Mount Pantokrator, Corfu's highest mountain at 2,972 feet. The drive up takes place along a narrow road



Karen Bradbury

and is not for the faint of heart, but from the top, the views make this a worthwhile detour.

En route back to the Old Town, call in at the rural mountain

village of Strinilas, where one of the local taverns will serve you a glass of the locally made Moschato Aspro, a light, sweet and aromatic white wine.

Day Two: Experience the best of Corfu's Old Town, designated a UNESCO World Heritage site for its rich tapestry of history dating back to the 8th century B.C. and the visible influence of many rulers, to include Venetian, French and British. Kick off the morning with a strong coffee and a pastry — perhaps a cinnamon-spiced, cream-stuffed boudgatsa — at the Spianada Square, considered the largest square in Greece. From there, walk along the Liston, a remnant from the Napoleonic period. The swanky street of arcaded terraces, trendy



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Buildings in the town of Matera, including the Santa Maria de Idris church, are hewn out of the rock in the Basilicata region of Italy.

cafes and upscale shops was modeled after the Rue de Rivoli in Paris. The city's other main sights include the Old Fortress; the towering, astonishingly huge New Fortress; and the St. Spyridonas Church, constructed in 1590 to honor the island's patron saint. Say goodbye to Corfu with a hearty last supper featuring local cuisine such as Pastitsada, a spicy meat or poultry dish with thick macaroni slices, or sofrito, a thin slices of fried veal.

Basilicata, Italy

The remote province located at the instep of Italy's boot-like shape features mountainous terrain, sandy unspoiled beaches and a host of architectural delights. The dramatic landscape

of this lesser-explored region is perhaps better known through blockbuster films such as "Ben-Hur" and "The Passion of the Christ" than by actual tourist footfall. The website climate-data.org suggests an average temperature of 62 degrees Fahrenheit and negligible precipitation during October.

Day One: Kick off explorations with an adrenaline rush by heading to the village of Pietrapertosa, site of the Volò dell'Angelo, a zip line connecting two villages in the southern Apennines mountain range. Riders achieve speeds of up to 68 miles per hour as they traverse a landscape dotted with bizarre rock formations. The range is called the Lucanian Dolomites

for its resemblance to the famous range in northern Italy. A flight on the nearly milelong "Flight of the Angel" goes for 42 euros for single riders or 75 euros for couples. Your next stop, just over an hour's drive away, is Craco, an otherworldly uninhabited mountain village. Following periodic landslides and earthquakes, the city's population abandoned it for good in 1963. The melancholy town that appears to be melting back into the mountain itself is locked up tightly behind a fence, but with proper planning, a tour through town with a competent guide can be organized. End your day with a dinner consisting of local specialties such as Lucania, a pork sausage seasoned with fennel seeds, pupazzella, hot peppers stuffed with anchovies and parsley, or ciammotta, a fry-up of peppers, potatoes and eggplant.

Day Two: Devote the bulk of your day to exploration of Matera, a fascinating city that housed the poorest of the poor right up until the 1950s. Lacking electricity and sanitation, this area considered the shame of Italy underwent a stunning transformation, and nowadays the cave dwellings carved into the mountains known as Sassi occupy a space on the list of World Heritage Sites. Today's visitors can wander about the cliffs to which the caves were hewed or stay the night in a cave revamped into a boutique hotel.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY JOHN VANDIVER/Stars and Stripes

Regulars at Oishi Sushi in Stuttgart's Feuerbach section say it offers some of the best sushi in the city and offers indoor and outdoor seating.

Perfectly prepared

The seafood at Oishi Sushi in Stuttgart will melt in your mouth

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Sushi in Stuttgart is something I've shunned. So far from the sea, dining on the Japanese culinary mainstay in southern Germany always felt like an unnecessary roll of the dice.

But I recently put my trepidation aside upon the advice of a friend, a retired Marine who spent much of his career in Japan and knows a few things about how fish and vinegared rice prepared just right can make all the difference. He insisted that Oishi Sushi in the Feuerbach section of Stuttgart was up to his high standards and a safe place for sampling.

I was somewhat surprised by the recommendation, having walked past the eatery many times and thought to myself: "I would definitely not eat there."

But I realized the rather rundown-looking exterior belied a pleasant atmosphere inside as I took a seat.

Hardly an expert in sushi, I scanned the menu's many offerings and went with one of the lunch specials. I chose the eight-piece nigiri mix with two California rolls.

I've always regarded sushi as more of a texture than flavor food. And in this case, I wasn't disappointed. There were no chewy or stringy bits, a horror that can ruin any sushi outing.

Instead, I could feel each piece of fish almost melt away in my mouth, which is really all I was looking for. The price, \$12, seemed reasonable, especially since it came with a side dish of tasty spring rolls.

For sushi enthusiasts, there's a lot more to choose from beyond the specials. The nigiri and sashimi offerings feature standards like salmon, tuna, octopus, scallop and eel, but also butterfish and sea bass. There are countless varieties of rolls, ranging from the more traditional and simple Japanese rolls and vegetarian options to the more Westernized creations like Dragon rolls.

Guests along for the ride who just won't go for sushi can opt for meals from the rest of Asia, including Thai curry. Korean bulgogi and plenty of Chinese-inspired chicken dishes.

For diners still anxious about eating indoors at



Oishi Sushi in Stuttgart offers a wide range of tasty seafood offerings and some options for the seafood-challenged.

OISHI SUSHI

Address: 28 Leobener Strasse, Stuttgart
Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m., 5 p.m.-11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m.-11 p.m.
Prices: Dishes range between \$12 and \$25
Information: Phone: 0711-469-12932; online: oishi-sushi-feuerbach.de

— John Vandiver

restaurants given the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, there is outdoor seating available. Inside, the servers all wear masks when taking orders. The sushi chef also donned a face covering, which was reassuring.

Oishi, which means "tasty" in Japanese, is an overall nice change of pace from Stuttgart's beer and brats, especially if you have a sushi craving.

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Crispy pecan-crusted trout bakes in the oven

By ANN MALONEY
The Washington Post

I love a fried fish fillet, but sometimes can't face the mess: the egg wash, the flour/cornmeal coating and the skillet of hot oil. So, when that craving strikes, especially on a weeknight, I turn instead to the oven and rather than flour or cornmeal, I coat the fillets in finely ground nuts.

After a fishing trip, my brother Michael's wife, Dorothy, made this dish with the trout we had just caught in Lake Pontchartrain and Louisiana pecans.

I've been making it that way ever since.

If I'm feeling fancy, I'll make an herby brown butter sauce to go on top. The nuts already are quite fatty, so a squeeze of fresh lemon on its own is great as well.

What I love about the recipe, besides its flavor and ease, is that

it solves a few problems often cited as reasons for not cooking fish: The fatty nut-crust keeps the fish moist, so no drying out. The fillets are cooked in the oven on a baking sheet, so there is no need to flip the delicate pieces.

And, finally, oven-baked fish often is less fishy smelling than cooking on the stovetop. You can serve the full fillets, as pictured here, but that is an indulgence because that big piece of fish is coated with almost a half-cup of nuts. For smaller appetites and less fat, consider halving the fillets and adding more green beans or a salad to the plate.

Refrigerate any leftover fillets in a parchment-lined, flat, airtight container. To reheat, place on a lightly oiled baking sheet in a 350-degree oven for about 10 minutes.



LAURA CHASE DE FORMIGNO/The Washington Post

PECAN-CRUSTED TROUT WITH BROWN BUTTER HERB SAUCE

Ingredients

For the fish:
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
4 (6- to 8-ounce) skin-off trout fillets, or any firm, white-fleshed fish

2 cups (8 ounces) raw pecans
¼ cup cornstarch
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon sweet paprika
½ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest (optional)

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
Lemon wedges, for serving (optional)

For the beans:
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 pound French green beans, trimmed and patted dry (defrosted if frozen)
2 cloves garlic, minced or finely grated
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

For the sauce:
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons minced fresh herbs, such as parsley, sage, rosemary or thyme

Directions:
Position the rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 350 degrees.

Grease a large rimmed baking sheet with oil.

Place the fish on a plate and pat it dry with a paper towel.

In a food processor, grind the pecans until finely chopped.

Transfer the nuts to a shallow dish, add the cornstarch and toss to combine. Season with the pepper, garlic powder, paprika and lemon zest and stir to combine.

Working with one fillet at a time, brush the fish with the mustard then coat the fish on both sides with the pecan mixture, pressing the mixture in to cover. Transfer the coated fish to the baking sheet and repeat with the remaining fish and coating ingredients.

Bake, without flipping, for about 25 minutes, or until just golden brown. Do not overbake.

Make the green beans: While the fish is baking, in a large skillet over medium-high heat, add 2 teaspoons oil until shimmering. Add the green beans and cook, stirring often, until they begin to blister and brown in spots, 5 to 6 minutes. Add the garlic and pepper flakes and toss together for about 1 minute. Transfer the beans to a platter.

Make the sauce: Just before serving, in a light-colored small skillet over medium heat, melt the butter, stirring constantly, until it browns and smells nutty, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from the heat, then add the lemon juice and your herb of choice, and swirl in the pan to combine.

Place a quarter of the green beans on each plate, top with a fish fillet and drizzle the butter sauce over. Serve immediately, with lemon wedges, if desired.

Serves 4.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe



MICHAELA HANDEK-REHLE/Bloomberg

Revelers raise their glasses in celebration during Oktoberfest 2019 in Munich. The music of Oktoberfest includes catchy American tunes that encourage people to sing along.

Music to drink by

Make your at-home Oktoberfest celebrations sound more authentic with these 10 songs

By JIM HARRINGTON
The Mercury News

One thing has always taken me a bit by surprise at Munich's Oktoberfest celebration — and no, I'm not talking about the humongous size of the beer steins. (Although, granted, they are something to behold.)

I'm referring to the soundtrack I hear as I make my way through the Spaten-Franziskaner-Brau, Hacker-Pschorr and Paulaner breweries.

One might expect they'd be filled solely with traditional Bavarian music, but that's far from the case. Sure, you'll get plenty of German oompah during the world's largest volksfest, but you'll also get a lot of American radio hits and pop songs, which have become nearly as popular as those giant pretzels they serve.

All this reminiscing has me missing Germany and Oktoberfests of years past. If you're celebrating at home, here's a playlist of 10 songs you would likely hear (again and again) if you were

there now.

'Take Me Home, Country Roads'

Nothing gets the Munich party started quite like John Denver, whose ode to the beautiful state of West Virginia always encourages massive sing-alongs at the festival. No one seems to know exactly how (or why) this became a "thing" at Oktoberfest. But I like to think it's because the singer's real last name wasn't Denver — it was Deutschendorf.

'Ein Prosit der Gemutlichkeit'

You'll hear this short song more often than any other at Oktoberfest, as Germans and visitors stand up from their tables, clap and sing out at top volume between gulps of beer. The song's title translates to "a toast to cheer and good times."

'So Ein Schöner Tag (Fliegerlied)'

Underscoring the eclectic nature of a proper Oktoberfest playlist, this offering — nicknamed "The Flyer Song" — is a catchy children's tune about daydreaming, animals and flying. The adults in the big beer tents have adopted it and made up a wacky dance to go along with it.

'99 Luftballons'

The beer tent crowds absolutely go wild when this early '80s pop classic hits. And I'm betting you'd join right in, singing along with Nena in German — whether you know the language or not. Of course, there's also an English version ("99 Red Balloons"), but the original is way better.

'Lichtensteiner Polka'

Get ready to polka with this Edmund Kotscher and Rudi Lindt-penned classic. The signature version was recorded by "Polka King" Will Ogle and His Orchestra and reached No. 16 on the U.S. pop charts back in 1957. But everyone from Lawrence Welk to "Weird Al" Yankovic to

the Pogues have tackled the song over the decades.

'Hey Baby'

This song gets real old, real quick in any setting other than Oktoberfest. But revelers in Munich have a seemingly boundless appetite for this 1961 Bruce Channel hit, which was introduced to a whole other generation — and generations to follow — in the film "Dirty Dancing."

'Das Esellied (Iha Iha Iha oh)'

Clap your hands, chant along — "Iha Iha Iha oh" — and groove to the accordion in this cool oompah number, widely known as "The Donkey Song." It features some really amazing yodeling.

'Angels'

This heartfelt power ballad from Robbie Williams' 1997 debut solo album, "Life thru a Lens," has been covered by Jessica Simpson, David Archuleta, Beverley Knight and others. But the renditions I prefer are the ones sung with gusto by folks in beer tents in Munich.

'Sweet Caroline'

This Neil Diamond sing-along isn't just for Red Sox games. It's long been a staple of Oktoberfest celebrations, as people swing their steins in the air and belt out the chorus with glorious bravado. So good, so good, so good.

'Sierra Madre'

This touching ballad hails from the 1987 album of the same name by the popular Austrian act Schürzenjäger. It's often heard near closing time in the Oktoberfest beer tents, so it's a good choice to close out our playlist, as well.

Bonus tune: 'Heuer'

OK, Loischmarci isn't an Oktoberfest staple — at least not yet. But the duo has played the festival, and its really cool music mixes traditional Bavarian music with EDM, so I decided to include a tune here. Recommended for



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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific



PHOTOS BY THERON GODBOLD/Stars and Stripes

You can see Japanese macaques take hot springs baths during all seasons at Jigokudani Monkey Park in Nagano prefecture, Japan.

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: 6845 Hirao, Yamanochi, Shimotakai District, Nagano 381-0401; Google coordinates: PFM6+3V

TIMES

April-October, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; November-March, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

COSTS

Admission, about \$7.25 for adults and \$3.60 for children younger than 12.

FOOD

Food is not available on site, but you'll find many restaurants near the parking and bus drop-off areas.

INFORMATION

Phone: 0269-33-4379; Online: en.jigokudani-yaenkoen.co.jp/guide

— Theron Godbold

Monkey business

Nagano's Japanese macaques do tourist-friendly hot spring bathing in warmer temperatures, too

By **Theron Godbold**
Stars and Stripes

The name Nagano might bring to mind ski slopes, snowboarding and the 1998 Olympic Winter Games, but it's just as well known for its snow monkeys and hot springs.

In the northern part of Japan's Nagano prefecture lies Hell Valley, so named for the steam and bubbling hot water that issues from the ground in some places. Here, you'll find the famous bathing Japanese macaques, or snow monkeys.

Established in 1964, Jigokudani Yaen-Koen, or Wild Snow Monkey Park, is home to a unique troop of Japanese macaques that enjoy a bath in the cooler months of the year. The park has built a small pool fed by a hot spring where the monkeys soak regularly in the winter months.

While the winter months will always remain the ideal time to check out the monkeys, they're still worth visiting in off-season months. With lush greenery filling the woods around the park, the trails leading throughout are a natural beauty. Visiting in the off-season also has another

benefit: fewer tourists. During winter, Nagano fills up with tourists and skiers taking up many of the sleeping and parking spots.

Approaching the site is an experience out of a 1960s sci-fi B-movie. You'll hear their hoots and screams before you come upon the monkeys in their bath. They pay little attention to tourists as they carry on their monkey ways: eating, sleeping, playing and other important monkey tasks.

Getting to the park can be a trek from the Tokyo area. A drive without tolls takes about five hours; with tolls, about 2½. By train, the trip is about 2½ hours, followed by a 15-minute bus ride from Yudanaka Station to the drop-off point.

From the parking lot, it's a walk of just over a mile to the park entrance and from the bus stop, it's 10-15 minutes.

You'll find tourist-friendly restaurants at either the parking lot or bus stop serving basic Japanese fare such as curry and other favorites. Don't take any food outside those areas. Not only is eating and walking a breach of Japanese etiquette, but feeding the monkeys is forbidden.

Uphill from the parking lot past the res-



Winter is the most popular time to visit the snow monkeys, but you can see them during warmer months, too.

taurants and small souvenir shops, you'll find the start of a gravel-covered trail. A sign overhead reads, "Jigokudani Yaen-Koen entrance ahead, 1.6 km."

After a stroll of maybe 45 minutes through a dense, beautiful cedar forest, you'll come to the park entrance. Admission is about \$8 for adults and a little less than \$4 for children.

Spend as much time as you would like on the park's multiple paths, which will take you across the river to the hot spring where the bathing monkeys splash and play and generally monkey around.

For those who aren't able to visit the park in person because of coronavirus-re-

lated travel restrictions, the park provides daily blog updates on the state of the park, the monkeys, photos, videos, and a livestream from their website.

The livestream swaps between several areas where monkeys tend to gather. Viewers are bound to see several red-faced monkeys relaxing and taking a dip in the hot springs. Check it out here: jigokudani-yaenkoen.co.jp/livecam2/video_en.php.

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Stars and Stripes reporter Christian Lopez contributed to this report.

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific

Good to go

US troops may soon qualify for generous travel discounts through Japan's 'Go To' campaign

By SETH ROBSON and HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

U.S. military personnel and their families in Japan may be eligible for half-price deals on bullet train tickets, hotels, meals and other tourist activities starting next month, according to the Japan Tourism Agency.

Japan's "Go To Travel" campaign, launched in July with a budget of nearly \$13 billion to stimulate domestic tourism amid the coronavirus pandemic, subsidizes up to 35% of travelers' expenses and is slated to add coupons next month worth another 15% in savings.

It has been available only to people living outside of Tokyo with official Japanese government identification to prove they do not live where the lion's share of the country's coronavirus infections occurred.

Starting Oct. 1, the program may be extended to anyone in Japan and include destinations in Tokyo, although a final decision will depend on the capital's coronavirus infections, according to Japan Tourism Agency officials.

If Tokyo is included, ID likely won't be required, the officials said.

The number of new daily coronavirus cases in Tokyo has been trending downward since a peak of 472 infections Aug. 1. On Monday, the city reported 98 new cases.

Travelers using the 'Go To' campaign are eligible for discounts of up to \$192 per person per night or \$96 per person for a day trip, according to the tourism agency website.

Travelers can get the discounts through registered travel agents and websites or by booking directly with tourism operators. Only hotels and vendors registered with the agency offer the discounts, according to the website.

The campaign is being extended at just the right time for U.S. military personnel in Japan whose travel options have been restricted for much of the year because of the pandemic.

People who go to the United States on leave may be required to spend weeks in quarantine. Travel within Japan has also been limited, with personnel barred from using public transportation and going

to virus hotspots, including central Tokyo.

However, since early June, when U.S. Forces Japan lowered its health protection condition from "substantial" to "moderate," U.S. military personnel have had more freedom to roam. For example, from Yokota Air Base, where USFJ is headquartered in western Tokyo, troops are now allowed to travel anywhere in Japan except central Tokyo and the island of Okinawa.

Toshinobu Muto, a travel agent at Yokota's Information, Tickets and Travel office, said Wednesday that he's been calling the tourism agency regularly to try to get deals for his U.S. military customers.

Those living off base and outside of Tokyo qualify for the discounts already, he said. However, few if any U.S. military personnel in Japan have Japanese government identification since they receive ID cards and drivers' licenses from the U.S. government rather than local authorities.

The discounts were exciting news for Mandy Tensfeldt, an Air Force spouse and mother of two elementary schoolers who said she hopes to take advantage of them.

The family arrived at Yokota in May 2019 and spent their first six or seven months in Japan exploring areas in and around the capital such as Showa Park in Tachikawa and local rivers.

They were ready to go farther afield when the coronavirus hit, she said.

"We were planning a trip to Bali (in Indonesia) but canceled it due to the pandemic," she said.

On Labor Day Weekend they went to see Mount Fuji, about an hour's drive from Yokota, but they're eager to see more of Japan.

"We definitely want to do stuff that is more than two hours away," she said.

Exactly when they can travel will depend on her husband's schedule at work as a CV-22 Osprey flight engineer, Tensfeldt said.

"We want to go on the bullet train to go to Hiroshima," she said. "We would like to fly to Okinawa when that opens up. We want to see the beaches there."

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Twitter: @HanaKusumoto



PHOTOS BY AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

Two popular tourists sites in central Tokyo are the Imperial Palace grounds, above, and Sensoji, a Buddhist temple in Asakusa, below. Americans in Japan are still banned from visiting certain areas that are still virus hotspots, but travel to other areas will be encouraged with the "Go To Travel" campaign extension that begins Oct. 1.



National park in Thailand mailing trash back to tourists

By NATALIE B. COMPTON
The Washington Post

Last week, Thailand's natural resources and environment minister shared a new way of dealing with tourists who leave behind their trash: mailing it back to them.

On his Facebook page, Varavut Silpaarcha posted a photo of a box of trash left at a national park that appeared ready to be mailed back to its original owners along with a note that said, "You forgot something at Khao Yai National Park."

Varavut later posted that the government will take strict measures to blacklist visitors who damage national parks or are noisy and disruptive. He cited two recent examples of bad behavior, including the offending group of tourists who left garbage in their rented tent at Khao Yai, and a group of allegedly drunken tourists who camped at Nantok Samlan National Park.

