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No station transfers for unvaccinated airmen

Air Force coronavirus vaccination rate nearly 97% ahead of Dec. 2 deadline for National Guard and Reserve members

By **WYATT OLSON**
Stars and Stripes

Airmen who have not been fully vaccinated against the coronavirus will not be allowed to proceed to their next permanent duty station beginning Monday, according to a memo issued by the Air Force.

Compliance with the guidance, which was issued Tuesday by Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, the Air Force's deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services, is mandatory.

"Airmen who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19, includ-

ing those awaiting final decision on a medical exemption or religious accommodation, are restricted from proceeding on existing [permanent change of station] orders, or selection for future PCS," Kelly wrote in the memo, which was first reported by the

Facebook page Air Force amn/nco/snco.

Phone calls from Stars and Stripes on Wednesday to the Department of the Air Force went unanswered.

In August, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered that all ser-

vice members be vaccinated against the coronavirus but left the timeframe up to individual services.

The Air Force set a deadline of Nov. 2 for all active-duty airmen

SEE AIRMEN ON PAGE 4

Soldiers, families in S. Korea enjoy bountiful feast

By **DAVID CHOI**
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The "Super Bowl" of Thanksgiving meals for U.S. troops, which included 3,097 pounds of turkey, was served by a bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation in South Korea on Thursday.

In addition to the turkey, the lavish meal throughout U.S. bases in South Korea included 2,088 pounds of roast beef, 1,251 pounds of steamship beef, 654 pounds of rib-eye steak and 2,449 pounds of ham, according to the 2nd Infantry Division fact sheet.

Sixty Army culinary specialists and 298 contractors prepared the meal for the roughly 28,500 troops, civilian employees and their families with U.S. Forces Korea.

Ice sculptures and cakes greeted the line of U.S. and South Korean troops at the Spartan Warrior Restaurant, a dining facility at Camp Humphreys.

Culinary specialists went through extra lengths to decorate the dining facility because the "soldiers are away from their families," according to Sgt. 1st Class Michael Han-

"This is a culinary specialist's Super Bowl every year."

Sgt. Michael Hanspard
culinary specialist and
restaurant manager

SEE FEAST ON PAGE 4

Soldiers from the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division's Quarantine Support Cell deliver Thanksgiving meals featuring a wide variety of dishes, from turkeys and grilled beef to salads, pies and fruits to soldiers and families in quarantine on Camp Humphreys.

KADE BOWERS/U.S. Army



BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Europe gas prices were not available before press time

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel					
Japan	..	\$4.169	..	\$3.789	South Korea	\$3.469	..	\$4.189	\$3.799
Change in price	..	No change	..	-1.0 cents	Change in price	-1.0 cents	..	+1.0 cents	-1.0 cents
Okinawa	\$3.459	\$3.789	Guam	\$3.469	\$3.919	\$4.179	..
Change in price	-1.0 cents	-1.0 cents	Change in price	-1.0 cents	No change	No change	..

*DieselEFD **Midgrade

For the week of Nov. 26 - Dec. 2

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		
Euro costs (Nov. 26)	\$1.09	
Dollar buys (Nov. 26)	0.8695	
British pound (Nov. 26)	\$1.30	
Japanese yen (Nov. 26)	111.00	
South Korean won (Nov. 26)	1158.00	
Commercial rates		
Bahrain(Dinar)	0.3771	
Britain (Pound)	1.3313	
Canada (Dollar)	1.2652	
China(Yuan)	6.3862	
Denmark (Krone)	6.6293	
Egypt (Pound)	15.7102	
Euro	0.8915	
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7961	
Hungary (Forint)	326.37	
Israel (Shekel)	3.1564	
Japan (Yen)	115.33	
Kuwait(Dinar)	0.3030	
Norway (Krone)	8.9564	
Philippines (Peso)	50.34	
Poland (Zloty)	4.16	
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7515	
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3677	

South Korea (Won)

Switzerland (Franc)

Thailand (Baht)

Turkey (NewLira)

1191.19

0.9351

33.41

11.9748

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

INTEREST RATES		
Prime rate		3.25
Interest Rates Discount rate		0.75
Federal funds market rate		0.09
3-month bill		0.06
30-year bond		1.96

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



TODAY

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MILITARY

Hawaii groups want military fuel tanks shut

BY AUDREY McAVOY
Associated Press

HONOLULU — Citing threats to Honolulu's drinking water, the Sierra Club of Hawaii and other groups on Wednesday called on President Joe Biden and military leaders to shut down tanks that provide an important fuel reserve for U.S. forces in the Pacific.

"Enough is enough. We've lost all faith in the local Navy command," said Wayne Tanaka, the director of the Sierra Club of Hawaii, at a rally and news conference.

The military built 20 fuel tanks, each the equivalent of 25 stories tall, during World War II near Pearl Harbor on top of an aquifer that supplies drinking water to one-quarter of Honolulu.

The call to shut them down comes after a series of recent revelations about fuel leaks associated with the Red Hill fuel tanks or Pearl Harbor.

Tanaka called the tanks "an unacceptable threat to the drinking water supply for 400,000 Oahu residents."

Navy Region Hawaii said in a



Sierra Club of Hawaii Director Wayne Tanaka speaks at a news conference and rally in Honolulu, on Wednesday.

statement that it is committed to safeguarding the environment and drinking water while protect-

ing national security.

"We will closely monitor all aspects of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel

Storage Facility to ensure the safety of our operations," it said.

On Monday, the Navy said

14,000 gallons of a water and fuel mixture leaked into the Red Hill facility's lower tunnel from a fire suppression system drain line. No fuel leaked into the environment.

Last month, Honolulu Civil Beat reported that officials waited months to report a January leak at Pearl Harbor to the state Department of Health "amid concerns it would hamper its ability to secure a state permit" for the Red Hill tanks.

Hawaii's four-member congressional delegation has asked the Department of Defense's inspector general to investigate the January leak, saying they want to know whether the Navy properly investigated and notified state authorities.

The state health department last month fined the Navy more than \$325,000 for Red Hill operations and maintenance violations.

A 2014 fuel leak prompted the Navy to sign an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state Health Department to upgrade the tanks and better prevent and detect leaks.

Ex-Army officer who advocated for Iraqi, Afghan detainees dies

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Ian Fishback, a former Army officer who in 2005 raised concerns about the treatment of detainees in the Global War on Terror, died Nov. 19 at an adult treatment facility in Michigan. He was 42 years old.

In a statement posted with Fishback's obituary, the veteran's family thanked his hometown community in Newberry, Mich., for the support provided Fishback in "recent difficult times."

"He faced many challenges and many of us felt helpless. We tried to get him the help he needed. It appears the system failed him utterly and tragically. There are many questions surrounding his death and the official cause of death is unknown at this time. We can assure you that we will get to the bottom of this. We will seek justice for Ian, because justice is what mattered most to him," according to the statement.

Fishback's mental health had declined recently and he struggled to get access to medical and mental health care from Veterans Affairs, said his longtime friend Justin Ford.

For those who knew Fishback, his friend said that his actions regarding the inhumane treatment

of detainees came as no surprise. He always had a strong moral and ethical compass and held tightly to those principles, Ford said.

"Standing up for what you believe in is never easy. And it wasn't easy on him," he said. "He paid a price."

In 2005, while a captain in the 82nd Airborne Division, Fishback wrote to Sen. John McCain about his concerns over the treatment of detainees and whether the Geneva Convention applied to Iraq and Afghanistan.

He wrote that he sought answers for 17 months, but found none.

"Instead of resolving my concerns, the approach for clarification process leaves me deeply troubled," Fishback wrote. "I am certain that this confusion contributed to a wide range of abuses including death threats, beatings, broken bones, murder, exposure to elements, extreme forced physical exertion, hostage-taking, stripping, sleep deprivation and degrading treatment. I and troops under my command witnessed some of these abuses in both Afghanistan and Iraq."

Later that year, the Senate passed legislation from McCain to prohibit inhumane treatment and Time magazine named Fishback



FACEBOOK

Ian Fishback

to its list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Fishback went on to serve with the Green Berets and later taught at his alma mater, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He left the Army as a major and often spoke on panels about his decision to call attention to detainee treatment in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"He wanted to support his soldiers, he wanted to support the United States government and he wanted to call us to our better angels — both the U.S. government and the people that were leading that the soldiers," Ford said.

Fishback is survived by his mother and father, his sister, his ex-wife and his daughter, he said. The veteran's family will hold a memorial service this weekend, according to his obituary. The family has asked that those looking to honor Fishback's life donate to the nonprofits, Human Rights Watch or Women for Women International.

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Review: Federal sailors academy at fault for its range of problems found

BY IAN DUNCAN
The Washington Post

A congressionally-ordered review of the federal sailors academy concluded the school was beset with problems ranging from aging facilities, a striking lack of diversity, and a curriculum that was failing to keep up with the needs of an evolving shipping industry.

The National Academy of Public Administration said that widespread problems at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy had festered for years, with school leaders lacking the wherewithal to solve them. The school, the group said, had "lost its way."

"The findings and recommendations of this report address long-standing issues that put the safety and health of the midshipmen and the entire USMMA community in peril," wrote Teresa Gerton, the public administration academy's chief executive.

Unlike the nation's service academies that train military officers and are part of the Defense Department, the Merchant Marine school is part of the Department of Transportation. The review's authors issued 67 recommendations and said it was up to Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to launch a task force and overhaul the King's Point, N.Y.,

school.

The findings are likely to only intensify scrutiny of the academy, which has been embroiled in a reckoning over sexual assault after a midshipman came forward in the fall and described being raped while training on a commercial ship. The new report, based on an investigation carried out between May 2020 and October 2021, says the school is doing too little to protect students from assaults and stamp out sexual harassment on campus and at sea, but makes clear its problems are far more widespread and affect almost every aspect of life there.

The Transportation Department said it has already taken steps to start modernizing facilities at the academy and to revamp sexual assault protections. The department said it was establishing the task force recommended by the reviewers.

"USMMA students are remarkable leaders committed to serving the nation and supporting positive change," said Lucinda Lessley, the acting maritime administrator. "They deserve a modern, safe, and inclusive learning environment where they have the training and resources that will prepare them to succeed in the U.S. merchant marine and in our armed forces."

MILITARY

USS The Sullivans comes home for Thanksgiving Day

BY DAN SCANLAN
The Florida Times-Union

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Travis Hensley gave a final salute, then became the first to bound down the gangway of the USS The Sullivans on its homecoming, his seabag with him as he hit the pier at Naval Station Mayport.

Within seconds, the bag was replaced in his arms with 3-month-old Alexander, 1-year-old son and wife Bryanna, greeting them with hugs after returning from a 7-month world cruise with Britain's Royal Navy.

"I am elated to see my new son and the rest of my family," the chief petty officer said Wednesday just in time for Thanksgiving. "Alex is great and I missed him so much. He looks so cute in his sailor's suit. It is perfect timing and I am grateful for the holidays."

"We are just overwhelmed, so excited and feeling so blessed that he's coming home," his wife said. "He's meeting his new baby too, so we are just so excited to have him home and get back to life. We are going to celebrate Thanksgiving and just spend time as a family."

Further down the pier, Jessica Nelson and her children spotted husband/father Anthony Nelson on an upper deck. Minutes later, it was a hug-fest after a 7-month absence at sea.