Varavut said visitors are not allowed to leave trash behind at park campsites, be drunk in public or make any noise after 10 p.m. Tourists who do not follow the rules

will be instructed to leave immediately.

According to the Bangkok Post, the standard punishment for littering is a fine or jail time. Those caught littering can be fined up to 500,000 baht (about \$16,000) and/or be held in jail for up to five years per Thailand's National Park Act.

After closing during the coronavirus pandemic, Khao Yai reopened July 1 with new protocols in place, limiting capacity at the more than 837-square-mile park to 5,000 visitors.

Additionally, visitors must now make

reservations online and check in using an app called Thai Chana. Those visiting will also have their temperatures taken on arrival.

The park has had some good news during the pandemic. Khao Yai's animal population has been thriving thanks to the sharp decline of tourists.

"The park has been able to restore itself," Chananya Kanchanasak, a national park department veterinarian, told The New York Times. "We are excited to see the animals are coming out."

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Going it alone

The do's and don'ts that will get you hooked on solo camping

By NATALIE B. COMPTON

The Washington Post

At the beginning of summer, I went on a bike camping trip about 30 miles from my apartment to take the edge off of pandemic stress. I had not been camping in years and had never gone alone. Pulling off the experience made me feel like survivalist-show host Bear Grylls.

Because 2020 has kept one-upping itself with nightmares, a few weeks after that trip I temporarily moved to New York to help my family during a medical emergency. After months of juggling pandemic anxiety, caretaking and a full-time job, I had a break in my schedule to steal away for two separate camping weekends in the woods. Now I'm hooked.

Camping by myself is not my go-to way of traveling (though I do love traveling alone), but it's been a perfect option this year. It's a trip for people who fear catching or spreading the novel coronavirus, and those who want to avoid travel shaming.

I'm not the only one out there alone, either. According to data from the booking service Campspot, about 3,000, or 5%, of all reservations since April have been for solo campers. On Tentrr, a campsite booking service, "even though solo campers represent a small percentage of our overall summer bookings, they have doubled compared to last year," says Stephen Krikelis, the company's vice president of direct marketing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



WEEKEND: TRAVEL

FROM PAGE 30

After my three solo camping trips, I've compiled some tips for those who want to give solo camping a try, and because I am by no means an expert on the topic, I spoke with people for the best advice.

Do choose a campsite where you'll feel comfortable

When I booked each of my campsites this summer using Recreation.gov and Hipcamp (essentially the Airbnb of campsites), I chose places where I would not be too close to other people but also would not be light-years away.

Amey Hardie, a program manager for REI Adventures who travels solo regularly, looks for less remote locations when she is camping by herself.

"It's more just being able to have conversations [with other campers] if I want it," she says. "Obviously it's reassuring to know that there are people there in case something happens. But that's not my main reason for it."

Other things to take into consideration are the amenities. Are you comfortable if the place does not have a restroom? Does it have reliable cellphone service? Do you want to be at a campsite geared toward young families? Is it near hiking trails or places to swim?

Do embrace being scared

The most common question I have gotten about my solo camping trips is: "Aren't you scared?"

Scared? Me? Yes.

I do not find camping alone to be scary. But once my tent is shrouded in darkness, and the sound of sticks cracking gets closer and closer, and I realize there's just a flimsy sheet of nylon between me and the fictional ax murderer closing in on me, then it's scary.

But you know who else got scared sleeping alone in the elements? John Steinbeck. In his book "Travels with Charley," Steinbeck recounts his solo cross-country road trip with his poodle, Charley, in a camper truck. On one cold, damp night in Maine, Steinbeck found himself lonely and afraid.

"Oh, we can populate the dark with horrors," he wrote. "I knew beyond all doubt that the dark things crowding in on me either did not exist or were not dangerous to me, and still I was afraid."

If a 6-foot, 58-year-old World War II veteran could admit to being scared camping alone, so can the rest of us. Acknowledge the terror, suss out that it's not actual danger and keep camping.

To further mitigate my late-night fears (and have some companionship), I borrowed my sister's two small dogs for the second and third camping trips. Like Stevie, having dog company gave me comfort knowing they'd attack, or at least bark, at any threats.

Do pack for your safety

Before my first few camping trips, my main concerns were basic: forgetting the tent and sleeping bag, getting to the campsite. I was not looking at the big picture, like what special precautions I need to take when camping alone.

Knowing I needed some advice, Gregg Fernandes, the vice president of customer care and logistics at The Washington Post, reached out through email. His team, which is responsible for the physical security of all company employees, had compiled a list of safety tips for me.

Some of his team's tips were straightforward: Wear broken-in, comfortable footwear; carry a knife; have a medical kit; never indicate to anyone you encounter that you're alone; carry a portable charger in a plastic bag; have a working flashlight with spare batteries; check the weather the morning you depart; and bring essential gear.

Other tips they listed I would have



PHOTOS BY NATALIE B. COMPTON/The Washington Post

Reporter Natalie B. Compton's only camp mates were her sister's dogs during a solo camping trip Sept. 12 in Colebrook, Conn.



Solo camping trips ideally include good food that can be easily prepared and eaten near a campfire.

never considered: carry bear spray, a satellite phone, a heat blanket, a GPS unit and a physical map; pack enough food and water for at least three days past your anticipated stay; pack a flare and a whistle; make a paper copy of your passport and ID; ensure that you have a spare tire, jack and socket wrench in case your vehicle breaks down; and have your money stored in multiple locations.

At a gas station stop on my way to my third solo camping trip, my mind started to spiral with the what-ifs of not being prepared enough. Fortunately I could still follow a few of the tips, including filling up my gas tank at the last stop before the destination and getting multiple fire starters.

Do pack things that will make you happy

Make sure it's not all business when you pack. While you want to prepare for safe camping, you also want to have a good time.

Hardie does not leave for a camping trip without her Kindle. "I can hold a lot of books in there, and it's super lightweight," she says, noting that more often than not, nature will end up being her entertainment.

For me, that's packing good food and wine that will be fun to prepare around a campfire (or in the dark, huddled in my tent), and a book or two.

Do not camp secretly

Before you leave on a camping trip



Decide what sort of camping trip you're interested in before you look for a campsite. The Goodnow Preserve in New Marlborough, Mass., made a lovely destination.

alone, tell loved ones where you're going.

Security experts recommend telling at least two people about your plans, including your estimated departure and arrival times. Should something happen to you, they will be able to sound the alarm and send help more quickly than if they had to figure out why you've been missing for a week.

Hwy Davies, regional security coordinator at Healix and HX Global, a company that specializes in security and travel-assistance services, recommends using the service What3Words to share your exact location using geographic coordinates, which can be particularly helpful if you're away from markers such as street signs.

Do not camp too publicly

While it's safe to tell your loved ones where you're going, it's not safe to tell strangers on the internet.

Davies encourages travelers to post on social media after a trip, or at least to not mention the specifics of your location, or geotag your campsite if you're posting during your trip.

"It's just important to make a note of what you're disclosing because it can have

a huge bearing on people knowing your plans and make you vulnerable to attack," Davies says.

A tragic example of this happened in 2018 when two Scandinavian hikers were killed in Morocco. Davies mentions that the hikers had been posting their itineraries on social media in the days leading up to their attack.

Do get weird

You're out in the woods (or field or beach or wherever) alone; take advantage of that freedom. The idea to let loose did not hit me until my third solo camping trip.

One morning, I picked up an egg and threw it as hard as I could against a tree, then watched the yolk drip down the bark. After cooking dinner, I tossed a piece of bread into the fire to see how it burns. I whittled a stick (in a failed attempt to start a fire using only wood), then heaved it like a javelin into the trees.

Being weird is cathartic. Throwing things is cathartic. Just make sure you're actually alone and not throwing anything that could hurt someone nearby or destroy anyone's property. Once you're done, be a good camper and leave no trace.

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Q&A

SEEKING
KINDRED
SPIRITSKeith Urban finds musical
connections across genresBy KRISTIN M. HALL
Associated Press

This year was poised to be a busy one for Keith Urban, with a full year of touring as well as a Las Vegas residency. He wasn't sure when he'd have time to finish his next album, "Speed of Now Part 1," when the coronavirus pandemic halted live performances in March.

"It ended up being the time I needed, not the way in which I wished I'd gotten the time," said the globe-trotting country star, who is nominated for three CMA Awards in November.

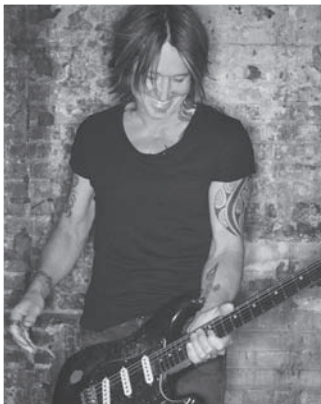
The downtime forced him back into the studio, where he connected with a kindred spirit in singer-songwriter Breland, whose urban-rural fusion "My Truck" was blowing up online. The pair co-wrote two songs for Urban's album, which was released Sept. 18, including "Out the Cage" featuring Breland's vocals and Nile Rodgers' rhythmic guitar.

"Breland was a man after my own heart musically, and I was just dying to get in the studio with him to see what happened," Urban said.

Urban talked to *The Associated Press* recently from Australia, where he was staying with his kids and wife-actor Nicole Kidman, about how he finds creative partners in the studio and learning how to talk about his feelings. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: You're so focused on the collaborative approach to music, and this album includes artists with lots of different styles like Breland, Pink and Eric Church. Are you drawn to the experimental part of collaborating?

Urban: I never think of it in terms of experimental. I think of it in terms of all these different styles that have a connection to one another. What is that connection? And can we find what that is and see if we can harness it? And in the process, have people hear it and go, "Wow, that really, that does connect



to that. I see that now." ... And that's what drives me: the commonality in people, in music and everything in life, the commonality. It's what drives me far more than what separates us, because there's plenty of that. We're drowning in it right now.

In that vein, one song called "Tumbleweed" includes a sample of a didgeridoo, an instrument that originated in Australia. Not sure I've ever heard a didgeridoo on a country song, but it works.

After the guitar solo, there was about four seconds

of a breakdown, and I was like, "I need something here. We've heard everything." And I went "Didgeridoo! Fantastic." My engineer is like, "Didgeri-what?" He goes, "I've never heard one." We jump online and I find a guy playing the didgeridoo. And it turns out to be this guy, Lewis Burns. And I was just sort of using him as, "See? Like that. It sounds like that." And then in the midst of it, I went, "Actually, can we use that?"

You've got a song on the album called "Say Something," about the power of words that seems to reflect the collective consciousness of this year's protests. What did you want to say with that song?

If anyone wants to know what my beliefs are, my views are, listen to my music or look at my life. It's all there. It's in plain sight. So I've never felt the need to go at sort of soapbox-type things probably because of the way my dad raised me. But there also is a need for that. And I thought the other thing there is a need for is to speak up in your family sometimes. I thought about people that I wished I'd said sorry to and didn't get a chance to and they drifted out of my life. People that I wished that I said 'I love you' to before they passed away, including my father, and lots of things I wished I had said, wished that I said something. So I wrote the second verse predominantly touching upon all of that, the struggle with intimacy and learning to speak up and say intimate things, which is helping my family now, my family of creation, to be very different to the way I was raised.

I'm sure that's a good example to show your children.

I'm learning. I'm learning. But Nic (Nicole) is incredible at it. She's very expressive. Doesn't bottle stuff up, you know, just very expressive. Really helpful. It's a much better way to be. We don't walk around on eggshells in our house, ever. We get stuff out. And I wasn't raised like that. It's a much better way.

Mark Seliger photos

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS



The Flaming Lips' new album isn't just provocative — it's really good

By STEVE KLINGE
The Philadelphia Inquirer

For the last decade or so of their 35-year career, Oklahoma's Flaming Lips have doubled down on their love of extremes, from the abrasive "The Terror" to full-album covers of "Dark Side of the Moon" and "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" to numerous collaborations with Miley Cyrus. They've been fascinating, but inconsistent.

In its open-heartedness, love of melody and Dave Fridmann's expansive production, "American Head" recalls their mid-period heyday of 1999's exuberant "The Soft Bulletin."

Leader Wayne Coyne wrote a set of semi-autobiographical songs inspired by imagining his drug-dealing older brother encountering Tom Petty's early band Mudcrutch when they passed through in Tulsa in the early '70s.

The Lips have always been a trippy, psychedelic band, but this album is explicit in its drug references, often detailing problematic consequences. The chorus of the lovely "Mother I've Taken LSD" is "And now I see the sadness in the world."

"At the Movies on Qualudes" is similar: "As we destroy our brains I'll believe we're dead."

The tone is often wistful and haunted, anchored in Steven Drozd's stately melodies and Coyne's thin, high vocals. But the songs often open up and soar.

The band, now a septet, slides easily from the ethereal, orchestral "Flowers of Neptune 6" (one of three tracks with Kacey Musgraves) to the more electronic "You n' Me Sellin' Weed" to the contemplative guitar ballad "My Religion is You."

American Head reveals a Flaming Lips that is surprisingly tempered and grounded, but still impressively adventurous.



The Flaming Lips

"American Head" (Warner Records)

Photo by George Salisbury

Elizabeth Cook

Aftermath (Agent Love/Thirty Tigers)

As an outlaw country disc jockey, fast-talking, y'all-ing Elizabeth Cook has a way with words, and so it goes on her new album, "Aftermath." The title is a reference to regrowth, and the set is heavily autobiographical, which may be why Cook is dressed like Evel Knievel's sister on the cover. She sings about marrying badly, tequila without regret, and Southern pride and pain, or as one lyric puts it, "stories that'll hurt ya."

The album lacks the high hilarity of her Sirius XM show, but there are flashes of wit, such as when she rhymes watchin' with debauchin'. And the record might set a record for references to other musicians, from George Jones and Elton

John to Carole King and Kevn Kinney.

Alas, Cook's vocals are often double-tracked or digitized in ways that distract from the words. The album was produced by Butch Walker (Fall Out Boy, Weezer, Avril Lavigne), and he guides Cook over pop terrain, with synth washes instead of steel guitar. It's an uncomfortable fit, and as the album progresses Cook's twang takes over.

Her most exposed vocal is the most endearing performance. Accompanying herself on guitar on the closing cut, "Mary, The Submitting Years," Cook masterfully pays tribute to the late John Prine as she looks at the greatest story ever told from the mother's point of view — an outlaw honoring outlaws.

— Steven Wine
Associated Press



Suzanne Vega

An Evening of New York Songs and Stories (Amanuensis/Cooking Vinyl)

Suzanne Vega has had a symbiotic relationship with New York City since moving there as a toddler, and the metropolis is a recurring presence in her tunes.

Her new live album, "An Evening of New York Songs and Stories," was recorded last year at Manhattan's Cafe Carlyle with a small combo, and its 16 tunes, plus some between-songs chatter, form an intimate appreciation of the city and some of its many roles and identities.

Backed by guitarist Gerry Leonard, bassist Jeff Allen and Jamie Edwards on keyboards, the arrangements are usually stripped-down versions of the originals and take advantage of Vega's at-ease stage manner, the results of decades of touring.

Including hits like "Luka" and "Tom's Diner," the album also shines a light on lesser-known songs that fit the NYC theme in some way.

Some are obvious, like "New York Is A Woman," who'll "make you cry / And to her you are just another guy."

Others are illuminated by her comments, like the yearning "Gypsy," inspired by her stint as the "folk-singing and disco dance counselor" at a camp in the Adirondacks, "two great skills every girl needs."

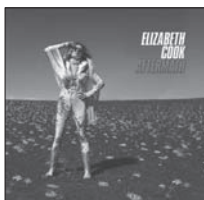
Vega leans heavily on "Beauty & Crime," with five songs coming from that remarkable 2007 album, which isn't surprising as it's her most directly New York-centric release, as well as her groundbreaking, self-titled 1985 debut (four songs) and its smash follow-up, "Solitude Standing" (three).

There's also a cover of Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side," which gets a very personal introduction as Vega recounts the first time she saw him perform, at Columbia University, and how it affected her own budding career.

You can abandon the album with a smile after "Tom's Diner," but it's worth staying for the encores. After "Anniversary" (about the city after 9/11) and "Tombstone," Vega makes a comment about "not wanting to leave you too sad" and proceeds to close with the slinky "Thin Man," some "exit music" about the Grim Reaper. Music and comedy all in one.

With its outstanding performances, "An Evening of New York Songs and Stories" also serves as an excellent Vega primer, an artist who still merits being on your radar no matter what your hometown may be.

— Pablo Gondi
Associated Press



WEEKEND: TELEVISION



Netflix

Sarah Paulson (Mildred Ratched) and Alice Englert (Nurse Dolly) star in Netflix's "Ratched." The series is a prequel to the "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" book and movie and explores how Nurse Ratched developed her villainous reputation.

Questionable bedside manner

Actress says show an attempt to 'reverse engineer' Nurse Ratched story

By KATE FELDMAN
New York Daily News

Sarah Paulson started with a simple question: Who broke Nurse Ratched? Screenwriter Ryan Murphy's longtime favorite actress was getting ready to take on fiction's most infamous nurse, but first had to figure out how she got there.

Paulson and Murphy are collaborating once again in Netflix's "Ratched," a prequel series about Mildred Ratched, the unbending villain of Ken Kesey's "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," set in 1947 — more than 15 years before the book and subsequent movie.

"God knows, Louise Fletcher couldn't have been more brilliant in that movie," Paulson told the Daily News of the actress who won an Oscar and Golden Globe for her portrayal of Nurse Ratched. "It felt like the respectful and proper thing to do was to keep her performance as close to my heart and in my mind as often as possible, so I did, but it was also a great opportunity to reverse engineer this story."

The Netflix series, which premiered Sept. 18, starts with Ratched's hiring at Lucia State Hospital, where she insists she belongs, regardless of the opinions of Dr. Richard Hanover (Jon Jon Briones) or head nurse Betsy Bucket (Judy Davis).

Ratched's motivation becomes clearer as the cast is revealed: prisoner Edmund Tolleson (Finn Wittrock), accused of killing priests; Gwendolyn Briggs (Cynthia Nixon), the press secretary to the California governor; the mysterious relationship between a neighbor (Corey Stoll); and a billionaire down the coast (Sharon Stone). Everything Ratched does appears to be with singular purpose.

"She's driven by a very, very strong motivation to rectify a years-old wrong, and

'She's driven by a very, very strong motivation to rectify a years-old wrong, and so therefore she is going to do anything she needs to do to do right by the most important person in her life and, subsequently, she may kill a person. Maybe. I don't know. She may not. She might be a murderer; she might not be. It depends on your interpretation of murder.'

Sarah Paulson
Mildred Ratched in "Ratched"

so therefore she is going to do anything she needs to do to do right by the most important person in her life and, subsequently, she may kill a person," Paulson told The News. "Maybe. I don't know. She may not. She might be a murderer; she might not be. It depends on your interpretation of murder."

"Ratched" feels reminiscent of "Asylum," Murphy's previous "American Horror Story" season about a psychiatric hospital in which Paulson played a gay journalist committed to Briarcliff against her will.

But where "Asylum" focused on the church's influence on the mental health industry, "Ratched" is purely about, well, Ratched.

"It's not to say I didn't see the correlation, but I needed not to play it," Paulson told The News. "At least, for me, 'Asylum' was solely about Lana's homosexuality being used against her or criminalized in a way. This story is different to me. The mental health concern we have, for me anyway, is Ratched's state of mind and being inside of that."

"Ratched" was announced with a two-season order at Netflix, but Paulson said Murphy has talked about a four-season plan that gets them to the timeline of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." But first

they have to film "American Crime Story: Impeachment," in which Paulson plays Linda Tripp alongside Clive Owen's Bill Clinton and Beanie Feldstein's Monica Lewinsky. Production was about a week away from starting when the coronavirus pandemic shut down Hollywood.

For now, the mysteries of "Ratched" revolve around the woman herself. Paulson doesn't have many answers.

"Is it possible that we have to come up against our own expectations of what we want from a woman in a position of power? We still want her to be soft, and we still want her to be cuddly, and we still want her to be gentle and we want her to be maternal," Paulson told The News. "The fact that she wasn't any of those things, we then, collectively as an audience, decided she was cruel when in fact she may have been a person who was adhering to a patriarchal structure within that hospital that she didn't want to contest. Bringing your humanity into it was considered unprofessional, so maybe she was doing the best she could with the tools she had and was maybe just not a natural activist in terms of rejecting what she had been taught."

"Or maybe she had been so traumatized as a child, as we suggest in our show, that what in the world could you expect?"

Side effects likely with this dose of Murphy

By HANK STUEVER
The Washington Post

Netflix's "Ratched" isn't the Ryan-Murphyest thing Ryan Murphy has ever produced, but it sure wants to be.