"I am pretty happy to see everybody and glad to be home, especially this little one," said Nelson, a logistics specialist, as he gazed at 9-month-old daughter Brynlee. "I am super happy for that and glad to be home for the holidays, be with the kids and eat lots of food, right guys?"

"Her second word was Dadda," added Jessica, joined by their other children Blake and Bryce. "I am so excited for him to hear her say Dadda in person. She absolutely knows her daddy, doesn't she?"

The 505-foot-long ship's name honors the memories of the five Sullivan brothers who died when a Japanese torpedo sunk their light cruiser 79 years ago.

The guided-missile destroyer is the second U.S. Navy vessel to honor George, Francis, Madison, Joseph and Albert Sullivan, all killed on Nov. 13, 1942, as the USS



FRAN RUCHALSKI, THE FLORIDA TIMES-UNION/TNS

Corey Mink, right, holds his 3-month-old daughter Charlotte for the first time as wife Julie and daughter Olivia, 4, welcome him home in time for the holidays at Naval Station Mayport on Wednesday.

Juneau sank during the battle for Guadalcanal. The brothers served on the same ship despite a Navy wartime policy to separate family members.

To honor them, the current ship flies a red-bordered white flag with five gold stars on it, flapping stiffly in the wind under the American flag on its main mast as it came in Wednesday.

This means everything to the crew to get home in time for Thanksgiving, the commander said.

"Seeing the skyline of Jacksonville as we were coming in was a

little surreal, like 'Oh yeah, this is the end and we've finished the deployment and coming home safe,'" he said. "Then seeing all the families on the pier, there were a lot of not-dry eyes on board as they started to cheer for us. I appreciate all the families coming out."

Awaiting the arrival along with hundreds of family members on the sunny, chilly day was Garry Cohn, the Navy League of the United States liaison with this destroyer. He also served on the first USS The Sullivans just before it was decommissioned in 1965. So he is happy that the latest ship and

its crew just had a historic deployment and made it home for Thanksgiving.

"I wish I could have been aboard that ship. It's an opportunity of a lifetime: a world cruise," he said. "I never had the opportunity. ... I am so proud of the men and women who serve aboard the ship."

As the ship hove into view in the channel, family members cheered and waved as the crew lined every deck. One boy carried a sign with a list for his returning father: "Hug and kiss me, play with me, read to me, but first, kiss Mommy!"

Feast: US lawmakers travel to South Korea to serve troops meals

FROM PAGE 1

spard, a culinary specialist and restaurant manager.

"This is a culinary specialist's Super Bowl every year," Hanspard told Stars and Stripes on Thursday. "This is what we want to throw down on. We really take pride in what we do, in terms of presentation and the taste of the food."

A delegation of five House representatives — Democratic Reps. Mark Takano of California, Elissa Slotkin of Michigan, Colin Allred of Texas, Sara Jacobs of California and Republican Nancy Mace of South Carolina — also helped serve meals to the troops.

"Come get your vegetables," Slotkin, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and a former CIA analyst, shouted as she served mixed vegetables to a line of service members.

"It was great to meet some of our service members," Takano, chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said to Stars and Stripes. "It's always a great pleasure to take the Thanksgiving holiday with members of Congress, who give up time with their families, to come and be with our troops, who are also giving up time with their families."

Mace, a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and a graduate of The Citadel Military College of South Carolina, toured the facility and stopped to chat with fellow South Carolinians.



DAVID CHOI/Stars and Stripes

U.S. Forces Korea senior leaders serve Thanksgiving meals for Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army trainees at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, on Thursday.

"It's just an honor to spend time with our soldiers who are stationed overseas, many of them don't get to go home that frequently," Mace said. "It's an honor to be out here with our men and women in uniform who do so much for us."

The delegation visited Japan earlier in the week and met with U.S. troops stationed on Okinawa. There, they warned about China's rising regional influence.

"There's a growing sense of a new reality with China, a stronger China, a more equipped China, a China that is closing the innovation gap," Takano told Stars and Stripes on Tuesday.

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Airmen: Troops to remain restricted until vaccinated

FROM PAGE 1

and U.S. Space Force guardians to be fully vaccinated.

The deadline for full vaccination for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members is Dec. 2.

The Air Force's PCS restriction will remain in force for any airman until that person either becomes fully vaccinated against COVID-19, which is the disease caused by the coronavirus, or receives an approved medical exemption or religious accommodation, Kelly wrote.

As of Tuesday, 96.6% of active-duty airmen had been fully vaccinated, leaving 7,874 airmen unvaccinated, according to the service's statistics.

The Air Force has granted 1,254 medical exemptions for vaccination and none for religious reasons. The Air Force is currently processing 4,756 requests for religious exemption, according to the statistics.

Airmen not fully vaccinated and those awaiting exemption approv-

al will be flagged in their personnel file to prevent them from being selected for future assignments, Kelly wrote.

"Airmen currently on assignment are not authorized to out-process and depart on PCS, with the exception of those who have out-processed and/or shipped household goods/vehicles on or prior to 29 November, who are permitted to proceed to their new duty location," Kelly wrote.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Travelers emerge again in time for Thanksgiving

By DAVID KOENIG
Associated Press

DALLAS — Determined to reclaim Thanksgiving traditions that were put on pause last year by the pandemic, millions of Americans will be loading up their cars or piling onto planes to gather again with friends and family.

The number of air travelers this week is expected to approach or even exceed pre-pandemic levels, and auto club AAA predicts that 48.3 million people will travel at least 50 miles from home over the holiday period, an increase of nearly 4 million over last year despite sharply higher gasoline prices.

Many feel emboldened by the fact that nearly 200 million Americans are now fully vaccinated. But it also means brushing aside concerns about a resurgent virus at a time when the United States is now averaging nearly 100,000 new infections a day and hospitals in Michigan, Minnesota, Colorado and Arizona are seeing alarming increases in patients.

The seven-day daily average of new reported cases is up nearly 30% in the last two weeks through Tuesday, according to figures



MATT ROURKE/AP

Travelers look for seats as they board an Amtrak train ahead of the Thanksgiving Day holiday at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia on Wednesday.

from Johns Hopkins University. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said unvaccinated people should not travel, although it is unclear whether that recommendation is having any effect.

More than 2.2 million travelers streamed through airport checkpoints last Friday, the busiest day since the pandemic devastated

travel early last year. From Friday through Tuesday, the number of people flying in the U.S. was more than double the same days last year and less than 9% lower than the same days in 2019.

For their part, airlines are hoping to avoid a repeat of the massive flight cancellations — more than 2,300 apiece — that dogged Southwest and American Airlines at dif-

ferent times last month.

The breakdowns started with bad weather in one part of the country and spun out of control. In the past, airlines had enough pilots, flight attendants and other workers to recover from many disruptions within a day or two. They are finding it harder to bounce back now, however, because they are stretched thin after

pushing thousands of employees to quit when travel collapsed last year.

American, Southwest, Delta and United have all been hiring lately, which gives the airlines and industry observers hope that flights will stay on track this week.

“The airlines are prepared for the holidays,” said Helane Becker, an airlines analyst for financial-services firm Cowen. “They cut back the number of flights, the industry has enough pilots, they are putting more flight attendants through their (training) academies, and they are paying flight attendants a premium — what I’m going to call hazardous-duty pay — to encourage people not to blow off work.”

The airlines have little margin for error right now. American expected to fill more than 90% of its seats with paying customers on Tuesday. That’s a throwback to holiday travel before the pandemic.

“There is not a lot of room to put people on another flight if something goes wrong,” said Dennis Tager, a pilot for the airline and a spokesman for the American pilots’ union.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

EU authorizes Pfizer's vaccine for kids 5-11

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — The European Union's drug regulator on Thursday authorized Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine for use on children from 5 to 11 years old, clearing the way for shots to be administered to millions of elementary school pupils amid a new wave of infections sweeping across the Continent.

It is the first time the European Medicines Agency has cleared a COVID-19 vaccine for use in young children.

The agency said it "recommended granting an extension of indica-

tion for the COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty to include use in children aged 5 to 11."

After evaluating a study of the vaccine in more than 2,000 children, the EMA estimated that the vaccine was about 90% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 in young children and said the most common side effects were pain at the injection site, headaches, muscle pain and chills. The agency said the two-dose regimen should be given to children three weeks apart.

At least one country facing spiking infections didn't wait for the

EMA approval. Authorities in the Austrian capital, Vienna, already have begun vaccinating the 5 to 11 age group. Europe is currently at the epicenter of the pandemic and the World Health Organization has warned the continent could see deaths top 2 million by the spring unless urgent measures are taken.

The EMA green light for the vaccine developed by Pfizer and German company BioNTech has to be rubber-stamped by the EU's executive branch, the European Commission, before health authorities in member states can begin administering shots.

Earlier this week, Germany's health minister Jens Spahn said shipping of vaccines for younger children in the EU would begin on Dec. 20.

The United States signed off on Pfizer's kids-sized shots earlier this month, followed by other countries including Canada.

Pfizer tested a dose that is a third of the amount given to adults for elementary school-age children. Even with the smaller shot, children who are 5 to 11 years old developed coronavirus-fighting antibody levels just as strong as teenagers and young adults getting the

regular-strength shots, Dr. Bill Gruber, a Pfizer senior vice president, told The Associated Press in September.

But the studies done on Pfizer's vaccine in children haven't been big enough to detect any rare side effects from the second dose, like the chest and heart inflammation that has been seen in mostly male older teens and young adults.

American officials noted that COVID-19 has caused more deaths in children in the 5 to 11 age group than some other diseases, such as chickenpox, did before children were routinely vaccinated.

Europe's Christmas markets warily open as COVID cases rise

Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany — The holiday tree is towering over the main square in this central German city, the chestnuts and sugared almonds are roasted, and kids are clambering aboard the merry-go-round just like they did before the pandemic. But a surge in coronavirus infections has left an uneasy feeling hanging over Frankfurt's Christmas market.

To savor a mug of mulled wine — an uncomplicated rite of winter in pre-pandemic times — masked customers must pass through a one-way entrance to a fenced-off wine hut, stopping at the hand sanitizer station. Elsewhere, security officers check vaccination certificates before letting customers head for the steaming sausages and kebabs.

Despite the pandemic inconveniences, stall owners selling ornaments, roasted chestnuts and other holiday-themed items in Frankfurt and other European cities are relieved to be open at all for their first Christmas market in two

years, especially with new restrictions taking effect in Germany, Austria and other countries as COVID-19 infections hit record highs. Merchants who have opened are hoping for at least a fraction of the pre-pandemic holiday sales that can make or break their businesses.

Others aren't so lucky. Many of the famous holiday events have been canceled in Germany and Austria. With the market closures goes the money that tourists would spend in restaurants, hotels and other businesses.

Jens Knauer, who crafts intricate, lighted Christmas-themed silhouettes that people can hang in windows, said his hope was simply that the Frankfurt market "stays open as long as possible."

While Christmas is 40% of annual revenue for many retailers and restaurateurs, "with me, it's 100%," Knauer said. "If I can stay open for three weeks, I can make it through the year."

Purveyors are on edge after other Christmas markets were



BERND WUESTNECK/AP

People visit the illuminated Christmas Market in Rostock, Germany, on Monday.

abruptly shut down in Germany's Bavaria region, which includes Nuremberg, home of one of the biggest and best-known markets. Stunned exhibitors in Dresden had to pack up their goods when authorities in the eastern Saxony region suddenly imposed new restrictions amid soaring infections. Austria's markets closed as a 10-day lockdown began Monday, with many stall owners hoping they can reopen if it's not extended.