From a bloody opening scene in which a deranged man (Finn Wittrock) kills a rectory full of Catholic priests and their monsignor (which, frankly, feels like target practice at this stage in Murphy's career) to the depiction of unsettling experimental treatments at a psychiatric asylum, "Ratched" can at times feel like the fullest expression of the television impresario's high-low values, matched with a celebratory display of his prevailing art form: purposeful camp that flips the scripts on old references.

"Ratched" is garish and gorgeous all at the same time; horrific and occasionally poetic; glamorous to an almost laughable degree; thrilling for a while and then puzzlingly dull for stretches, only to become interesting all over again. The show is a fine and flawed example of who Murphy is and what he makes. You can't help but be lured in by it.

Behind her steely-eyed menace, the story of Nurse Mildred Ratched (yes, the very one from Ken Kesey's novel "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and the classic film adaptation, played here with calm and collected determination by Sarah Paulson) is presented as a kind of feminist dawning. Nurse Ratched is someone trying to overcome her own damage and demons and, in her demented way, she wants to make the world kinder and more just, through the most painful and manipulative sort of caring.

It can take a while for the series to find its way — and often it's the viewer who will feel as if they are missing something profound. As a prequel set in 1947, it's not required that the viewer know much about "Cuckoo's Nest" or even Louise Fletcher's Oscar-winning performance as a more powerful Ratched in the 1975 movie version, other than the fact that Murphy (working here with Ian Brennan and creator Evan Romansky) is among our shrewdest and most knowing samplers of popular culture.

Of course a lot of us will come here wanting to know what made Ratched into the sublimely vindictive control freak of the mental ward. Audiences have been wondering that for decades.

"That (expletive) nurse, man," Jack Nicholson's character said about Nurse Ratched. "She ain't honest."

The answers provided in "Ratched" may or may not satisfy that curiosity, but fans of Murphy's previous and provocative works won't. "Ratched" combines the lushly lurid old-school glamour of his FX series "Fever: Bette and Joan" (in which powerful women discover that mutual respect is a byproduct of their bitter rivalry) with slightly less grisly aspects of "American Horror Story: Asylum" (itself a comment on mental health care conditions before landmark revisions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, featuring Catholic nuns with warped, Ratched-like control

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WEEKEND: TELEVISION

FROM PAGE 34

over their patients).

Six months after the priest slayings, Paulson's Mildred, always dressed to the nines, arrives at a sprawling asylum on the Northern California seaside — Lucia State Hospital, where the alleged killer, Edmund Tolleson (Wittrock) is housed. Although the asylum's director, Dr. Richard Hanover (Jon Jon Briones), tells her he has no job openings for nurses, *Ratched* schemes her way onto the staff, to the dismay of Nurse Betsy Bucket, played by Judy Davis.

This Nurse Bucket is pretty much your best reason to give "*Ratched*" a whirl, with a splendidly sour performance and much-needed drop of comic tension from Davis — a template example of institutional cruelty and caprice that will help create the Nurse *Ratched* of lore. Later in the series, Murphy's diva worship shifts to Sharon Stone, who has a ball playing the deeply disgruntled and deep-pocketed mother of one of Dr. Hanover's former patients.

The state's unctuous governor (Vincent D'Onofrio) is eager to see Tolleson executed so he can boost his tough-on-crime profile during a re-election campaign. Nurse *Ratched* has come to this place because she has an abiding interest in Tolleson's fate (I won't reveal it here); the governor's press secretary, Gwendolyn Briggs (Cynthia Nixon) takes an immediate interest in Mildred.

The asylum setting is, of course, irresistible as a source of creepiness, as Dr. Hanover tries to improve on methods for lobotomizing intractable patients and prescribes other torturous treatments designed to "cure" such questionable diagnoses as homosexuality and teen angst. This bad medicine has a way of feeling like redundant territory in a Murphy drama, given how often he and his collaborators routinely demonize an array of authority-figure archetypes — doctors, nurses, nuns, preachers, elected leaders, Hollywood studio bosses, etc. It's playful, but it has a way of becoming a facile harangue against anyone in charge.

That's why Nurse *Ratched* has such potential as a character study — how she gets off on simply taking charge. "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" left her motivations vague, which had a way of making the viewer feel as helpless as the drugged patients. "*Ratched*," too, seems to let its sense of purpose get similarly fogged in, as if the narrative has been slipped a calming sedative and is wearing restraints.

The show's obsessive attention to style and mood begins to seem hallucinatory and sluggish. As with Murphy's other projects on Netflix so far ("*The Politician*"; "*Hollywood*"), and with more than one season of his "*American Horror Story*" on FX, the dosage is strong, but the symptoms persist. As a viewer, you have no idea why you're here or how you got here. Nurse Murphy wants it that way.

"*Ratched*" (eight episodes) is available for streaming on Netflix.



SHATESBURY, GREENPOINT PRODUCTIONS, PEACOCK/AP

Christopher Plummer (Howard Lawson), Claire Forlani (Janet Freeh), Kris Holden-Ried (Dominic Hayes) and Archie Panjabi (Kendra Malley) star in "*Departure*." Malley is an aviation investigator tasked with solving the disappearance of a jetliner en route to London.

'Departure' from the norm

Lead of Peacock show grateful for chance to be front and center

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Though she's making a name for herself, actor Archie Panjabi still gets a kick out of it when strangers ask for her and clearly don't anticipate what they're getting. "They expect a blond Scottish boy with blue eyes to come out," she says. "They're always pleasantly amused when I tell them Archie is me."

Panjabi is certainly helping her name recognition levels these days: The actor, who earned a supporting Emmy for her work on "The Good Wife," is back on American screens this month, but this time as the star.

On Peacock's six-part series "*Departure*," Panjabi is the star opposite Christopher Plummer and Claire Forlani. She plays a brilliant aviation investigator and single mom who is called in to solve the strange disappearance of a jetliner en route to London.

Was it a hijacking? Pilot error? Could it be a government cover-up? The mystery deepens when a survivor is miraculously located in the middle of the ocean.

Panjabi calls the series, which was inspired in part by missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, "highly binge-worthy."

"It's everybody's worst nightmare to have a member of family or somebody that you love on a flight and the flight goes missing," she says. "And I think there is this universal kind of fear and fascination of flying."

If anyone tuning into the series is worried that her character won't survive the mystery, relax: Panjabi is speaking from the Toronto-based set of season two of "*Departure*."

"That's a bit of a giveaway. But I do," she says, laughing.

The London-bred actor of Indian descent initially was sent all six scripts for season one and devoured them.

In addition to the loss of the plane, her character is also trying to process the death of her husband.

"I remember reading it and I couldn't put it down," she says. "You go on this journey where you're just so unsure of what could be the cause. I thought, 'Well, if I'm feeling like this and I read so many scripts in my line of work, I really feel this would be that kind of show that an audience would want to watch all in one go.'"

Christina Jennings, the executive producer of "*Departure*," calls Panjabi one of the smartest actors she's ever worked with and considers Panjabi's role as a woman stuck in a vise.

"She's in the vise of being a mother, her own grief, dealing with a son and this investigation all at the same time," Jennings says. "She was the best woman for the job."

Season one of "*Departure*" was filmed last summer over seven weeks and has aired elsewhere in the world. The Peacock streaming platform launched the American premiere of "*Departure*" on Sept. 17, and it will air in Canada on Oct. 8 on Corus' Global Television.

The world has changed so much since the first season wrapped that Panjabi is not entirely sure how it will be greeted now. Will a disaster show during a disaster fall flat? Or will viewers actually seek it out?

"There could be even more interest than maybe it would normally get because of what we're going through. How do you cope when there's a disaster like that? Maybe that taps into something that people are going through right now," she says. "But, at the same time, it could be that people want pure escapism and they want something a

lot lighter. Maybe they'll run away from it. I think it's so difficult to tell."

Whatever happens, there's one thing Panjabi can be proud of: The actor who's had scene-stealing roles in "Bend It Like Beckham" and opposite Angelina Jolie in "A Mighty Heart," is the series' big star, her face on the poster, front and center.

"As a child growing up, I never felt I would have that opportunity because there weren't that many roles for somebody like me leading a show. And I was quite happy to take second or third position as long as I was working," she says.

Of the producers handing her the lead, she says: "I'm sort of eternally grateful for that trust."

Panjabi, who was born with the name Archana but changed it because teachers couldn't pronounce it, has had quite a purple patch lately, with roles in "Run," "Blindspot" and "I Know This Much Is True."

She's grateful: "Our profession is feast or famine, so it's nice to be able to have these opportunities."

These days, she's on the set of "*Departure*" and it's completely different from the last time. She and the cast are now tested for COVID-19 regularly; they keep face masks on until the moment the cameras start rolling; there are limited props and there's plenty of sanitizer on hand.

"You have to train your mind differently. You have so many things to think about in terms of the script, but you also have to think of this additional element of taking care — to protect yourself and to protect others," she says.

"The attitude on set is we assume that everybody in the room has it, so we have to take precautions with everybody that we're in contact with," she adds. "I just hope we can gradually find a new normal."

WEEKEND: HEALTH AND FITNESS

Fall flourish

Tips for the home, relationships and mindfulness to make the most of spending autumn in a pandemic



iStock photos

Fall won't be wasted, even in a pandemic, if you use the time to prioritize your relationships (above) and make your home more cozy, for instance by gathering pine cones (below).

Special to The Washington Post

Last week, we offered fall tips for food and fitness. This week, check out how to let the spirit of fall inspire your home, relationships and mindfulness.

Home

■ Bring the outdoors in

Making a home cozy for fall can be as simple as gathering pine cones in a centerpiece bowl. For something different this year, Hannah Morgan, owner of the Seattle-based botanical studio and garden Fortunate Orchard, suggests using wire to attach pine cones to branches for vases.

"The beauty of using pine cones or branches is that they don't need water," she explains. Make different heights of these pine-cone sticks for the vase and mix them with dried grasses or botanicals.

"A lot of time for me," she continues, "the gathering of all of these things is the best part, and the most important part, especially right now when we're stressed out."

Take a walk early in the fall (when it's dry out) and look for grasses, cones and seed pods that have fallen. For an arrangement that will evolve into winter, Morgan suggests making a garland, stringing pine cones and grasses with twine and ribbon, to be laid flat on a dining table or hung from a mantle. Add some dried leaves when they fall. Come Thanksgiving, you can add decorative squash, and in winter, evergreen branch-ies.

"It's a nice rotating exhibit in your living space," Morgan says. Because the base of these arrangements doesn't need water, they will last throughout the season.

■ Or make yourself at home outside

As we begin to escape summer's sizzle and face the responsibilities of fall, making good use of your home's outdoor spaces might just be what keeps you sane, New York interior designer Hilary Matt says.

She recommends starting with a furniture arrangement that works for all seasons. For a balcony, that can be a weather-resistant bistro set. For a patio, a dining table and chairs are great for cookouts or messy pumpkin carving come October. String lights or tiki torches can add a festive touch.

Stow heavy blankets, such as wool



ones, in baskets away from the elements, or splurge on a heat lamp to ensure that you can enjoy your outdoor space into the night and as the evenings grow colder.

S'mores, anyone?

"One of the best things that people can do in their backyard when it's cold out is add a fire pit," Matt says. "It's a good way to social distance because you can have people over but sit far apart."

—Lindsey M. Roberts

Human connections

■ Lend a helping hand

One of the best ways we can volunteer our time right now is simply loving our neighbor. We can run errands for the elderly, bring meals to friends out of work and make a better effort to talk to relatives on the phone. This is also a great time for families to come together and bond over serving others, says David Thomas, the director of family counseling at Daystar Counseling in Nashville.

"There are many opportunities for families to give and serve on a national level during the pandemic," he explains. "My challenge to families is to look for local opportunities to serve as well."

Besides picking up groceries or medication, he suggests baking for neighbors, decorating driveways with encouraging messages in sidewalk chalk and offering to walk dogs or pick up school supplies.

■ Prioritize meaningful relationships

Loneliness has surely hit us all this year.

"Virtual is wonderful, but I think we're all wanting to talk in person," says Kim Grevler, a clinical social worker and life

coach in New York.

What if, though, this were an ideal time to step back and evaluate the relationships in our lives? Ask yourself, she says, if you get together with certain people only out of obligation.

"Are we settling for some friendships and relationships?" she asks. "It's a good way to sound harsh, but it doesn't have to be. It could simply mean that, for example, even though you like your book club friends, you want to prioritize time elsewhere. Maybe that's more time taking care of your parents or intentional time with your kids."

The prompt Grevler gives her clients is: "If I were honest with myself..." If you were honest with yourself, who do you want to spend time with right now? Which groups would you quit? Which would you join? Do you wish you had a circle for your favorite hobby? Get the people you want down on your calendar, and then evaluate your flexibility. Don't be afraid to see people, even six feet apart, especially if it's outdoors. It will take time to push past the fear. Grevler says that if you're feeling uncomfortable, the other person is probably feeling uncomfortable, too.

"If you're feeling lonely and unsettled, don't blame yourself for that and shun yourself," she explains. "Use it as ammo to connect more with other people."

—Lindsey M. Roberts

Mindfulness

■ Take a deep breath (or five)

Deep breathing is a great way to calm down. But taking a deep breath is not easy to do when we are stressed, because

anxiety often manifests as tightness in the throat and jaw. That's why you can often hear stress in someone's voice. Before we can start taking deep breaths, then, we have to open the vocal cords.

To do that, take three to five continuous sniffs of air through your nose, as if you are smelling a fragrant flower. Then, exhale a long slow breath out of your mouth with rounded lips.

Next, without engaging your shoulders and chest, try taking a deep breath through your nose all the way into your lower lungs or belly. Put your hands on your belly to feel your stomach rising. If necessary, repeat the sniffs until you can take that deep breath.

When we're stressed, we primarily use our mouth to breathe into the upper lungs. Breathing into our lower lungs, on the other hand, stimulates the vagus nerve, which in turn activates a relaxation response (decreasing your heart rate and blood pressure). It also allows the lungs to distribute more oxygen throughout the body, enhancing the calming effect.

—Amanda McCracken

■ Get hooked on crochet

Knitters have a tendency to look down on crochet, the latter being, technically, a less difficult art. Those of us who love crochet respond with a shrug. "Whatever," we say, as we launch into some wild variation on a pattern, making up the rules as we go and reveling in a magical flow between mind and body that, yoga-like, instills calm while strengthening the inner core of one's being.

Crochet is a gorgeously forgiving medium, allowing the freedom to explore without having to worry about the dreaded "dropping" of stitches that strikes fear in the hearts of novice knitters. Where knitting is for "experts," crochet is for everyone, and can be learned in 10 minutes.

Yet this simple craft, along with a basic algorithmic pattern, can be used to generate complex curving "hyperbolic" surfaces that mimic the shapes of coral. For 15 years, my twin sister, Christine, and I, joined by thousands of women worldwide, have been working on the Crochet Coral Reef, a global art and science project we created. Together we've whiled away countless hours making sculptural forms with our hooks as we binge-watch "Xena: Warrior Princess" and other out-of-feminist delights.

"I didn't waste an evening," I can say. "Look what a fantastic form I created!"

—Margaret Wertheim

WEEKEND: FAMILY

Memories matter

Families can help shape how kids will remember pandemic

By DANIEL WILLINGHAM
Special to The Washington Post

My kids won't be in school full time this fall, so, like most parents, I will be thinking about how to keep them occupied and content. But I'm also a memory researcher, and that makes me wonder how they will recall these odd times decades from now. Naturally, I hope those memories will be more pleasant than miserable.

That goal sounds uncomplicated — happy kids should grow into adults with happy memories. But reminiscences aren't a simple averaging of experience. I'm not out to manipulate my kids, but knowing how memory works helps me shape what my children will recall of 2020.

What's a desirable "normal" of the pandemic? For my kids — three teens — I want to minimize bitterness about the restrictions on our lives and maximize gratitude for our health and well-being. I hope for less frustration at being separated from friends and more pleasure at spending time with family. These emotions and attitudes not only lead to better mood today; they are also associated with happiness in the long term.

Obviously, repeated nagging to "Be grateful!" will not prompt feelings of gratitude. Creating new family rituals makes for a better strategy.

My family has started saying a version of grace at supper. Each of us says a word or two about what we're thankful for that day. We also make it routine to help others. At least weekly, we send a handwritten note to someone who's alone in the

COMMENTARY

pandemic lockdown, or share baked goods with neighbors or a delivery person, as a way of moving my children's focus of attention from themselves to others.

My children miss their friends and classmates, of course, so we use other rituals to highlight that we have more family time. We gather at 5 p.m. daily (with age-appropriate drinks) to review our day. Pre-pandemic, we usually went our separate ways after supper, but now we make a point of doing something together, with family members selecting what we'll do in a weekly rotation. We do household chores as a family, instead of splitting them up. Weekends usually include a long walk or a living-room dance party.

How will these practices influence what my children recall decades from now?

A memory summarizing months or years, for example, "the pandemic" or "attending Wilson High School" is not the heading of a mental file containing details of that time. It's an isolated fact.

The rich detail resides in episodes: memories of events that last hours, not months. Episodes like "trying out for basketball" or "taking the SAT" include mental images and sounds, as well as the feeling that this happened to me.

Remembering "my Wilson High days" means constructing a story from episodes of that time. You can't use all of them, so you pick episodes that fit with broader beliefs about yourself. For example, if you think you were "a good son" at 17, you'll summarize high school with episodes showing that theme.

This desire for memories to seem

logical is heightened when we relate them to others. People think of their life story as just that — a story — and so they tell a good one, filling gaps and editing out-of-place events as needed. We even edit individual episodes to make them more logical. For example, if a story about a restaurant visit doesn't mention the patron ordering, people falsely remember that happening: If the customer ate, he must have ordered.

Thus, memories become inaccurate in a consistent way: We change memories to conform to more stable beliefs. The order must have been placed, because that's what happens at restaurants. I must have come home early on prom night, because I was a good son. Episodes are spotty and incomplete, so this unconscious editing makes you more likely to describe what actually happened, compared to relating the unadorned memory.

My children's memories of the pandemic will be influenced by their beliefs about this time in their lives. Those beliefs, in turn, are shaped by repeated experiences.

That process is the same in young children and the elderly: What happens again and again during lockdown becomes, in memory, what usually happened during lockdown. Yes, my 13-year-old, who has always loved her weekly piano lesson, is not thrilled it's on Zoom now, but her siblings and parents make a point of being the best-ever audiences for home recitals.

I want my children to someday remember "what normally happened" during the pandemic to be "parts were hard, but we were okay."

In a time when so much lies outside our control, there's some solace in knowing that's possible.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



A farewell to the rinse and spit era

Waiting for the receptionist to call, I counted my fingers. It had been 11 months since I'd been to the dentist thanks to COVID-19. I scraped a fingernail across my front tooth and thought, "The hygienist has her work cut out for her today."

Sitting in my car in the parking lot didn't have the same appeal as lounging in the dentist's cushy waiting room. Over the years, spending countless hours waiting with my kids were appointments with pediatricians, dentists, orthodontists, speech therapists, hairdressers, occupational therapists, gastroenterologists, ophthalmologists and psychologists had taught me how to entertain myself.

First, I'd grab any free K-Cup coffee or bottled water before settling into a comfy seat. Next, I'd peruse the magazines, splayed out before me. I'd snag a gossip rag first, gobbling up who wore what dress better, who went to rehab or who's breaking up with whom. Then, I'd leaf through lifestyle magazines for good recipes, which I'd secretly tear out. If I was still waiting, I'd clean out my purse. I'd make a garbage pile of old receipts, gum wrappers and linty cough drops. Loose change, Chapstick, keys, pens and stolen recipes were filed properly.

My car phone was my lifeline. I was in the dentist's lobby answering COVID-19 questions. I passed the test and was led to a room with a reclining chair, instrument cart, advertising posters, torturously bright light suspended from a robotic hinged arm and pamphlets with ghastly photos of gum disease.

The hygienist adorned me with a paper bib and laid the lead X-ray vest over my torso. Then she jammed uncomfortable X-ray slides into my wide-open mouth. I felt as if my lips had exceeded their elasticity and might droop down past my chin.

The hygienist then gave me the rundown: First, she'd clean my teeth (most likely with a chisel, ice pick and sledgehammer), then the dentist would stop by (grace me with his presence) to take a look (poke me with a sharp object) and have a chat (try to sell me expensive cosmetic procedures).

She swung the robotic arm over my face, holding what looked like a miniature gaffing hook. Between pokes and picks, she slurped up my excess saliva with a curved suction tube while I stared up at the posters aimed at selling me Invisalign, Botox and expensive whitening treatments. "What else will these dentists come up with to make money? They should just stick that saliva sucker into our wallets," I thought.

Although the hygienist was wearing a new COVID-19 face shield, to me, modern day dental staff had always looked prepared for a nuclear holocaust. Goggles, lab coats, latex gloves, surgical masks, shoe covers and equipment wrapped in cellophane came standard.

Staring into the light, my mind wandered back to childhood dental visits. I recalled the taste of soap as Dr. Petras, protected by nothing but his horn-rimmed glasses, used bare hands to clean and polish my teeth himself with instruments laid out on a rolling metal tray. I remembered rinsing and spitting into a tiny swirling sink that looked like a miniature toilet bowl, having trouble disconnecting myself from a long string of saliva.

The hygienist woke me from my daydream with a jab to the gums. I marveled at her sparkling white teeth. Dr. Petras had his share of coffee stains and silver fillings, but today, dentists and hygienists have unnaturally perfect teeth. "Another high-pressure sales tactic," I thought.

When it was over, I looked around for the little toilet bowl. Instead, the hygienist hooked me like a catfish with the curved suction tube and sucked my mouth dry. I sat up and tried to put my lips back into place.

On the way home, I admired my teeth in the rearview mirror, running my tongue over their smooth surface. Despite my nostalgia for the simpler times of my childhood, I'd found new appreciation for modern advancements, and bid a fond farewell to the era of rinse and spit.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com



istock

When children remember the pandemic, the hope is that they will focus more on what they were grateful for than on what they found difficult. Creating new family rituals can help ensure that more of their memories are positive.

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

FINAL OFFER

BY MARYELLEN UTHLAUT / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

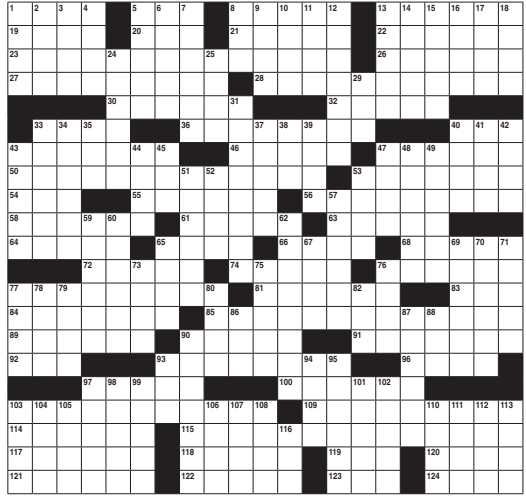
MaryEllen Uthlaut is a writer and homemaker in Charleston, S.C. Some years ago she was at her local library doing research for an article when she stumbled across a book about crosswords that had been misshelved. She checked it out, read it and started constructing. Her first-ever puzzle appeared in The Times in 2010. This is her third crossword for the paper and her first Sunday — W.S.

ACROSS

- 1 Curse
- 5 Unit of current
- 8 Developer of 1982's E.T., a video game so bad that hundreds of thousands of unsold cartridges were secretly buried in a New Mexico landfill
- 13 Stealing attempts on the diamond?
- 19 Look extremely stylish, slangily
- 20 _____ People's Democratic Republic
- 21 Classic actress Sophia
- 22 Lacking freshness
- 23 Always glad to be seated in the back of the boat?
- 26 Printed cotton fabric
- 27 Think of together
- 28 Perfectly placed "Batman" punch?
- 30 Behind the line of scrimmage
- 32 Pried, with "in"
- 33 Look ahead
- 40 Part of New York City's Museum Mile, with "the"
- 43 Charlatans
- 46 "Catch you later!"
- 47 Buddhist temple structure
- 50 Penny going through the wash once again?
- 53 Subject of Walter Lord's "A Night to Remember"
- 54 Espion product
- 55 Facebook profile feature
- 56 Soup served at the church social?
- 58 Persuade by force
- 61 Sheep's kin
- 63 Commencement
- 64 Church officer
- 65 Grape-Nuts maker
- 66 Ark groupings
- 68 Feudal workers
- 72 In a lively manner
- 74 What a pointless meeting probably should have been handled by
- 76 California in San Francisco, e.g.
- 77 Afternoon gatherings of Mensa?
- 81 Force at sea
- 83 Monk's title
- 84 Withdrew
- 85 Having no feeling in one's texting hand?
- 89 Assumed name
- 90 One of the so-called "Three Crowns of Florence," along with Petrarch and Boccaccio
- 91 Source of the idioms "fat of the land" and "fire and brimstone"
- 92 As we speak
- 93 Small anatomical opening, as in a bone
- 96 These can go for a lot of bucks
- 97 Check for mistakes
- 100 Party tray meat
- 103 Ad for heartburn medication?
- 109 Puts forward
- 114 State you'll never get to
- 115 "Quit your snickering, Dumont!"
- 117 Hitting the floppy disk icon, say
- 118 Islamic rulers
- 119 Hill resident
- 120 Soup pod
- 121 Dangerous fly
- 122 Dividing membranes
- 123 _____ flour
- 124 "No man hath _____ God ..."

DOWN

- 1 Labor-regulating org.
- 2 "Such a pity!"
- 3 Bugs
- 4 Doc's needle
- 5 Without reserve
- 6 Yucatán natives
- 7 Fancifully worded
- 8 Drink rarely drunk with a straw
- 9 _____ Bora, area of Afghanistan
- 10 _____ American Heritage Month (April)
- 11 Foul rulers
- 12 Says without feeling
- 13 Start of a magician's phrase
- 14 Send over the moon
- 15 Waited at a red light, say
- 16 FedEx, maybe
- 17 Order by the border
- 18 "Please _____ your tables!" (plane request)
- 24 World-renowned
- 25 Sanskrit scripture
- 29 Part of many California place names
- 31 Get out of Dodge, so to speak
- 33 Caustic compound, maybe
- 34 Needing a passcode, maybe
- 35 Even one
- 37 Latin clarifier
- 38 Easy-to-bend metal
- 39 Greek vowel
- 40 Lead-in to rail
- 41 Computer menu with Undo and Redo
- 42 Dash gauge
- 43 Word with freeze or fixing
- 44 Choice word
- 45 "Don't just _____ there!"
- 47 Digital passcodes
- 48 Viewed optimistically
- 49 _____ snake
- 51 Japanese city where Lexus is headquartered
- 52 Classic muscle cars
- 53 Cards with the most bids
- 57 Bread
- 59 Map section
- 60 Iracible
- 62 Some Hollywood up-and-comers
- 65 Responded in court
- 67 Cowardly sort
- 69 Turn down



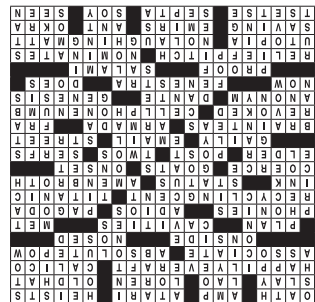
- 70 Units of distance in physics
- 71 Sticks a fork in
- 73 Piece of news
- 75 Drinks usually drunk with straws
- 76 Compos mentis
- 77 Stark who was crowned king in the "Game of Thrones" finale
- 78 Eight-year member of Clinton's cabinet
- 79 State
- 80 Glance at, as headlines
- 82 Animal for which the Canary Islands are named
- 86 Opposite of WSW
- 87 -s or -ed
- 88 Modern prefix
- 90 Practices
- 91 Lexiconary
- 93 One vain about his looks
- 94 "You _____?"
- 95 Greetings to some mainlanders
- 97 Ground-dwelling songbird
- 98 Bit attachments
- 99 Old enough
- 101 Kind of acid
- 102 Like most mouthwashes
- 103 Brownish shade
- 104 Greek vowels
- 105 Classic pop-art sculpture with a slanted "O"
- 106 "Personally ..."
- 107 Cut out
- 108 Male deer
- 110 Singer/songwriter
- 111 Appropriate
- 112 "Suis" is part of its conjugation
- 113 Comic book publisher
- 114 Where to find MA and PA

GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE






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STARS AND STRIPES

FACES



PETER DAVID JOSEK/AP

A couple look at the "Lennon Wall" with a face mask attached to the image of John Lennon in April in Prague, Czech Republic. Like so many other events in the year of coronavirus, an annual tribute to John Lennon held in its adopted city of New York will go online.

Out of love for Lennon

Organizers won't let pandemic cancel 40th annual tribute to Beatle

By DAVID BAUDER
Associated Press

Like many other events, an annual John Lennon tribute concert that takes place in his adopted city of New York on his Oct. 9 birthday has been forced online because of the coronavirus pandemic.

There was no way it was being canceled, not on what would have been Lennon's 80th birthday, not on the tribute's 40th year.

"The idea of not celebrating John, of stopping after 39 years, never crossed my mind," said Joe Raiola, the tribute's producer and artistic director of the Theatre Within organization.

Raiola had booked the Town Hall venue for this year's show. With the pandemic forcing it to stream for free from 7 p.m. to midnight Eastern time on the LennonTribute.org website, the event could get more exposure than ever.

Taped performances by Jackson Browne, Patti Smith, Natalie Merchant, Rosanne Cash, Jorma Kaukonen, Shelby Lynne, Taj Mahal, Marc Cohn, Joan Osborne and others will be included — many from past shows but some new.

Without ticket sales, organizers will ask for contributions for programs that benefit people affected by cancer. Theatre Within and Gilda's Club offer free

workshops such as songwriting, art and meditation to cancer patients and survivors and to children who have lost parents to the disease.

Raiola and other friends began their informal tribute to Lennon in 1981, less than a year after the former Beatle was shot to death.

It stayed small, at least until 24 years in, when Lennon's widow Yoko Ono read a story about the tribute in the New York Daily News and called Raiola to say, in effect, what are you doing?

Learning more about it, she offered support, and said in a statement issued Thursday that "this is such a wonderful way to honor John and the values he stood for."

Cash, a fellow New Yorker who was honored with the John Lennon Real Love Award in 2018, has performed the former Beatle's songs "I'm Only Sleeping" and "Look at Me" at a past tribute.

"It's one of those things that you don't often see where the same people show up every year," Cash said in an interview. "They're devoted to it. It's not just because of John, it's out of respect for what they're doing and the community they've created."

Raiola believes Lennon's impact was "seismic" and that the ideals he believed in didn't die with him.

"Peace, love, gender equality and social justice — that stuff never gets old," he said.

Other news

■ Pop icon, Elton John, said Wednesday that his "Farewell Yellow Brick Road Tour" will return to North America on Jan. 19, 2022, in New Orleans. His global tour will officially return on September 1, 2021, in Berlin.

■ Bob Woodward's "Rage" sold more than 600,000 copies in its first week of publication, continuing a yearlong wave of blockbuster books about President Donald Trump.

■ Sir Harold Evans, a publisher, author and muckraker who for decades exposed wrongdoing in London and published such 1990s bestsellers as "Primary Colors," died Wednesday of heart failure. He was 92.

From The Associated Press

More delays announced for Disney releases

By STEVEN ZEITCHIK
The Washington Post

Disney massively overhauled its release calendar on Wednesday, delaying its biggest releases until well into next year, a sign that the huge entertainment company has determined that there's little movie business to be had in the United States while the coronavirus pandemic remains unchecked.

The studio, which is the driver of a large share of theatrical moviegoing around the world, is postponing its biggest films to at least May, with one being postponed till December 2021.

Originally scheduled for May of this year, then moved to November, "Black Widow" — the latest installment in the Marvel Cinematic Universe — now won't be released until May of next year, Disney said.

"West Side Story," Steven Spielberg's version of the iconic musical that had been one of the most anticipated films of the holidays, has been pushed a full year from this December to December 2021.

And "Eternals," Chloe Zhao's take on the immortal alien race for the Marvel franchise, won't be released till November 2021, a full year after its original release date.

Collectively, the trio of moves is indicative of a striking pandemic-related shift: the loss of a full year in the Hollywood release calendar. Every film scheduled for a particular month in 2020 will now come out on that same month in 2021.

The postponements amount to a formalization of what many experts feared and predicted in recent weeks: Americans are in no rush to return to movie theaters, and Disney and other major studios are unpersuaded they can change their minds.

The moves come as COVID-19 continues to show renewed strength in many areas of the United States. At least 27 states have shown an increase in the seven-day average of new confirmed cases, according to data analyzed by The Washington Post.

That has kept theaters closed and moviegoers at home. Theaters in New York and Los Angeles, the country's two largest markets, are still shut down by government order. Meanwhile, fears of a new wave across the Atlantic have emerged; the United Kingdom has announced tightened restrictions amid rising numbers.

Notably, Disney did not move any of the films to its Disney Plus platform, as it did for the much-delayed "Mulan" in the U.S. and much of Western Europe several weeks ago.

The near-term effect on Disney's bottom line will be considerable. Disney drew nearly \$3 billion in profit from theatrical films last fiscal year; the latter number represented nearly 20 percent of its total profit.

Nominees announced for CMT music awards

Ashley McBryde, Dan + Shay, Kelsea Ballerini, Luke Combs, Sam Hunt and Thomas Rhett top the 2020 CMT Music Awards nominations with three each.

In nominations announced Wednesday for the pandemic-delayed show, 14 videos are vying for the top prize of video of the year. The fan-voted show will air on CMT and other networks on Oct. 21 with outdoor performances.

A number of artists are getting their first ever nominations this year, including Caylee Hammack, Gabby Barrett, Ingrid Andress, Riley Green and Travis Denning.

Times Square New Year adds virtual elements

New Year's Eve in Times Square will incorporate virtual elements, organizers said Wednesday as they gear up for a celebration that will have to be scaled down and socially distant in response to the coronavirus.

Details are still coming together, but the Times Square Alliance, Jamestown Properties and Countdown Entertainment said in a news release that the annual event will have an extremely limited group of in-person honorees.

A virtual experience will allow people to take part in the countdown to 2021 from wherever they are, organizers said.

STARS AND STRIPES

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OPINION

200K dead in US, yet virus response is worse

By LEANA S. WEN
Special to The Washington Post

The United States has reached the grim milestone of 200,000 deaths from COVID-19. We are in a much worse place than we were when we crossed the 100,000-death threshold in May.

Why? Start with the numbers. In late May, we had about 20,000 new infections per day. Now we are at double that, with around 40,000 new daily infections. This is a high baseline to have entering the fall and winter, when the combination of quarantine fatigue and cold weather could drive people to congregate indoors and substantially increase transmission.

In addition, restrictions kept getting lifted, even in states with surging infections. The nearly 2 million students returning for in-person instruction will surely lead to more outbreaks, as some college towns are already emerging as new coronavirus hot spots. In 27 states, the number of infections this week is higher than it was last week. In 14, the test positivity rate is in the double digits, which means the true infection rate is much higher.

While we are closer to a vaccine than we were a few months ago, the proportion of people who say they'll take one if it's available has dropped from more than 70% to about half. The newly doubtful aren't vaccine skeptics who distrust science; to the contrary, they began to worry when they heard President Donald Trump talking about vaccine approval in connection with his election prospects. They fear that speed and political expediency will drive the approval process, instead of safety and efficacy.

We are also further from implementing the basic public health measures necessary to stave off outbreaks. The president himself holds large indoor rallies, sometimes in open defiance of local ordinances against mass gatherings. Masks have become a partisan symbol. An influential model, from the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics, predicts that if 95% of Americans wear masks, we could save 100,000 lives by the end of the year. This doesn't seem likely, unfortunately — the same model estimates current national mask usage to be 45%.

So, the burden of disease is much higher. We've gotten worse at using the tools at our disposal. Add on top of that an extremely worrisome development: The one critical institution needed to fight this pandemic has been cut off at the knees.

Until a few months ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was regarded as the premier public health entity in the country, if not the world. When I was the health commissioner of Baltimore, I relied on the CDC for daily guidance as I navigated Zika, Ebola, measles and other public health crises. During the early months of COVID-19, I and clinicians all over the world turned to the CDC for clear and directive information.

I could not have imagined a day when health officials and doctors would join together and ask the public to disregard the CDC.

Yet, this is what happened when the CDC came out with its nonsensical guidelines that implied asymptomatic people don't need to be tested for COVID-19. We later learned that the guidelines were reported by advanced not by expert scientists at the agency but by political appointees outside

of the CDC. The guidelines were reversed, but only after causing much confusion. This incident, plus reports of political meddling with CDC's hallowed scientific publications and the sudden retraction of its guidance on aerosol transmission, has seriously eroded its credibility and effectiveness.

What's to be done?

There's a lot that a competent federal administration would do now. Announce a national strategy. Scale up testing. Take the muzzle off scientists, and let our government's top public health experts lead.

I'm afraid none of this will happen during this administration. That means we have to take matters into our own hands.

The same public health measures we've been discussing for months are still our best defense. Being around others outdoors is much safer than gathering indoors. Wear masks when you can't keep a six-foot distance outdoors; when indoors with those not in your household, maintain as much distance as possible and keep masks on to reduce aerosol transmission. Avoid crowds. Wash your hands. Keep in mind the concept of cumulative risk: Just because you are doing one activity that has risk doesn't mean you should do others.

The United States is on track to have 200,000 more COVID-19 deaths by the end of this year. We are in a worse place now than we were in May, but I still believe in the willpower and resiliency of the American people. It will be up to each of us to protect ourselves and our loved ones — and in so doing, reduce infection in our communities and our country.

Leana S. Wen is an emergency physician and columnist for The Washington Post. She is a University Medical Institute School of Public Health, Previously, she served as Baltimore's health commissioner.

Networks are preparing for a slow vote count

By DAVID IGNATIUS
Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON
nd Wisconsin goes for ... no body, yet." That's the kind of inconclusive message you may hear often on election night, as television networks try to cover the results of a presidential contest unlike any other in our history. Viewers should be grateful for the caution.

Journalists at all the major networks use similar language to describe the challenge of reporting the Nov. 3 outcome. They recognize that because many votes will be cast by mail, the counting will be slow in some states and the final result may be delayed for days. Commendably, all the networks are preparing for a "decision night" that may not yield an immediate decision.

"There's a lot of responsibility for us. We take it very seriously," Bret Baier of Fox News, who will be co-anchoring that network's coverage, stressed in an interview. "If the difference in the number of absentee ballots yet to be counted is too large, you can't make the call."

I spoke this week with senior political journalists at Fox News, ABC, CBS, CNN and NBC. They've all been pondering the unusual political dynamics caused by the coronavirus pandemic. More voters will be casting absentee ballots, which often take longer to count than in-person votes. This mail-in electorate is expected to skew sharply Democratic.

A September CNN poll found that 78% of Joe Biden's supporters plan to vote early or by mail, while 68% of President Donald Trump's supporters want to vote in person

on Election Day. In Pennsylvania, 70% of requests for absentee ballots came from Democrats and only 29% from Republicans. The New York Times reported this month.

Think about election night: The returns that are available by midnight, say, will be heavy with in-person votes, and they might show that Trump is leading in enough states to win an Electoral College majority. The president, bolstered by these initial returns, might declare victory. But until the mail-in votes are counted in key swing states, such a declaration could be premature.

"This will be an election like no other," cautioned Steve Kornacki, the national political correspondent for NBC and MSNBC. Tempers will be high, and so will uncertainty about the result.

David Chalian, the political director at CNN, explained: "If someone out there is claiming victory, and we haven't counted the vote yet and made a call, we have to be clear that the facts don't back up that claim. ... One thing that's critical is that we be as transparent as possible about what is and isn't in the vote count, and what we know about the still-outstanding vote."

Trump and his supporters have been working overtime to delegitimize mail-in votes. A blatant example was the claim this month by White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany that a "fair" election will be one "where we know who the president of the United States is on election night." That's how the system is supposed to work. Nonsense. The system is supposed to count every vote.

The stakes on Election Day are huge, and voters on both sides will want some in-

formation that night of how the race is trending. The networks plan to use "exit polls," which this year will include telephone sampling that captures absentee voters. There are two polling consortia: the National Election Pool, used by ABC, CBS, CNN and NBC; and VoteCast, used by Fox News and The Associated Press. Competing narratives shouldn't be a danger here. "Two high-quality surveys are better than one," argued Scott Clement, the polling director at The Washington Post, who has used both.

Elections are marquee marketing events for the networks, and the danger is that journalists will get caught in the hype and hysteria of a rush to judgment — or in claims of fraud by either side. But the networks seem to understand the danger. "We may need to tell voters that we don't know who won the election tonight. We may need a few more days," cautioned Rick Klein, the political director for ABC.

Journalists remember the embarrassment of mistaken early calls that Al Gore had won the 2000 election. "Humility is always the key," noted John Dickerson, a senior political analyst and "60 Minutes" correspondent at CBS. "Delay is a sign of rigor."

The public seems to get it. A recent poll by The Washington Post and the University of Maryland found that 53% of respondents believed that it will take two to three days to know the winner, and that 62% were very or somewhat confident that votes would be counted accurately.

This has been a crazy campaign season. But prominent journalists are thinking hard about how to avoid making it worse with hasty judgments on election night.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Clear answer why Biden won't name names on court pick

The Wall Street Journal

"The voters of this country should be heard," Joe Biden said this weekend as he exhorted Senate Republicans to block a vote on President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee. That might be clever messaging — who doesn't want voters to be heard? But there's one problem: Unlike Trump and Senate Republicans, Biden has given so few details about his Supreme Court vision that voters are left guessing at what a vote for him means for the judiciary.