Markets usually attract elbow-to-elbow crowds to row upon row of ornament and food sellers, foot traffic that spills over into revenue for surrounding hotels and restaurants. This year, the crowds at Frankfurt's market were vastly thinned out, with the stalls spread out over a larger area.

Heiner Roie, who runs a mulled wine hut in the shape of a wine barrel, said he's assuming he will see half the business he had in 2019. A shutdown would cause "immense financial damage — it could lead to complete ruin since we haven't made any income in two years, and at some point, the financial re-

serves are used up."

But if people have a little discipline and observe the health measures, "I think we'll manage it," he said.

Next door, Bettina Roie's guests are greeted with a sign asking them to show their vaccination certificates at her stand serving Swiss raclette, a popular melted cheese dish.

The market "has a good concept because what we need is space, room, to keep some distance from each other," she said. "In contrast to a bricks-and-mortar restaurant, they have their building and their walls, but we can adjust ourselves to the circumstances."

The extended Roie family is a fifth-generation exhibitor business that also operates the merry-go-round on Frankfurt's central Roemerberg square, where the market opened Monday.

Roie said it was important to reopen "so that we can bring the people even during the pandemic a little joy — that's what we do, we bring back joy."

The latest spike in COVID-19

cases has unsettled prospects for Europe's economic recovery, leading some economists to hedge their expectations for growth in the final months of the year.

Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg Bank in London, has cut his forecast for the last three months of the year in the 19 countries that use the euro from 0.7% to 0.5%. But he noted that the wave of infections is having less impact across the broad economy because vaccinations have reduced serious illnesses and many companies have learned to adjust.

That is cold comfort to Germany's DEHOGA restaurant and hotel association, which warned of a "hail of cancellations" and said members were reporting every second Christmas party or other special event was being called off.

Other European countries where the pandemic isn't hitting as hard are returning to old ways. The traditional Christmas market in Madrid's Plaza Mayor, in the heart of the Spanish capital, was slated to open Friday at the size it was before the pandemic.



MARKUS SCHREIBER/AP

Lights illuminate the Christmas market at the Gendarmenmarkt square, in Berlin, Germany, on Monday.

NATION

DOJ to prioritize prosecuting violence on flights

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Merrick Garland directed U.S. attorneys across the country to swiftly prioritize prosecution of federal crimes that happen on commercial flights as federal officials face a historic number of investigations into passenger behavior.

Garland's memo, issued Wednesday, emphasizes that the Justice Department is committed to aggressively prosecuting violent passengers who assault crew members or endanger the safety of other passengers. Federal law prohibits interfering with a flight crew, including assaulting, intimidating or threatening crew members.

In a statement, Garland said such passengers do more than harm employees.

"They prevent the performance of critical duties that help ensure



BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

A plane prepares for a flight at the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport on Tuesday.

safe air travel. Similarly, when passengers commit violent acts against other passengers in the close confines of a commercial

aircraft, the conduct endangers everyone aboard," he said.

The memo also notes that dozens of incidents have been report-

ed to the FBI by the Federal Aviation Administration — it investigates some flight disturbances and can issue civil fines to disrupt

tive passengers — as part of an "information-sharing protocol" between the two agencies.

The FAA said earlier this month that it had launched 950 investigations into passenger behavior on flights this year. That is the highest total since the agency started keeping track in 1995. In the five years from 2016 through 2020, the agency averaged 136 investigations a year.

The agency also said that it had referred 37 cases involving unruly airline passengers to the FBI for possible criminal prosecution since the number of disruptions on flights began to spike in January.

"The unacceptable disruptive behavior that we're seeing is a serious safety threat to flights, and we're committed to our partnership with the DOJ to combat it," FAA Administrator Steve Dickson said.

CIA director: 'Consequences' if Russia behind 'Havana Syndrome'

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — CIA Director William Burns delivered a confidential warning to Russia's top intelligence services that they will face "consequences" if they are behind the string of mysterious health incidents known as "Havana Syndrome" afflicting U.S. diplomats and spies around the world, according to U.S. officials familiar with the exchange.

During a visit to Moscow earlier this month, Burns raised the issue with the leadership of Russia's Federal Security Service, the FSB, and the country's Foreign Intelligence Service, the SVR. He told them that causing U.S. personnel and their family members to suffer

severe brain damage and other debilitating ailments would go beyond the bounds of acceptable behavior for a "professional intelligence service," said the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss highly sensitive conversations.

The warning did not assign blame for what U.S. officials are calling "anomalous health incidents," or AHIs. The fact that Burns formulated the warning by saying "if" suggests that after four years of investigations across multiple administrations, the U.S. government remains unable to determine a cause of the unusual incidents. Nevertheless, the director's decision to raise the possibility of

Russian involvement directly to his counterparts in Moscow underscored the deep suspicion the CIA has of Kremlin culpability.

The CIA declined to comment on Burns' warning to the Russians, which has not been previously reported. The Russian Embassy in Washington did not respond to re-

quests for comment.

Moscow has previously denied any involvement in the Havana Syndrome incidents, a phenomenon named after the Cuban capital where U.S. diplomats and intelligence officers first reported unusual and varied symptoms — from headaches and vision prob-

lems to dizziness and brain injuries — that started in 2016.

The main purpose of Burns' trip to Moscow was to put the Kremlin on notice that Washington was watching its troop buildup on the border of Ukraine and would not tolerate a military attack on the country, officials said.