Start with appointments. Biden has resisted naming individuals he'd consider for the Supreme Court, saying he'd subject them to undue criticism. Fair enough — Trump's practice of making his short-list public is not required of other candidates. But the absence of specifics raises a fair suspicion that he doesn't want voters to know that his nominees would be well left to fester.

Biden's chief stated requirement for a Supreme Court appointee is based on race and gender, not judicial philosophy or qualifications. His website says he would appoint the first African American woman to the Supreme Court. That's his prerogative, but the demand he's put forward about the impact of the court's race and gender is not a proxy for views of the law.

Given those requirements, legal observers have speculated that two women top his list: 44-year-old Justice Leandra Kruger of the California Supreme Court and 42-year-old federal district court judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, whom President Barack Obama reportedly vetted for Justice Antonin Scalia's vacancy. Both have significant records, but by avoiding names Biden can please his base with race and gender symbolism and avoid a debate on the law.

Perhaps more important to voters is whether Biden would undermine the court's independence. The Supreme Court remains one of the more trusted American institutions, but Democrats in Congress are threatening to pack it with liberal justices, and the Senate has blocked Trump's nominees. Nothing is off the table. Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said this weekend.

Legislation expanding the Supreme Court would need Biden's signature, and he was asked Monday by a Wisconsin news station whether he was open to it. His answer: "It's a legitimate question, but let me tell you I'm not going to answer that question. Because it will shift the whole focus, that's what (Trump) wants." This is a calculated political dodge, and moderator Chris Wallace shouldn't let Biden get away with it in next week's first presidential debate. Would he veto court-packing legislation?

Biden wants to run on Donald Trump's character and the coronavirus, full stop. He also wants to duck his party's court-packing threats because they aren't popular. Data for Progress, a progressive polling group, found only 40% of voters support the idea of a presidential court-packing bill. But if Republicans confirm Trump's nominee.

But Biden has given little reason to think he'd resist his left flank in office. From his economic plan issued with the Bernie Sanders team to his increasingly extreme climate-change rhetoric, and new openness to eliminating the Senate's legislative filibuster, Biden has shown little willing-



ness — or ability — to shape the Democratic Party in his image. If the justices rule the way Democrats don't like, the pressure would be overwhelming for Biden to go along with court packing.

So let's review the way both sides are honoring the voters who Democrats say should decide the next court seat. In 2016 Trump ran on the courts, becoming the first candidate to release a list of potential justices. In 2018 voters increased the GOP's Senate majority in part because they disliked the Democratic smearing of Brett Kavanaugh. Now Trump is putting forward a new nominee, for which he can be accountable on Nov. 3.

Biden, in the name of letting voters be "heard," is demanding that Republicans surrender and not confirm a new justice. But he has given voters no idea of who he would appoint to the court, beyond an identity politics pledge. And he won't tell voters if he'd resist his party's court-packing scheme that could blow up its legitimacy.

The integrity of the Supreme Court and judicial independence are on the ballot, and Biden has a duty to clarify his position if he really wants to give voters a chance to be heard.

GOP plan to fill seat threatens Ginsburg's accomplishments

The New York Times

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who died Friday at the age of 87, will forever have two legacies.

The one Americans could be focusing on right now is the one of legal trailblazer: Ginsburg, the second woman ever to be appointed to the Supreme Court, paved the way for women's equality before the law, and for women's rights to be taken seriously by the courts and by society.

The one Americans could be focusing on right now is the one of legal trailblazer: Ginsburg, the second woman ever to be appointed to the Supreme Court, paved the way for women's equality before the law, and for women's rights to be taken seriously by the courts and by society. The one Americans could be focusing on right now is the one of legal trailblazer: Ginsburg, the second woman ever to be appointed to the Supreme Court, paved the way for women's equality before the law, and for women's rights to be taken seriously by the courts and by society. The one Americans could be focusing on right now is the one of legal trailblazer: Ginsburg, the second woman ever to be appointed to the Supreme Court, paved the way for women's equality before the law, and for women's rights to be taken seriously by the courts and by society.

The other legacy of Ginsburg's that the country is now urgently forced to confront is the cold political reality that she died in the final weeks of a presidential campaign, at a moment when President Donald

Trump and Mitch McConnell, the Senate majority leader, appear to be dead-set on replacing her with someone who would obliterate much of the progress she helped the country make.

The court now faces a serious crisis of legitimacy. Senate Republicans, who represent a minority of the nation, and a president elected by a minority of the nation, are now in a position to solidify their control of the third branch of government. The Supreme Court, with another Trump appointee, could stand as a conservative firewall against the expressed will of a majority of Americans on a range of crucial issues.

The cynicism of the political moment stands in sharp relief against Ginsburg's idealism. She faced down multiple bouts of cancer and other health emergencies during her tenure on the bench. Through it all, she never wavered in her commitment to the court as a vehicle for a more just and more equal America. She was a dogged, tireless fighter — it was easy to imagine she might live another 20 years, battling back whatever came at her. Of course, we knew better.

Defending her decision not to retire when President Barack Obama could have picked her replacement, she said, "There will be a president after this one, and I'm hopeful that that president will be a fine president." She never anticipated President Donald Trump, whom she called a "faker" during a 2016 interview. She shouldn't have said it, but she was right.

Everyone who cares about the integrity of the nation's highest court has been dreading a moment like this — the death of a justice as Americans are already casting their ballots in the most contentious and consequential presidential election in living memory. The future of the court now rests in the hands of McConnell, the man who has done more damage to the court's standing than perhaps anyone in modern American history.

With McConnell's help, Trump has already filled two seats on the court with hard-right ideologues. The first, Neil Gorsuch, is a justice solely because of McConnell's obstruction, on false pretenses, of Obama's nomination of Merrick Garland. The second, Brett Kavanaugh, was a highly contentious nominee with a long, troubling record in government that McConnell hid from the American people. And that was before Kavanaugh faced credible allegations of sexual assault.

At least there was no question about the circumstances surrounding the vacancy that Kavanaugh filled. In contrast, Gorsuch's seat is forever stained by McConnell's outrageous ploy to deny a Democratic president an appointment. At the time, the majority leader claimed that he was holding open the seat that had been held by Justice Antonin Scalia because it was an election year, and the American people should have a "voice" in choosing

the next justice.

McConnell disavowed that position almost immediately, claiming that it only applies when the presidency and the Senate are controlled by different parties. Last Friday night, he said, "President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate" — even though the election is less than two months away. So much for the American people.

Throughout the Trump years, Republicans have shown little willingness to place principle above party, or to place the long-term interests of the nation above short-term political victories. But perhaps a few Republican senators will take the quickened pulse of the nation and consider the case to postpone resolving Ginsburg's replacement.

Ginsburg, who was Jewish, died on the eve of Rosh Hashana, the Jewish new year. Fittingly, it is a day when Jews look backward and forward, reflecting on what has passed, and preparing for what is to come. Ginsburg's death marks the end of her long battle on behalf of equality for all Americans. Others must now carry that fight forward.

Bloomberg kept his word. Use \$20M to help ex-felons vote

Miami Herald

Last week, the Editorial Board urged Michael Bloomberg to "write a big old check" to help ex-felons in Florida vote in the presidential election. The editorial was pushed up by several national outlets.

This week, he announced that he has raised almost \$20 million for the cause. Bravo!

After decades of being denied the right to vote, most former prisoners in the state still are being denied access to the ballot box, even though, in 2018, a solid majority of voters had agreed to a referendum that allowed them to cast a ballot. Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Republican Legislature erected what they knew would be a roadblock: an added provision that ex-felons have to pay all court fees and fines before having their right to vote restored. It was a caveat that the voters never intended.

We don't know if the ex-New York mayor and former Democratic candidate for president even read our editorial. But at the very least, we're going to pat ourselves on the back for having a good idea that Bloomberg, too, thought was worthy.

He is fulfilling his promise to do anything in his money's power to pull Florida into Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's camp in November. He already had pledged to spend \$100 million in Florida alone for Biden ads. Tuesday, he announced the strategy championed by the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition: to get the ex-felons by paying off many former inmates' fines and fees. Bravo!

On Tuesday, Bloomberg announced his team has raised at least \$16 million to pay the court fines and fees of nearly 32,000 of the 776,000 Florida voters with felony convictions, many of them Black and Hispanic. The caveat that he committed to spending \$100 million in the state, we followed up by saying that, with legal challenges to overturn the fee requirement for ex-felons seemingly at an end, Bloomberg "could be their last hope, empowering hundreds of thousands of new voters to cast their ballots."

"With such a significant donation, Bloomberg's money won't get lost in the miasma of campaign ads and yard signs, it will have a direct effect on ensuring the democratic process."

Bloomberg's fines-and-fees money now goes to the fund created by the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, which has been collecting money to pay what was owed by former prisoners who want to vote.

The onus now is on the coalition to quickly reach out to those disenfranchised voters in Florida, settle up their fines and fees and get them registered to vote before the Oct. 5 deadline.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Stranded, 700-pound sea turtle euthanized

VA NORFOLK — A Virginia Aquarium team had to euthanize a 700-pound sea turtle that became stranded on a beach.

The aquarium's Stranding Response Team was called to a Norfolk beach Monday morning after beachgoers noticed the giant leatherback turtle on the shore, news outlets reported.

The Virginian-Pilot quoted resident Alyssa Muhlendorf as saying that the group gathered on the beach could tell something was not right — there was blood on the turtle's shell and the reptile spent hours walking in circles toward the water. Once it got in, it could not swim well and was repeatedly washed ashore, witnesses said.

The team monitored the turtle and consulted with other agencies before deciding to euthanize the turtle Tuesday, aquarium spokeswoman Natalie Sims said.

Man who set pews on fire at church sought

FL TAMPA — Sheriff's officials in Florida are looking for a man who was caught on security cameras breaking into a church and setting some pews on fire.

Hillsborough County Sheriff's officials said the man broke into Incarnation Catholic Church near Tampa on Friday night and poured flammable liquid onto three wooden pews before setting them on fire. The man then ran from the church, news outlets reported.

"While we are unsure of his motive, it is clear he has no respect for private property or a sacred place of worship," said Sheriff Chad Christner. "We promise this church community we are doing everything we can to capture this suspect and ensure he is held accountable for his actions."

Parents tackle man accused of spying on girl

SC DUNCAN — A group of parents tackled and restrained a registered sex offender accused of spying on a 15-year-old girl in the women's bathroom of a Cracker Barrel restaurant in South Carolina over the weekend, authorities said.

Douglas Lane, 53, has been charged with voyeurism, as well as possession of marijuana and paraphernalia, according to Duncan Police Chief Carl Long.

Lane has several past convictions for similar behavior in both North and South Carolina dating back more than 20 years, court records show.

News outlets report that the incident occurred Sunday when the girl was using the bathroom and noticed a man looking out from under the stall beside her.

Lane tried to flee the scene after being confronted by the girl's father but was stopped by a group of parents who were in town for a girls' softball tournament, Long said. They tackled Lane in the parking lot and held him until police arrived.



J. David Aze/AP

Here comes the sun

Bicyclists are silhouetted against the National Mall reflecting pool as they stop to watch the sunrise in Washington on Wednesday.

During a bond hearing Monday, an attorney representing him claimed that Lane didn't know he was in the women's bathroom.

Fight near courthouse follows sentencing

MN ST. PAUL — A family fight following a sentencing for murder at the Ramsey County Courthouse caused deputies to lock down the building before gunshots were fired outside nearby in a shooting believed to be related to the argument.

No one was injured in the shooting several blocks from the courthouse Monday.

A judge sentenced Marcus Baker to more than 40 years in prison for fatally shooting Shawn Jones last November, the St. Paul Pioneer Press reported.

According to Undersheriff Tina McNamara, the defendant's family had a fight in the lobby of the courthouse and when it began to get physical deputies escorted those involved outside. Soon after deputies heard gunshots fired. Shell casings were found in the area.

Trapped dog lured to safety with beef jerky

NC MORGANTON — A group of mountain bikers on a North Carolina trail spotted a dog trapped 30 feet down in a sinkhole — and it took a salty snack and some straps to lift him to safety.

The group was riding the Sinkhole Trail at Pisgah National Forest, about 50 miles south of

THE CENSUS

\$25K

May in Columbia, S.C., after being on the run since November 2018. Police said he took the money to pay off social media scammers after sending thousands of dollars of his own money. Prosecutors are recommending an eight-year sentence.

The approximate amount of money the former director of Paducah, Ky.'s annual Barbecue on the River admitted he stole from the nonprofit in 2018, the Paducah Sun reported. David Boggs, 51, pleaded guilty Monday. He was arrested in July following a gunfight.

Asheville, on Sunday when they encountered the dog, who had apparently been stuck in the hole for several days, according to Burke County Search And Rescue.

The bikers called for help and led rescuers more than a mile to the stranded animal, where they rappelled into the sinkhole, noticed the starving dog with some beef jerky and raised him to safety using a harness, the rescue squad said.

The dog was not injured, but was starving and dehydrated, according to the rescuers. He was taken to Burke County Animal Services for an examination and named "Sinkin'." Officials said he did not have a collar or a microchip, and if owners are not found, he could be placed up for adoption.

The 7-mile trail is named for the large sinkhole along its ridge.

County sets aside money for renters

MD TOWSON — Officials in Baltimore County say that there could be as many as 24,000 eviction filings in a single month once the courts get back

up to speed following the coronavirus-related closures.

The Baltimore Sun reported Tuesday that county officials are setting aside assistance money to try to help renters.

Terry Hickey, Baltimore County's deputy director of Housing and Community Development, said that as many as 8,000 families are at risk of losing housing as people lose their jobs.

Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski Jr. has asked the council to approve an application for \$3 million in federal relief funds for the county's rental assistance program.

County spokesman Sean Naron said that the county is also redirecting \$800,000 to future eviction prevention efforts.

2 hospitalized after WWII-era plane crashes

CA STOCKTON — Two people were hospitalized after a World War II-era plane crashed in a field in central California over the weekend, officials said.

The multiengine North American B-25 crashed Saturday eve-

ning a few miles southeast of Stockton Metropolitan Airport, Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Allen Kenttzer said.

Three people were on board. One person walked away and two others were taken to hospitals with non-life-threatening injuries, the Sacramento Bee reported. The plane appeared to have hit an irrigation ditch during an attempted landing in a field, the newspaper said.

The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board will investigate.

Strip clubs fight to lower dancer age to 18

FL JACKSONVILLE — Some Florida strip club owners are lobbying to lower the age limit for dancers from 21 to 18-years-old, calling the current age requirement unconstitutional.

A lawyer representing 13 clubs and four dancers in Jacksonville argued before a federal judge that dancing is a form of expression protected under the First Amendment.

"This is just a ban on speech," attorney Gary Edinger said.

The city law currently bans dancers under 21 and was passed in an effort to reduce sex trafficking. The measure also requires dancers to have a city-issued ID card.

City attorneys said younger people are more susceptible to the coercion that's often part of trafficking and argued that 21 is a safer age.

From wire reports

Stripes SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market



Transportation

944

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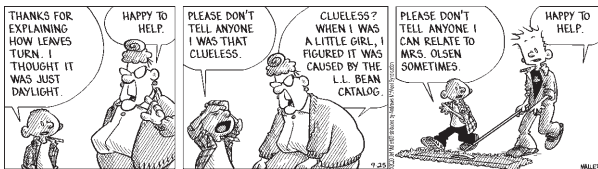
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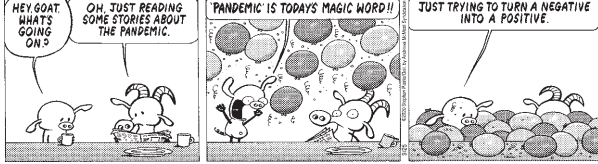
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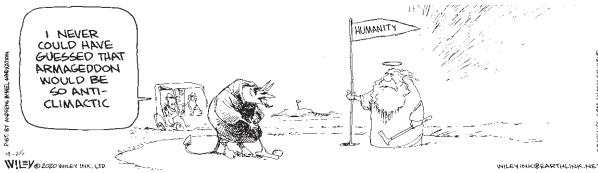
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



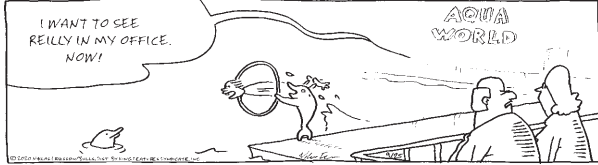
Non Sequitur



Candorville



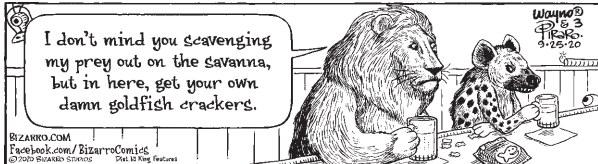
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12						13			14	
15						16			17	
		18			19			20		
21	22		23				24			
25		26		27		28				
29			30		31			32	33	34
			35		36			37		
38	39	40			41		42		43	
44				45				46		
47				48			49		50	51
52				53			54			
55				56			57			

ACROSS

- 1 Letter before iota
- 6 "Frontline" airer
- 9 LAPD alert
- 12 Roll with a hole
- 13 Stephen of "Still Crazy"
- 14 Roman 1051
- 15 Uneasy feeling
- 16 Brainiac
- 18 Inventor Edison
- 20 Green Gables girl
- 21 Discoverer's call
- 23 Moment
- 24 Sports bar fixture
- 25 Padlocked fastener
- 27 Tourist's query
- 29 Treat badly
- 31 Alaskan capital
- 35 Military group
- 37 End-of-wk. cry
- 38 Supports
- 41 Green prefix
- 43 Day- — paint
- 44 Author Wiesel
- 45 Planet with rings
- 47 Asian appetizer
- 49 "— were the days!"
- 52 PBS funder
- 53 — Kippur
- 54 Scalawag
- 55 Goof up
- 56 Guitar master Paul

DOWN

- 1 TV itinerary abbr.
- 2 Solo of "Star Wars"
- 3 Messy picnic game
- 4 TV/radio host John
- 5 Choir members
- 6 Sermonize
- 7 Pleads
- 8 Droop
- 9 Church cries
- 10 Runway model?
- 11 Fancy bathroom fixture
- 17 "— you heard?"
- 19 Made kittenish sounds
- 21 Resistance unit
- 22 "Bali —" nickname
- 24 Capote
- 26 Prepare for a kiss
- 28 Kick out
- 30 Airline to Sweden
- 32 Spiked Sule drinks
- 33 Have a bug
- 34 Roswell sighting
- 36 Kingdoms
- 38 Designer Geoffrey
- 39 Rags-to-riches author
- 40 Humidifier item
- 42 Unconventional
- 45 — gin fizz
- 46 Frat letters
- 48 Popeye's Olive
- 50 Take to court
- 51 Poetic dusk

Answer to Previous Puzzle

SLAP	TED	STAN
TAXI	ENO	HALO
ARES	NEW	APTS
BALTIC	NORWAY	
	ODE	VIA
COAL	NOT	OFTEN
AWN	TRU	EPI
TENNYSON	IRAN	
	EAU	GOT
GARGLE	SNACKS	
IDIG	DAT	LOLA
RACE	ARE	IDES
DYED	MAN	CEES

9-25

CRYPTOQUIP

T SKTHJ SKFS YFH LCSA SXX
YCMK LXYFEV TH KTA KFTU.
KV FLLZTVA TS SX F

AZTMJVHTHD EVDUVV.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MUSICAL MOVIE ABOUT AN OPERA STAR WITH A SHOW IN NEVADA'S GAMBLING CAPITAL: "DIVA LAS VEGAS."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals C

Frazz



Dilbert



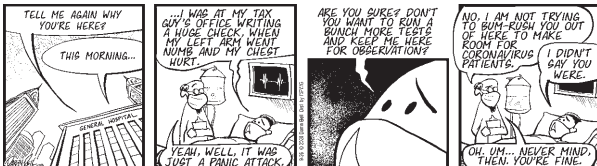
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



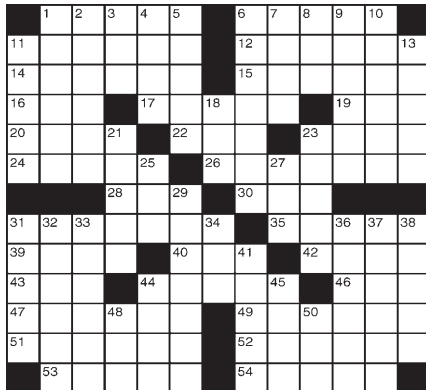
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Florida city
- 6 Envelope parts
- 11 Not as flabby
- 12 "Sorry Not Sorry" singer Demi
- 14 Speak from memory
- 15 Martini garnishes
- 16 Nabokov novel
- 17 Dasher's boss
- 19 Inc. cousin
- 20 Albacore, e.g.
- 22 "Mayday"
- 23 Spanish greeting
- 24 Masts
- 26 Tea urn
- 28 Hosp. parts
- 30 Chairman of China
- 31 Pontiac sports car

DOWN

- 1 Busy
- 2 Secret matters
- 3 2001, to Cato
- 4 Favorites
- 5 Locales
- 6 Wreckage at sea
- 7 "Damn Yankees" vamp
- 8 Bird (Pref.)
- 9 "Conditioned reflex" Nobelist
- 10 "A Streetcar Named Desire" cry
- 11 Dorm alternatives
- 13 Film trophy
- 18 Refusals
- 21 Concert venue
- 23 Owl sounds
- 25 Soon-to-be grads
- 27 Goat's plaint
- 29 "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" actor Andy
- 31 "— show biz!"
- 32 Depends (on)
- 33 Noah's landfall
- 34 Actress West
- 36 Hip
- 37 Blacksmiths' blocks
- 38 Prepared
- 41 Unmanned plane
- 44 Paradise
- 45 Walked (on)
- 48 Will Smith biopic
- 50 Hit CBS series

Answer to Previous Puzzle



9-26

CRYPTOQUIP

HA T Z R B Q Z O S T G Y B O P M B T
R B X M T D H F Y X Q B L B A X G F Z I,
H D Z P M O T X S F Y B S ' N B R X O B

O Z L Z I I B T B I N X F H Z L T.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I THINK THAT MAN PUTS TOO MUCH POMADE IN HIS HAIR. HE APPLIES IT TO A SLICKENING DEGREE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals Y

STANLEY CUP FINAL/FRENCH OPEN



JASON FRANSON, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Tampa Bay Lightning center Steven Stamkos, top, celebrates his goal Wednesday against Dallas Stars goaltender Anton Khudobin, right during the first period of Game 3 of the Stanley Cup Final, in Edmonton, Alberta. Stamkos had not played since February because of a core muscle injury.