Interior Department approves 2nd large offshore wind farm

Associated Press

The Biden administration approved an offshore wind farm off the coasts of Rhode Island and New York on Wednesday as part of a plan to deploy 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030.

The U.S. Department of the Interior announced it approved the construction and operations of the South Fork Wind project, the department's second approval of a commercial-scale, offshore wind energy project in the United States. Last week, the department marked the groundbreaking off the coast of Massachusetts for the first commercial-scale offshore wind project.

Seven major offshore wind farms would be developed on the east and west coasts of the U.S.

and in the Gulf of Mexico under a plan announced last month by the Biden administration to build infrastructure, create jobs and address global warming. Deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy would generate enough electricity to power more than 10 million homes.

The South Fork Wind project will be located about 19 miles southeast of Block Island, R.I., and 35 miles east of Montauk Point, N.Y. It's expected to provide roughly 130 megawatts, enough power for about 70,000 homes. Its transmission system will connect to the electric grid on Long Island, New York, making it the state's first offshore wind farm and jump-starting the offshore wind industry there.

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NATION

Inflation lurks as consumer spending rises

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Americans are doing the main thing that drives the U.S. economy — spending — but accelerating inflation is casting a pall.

A raft of economic data issued Wednesday showed the economy on solid footing, with Americans' incomes rising and jobless claims falling to a level not seen since the Beatles were still together.

The spike in prices for everything from gas to rent, however, will likely be the chief economic indicator Americans discuss over Thanksgiving Day dinner.

The Commerce Department reported that U.S. consumer spending rebounded by 1.3% in October. That was despite inflation that over the past year has accelerated faster than it has at any point in more than three decades.

The jump in consumer spending last month was double the 0.6% gain in September.

At the same time, consumer prices rose 5% compared with the same period last year, the fastest

12-month gain since the same stretch ending in November 1990.

"Although consumer confidence has declined in the fall because of high inflation, households continue to spend," said Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Financial.

Personal incomes, which provide the fuel for future spending increases, rose 0.5% in October after having fallen 1% in September, which reflected a drop in government support payments.

Pay for Americans has been on the rise with companies desperate for workers, and government stimulus checks earlier this year further padded their bank accounts. That bodes well for a strong holiday season and major U.S. retailers say they're ready after some companies, like Walmart and Target, went to extreme lengths to make sure that their shelves are full despite widespread shortages.

Analysts said the solid increase in spending in October, the first month in the new quarter, was encouraging evidence that overall



NAM Y. HUH/AP

People shop for frozen turkeys for Thanksgiving at a grocery store in Mount Prospect, Ill. on Nov. 17.

economic growth, which slowed to a modest annual rate of 2.1% in the July-September quarter, will post a sizable rebound in the current quarter. That is expected as long as the recent rise in COVID cases and concerns about inflation don't dampen holiday shopping.

"After experiencing one of the most severe economic shocks of the past century in 2020, the U.S. economy has displayed one of the most rapid recoveries in modern history in 2021," Gregory Daco, chief U.S. economist for Oxford Economics, wrote in a note to clients. Daco predicts GDP in the current October-December period would rebound to a growth rate

of 5.6%.

The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits, meanwhile, dropped last week by 71,000 to 199,000, the lowest since mid-November 1969. But seasonal adjustments around the Thanksgiving holiday contributed significantly to the bigger-than-expected drop. Unadjusted, claims actually ticked up by more than 18,000 to nearly 259,000.

In a cautionary note Wednesday, the University of Michigan reported that its consumer sentiment index fell 4.3 percentage points to a reading of 67.4 this month, its lowest level since November 2011, weighed down by inflation concerns.

And there are regions in the U.S. experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases that could get worse as families travel the country for the Thanksgiving holiday.

President Joe Biden acted Tuesday to counter spiking gasoline prices by ordering a release from the nation's strategic petroleum reserve, but economists expect that move to have only a minimal effect on the surge in gas prices.

The Fed seeks to conduct its interest-rate policies to achieve annual gains in its preferred price index of around 2%. However, over the past two decades, inflation has perennially failed to reach the Fed's 2% inflation target.

Holiday season moves into high gear but challenges remain

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Buoyed by solid hiring, healthy pay gains and substantial savings, shoppers are returning to stores and splurging on all types of items.

But the big question is: How much will supply shortages, higher prices and staffing issues dampen their mood this holiday season?

Americans, already fatigued with pandemic-induced social distancing policies, may get grumpy if they can't check off items on their holiday wish lists, or they may feel disappointed by the skimpy holiday discounts. Exacerbating their foul moods is the fact that many frustrated workers called it quits ahead of the holidays, leaving businesses short-handed during their busiest time of the year.

Shoppers are expected to pay on average of between 5% to 17% more for toys, clothing, appliances, TVs and others purchases on Black Friday this year compared with last year, according to Aurelien Duthoit, senior sector adviser at Allianz Research. TVs will see



RINGO H.W. CHIU/AP

Black Friday shoppers wearing face masks wait in line to enter a store at the Glendale Galleria in Glendale, Calif., on Nov. 27, 2020.

the highest price spikes on average, up 17% from a year ago, according to the research firm. That's because whatever discounts available will be applied to goods that are already expensive.

Such frustrations could mute sales for the holiday season that are supposed to break records.

The National Retail Federation,

the nation's largest retail trade group, predicts holiday sales will increase between 8.5% and 10.5% compared with the 2020 holiday period when shoppers, locked down during the early part of the pandemic, spent their money on pajamas and home goods — mostly online. Holiday sales increased 8.2% in 2020.

"I think it is going to be a messy holiday season," said Neil Saunders, managing director at GlobalData Retail. "It will be a bit frustrating for retailers, consumers and the workers. We are going to see long lines. We are going to see messier stores. We are going to see delays as you collect online orders."