Stamkos scores, leaves as Lightning down Stars

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — As soon as Steven Stamkos scored on his first shot since February, his Tampa Bay Lightning celebrated on the ice and the bench with 211 days of pent up excitement.

Even after Stamkos left with an injury, they didn't let up and dominated without him, blowing the Dallas Stars out of an empty arena with a 5-2 rout in Game 3 of the Stanley Cup Final on Wednesday night to take the lead in the series. Even though he only skated five shifts for 2:47, the long-time Lightning captain making his 2020 playoff debut 211 days after he last played in an NHL game gave the Lightning a jolt.

"Just to be able to get out into a game and have an impact on a game, which a month ago may have never been possible," a smiling Stamkos said. "It's been such a long time. At this time of the year, you want to do anything you can to help your team win. I've watched these guys be so committed to what our end goal is, and to be part of it tonight, it was a dream come true."

Stamkos made the most of limited ice time, scoring a vintage goal by going around Esa Lindell and sniping a shot past Anton Khudobin. Defenseman Victor Hedman, who fed the puck to Stamkos, lost track of it until he saw it in the back of the net.

The Lightning bench broke into a spontaneous celebration perhaps unlike any goal during the playoffs.

"I think that the cheer was just a little bit louder," coach Jon Co-

NHL scoreboard

Stanley Cup Final (Best-of-seven, x if necessary) At Edmonton, Alberta		
Tampa Bay 2, Dallas 1		
Dallas 1, Tampa Bay 1		
Tampa Bay 3, Dallas 2		
Wednesday: Tampa Bay 5, Dallas 2		
Friday: Game 4 (AFN-Sports/2, 2 a.m.)		
Saturday CET: 9 a.m., Saturday (JKT)		
Saturday: Game 5		
Monday: Sept. 28: Game 6		
Wednesday, Sept. 30: Game 7		
Wednesday		
Lightning 5, Stars 2		
Tampa Bay	2	3
Dallas	1	0
First Period —1. Tampa Bay, Kucherov 7:53; 2. Tampa Bay, Stamkos 1 (Rutta, Hedman), 6:58; 3. Dallas, Dickinson 2 (Hirtz), 1:18 (5:41)		
Second Period —4. Tampa Bay, Hedman 10 (Palat, Girault), 0:54 (pp.); 5. Tampa Bay, Point 11 (Hedman, Kucherov), 12:02; 6. Tampa Bay, Palat 10 (Point, Shattenkirk), 18:52.		
Third Period —7. Dallas, Heiskanen 10 (Goellitz, Pavesio), 5:40.		
Shots on goal —Tampa Bay 8-21-3-32. Dallas 15-4-4-24.		
Power-play opportunities —Tampa Bay 1 of 4; Dallas 0 of 4.		
Goalies —Tampa Bay, Vasilevsky 15-5-1 (24 shots-22 saves). Dallas, Khudobin 13-7-0 (29-24), Dallas, Oettinger 0-0-0 (3-3).		
T-2:34.		

per said. Stamkos skated off gingerly at the end of his final shift in the first period and was not on the bench for the start of the second. He returned to the bench and took a few twirls to test out the injury but did not return.

The Lightning were just fine with Stamkos offering moral support sitting in the middle of the bench. Still his presence meant so much.

"Unexpected, but just the lift he gave us A) being able to dress and play and B) scoring, I don't think the guys were going to be

denied," Cooper said.

That's because the Lightning got goals from all three of their first-line forwards, their top defenseman and their captain and big saves from their Vesina Trophy finalist goaltender, while the Stars' best players were quiet again or made big mistakes to contribute to the loss. Nikita Kucherov, Stamkos, Victor Hedman, Brayden Point and Andrej Palat all scored for Tampa Bay, which was the better team from the start of the second period on.

"They made two good shots early," Stars captain Jamie Benn said. "They capitalized on their chances and we didn't."

Khudobin was under pressure most of the night and allowed five goals on 29 shots before coach Rick Bowness replaced him at the start of the third with rookie Jake Oettinger. Khudobin said it was Bowness' choice and that he didn't ask for the rest.

At the other end, Andrei Vasilevsky made a few big saves among his 31, including a brilliant left pad stop on Corey Perry early in the game.

The game was everything that has made Tampa Bay one of the best teams in hockey for more than half of the last decade. That included the return of Stamkos, the Lightning's leader who has been forced to watch while rehabbing a core muscle injury.

Stamkos, who last played Feb. 25, had surgery in early March and aggravated the injury at least once over the summer, didn't want to go into detail about what happened then or Wednesday night.

Preparations vary for players headed to Roland Garros

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
AND ANDREW DAMPF
Associated Press

Serena Williams bypassed any clay-court tuneup tournaments ahead of the French Open, so her first match at Roland Garros will be her first competition since the U.S. Open.

Naomi Osaka won the U.S. Open and is sitting out the French Open, which starts its 15 days of main-draw action Sunday after being postponed in May because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Dominic Thiem also won the U.S. Open and decided to rest at home for a bit before heading to Paris.

Simona Halep skipped the trip to New York's hard courts altogether and has been playing exclusively — and extremely well — on clay since tennis resumed after its pandemic hiatus. Rafael Nadal sat out the U.S. Open, too, but he only has played three matches on his favorite surface in all of 2020, hardly the sort of run-up to Roland Garros the King of Clay is used to.

"A completely special year," he said after a quarterfinal loss in Rome last week, "and unpredictable year."

And Novak Djokovic? He traveled to the United States, won the Western & Southern Open and experienced a tumultuous exit from the U.S. Open via disqualification, then flew back halfway around the world and won the Italian Open, which he probably considers perfect preparation for the year's last Grand Slam tournament.

"Well, it is unusual to be in these kind of circumstances, but at the same time, we are — I am, and I know most of the players are — thankful that we have a chance and opportunity to play and compete and be on the tour," said Djokovic, who will be seeded No. 1 at the French Open.

He is bidding for a second title

there and 18th Grand Slam trophy overall, which would move him within two of Roger Federer's record for men and one behind second-place Nadal. (Federer is sidelined for the rest of the season after two operations on his right knee.)

"It's just very close after an exhausting month of tennis in (the) States on a different surface (to) come back and play ... on a different surface, different continent," Djokovic said. "It's very challenging."

All players needed to make their own decisions about how to approach this once-in-a-lifetime — let's hope so, anyway — year and the coronavirus-altered tennis calendar, with the quick switches from North America to Europe and from hard courts to clay that no one is used to managing quite this way.

As Johanna Konta, a three-time Grand Slam semifinalist now ranked 13th, put it: "It is a very different, very strange, very unorthodox kind of mini-season for us."

With the French Open beginning exactly two weeks after the U.S. Open ended, the hindsight-is-20/20 answers to various key questions everyone needed to confront eventually will present themselves on the courts.

"You have to play your cards smart there, I guess," said Thiem, the runner-up to Nadal in Paris the past two years.

Halep enters on a 14-match winning streak, including clay-court titles in Prague last month and Rome last week.

Could all of the time Halep spent on clay be an advantage for her against players who trained and played on hard courts?

"Yes and no," was Halep's answer.

"Yes, because I had the chance to practice on clay only, and no, because I didn't have official matches," she said. "So both sides, I think, have an advantage, if we know how to (use) it."

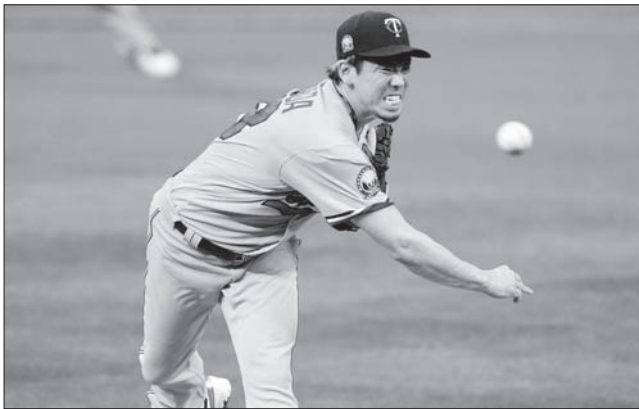


ALFREDO FALCONE, LA PRESSE/AP

Romania's Simona Halep poses with her trophy after beating Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova in the final of the Italian Open on Monday in Rome. Halep skipped the U.S. Open to play exclusively on clay so she could prepare for the French Open.

[illegible]

MLB



Jim Monahan/AP

Minnesota Twins pitcher Kenta Maeda had nine strikeouts in six innings while allowing three runs and four hits in the Twins' 7-6 defeat of the Detroit Tigers on Wednesday in Minneapolis.

Roundup

Twins edge Tigers, take sole possession of AL Central lead

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Jake Cave hit a pair of home runs, Kenta Maeda finished off his regular season with another strong start and the Minnesota Twins beat the Detroit Tigers 7-6 on Wednesday to take over sole possession of the AL Central lead for the first time since late August.

Eddie Rosario added a two-run homer for the Twins (35-22), who have won four straight. They moved a half-game ahead of the second-place White Sox (34-22).

Maeda (6-1) allowed three runs and four hits in six innings with nine strikeouts. After an infield hit by the first batter of the game, he set down 15 of his next 16 hitters. He gave up a three-run homer to Miguel Cabrera in the sixth.

Indians 3, White Sox 2: Shane Bieber lowered his ERA to 1.63 in his final regular-season start, the lowest in the American League since Luis Tiant's 1.60 for the same team in 1968, and Jordan Luplow hit a game-winning home run for host Cleveland.

Bieber, who leads the big leagues with eight wins, allowed an unearned run and two hits in five innings with 10 strikeouts in his eighth double-digit strikeout game, also a major-league high.

Athletics 6, Dodgers 4: Ramon Laureano broke a ninth-inning tie with a two-run homer and Oakland won at Los Angeles in a matchup of West division champions.

Laureano also had an RBI single in the seventh and made a diving catch in center field.

Giants 7, Rockies 2: Mauricio Dubón hit a three-run homer off reliever Yency Almonte in the

fifth inning and San Francisco defeated visiting Colorado to move barely in front in a crowded NL wild-card race.

Evan Longoria also went deep for the Giants. Brandon Belt added three hits and walked twice.

Phillies 12, Nationals 3: Given a chance to DH so he could ease the burden on his bothersome back, Bryce Harper homered twice against his former team, helping Philadelphia win at Washington and eliminate the 2019 World Series champions from the playoff race.

The loss ended the Nationals' modest — albeit season-best — four-game winning streak and left their record at 23-33. Washington was knocked out of postseason contention hours later when San Francisco beat Colorado.

Royals 12, Cardinals 3: Salvador Perez and Franchy Cordero each had two homers and five RBIs, and out-of-contention Kansas City pummeled visiting St. Louis in their series finale.

The Cardinals (27-26) remain 3½ games back of first-place Chicago in the NL Central but had their edge for the No. 2 spot in the division nearly wiped out.

Braves 9, Marlins 4: Dansby Swanson hit a three-run homer and host Atlanta cruised to its third straight win over Miami in a game overshadowed by Max Fried's early departure with an ankle injury.

The Braves ace was making his final regular-season start, hoping to boost his NL Cy Young Award credentials ahead of starting Game 1 in the NL playoffs next week.

Red Sox 9, Orioles 1: Nathan Eovaldi struck out eight over six scoreless innings, Rafael De-

vers hit a three-run double that capped a six-run third and host Boston won a matchup of the AL East's worst teams.

Diamondbacks 7, Rangers 3: Rookie Wyatt Mathisen hit his first two career homers, fellow rookie Daulton Varsho knocked in the go-ahead run with a triple, and host Arizona rallied past Texas.

Reds 6, Brewers 1: Joey Votto homered for his first hit all season against Milwaukee. Trevor Bauer dominated on short rest and host Cincinnati won a pivotal series for playoff contention.

The Reds are in position for a wild-card playoff berth after taking two of three from their NL Central rival.

Angels 5, Padres 2: San Diego starter Mike Clevinger was pulled after one inning because of a tight right biceps, potentially a big setback for playoff-bound San Diego in a loss to visiting Los Angeles.

Clevinger, acquired last month in a trade with Cleveland and the presumed starter for Game 1 of the playoffs next week, was sent for an MRI.

Blue Jays 14, Yankees 1: Catcher Gary Sánchez made two of his team's season-high four errors and Toronto damaged visiting New York's hopes in its race for home-field advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

Pirates 2, Cubs 1: Adam Frazier and Ke'Bryan Hayes led off the bottom of the first inning with back-to-back homers off Kyle Hendricks, sending Pittsburgh past visiting Chicago.

Mariners 3, Astros 2: Nick Marguevicius tossed six shutout innings, Ty France drove in a pair of runs and host Seattle kept its slim postseason hopes alive.

Rays defeat Mets for first AL East title in 10 years

By JERRY BEACH

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Confetti instead of champagne. Silly string instead of beer.

The Tampa Bay Rays, long accustomed to doing more with less, figured out a way to maximize the division-clinching celebration they were allowed to enjoy during a 2020 season shortened by the coronavirus.

Randy Arozarena homered twice and the Rays clinched their first AL East title in 10 years Wednesday night with an 8-5 victory over the New York Mets.

"I'm completely dry right now, which I'm not a huge fan of," center fielder Kevin Kiermaier, the longest-tenured Rays player, said with a grin. "But you have to adapt to what we're asked of."

With teams instructed to celebrate in a muted and socially distant style, Tampa Bay went old school — or maybe elementary school — with its clinching party.

The team filed slowly onto the field after Nick Anderson fanned Andres Gimenez for the final out. A couple of players shot off canisters filled with confetti that eventually dotted the grass and dirt at Citi Field. Hugs and handshakes were exchanged before the Rays doused one another with silly string and lit some cigars in the visiting clubhouse.

Later, hooting and hollering could be heard from the visitors' dugout.

"We're little kids trapped in grown men's bodies," Kiermaier said.

Joey Wendle and Brandon Lowe also went deep for Tampa Bay to back Tyler Glasnow's six solid innings. The team will be home at quirky Tropicana Field for a best-of-three first-round playoff series beginning next Tuesday.

It is the third division crown for the thrifty Rays, whose payroll this season is just over \$28 million more than that of the Pittsburgh Pirates and Baltimore Orioles, Tampa Bay, which began play in 1998, also won the AL East, home of two big-spending powers in the Yankees and Red Sox, in 2008 and 2010.

"It feels great to win the division, no matter what division you're in," Kiermaier said. "But especially the American League East — it's just a different animal."

After missing a chance to clinch Tuesday, the Rays went into Wednesday again needing just a win or a Yankees loss against Toronto to lock up the division champions' spot.

Tampa Bay (37-20) broke a 2-all tie in the sixth on Arozarena's



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

The Tampa Bay Rays' Randy Arozarena, left, and teammate Kevin Kiermaier celebrate their AL West-clinching 8-5 defeat of the New York Mets Wednesday in New York.

na's two-run homer off Michael Wacha and pulled away, taking care of business themselves while the Yankees were routed 14-1 by the Blue Jays.

"At the end of the day, a clinch is a clinch," said Wendle, who homered in the second. "But to do it on a win — everybody's kind of riding the high of winning the game along with the division. We didn't want to see it come down to them losing a game."

The team also is closing in on wrapping up the top record in the AL and the No. 1 seed in the playoffs.

Lowe, who had an RBI fielder's choice in the third, hit a two-run homer in the eighth. Willy Adams added an RBI single later in the inning and Arozarena homered again in the ninth.

The insurance came in handy for the Rays when the Mets scored three times off Oliver Drake in the ninth — via an RBI groundout by Robinson Cano and a two-run homer by Todd Frazier — before Anderson closed the door.

"I think we had the game pretty much in control (and) certainly recognized what was going on in Buffalo, but I don't know if you can ever prepare for a moment like that — it's pretty special," Rays manager Kevin Cash said.

Glasnow (5-1) allowed two runs on three hits and one walk with eight strikeouts.

Gimenez and Dominic Smith homered off Glasnow in the final home game of the season for the Mets, whose long-shot playoff hopes were further damaged with the loss. With four games to play, New York is three behind Miami for second place in the NL East.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Everything may be different, but SEC is loaded, as usual

By JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

The Southeastern Conference is trying to carry its football season amid the COVID-19 pandemic while Georgia, Alabama and LSU forge ahead without their star quarterbacks.

In a precarious season when almost nothing feels normal, the SEC does feel like, well, the SEC — even without its most prominent passers. The powerhouse league approaches the delayed, shortened season with six teams ranked in the top 10.

No. 2 Alabama, No. 4 Georgia, No. 5 Florida, No. 6 LSU, and others nurse championship hopes. However, the Crimson Tide must replace prolific passer Tua Tagovailoa, Georgia is without Jake Fromm and defending national champion LSU no longer has Heisman Trophy winner and No. 1 NFL Draft pick Joe Burrow.

With the Pac-12 conference bowing out, for now, this fall because of COVID-19 concerns and the Big Ten starting late, that cuts the potential field of contenders for a “national” title down. But the SEC would have figured prominently on that list anyway.

And the league opted to continue working toward a season that will include just seven SEC games with a Sept. 26 start. Alabama coach Nick Saban said that schedule under the circumstances will be good for the fans and players alike.

“I mean, I’ve been a guy that’s been wanting to play 10 SEC games for a long time, so this year we get to do that,” said Saban, whose team added games against Kentucky and Missouri. “I think it’s good for our players who get the opportunity to create value against 10 really quality opponents in our league.”

The SEC does have eight teams

in the Top 25, a list that includes leagues that aren’t playing. Auburn is tied at No. 8 and Texas A&M is No. 10, with quarterbacks Bo Nix and Kellen Mond, respectively, returning. No. 16 Tennessee has 25-game starter Jarrett Guarantano back.

There’s also the usual crop of elite NFL prospects hoping for another season to improve their draft stock and compete for titles.

“We’re the SEC,” Mississippi tailback Jerriion Ealy said. “We love our football and we’re going to play football no matter what.”

The favorites

East: Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, South Carolina, Missouri, Vanderbilt.

West: Alabama, Texas A&M, LSU, Auburn, Mississippi State, Mississippi, Arkansas.

Top players

DeVonta Smith and Jaylen Waddle, WRs, Alabama: The Tide lost two first-round NFL Draft picks at receiver, but still have a top tandem.

Trey Smith, OL, Tennessee: All-SEC guard returned for his senior season. Has started 31 of his 32 games playing for the Volunteers.

Dylan Moses, LB, Alabama: The leader of ‘Bama’s defense is back after missing last season with a knee injury.

Derek Stingley Jr., CB, LSU: Became immediate star as a freshman, earning AP All-America and SEC newcomer of the year honors. Led SEC and ranked fifth nationally with six interceptions.

Richard LeCounte, S, Georgia: Led SEC with three fumble recoveries and had two of his four interceptions last season in the Sugar Bowl win over Baylor.



Tennessee offensive lineman Trey Smith is one of the top returning players in the SEC this season.