Jill Renslow, executive vice president of business development and marketing for Mall of America, the nation's largest mall, expects customer counts on Black Friday to be close to the 2019 levels and said its store tenants are seeing "power shopping" earlier in the season. But she acknowledged the mall's tenants have struggled with staffing and, as a result, the center will open two hours later and close one hour earlier on Black Friday.

"They (retailers) are doing everything they can to deliver a good guest experience," Renslow said. "But consumers are going to need to be patient and know that the lines may be little bit longer."

Still, don't discount the resilience of shoppers who have shown signs they want to cele-

brate the holidays after muted celebrations last year.

Some of the changes that were introduced in 2020 out of necessity appear to be here to stay, including offering big holiday discounts earlier in October to smooth out peaks in online ordering, and doing away with Thanksgiving Day store shopping and moving customers online instead for deals.

And while the pandemic-induced clogs in the supply network have reduced inventory needed to satisfy shopper demands, such shortfalls have also proven to be a silver lining. Leaner inventories have brought back some pricing power to retailers who've been locked in a vicious cycle of discounting for years. Such non-stop promotions have eaten away profits.

"Even with the increased labor costs and increased supply chain costs, retail earnings have been quite good," said Ken Perkins, president of Retail Metrics LLC, noting that when the pandemic hit, it looked like the "sky was falling and retailers would never see a profit again."

NATION

Macy's Thanksgiving parade makes full return

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Crimped by the coronavirus pandemic last year, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade returned Thursday in full, though with precautions.

Balloons, floats, marching bands, clowns and performers — and, of course, Santa Claus — once again began wending Thursday morning though 2½ miles of Manhattan streets, instead of being confined to one block or sometimes pretaped last year.

Spectators, shut out in 2020, lined the route again. High school and college marching bands from around the country were invited back to the lineup; most of last year's performers were locally based to cut down on travel. The giant balloons, tethered to vehicles last year, got their costumed handlers back.

To President Joe Biden, the parade's full-fledged return was a sign of renewal, and he called NBC broadcaster Al Roker on-air to say so.

"After two years, we're back. America is back. There's nothing we're unable to overcome," Biden said over the phone from Nantucket, Mass., where he was watching the broadcast with his family.

Biden on Thursday wished Americans a happy and closer-to-normal Thanksgiving, in remarks welcoming the resumption of holiday traditions in many homes.

"As we give thanks for what we have, we also keep in our hearts those who have been lost and those who have lost so much," the president said in a video greeting recorded with first lady Jill Biden at the White House before their trip to Nantucket.

On Nantucket, the Bidens visited the Coast Guard station at Brant Point to meet virtually with U.S. servicemembers from around the world and chat with personnel at the station. "I'm thankful for these guys," the president said when asked what he was



PHOTOS BY SETH WENIG/AP

The Tom Turkey float waits along Central Park West before the start of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on Thursday in New York.



People enjoy the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade along Central Park West in New York.

thankful for, referring to the Coast Guard members standing ramrod straight in front of him on the grounds.

The Thanksgiving parade is the latest U.S. holiday event to make a comeback as vaccines, familiarity and sheer frustration made offi-

cials and some of the public more comfortable with big gatherings amid the ongoing pandemic.

Still, safety measures continued. Parade staffers and volunteers had to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and wear masks, though some singers and perform-

ers were allowed to shed them.

There was no inoculation requirement for spectators, but Macy's and the city encouraged them to cover their faces. A popular spectacle before the parade — the inflation of the giant balloons — was limited to vaccinated viewers.

The Thanksgiving event also came days after an SUV driver plowed through a Christmas parade in suburban Milwaukee, killing six people and injuring over 60. Authorities said the driver, who has been charged with intentional homicide, was speeding away from police after a domestic dispute.

Thousands of police officers were assigned to the parade route, from streets to rooftops. Cars were blocked from the parade route with sand-filled garbage trucks, other heavy vehicles and approximately 360,000 pounds of concrete barriers.

Bomb-detecting dogs, bomb squad officers, heavy-weapons teams, radiation and chemical sensors and over 300 extra cameras also were dispatched to the parade route, NYPD Chief of Counterterrorism Martine Materasso said.

Inside the barricades, the parade featured about 8,000 participants, four dozen balloons of varying sizes and two dozen floats.

New balloon giants joining the lineup include the title character from the Netflix series "Ada Twist, Scientist", the Pokémon characters Pikachu and Eevee on a sled (Pikachu has appeared before, in different form), and Grogu, aka "Baby Yoda," from the television show "The Mandalorian." New floats are coming from entities ranging from condiment maker Heinz to NBCUniversal's Peacock streaming service to the Louisiana Office of Tourism.

Native tribes mourn on Thanksgiving: 'No reason to celebrate'

Associated Press

Members of Native American tribes from around New England are gathering in the seaside town where the Pilgrims settled — not to give thanks, but to mourn Indigenous people worldwide who've suffered centuries of racism and mistreatment.

Thursday's solemn National Day of Mourning observance in downtown Plymouth, Mass., will recall the disease and oppression that European settlers brought to North America.

"We Native people have no reason to celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims," said Kisha James, a

member of the Aquinnah Wampanoag and Oglala Lakota tribes and the granddaughter of Wamsutta Frank James, the event's founder.

"We want to educate people so that they understand the stories we all learned in school about the first Thanksgiving are nothing but lies. Wampanoag and other Indigenous people have certainly not lived happily ever after since the arrival of the Pilgrims," James said.

"To us, Thanksgiving is a day of mourning, because we remember the millions of our ancestors who were murdered by uninvited European colonists such as the Pilgrims. Today, we and many Indige-

nous people around the country say, 'No Thanks, No Giving.'"

It's the 52nd year that the United American Indians of New England have organized the event on Thanksgiving Day. The tradition began in 1970.