WADE PAYNE/AP



BUTCH DILL/AP

Auburn running back Shaun Shivers is tackled by Alabama linebacker Dylan Moses during the second half of a 2018 game in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The Tide open Saturday at Missouri with Moses returning when he might otherwise have left for the NFL. He missed last season with a knee injury.

On the defensive: coordinator wants better effort from Tide

By JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

Pete Golding doesn’t make excuses for Alabama’s uncharacteristic defensive shortcomings last season, and he probably could.

The second-ranked Crimson Tide struggled at times amid a wave of injuries, losing players like middle linebacker Dylan Moses and defensive end LaBryan Ray for all or most of the season. Golding, Alabama’s defensive coordinator, and his defenders expect better this season.

“That’s why I took this job,” Golding said. “I took this job because I wanted to coach the best defense in the country and that’s the expectation with this place and I don’t want anything differently. So the bottom line is it’s our job to put the best product on the field and they’ve got to perform and they’ve got to do well.”

In some ways, those injuries might help Alabama’s defense return this season to its more typical status as a gold standard in the Southeastern Conference and nationally. The Tide open Saturday at Missouri with Moses returning, plus there’s a measure of added motivation.

Fellow inside linebacker Josh McMillon, who like Moses missed the season with a knee injury, received a sixth year of eligibility from the NCAA. Also back are Ray (foot) and nose guard DJ Dale, who missed the last three games with a lower leg injury.

Relying heavily on youngsters because of injuries and annual attrition, the Tide struggled at times defending the run and yielded a combined 94 points in shootout losses to eventual national champion LSU and Auburn.

The result: The Tide’s first



VASHA HUNT/AP

Alabama defensive back Patrick Surtain III is one of his team’s top returnees this season.

shotout from the College Football Playoffs. And some extra motivation in an offseason upended by COVID-19 for Moses & Co.

“I want to be able to put a punctuation mark on the back end of my Alabama career,” said Moses, a 2018 finalist for the Butkus Award given to the nation’s top linebacker. “At the same time, I want to be able to affect my teammates. That’s the reason I came back.”

“I care about them, I love them, and they love me so I want to affect them and get us back like we used to be.”

Alabama allowed 18.6 points per game nationally last season, good enough for 13th nationally. But it’s still the most the Tide have given up since 2007, coach Nick Saban’s first year in Tuscaloosa. Alabama has led the nation in scoring defense four times since then but allowed 18-plus points on average two years in a row.

It’s still strong by most standards but a dramatic departure from the 2011 defense, that yielded 8.15 points per game and

produced five first-round draft picks.

Of course, there was the usual exodus to the NFL, where five defenders were drafted either in the second or third round. Two of the defense’s big names — Moses and cornerback Patrick Surtain III — are back, along with potential stars like Ray and linebacker Christian Harris.

With prolific quarterback Tua Tagovailoa gone to the Miami Dolphins, along with two first-round wide receivers, Alabama will likely need a stronger defense to contend nationally.

Saban said the defense needs improved leadership and to play better both against the run and in the red zone. Moses can provide some of that leadership.

“But we just have to get more physical at the line of scrimmage,” Saban said.

And the Tide must replace four starters in the secondary with scant starting experience around Surtain. Safety Jordan Battle (four starts as a freshman last season) and cornerback Josh Jobe (two career starts) are the only defensive backs besides Surtain to have started multiple games. Newcomers like Brian Branch and Ronald Williams could play early roles in the secondary.

But it’s the veterans who want to exorcise last season’s demons. McMillon said that goal made his decision to return easy, though he already has a degree in mechanical engineering.

“It just a bad taste left in my mouth, from the past year,” McMillon said. “Going 11-2, I don’t want to end my college career on a bad note like that. I don’t think anyone who came to the University of Alabama would want to end like this.”

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



BRETT DUKE/AP

Georgia cheerleaders pose with the school mascot "Uga" before the Sugar Bowl against Baylor in New Orleans on Jan. 1. Georgia's white English bulldog and other live animal mascots won't be in stadiums because of the SEC's coronavirus precautions.

Traditions: Season just won't be the same

FROM BACK PAGE

Some traditions will go on: The Ramblin' Wreck (1930 Ford Model A) still leads Georgia Tech onto the field, Clemson players still touch Howard's Rock before running down the hill. The Sooner Schooner is rolling along at Oklahoma.

Georgia, which opens at Arkansas on Saturday, plays its first home game Oct. 3 against Auburn and will allow about 16,000 fans inside Sanford Stadium. Uga, which stands for "University of Georgia," will spend that day and other game days with Seiler and his family in Savannah, Ga. "We'll have the game on, we'll put his jersey on, and he'll be able to listen to it," Seiler said. "I have a feeling the networks are going to run out of stuff to show, so I wouldn't be surprised if they don't try to catch me on a Zoom or maybe a video of him on game day sitting at the house."

The only time Seiler can recall an Uga missing a home game was in 2009. Uga VII had died two days before the game, and Uga VIII wasn't in place until the following week.

Diane Roberts, author of the 2015 book "Tribal: College Football and the Secret Heart of America," said college football "organizes our identity for us" and fans had hoped the season would go ahead so "none of our sacred rituals would be lost." "That would mean that things were 'normal,' and that the 'rona was not the boss of us,'" Roberts said in an email. "Unfortunately, the 'rona is the boss of us."

Other traditions that won't be the same this season:

Mississippi's Grove: The Grove has been the place for pregame socializing since the 1950s and is famous for students and older fans dressing to the nines: men in slacks, coats and ties and women in sundresses or cocktail dresses.

Tiger walks: Auburn's walk down Donahue Drive has been a tradition since the 1960s. LSU's team and coaches — including

ebullient Ed Orgeron — walk down "Victory Hill," a procession that also involves the band.

Midnight Yell: Texas A&M's Midnight Yell practices have moved online. A tradition that dates to 1931, Midnight Yell is held at Kyle Field before home games and is attended by thousands of fans. Smaller versions are also held near the site of away games.

Gathering at The Paw: Clemson fans head to the field shortly after the game and join players and coaches for autographs and photos while the band plays the alma mater.

Jump around: With no fans in Big Ten stadiums, there'll be no bouncing up and down between the third and fourth quarters at Camp Randall Stadium in Wisconsin during the song "Jump Around" by House of Pain.

Horsing around: The white horse named Traveler, whose rider is dressed as a Trojan warrior, has appeared at Southern Cal home games since 1961. He'll stay in the stable this year unless the Pac-12 decides to play. At Florida State, the Appaloosa horse Renegade and the rider portraying Chief Osceola will still dash to midfield before each home game to spike a flaming spear into the turf. They aren't allowed to remain on the sideline, as is custom.

Hold the beef: Texas' pregame entertainment zone is closed, so there is no parade of cheerleaders, the band and Bevo into the stadium. The beloved 1,800-pound longhorn still hangs out in the end zone, but no photo opportunities. Still, "when you are as big as Bevo, social distancing pretty much takes care of itself," said Ricky Brennes of the sponsoring Silver Spurs Alumni Association. At Colorado, Ralphie VI's debut is on hold while the Pac-12 decides what to do this fall. Ralphie V retired after last season. This would be the 54th season a live buffalo has led the team onto the field at the start of games.

Former Georgia DB: Racist events seemed 'never-ending'

By PAUL NEWBERY

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Former Georgia defensive back Otis Reese says he left the school because of racist treatment on campus, and contends that coach Kirby Smart manipulated him to continue playing for the Bulldogs last season after he expressed his intention to transfer.

Reese transferred to Mississippi in January after two seasons at Georgia and is awaiting a ruling from the NCAA and Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey on his request for a waiver to play immediately.

Georgia, which is ranked fourth in the country, denied the allegations and said it would share its full response to Reese's waiver application if he is granted permission.

Reese released a statement Tuesday night on Twitter expressing frustration that his waiver had yet to be granted. He addressed it to the NCAA, the SEC and Sankey.

Reese said he decided to transfer because his 1½ years at Georgia "took a devastating mental toll on me. From my first moment I stepped on campus, it was not what I expected. The racist events that I kept experiencing weighed on me heavily and seemed never-ending."

He said he told Smart on Oct. 4 of last season that he planned to leave Georgia. The Bulldogs were 4-0 at the time and ranked

'From my first moment I stepped on campus, it was not what I expected. The racist events that I kept experiencing weighed on me heavily and seemed never-ending.'

Otis Reese

Mississippi defensive back, on his time at the University of Georgia

third in the country heading into a game at Tennessee the next day.

"I was led to believe by Coach Smart that if I finished the season and not 'let my team down' as he requested, he would support both my decision to transfer and my request to be immediately eligible," Reese said.

He added that a copy of the text message he sent to Smart on that day has been forwarded to the NCAA, showing he "was manipulated to play the very next day, when I truly was at my darkest moment."

Smart declined comment on Reese's allegations but denied that he was standing in the way of him playing right away for Ole Miss, pointing to SEC rules that mandate anyone transferring from one conference school to another must sit a season.

Reese, who is Black, said the racist treatment in Athens included two stops by local police, once when he was driving alone and another time when he was a passenger in a teammate's car.

"On both occasions the officers were extremely aggressive,

accusing us of using drugs and searching the car without any basis and told us they would take us to jail," Reese wrote. "This type of harassment from players throughout my time at UGA as many of my teammates were falsely arrested and harassed."

Reese said he was "polite, respectful, and compliant" during the police stops but still received tickets and citations.

"Both these experiences left me shaken," he said.

Reese said the racist behavior extended to the athletic building, including one of his best friends being called a racial slur by a white athlete.

"Another group of white classmates mocked slavery and pretended to whip each other," he added. "These were two public events. I didn't want to be part of a campus where my classmates held that kind of hate in their hearts. None of those things were ever addressed by the coaches at UGA. There was literally nobody to speak to about these types of things without having fear of losing your position on the team."

Budget shortfall forces deep cuts to Ohio State's athletic department

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State's athletic department will cut 25 jobs, furlough hundreds of other employees and ask coaches and others to take 5% pay cuts to help grapple with a projected \$107 million budget deficit due to the COVID-19 pandemic, athletic director Gene Smith said Wednesday.

Some of that money will be made up by football television revenue, but that amount is yet to be determined, Smith said. Ohio State is scheduled to play at least nine games beginning Oct. 24.

Firm numbers are elusive, Smith said, because all football games may not be played if there is a virus outbreak and the framework of the basketball season is yet to be determined. Among the other "moving parts" is whether other fall sports will play their seasons in the spring.

"Our budget is uncertain," Smith said. "You have the numbers, but I might just be quite frank with you, they mean nothing at this point relative to accuracy."

Unlike fellow Big Ten members Minnesota and Iowa, Ohio State will not cut any of its 36 intercollegiate sports. The proposed \$180 million budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 includes \$25 million for scholarships, \$3.6 million for student-athlete academic support, \$3 million for meals and nutrition, and \$1.8 million for sports medicine and sports psychology services.



Smith

Schools around the country have cut more than 100 sports from their programs to help deal with budget shortfalls from the pandemic, including at least 84 at Division I programs.

Smith said 47 contracted employees at Ohio State, which includes coaches, will be asked to take 5% salary cuts, but it is not clear how many have agreed.

Football coach Ryan Day has a salary package that amounts to about \$3.4 million this year, but the reduction would be against his base salary of \$850,000, so it would amount to \$425,000. Basketball coach Chris Holtmann, whose package is worth \$3 million, would give up \$27,500 of his \$550,000 base.

"That will be their decision," Smith said. "It is certainly optional because they are contracted, and I anticipate they will. Ryan Day and Chris Holtmann and I had already had conversations."

Four assistants on Day's coaching staff make at least \$1 million.

Asked whether 5% was asking enough sacrifice of Day and other higher-salaried employees, Smith said he was "100%" comfortable with the number.

The furloughed employees will have no choice. Ohio State said 345 employees will take furloughs ranging from five days to 60 days, although Smith said the 84 staff members forced to take 60-day furloughs will be deployed elsewhere in the university.

HIGH SCHOOL/AUTO RACING

Europe's athletes finally competing

Several fall sports begin this weekend

By KENT HARRIS
Stars and Stripes

A year ago this week, cross country, football, golf, tennis and volleyball teams were in the heart of their DODEA Europe fall seasons, competing mightily against rival schools in preparation for season-ending championships.

This weekend, some of the 2020 versions of those teams are facing rivals again for the first time. Of course, there are no 2020 football or volleyball versions due to precautions against spreading the coronavirus. And cross country runners, golfers and tennis players outside Germany, England and Belgium will be competing on their home turf against only their own teammates.

Lakenheath, Frankfurt International, Vilseck and Kaiserslautern are all set to host cross country meets Saturday. In tennis, Ramstein, Alconbury, Wiesbaden and Vilseck all hope to hold serve against rival schools. And golfers from three schools

were set to compete at Ramstein this week.

"As far as I know, everything's a 'go,'" DODEA Europe athletic director Kathy Clemmons said. "We're hopeful."

But the season is far from ordinary. Last year, there were five cross country meets before the season-ending championships. This year, there will be three. There were six weekends of tennis matches, but there are only three in 2020. Golf tournaments have gone from three to two.

And it's possible seasons will end without in-person championships, though Clemmons said he's hopeful that won't be the case.

Virtual competition is nothing new for DODEA Europe, with some marksmanship teams competing remotely every season.

But the concept will reach new levels this fall. Cross-country teams south of the Alps will not only compete remotely during the season, but they'll square off in a virtual championship as



JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Runners sprint for position after the start of the boys race at the 2019 DODEA Europe cross country championships last October in Baumholder, Germany. This year's season gets underway this weekend.

well. DODEA Europe has created a new sport — the European Athletic Fitness Games — where the action all season will involve athletes competing on their home fields and then comparing scores online.

That sport isn't the only one that will crown new champions, though. A few titlists from last year have either graduated or

transferred. The Naples girls edged Bahrain for the Division II cross country championship last year. Naples — and Division III boys winner Sigonella — won't be going to Germany. And Bahrain remains on virtual learning. It's unclear whether Florence will be able to defend its boys doubles title in tennis. And even for those champions returning to action, a

shortened schedule might contribute to unforeseen results.

Regardless, sports teams are back in DODEA Europe after a seventh-month break. And while cheerleaders won't be roaming the football sidelines this fall, they'll at least have something to cheer about starting Saturday.

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NASCAR's sippy season will change landscape

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — There were two early warning signs that NASCAR was heading into its most unpredictable "silly season" in decades.

Former series champion Brad Keselowski accepted a one-year extension with Team Penske and rookie Tyler Reddick renewed with Richard Childress Racing with barely a glance at other options.

Those moves were a wake-up call — the economics that have changed the landscape of NASCAR's two lower series have finally reached the Cup level.

The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the inevitable: The driver market bubble, pushed to its limit with multimillion-dollar salaries for nearly two decades, is about to burst. A major reset has arrived and team owners have all the power. They can pick and choose between drivers who bring sponsorship dollars (Bubba Wallace) or drivers who have won races (Erik Jones).

When the music stops, the Cup Series lineup will look radically different. Left standing? It doesn't look good for Jones, a one-time Kyle Busch protégé with a Truck Series title, two Cup playoff appearances and a Southern 500 victory. He is being replaced at Joe Gibbs Racing.

Signed for 2021

Alex Bowman at Hendrick Motorsports and Ryan Blaney at Penske inked extensions before the pandemic. Keselowski agreed to a smaller deal with Penske, a gamble that his value will still be high and



JOHN RAOUX/AP

NASCAR owners have the option of choosing between drivers who bring sponsorship dollars like Bubba Wallace, or drivers who have won races, like Erik Jones, above.

the market will have improved in 2022. Aric Almirola renewed at Stewart-Haas Racing, Reddick took the option at RCR, William Byron was extended at Hendrick and Ross Chastain got the seat at Chip Ganassi Racing vacated when Kyle Larson was fired in April for using a racial slur.

That No. 42 had been considered a top available ride and Ganassi awarded it to an eighth-generation watermelon farmer with five combined victories at NASCAR's lower levels. Chastain is something of a unicorn in that he doesn't bring sponsorship and doesn't have a proven Cup record.

Wallace, who has an estimated \$18 million in sponsorship to bring with him when he leaves Richard Petty Motorsports, on Monday night said he'd drive for a new team owned by Denny Hamlin and Charlotte Hornets owner Michael Jordan.

Still available

Jones is being replaced by Christopher Bell, and former Xfinity Series champion Daniel Suarez said last week he is looking for his third team in three years. Corey LaJoie is leaving GoFas Racing; Ty Dillon's team owner, Bob Germain, wants to sell his charter; and Xfinity Series drivers Chase Briscoe and Austin Cindric both want promotions.

And don't forget Larson. He was supposed to be the top free agent this year but was banished to sprint cars after his firing five months ago. Larson has won 35 races since, is awaiting the appropriate time to apply for reinstatement to NASCAR and, if sponsors agree to forgive him, he should get a job.

The top prize is a seat at Hendrick Motorsports, which will replace seven-time champion Jimmie Johnson. It's the job opportunity of a lifetime and LaJoie made a run at it back in January when he hand-delivered a letter to Rick Hendrick at the Hall of Fame ceremony.

What could happen

Every indication is that Hendrick is the only logical place for Larson, though the team has not said if he is a contender for Johnson's No. 48. That could be because Larson instead could land the No. 88 with Bowman moving to the No. 48.

Hamlin on Monday night ended months of speculation by announcing he's partner-

ing with Jordan on a one-car team that will prepare the three-time Daytona 500 winner for his future. Hamlin and Jordan selected Wallace to drive and bought a charter from Germain Racing.

Stewart-Haas Racing said it doesn't expect to change its four-car lineup and Clint Bowyer is the only driver still unsigned. Briscoe, who has seven Xfinity Series wins for SHR this season, wants a promotion; it is not clear what he will do if Bowyer is extended for another year.

Cindric, the regular-season Xfinity champion, is at the mercy of Team Penske. The organization could field a fourth car for him, could stash him in Matt DiBenedetto's seat at Wood Brothers Racing or leave him in Xfinity another year. But if Cindric is called up to Wood Brothers, it's going to put DiBenedetto in a tight spot. He wants to return to that team next year and the contractual deadline is September for his option to be picked up.

Ready to pounce

Waiting and watching is Spire Motorsports, which bought another charter from Leavein Family Racing and is committed to fielding two cars in 2021 in alliance with both Hendrick and Ganassi. The team is currently eyeing Justin Haley, who won the 2019 July race at Daytona for Spire, and LaJoie. Spire knows some top drivers may slip to its level and it also has the ability to find more than two cars next year.

There are at least a dozen other drivers chasing Cup deals in a flooded market where even backmarker teams are appealing as gainful employment. Drivers like Jones are at the mercy of how other deals play out.

In the Pits



by JENNA FRYER • AP

NBA

For NBA's players, Taylor grand jury decision 'not enough'

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — LeBron James sent the word to the Los Angeles Lakers in a group text on Wednesday afternoon, and basketball suddenly seemed irrelevant.

A grand jury in Kentucky had finally spoken. And James was letting his team know that NBA players, who have spent months seeking justice for Breonna Taylor, did not get what they wanted. "Something was done," Lakers guard Danny Green said, "but it wasn't enough."

Wednesday's decision by the grand jury, which brought no charges against Louisville police for Taylor's killing and only three counts of wanton endangerment against fired officer Brett Hankison for shooting into Taylor's neighbors' homes, was not unexpected by many NBA players and coaches. While there were no drugs in Taylor's apartment, her boyfriend shot and wounded a police officer. State Attorney General Daniel Cameron said the officers' shots that killed Taylor were fired in self-defense.

"I know we've been using our platform from here to try to bring about education and a voice in a lot of players on our team, especially also spoken out on justice for Breonna Taylor," Denver coach Michael Malone said. "We have not gotten that justice."

Teams came to Walt Disney World to finish the season and crown a champion, and hoping that the platform of the NBA's restart bubble could help amplify calls for change. Players and coaches have used the NBA spotlight to make statements at a time when the demand for racial equality and an end to police brutality is resonating as loudly as it has in generations.

And Taylor's story — the tale of a 26-year-old Black woman who was killed March 13 by police in Louisville when she burst into her apartment on a no-knock warrant during a narcotics inves-

tigation centered around a suspect who did not live there — has captivated NBA players. There were no drugs in Taylor's apartment. Her boyfriend shot and wounded a police officer during the raid and Kentucky State Attorney General Daniel Cameron said the officers' shots that killed Taylor were fired in self-defense.

Many NBA players have met, virtually, with members of her family to offer support. They say her name in news conferences, wear it on shirts, scrawl it onto their sneakers.

"We have moms. We have sisters, nieces, aunts. And just like men of color have experienced traumatic instances, so have women," Boston forward Jaylen Brown said. "That is an example of some things that happen to women in our country. So, we wanted to stand alongside them, but also make it that it's not just us. I think the future is female, so it's important to show our sisters that we care. That's why it's been important."

Even for teams not in the bubble, it mattered. Atlanta coach Lloyd Pierce leads a committee of NBA coaches tasked with finding new ways to use their own platform to create change.

"Yeah, there was a grand jury and yeah, they went through the information and yeah, they have facts to support whatever the claims may be," Pierce said. "But that doesn't provide any justice for those that are on the outside, those that feel like the police and law enforcement are there to protect them. ... What currently is happening isn't good enough."

National Basketball Players Association executive director Michele Roberts went a step further. "Sadly, there was no justice today for Breonna Taylor," Roberts said. "Her killing was the result of a string of callous and careless decisions made with a lack of regard for humanity, ultimately resulting in the death of an innocent and beautiful woman with her entire life ahead of her."



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Lakers guard Danny Green said the grand jury in the Breonna Taylor case did not go far enough in charging Louisville police officers.



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Miami Heat guard Tyler Herro, left, takes a shot as Boston Celtics' Marcus Smart, right, defends during the Heat's 112-109 win Wednesday in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference final in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. Herro scored a Heat rookie-record 37 points in the game.

Heat's Herro of the day

Rookie scores 37 as Miami takes 3-1 lead over Celtics in series

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Tyler Herro should still be in college. He's not, but is still a student.

He carries a red spiral-bound notebook with him at all times, jotting down notes when things pop into his head. What worked, what didn't, where he thinks he can get better and how he's feeling after a game.

"It helps me get locked in, helps me focus," Herro said.

Whatever he read Wednesday night helped him put together the game of his life — and carry the Miami Heat a win away from the NBA Finals. The 20-year-old Herro scored a Heat rookie-record 37 points and Miami beat the Boston Celtics 112-109 in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals.

"He has a great competitive humility about him," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "He has a confidence. He has a fearlessness that is uncommon. But he's humble enough to work, to be coachable, to take the mentorship from the veteran players that we have on our team, and he just continues to gain more confidence as we go."

Jimmy Butler scored 24 points, Goran Dragovic added 22 and Bam Adebayo — dealing with a bit of shoulder soreness — had 20 points and 12 rebounds to help the Miami take a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven series. It can close it out Friday night in Game 5.

Jayson Tatum scored all 28 of his points in the second half for the Celtics. They erased a double-digit deficit to take a one-point lead in the fourth — then saw the Heat run away again. Jaylen

Scoreboard

Playoffs

CONFERENCE FINALS (Best-of-seven; 2 if necessary)

Eastern Conference
Miami 117, Boston 114, OT
Miami 106, Boston 101
Boston 117, Miami 106
Wednesday: Miami 112, Boston 109
Friday: Game 5 (AFN-Sports, 2:30 a.m.)
Saturday CET: 9:30 a.m. (Saturday JKT)
x-Sunday, Sept. 27: Game 6
x-Tuesday, Sept. 29: Game 7

Western Conference
L.A. Lakers 2, Denver 1
L.A. Lakers 126, Denver 114
L.A. Lakers 105, Denver 103
Tuesday: Denver 114, L.A. Lakers 106
Thursday: Game 4
Saturday: Game 5 (AFN-Sports, 3 a.m.)
Sunday CET: 10 a.m. (Sunday JKT)
x-Monday, Sept. 28: Game 6
x-Wednesday, Sept. 30: Game 7

Wednesday Heat 112, Celtics 109

BOSTON — Brown 8-14 1-2 21, Tatum 10-22 4-8 28, Teague 4-5 0-0 8, Smart 3-12 3-10, Walker 6-14 5-10, Hayward 4-9 4-14, Ojiodala 0-0 0-0, Williams 0-0 0-0, Williams III 2-4 0-1, Wamaker 2-2 0-0 4. Totals 39-62 17-21 109.

MIAMI — Butler 8-9 9-24, Crowder 1-9 0-3, Adebayo 7-11 6-8 20, Dragic 8-21 3-12, Robinson 0-5 3-3, Hill 0-0 0-0, Ojiodala 1-4 0-0 3, Herro 14-21 4-4 37. Totals 39-61 24-27 112.

Boston 23 21 32 33-109
Three-point: Coach Boston 14-40 (Brown 4-7, Tatum 4-11, Walker 3-8, Hayward 2-6, Smart 1-8), Miami 10-37 (Herro 5-10, Dragic 3-9, Ojiodala 1-4, Crowder 1-7, Butler 0-2, Robinson 0-4). Fouled Out: Boston 1 (Smart), Miami None. Rebounds: Boston 46 (Brown, Tatum, Teague 9), Miami 40 (Adebayo 12, Assistis-Boston 28 (Smart 11), Miami 20 (Adebayo 4). Total Fouls: Boston 24, Miami 20.

Brown scored 21 points, Kemba Walker added 20. Gordon Hayward had 14 and Marcus Smart finished with 10 points and 11 assists.

Brown's three-pointer with 16 seconds left cut the Heat's lead to 107-104. Herro went to the line 2.1 seconds later and coolly swished

a pair, stretching the lead back to five. Boston got within two points twice, Butler made a free throw with 1.1 seconds remaining, and the Celtics — out of timeouts — never got a desperation shot off.

"At the end of the way, we've got to find a way," Walker said. "That's really all we can do. We can do it. It's about pride. It's about wanting to do it. Next game we got to come out and show that."

Herro made 14 of 21 shots from the floor, 5-for-10 from three-point range and became just the second 20-year-old in NBA playoff history to score at least 37 points in a game. The other: Magic Johnson, who had 42 in Game 6 of the 1980 NBA Finals for the Los Angeles Lakers.

"I feel good about it," Herro said. "There's a lot of work to be done still. We're up 3-1."

And Miami's rookie playoff record was 27 by Dwyane Wade in 2004; it now belongs to Herro, who scored 17 points in the fourth alone.

Daniel Thomas scored with 8:44 left to put Boston up 85-84, the Celtics' first lead since 25-24 with 11:19 left in the second quarter. It was Boston's only lead in the second half and it lasted just 16 seconds. Adebayo scored to give Miami the lead, and Herro basically carried the load from there.

"Herro's shot-making tonight was ... the difference in the game," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said. "Jimmy was great late. Adebayo was his typical self. Dragic made some big plays. But Herro was ridiculously good tonight. That rim must have looked like the ocean to him."

NFL

Ravens' ball hawk Humphrey hungry

All-Pro CB wants what Chiefs have — a Super Bowl title

By DAVID GINSBURG
Associated Press

Whether it's knocking down a pass, punching the ball loose or going the other way with an interception, Baltimore Ravens All-Pro cornerback Marlon Humphrey has a knack for making game-changing plays.

It's a trait that might prove to be pivotal in Monday night's matchup against the defending Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs and standout quarterback Patrick Mahomes.

Last Sunday in Houston, Humphrey whipped his right arm around wide receiver Keke Coutee and stripped the ball. Baltimore linebacker L.J. Fort picked up the fumble and streaked 22 yards for a second-quarter score to put the Ravens up 20-7 in a game they won 33-16 for their 14th consecutive regular-season victory.

It was a play that has become commonplace for Humphrey, who last year forced Pittsburgh receiver JuJu Smith-Schuster to fumble in overtime. Although left on his back while making the play, Humphrey got up and sprinted 10 yards to pick up the loose ball and set up the game-winning field goal.

That was one sampling of a season in which Humphrey had



Kansas City Chiefs (2-0)
at Baltimore Ravens (2-0)
AFN-Sports (tape delayed)
1 p.m. Tuesday CET
10 p.m. Tuesday JKT

65 tackles, three interceptions, three fumble recoveries (scoring on two of them) and two forced fumbles. It's more of the same in 2020: The fourth-year star is the only AFC player thus far with an interception and forced fumble.

"It's just Marlon doing Marlon things," Ravens offensive tackle Ronnie Stanley said Wednesday. "He's always trying to knock the football out."

With Humphrey leading the way, the Ravens (2-0) have forced a turnover in 15 straight games and lead the NFL during this young season with five takeaways. In addition, Baltimore scored six defensive touchdowns last year (two by Humphrey) and started the 2020 ledger with Fort's game-changing TD.



Marlon Humphrey
Baltimore Ravens cornerback

"The energy I felt down there in Miami, it really just triggered my whole offseason into thinking, 'The only thing I really want is a Super Bowl.'"

ERIC CHRISTIAN SMITH/AP

The Ravens scored a touchdown after recovering Texans receiver Keke Coutee's fumble when All-Pro cornerback Marlon Humphrey, right, stripped the ball during the first half of Sunday's game in Houston. Humphrey has a knack for making game-changing plays, something that could prove pivotal in Monday night's matchup against the defending Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs.

After a breakthrough season in which Humphrey made All-Pro, earned his first Pro Bowl berth and helped the Ravens to a 14-2 record, Humphrey lamented after a playoff loss to Tennessee that his year fell short of expectations.

"I was on the field during the Super Bowl just walking around, watching the other teams warm up," Humphrey said. "The energy I felt down there in Miami, it really just triggered my whole offseason into just thinking, 'The only thing I really want is a Super Bowl.'"

So he worked hard during the offseason, climbing a rock pile in Alabama with his brothers and

running with his sister, who's on the track team at LSU.

During training camp, coach John Harbaugh said, "I would say he's taking it up another notch, which is really impressive, because some guys aren't mature enough to handle the attention."

Humphrey attributes a portion of his success to fellow cornerback Marcus Peters, who was also selected to the Pro Bowl last season. Obtained last October in a trade with the Rams, Peters scored twice on interception returns for Baltimore and has seven touchdowns over his five-year career.

"When it comes to getting the

ball, I've got the best guy at that in Marcus Peters," Humphrey said. "Anytime I need a tip or a hint, I can go to him."

Humphrey has proven to be quite a student, and he's surely going to have to be at the top of his game when the Ravens take on Mahomes and the Chiefs (2-0).

"He's got all these tools and has all this talent around him," Humphrey said of Mahomes, the 2018 NFL MVP and reigning Super Bowl MVP.

"As good as he is in the pocket, he's just as good if not better outside the pocket. Preparing for him is really tough. He's never out of the game."

Motivated Davis ready to replace Panthers RB McCaffrey

By STEVE REED
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — There were days when running back Mike Davis wanted to quit the NFL, frustrated over his role as a practice squad player with the Seattle Seahawks.

But the memory of his brother's brief NFL career as well as a motivational speaker helped change that.

Now, two years later, the 27-year-old Davis is set to take over as the Carolina Panthers starting running back on Sunday against the Chargers, replacing All-Pro Christian McCaffrey, who was moved to short-term injured reserve Wednesday and will miss at least three games because of a high ankle sprain.

"What stands out most is I never gave up," Davis said of his journeyman career in the NFL which has seen him play for four teams. "It could have been so easy for me to give in when I was in Seattle being on a practice squad. It was real depressing and there were times where I was like, 'I don't want to do this no more.'"

His older brother, James Davis, made that mistake and it cost him his career.

James Davis was a star at Clem-



JASON BENNETT/AP

At 27 years old, Mike Davis, center, will fill in as the Panthers' starting running back Sunday against the Chargers. All-Pro Christian McCaffrey was moved to short-term injured reserve Wednesday and will miss at least three games because of a high ankle sprain.

son who went on to play for the then-Washington Redskins. But in 2011 he became disgruntled with his lack of reps and left the team, later asking for his release. He wound up on a few other NFL practice squads, but never played another down in the league and

finished his career with just 75 yards rushing on 28 carries.

"My brother, he was very talented — and he should have had more years than he did," Mike Davis said.

Davis said he learned many lessons from his older brother,



Carolina Panthers (0-2)
at Los Angeles Chargers (1-1)
AFN-Sports
10 p.m. Sunday CET
5 a.m. Monday JKT

including how to stay in shape and leave his money.

He also drew motivation during those internal struggles while on the Seahawks practice squad when he stumbled across a video of motivational speaker Eric Thomas' "You Owe You" speech. He watched it every morning when he woke up at 6 o'clock.

"Every day I would go against the (starters) in practice like it was a game for me, and it was a challenge," Davis said. "I treated every day like it could be my last."

The Panthers claimed him off waivers last year and now Davis is looking to make the most out of his latest opportunity after a strong training camp.

It was there that he grabbed

the attention of running backs coach Jeff Nixon. Nixon championed Davis' battle, telling head coach Matt Rhule that Davis had what it took to be a starting running back in the NFL. Davis went on to beat out incumbent Reggie Bonnafon for the No. 2 spot behind McCaffrey to start the season.

Still, Davis barely saw the field in Carolina's 34-30 loss to the Raiders in Week 1 playing behind McCaffrey.

"It's hard to take Christian off the field because he's such a good player," Rhule admitted.

But the Panthers vowed to get Davis more work in Week 2 and he finished with eight catches for 74 yards after McCaffrey went down.

Davis should get the bulk of the carries on Sunday, although Bonnafon will see action, too.

"He runs with speed and power," Rhule said.

Davis, a fourth-round pick by the 49ers in 2015 out of South Carolina, has struggled to find a permanent home.

Davis said his goal heading into Sunday is to "play angry" and not try to do too much.

"I'm not going to try to do anything crazy because that's what bad plays happen," Davis said.

NFL



Denver Broncos quarterback Jeff Driskel, right, is sacked by Steelers strong safety Terrell Edmunds, late in the second half of Sunday's game in Pittsburgh.
DON WRIGHT/AP

'Blitzburgh' is back

Sack-happy Steelers return to their roots

BY WILL GRAVES
Associated Press

The pressure came from everywhere. Up the middle. Off the edge. On stunts. On good old-fashioned one-on-one domination.

Still, Denver quarterback Jeff Driskel thought he'd figured things out late on Sunday afternoon, leading the Broncos down to the Pittsburgh 15 with less than two minutes to go. The door for a stunning upset on the road had swung wide open.

It slammed shut in less than 3 seconds, or the time it took Steelers safety Terrell Edmunds to rush in

untouched to get Pittsburgh's seventh and final sack on Sunday. Edmunds' second career sack preserved a 2-0 start and offered another wrinkle in a seemingly endless string of exotic packages conjured up by defensive coordinator Keith Butler.

Edmunds typically drops into coverage. Yet when a Denver receiver ran in motion, Edmunds found himself tight against the line of scrimmage. At the snap, there was nothing between the third-year safety and Driskel but green grass. Ten steps later, Driskel was down and the Steelers were still unbeaten.

"Anyone on our defense can make a play at any time," Edmunds said with a shrug.

It's not lip service. Eight different players have at least half a sack through two games. Four members of the front seven have knocked down at least one pass. Oh, and the Steelers have blitzed an NFL-high 64% of the time through two weeks, sowing seeds of chaos that overwhelmed New York's Daniel Jones, knocked out Denver starter Drew Lock and forced backup Driskel to spend a considerable portion of the game on the run.

While coach Mike Tomlin downplayed his team's propensity to pin its ears back and attack, the first two games have simply been another step in an evolution of a unit that's returned to its "Blitzburgh" roots.

When the team promoted Butler to replace Hall of Famer Dick LeBeau in 2015, it gave him a mandate: put more pressure on the quarterback, it doesn't matter how. The Steelers were 26th in sacks in 2014. They've never finished lower than eighth under Butler and have led the league in sacks three years running.

They're second through two weeks in 2020 and perhaps most importantly, it's not outside linebackers T.J. Watt and Bud Dupree doing damage. Cornerback Mike Hilton — all 5-foot-9 inches of him — has a sack. So does nose tackle Tyson Alualu, who took over when Javon Hargrave bolted for Philadelphia in free agency. Inside linebacker Vince Williams has taken advantage of an uptick in play during time to earn one. And Edmunds' fourth-quarter sprint to Driskel was his first since he was a rookie in December 2018.

"It starts with our front and our linebackers," said Hilton, whose 8½ sacks since 2017 are tied for second-most in the NFL by a defensive back over that span. "The offensive line is so worried about the guys up front, me and Terrell and guys in the secondary have a chance to go make plays."



ADAM HUNGER/AP

Even cornerback Mike Hilton — all 5-foot-9 inches of him — has a sack this season for the Steelers.

Rams' Henderson steps to forefront

BY GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — Although the Los Angeles Rams intend to replace Todd Gurley by using three running backs extensively this season, the plan might need a short-term alteration with two of those backs already slowed by injuries.

Luckily for the Rams, Darrell Henderson is healthy and playing the best football of his young NFL career.

Coming off the most productive game of his tenure with Los Angeles, Henderson is likely to get plenty of work Sunday when the Rams (2-0) visit the Buffalo Bills for an early showdown of unbeaten teams.

The second-year pro from Memphis set a career high with 81 yards rushing in the Rams' 37-19 win at Philadelphia. He also had two key receptions for 40 yards, and he rushed for a short touchdown that put the game away in the fourth quarter.

Henderson modestly said he "felt like I had the hot hand," but the Rams weren't surprised to see the way Henderson asserted himself early in his second season, which is typically when many skill-position players make a big jump.

"You've seen his jump has been awesome," quarterback Jared Goff said Wednesday. "As a running back in our offense, there's a lot asked of them. When they're able to put the mental part behind them and just be able to play and show their physicality and show their athleticism, that's where he's at now, and it's showing, and it's exciting to see. He has a great game last week."

He should have many more opportunities soon. Two of the Rams' top three running backs missed practice Wednesday as the Rams began their preparation for Buffalo. Rookie Cam Akers has separated rib cartilage, and Malcolm Brown injured his left pylon finger.

Henderson is going full speed after getting a slow start to an important season for his career. The third-round pick in 2019 picked up a hamstring injury early in training camp and missed most of the preseason workouts.

Meanwhile, Akers impressed the coaches enough to get the starting role in each of the first two games. Brown then took over as the featured back in the Rams' season opener with strong play against Dallas.

Henderson didn't get to play much as a rookie behind Gurley and Brown. The hamstring injury set him back again, and he admits he still isn't 100% healthy.

But Henderson never got discouraged, and when he was the healthiest running back left in Philadelphia, he capitalized.

"It was a setback," Henderson said of his hamstring woes. "I just used it to work even harder, to make sure when I came back, my hamstring would hold up pretty good. I feel pretty good now, but I'm just going to keep doing what the coach asks me to do and keep playing my game."

The Rams believed they couldn't find one running back to replace Gurley, the centerpiece of their offense for the past half-decade and one of the NFL's most productive offensive players over that time. Gurley was released last spring in a money-saving move.

Henderson, Akers and Brown have teamed up with Thomas Brown, the Rams' first-year running backs coach, to get better together. Rather than competing for carries or starts, they insist they're committed to making it work by committee.

"We've just got a great bond," Henderson said. "We're always coaching each other up to make sure we're doing everything the right way. We're a family, so everybody is close. We've got that bond, like a brotherhood. ... The Rams' running game has always been strong, so we're just keeping it going."



CHRIS SZAGOLA/AP

The Los Angeles Rams' Darrell Henderson, left, picks up yards against the Philadelphia Eagles' Nate Gerry during the first half of Sunday's game in Philadelphia.

SPORTS



Herro ball

Rookie scores 37 as Heat take 3-1 lead over Celtics » **Page 53**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Reining things in

Games may go on, but many traditions put on hold

By ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

To the delight of fans young and old, an English bulldog named Uga has been stationed on the sideline at all but one Georgia home football game since 1956.

Charles Seiler, whose family has bred and cared for each of the Ugas all these years, said lots of people have told him they enjoy seeing the dog, adorned in his jersey with the big "G" on front, as much as the games themselves. Thousands of fans have their pictures taken with him.

"He's so approachable," Seiler said. "But in this day and age, because of what's going on, it's not good to approach."

Uga X won't be on hand for any games this season unless the Southeastern Conference changes

'Unfortunately, the 'rona is the boss of us.'

Diane Roberts
author of 2015 book

"Tribal: College Football and the Secret Heart of America"

its policy of not allowing live mascots as part of its coronavirus precautions.

Many other beloved traditions, some dating to the 19th century, also are on hold or taking different forms this year because of the pandemic. The Grove at Mississippi is closed. War Eagle flights are grounded at Auburn. Fans won't "Gather at the

Paw" after games at Clemson.

These traditions and others are extremely meaningful, especially in the South, said Andrew McIlwaine Bell, who wrote the 2020 book "The Origins of Southern College Football: How an Ivy League Game Became a Dixie Tradition."

"They create community and give people from different walks of life an awareness of their shared history and culture," Bell said in an email to The Associated Press. "For many of us, game day rituals also bring to mind generations past, including departed friends and relatives who shared our love of college football and would enjoy seeing a modern game if they could somehow be here with us again."

SEE TRADITIONS ON PAGE 51

Texas mascot Bevo runs on the field before a game between Texas and LSU last season in Austin, Texas. Football is being played in the Power Five conferences, but many of the long-standing traditions that go along with the games are on hold during the coronavirus pandemic.

Eric Gay/AP



Lightning dominate Stars in Game 3, take 2-1 series lead » **Stanley Cup Final, Page 47**

Underdog Rays defeat Mets to secure first AL East title in 10 years » **Page 49**