Indigenous people and their supporters planned to gather at noon in person on Cole's Hill, a wind-swept mound overlooking Plymouth Rock, a memorial to the colonists' arrival. Participants will beat drums, offer prayers and condemn what organizers describe as "the unjust system based on racism, settler colonialism, sexism, homophobia and the profit-driven

destruction of the Earth" before marching through Plymouth's historical district.

This year, they'll also highlight the troubled legacy of federal boarding schools that sought to assimilate Indigenous youth into white society in the United States as well as in Canada, where hundreds of bodies have been discovered on the grounds of former residential schools for Indigenous children.

Brian Moskwetah Weeden, chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council, said on Boston Public Radio earlier this week that Americans owe his tribe a debt of

gratitude for helping the Pilgrims survive their first brutal winter.

"People need to understand that you need to be thankful each and every day — that was how our ancestors thought and navigated this world," Weeden said. "Because we were thankful, we were willing to share ... and we had good intentions and a good heart."

That wasn't reciprocated over the long term, Weeden added.

"That's why, 400 years later, we're still sitting here fighting for what little bit of land that we still have, and trying to hold the commonwealth and the federal government accountable," he said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

\$4M grant helps preserve Civil War battlefield

VA WILLIAMSBURG — The National Park Service announced that it has awarded the largest single grant in the history of its American Battlefield Protection Program to help preserve one of the nation’s lesser-known Civil War battlefields.

The \$4.6 million grant will be used to purchase and preserve 250 acres of the Williamsburg Battlefield in York County, Va., which has sat on private land outside the city and former colonial capital.

The battle was part of what’s known as the Peninsula Campaign of 1862, when Union forces tried to capture Richmond from the south-east.

Fighting began after enslaved Americans provided vital intelligence to the Union Army about unoccupied Confederate entrenchments. There were 72,000 troops engaged in the battle, which ended with 3,800 killed, wounded or captured, said Jim Campi, chief policy and communications officer with the American Battlefield Trust.

Landlord fined for ‘horrific’ rental conditions

MN MINNEAPOLIS — A Hennepin County district judge fined a north Minneapolis landlord \$133,500 for what he called horrific conditions in his rental properties.

The Star Tribune reported that Judge Patrick Robben ruled that landlord Steven Meldahl operated in bad faith by telling tenants that they were not allowed to contact city inspectors, violating the rights of 267 families who rented his properties.

“Infestations suggestive of biblical plague proportions — squirrels, mice, rats, gnats,” the judge said.

Robben levied a fine of \$500 per family. He also issued a permanent injunction preventing Meldahl from engaging in illegal and deceptive practices, and gave him until Dec. 15 to comply with all housing correction notices.

Dempsey Challenge reaches \$1.5M goal

ME LEWISTON — The Dempsey Challenge has reached its \$1.5 million fundraising goal, garnering \$200,000 more than any previous year despite the coronavirus pandemic decreasing participation.

The bike-and-run fundraiser in September raised a record \$1.3 million and additional fundraising from businesses and a virtual cycling event pushed the Dempsey Challenge past its fundraising goal, The Sun-Journal reported.

The challenge is the primary fundraiser for the Dempsey Center, a nonprofit organization founded by actor Patrick Dempsey that provides free services to cancer patients and their families. The Lewiston nonprofit had increased its fundraising goal in 2020 but the pan-



GRACE RAMEY, (BOWLING GREEN, KY.) DAILY NEWS/AP

A yummy domino effect

T.C. Cherry Elementary School students wait for a trail of 1,420 cereal boxes they collected over a two-week span to domino through the hallways of the school in Bowling Green, Ky. The school partnered with Guarantee Pest Control to do a food drive for cereal boxes, which will be distributed to Bowling Green and Warren County food pantries.

demic hit and the in-person Dempsey Challenge was canceled and replaced with a virtual event.

Former art dealer pleads guilty in fraud case

NY NEW YORK — A former London and Miami art dealer pleaded guilty to defrauding art buyers of over \$86 million.

Inigo Philbrick, 34, a U.S. citizen who has also lived in London, entered the plea in Manhattan federal court.

He pleaded guilty to a single count of wire fraud after prosecutors said he conducted a scheme from 2016 through 2019 to defraud individuals and entities to finance his art business.

Prosecutors said he carried out the scheme by misrepresenting the ownership of certain artworks and by sometimes selling more than 100% ownership to multiple individuals and entities without their knowledge.

Driver charged with desecrating cemetery

SC RAVENEL — A driver was charged with desecration of a human burial ground after he drove over several gravestones and knocked over a headstone in a Charleston County cemetery as he tried to run from police, investigators said.

THE CENSUS

20 The length of time, in years, that Larry Albert Flake eluded authorities. Flake, who skipped his Indiana trial on sex charges, was arrested in Alabama, police said. He was taken into custody after the FBI and police located him in Birmingham, police in Richmond, Ind., said. He was living under the assumed name of Larry White and was pastoring at a nearby church, FBI spokesman Paul Daymond told al.com. Flake, now 75, failed to appear for his August 2001 trial on rape and sexual misconduct charges, according to police and al.com. Richmond police had received a report that he attacked a 15-year-old girl in 1999. A jury convicted him of sexual misconduct in his absence, but a mistrial was declared on a rape charge, al.com reports. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

When deputies checking a suspicious vehicle near the Saint Paul United Methodist Church Cemetery turned on their blue lights, the 31-year-old driver sped off through the graveyard, the Charleston County Sheriff’s Office told news outlets.

The chase reached speeds of more than 110 mph on U.S. Highway 17 and state Highway 162, deputies said.

The driver hit a tree but kept going and at one point the chase went down roads so rough a sheriff’s patrol car had its bumper torn off, investigators said.

Deputies said the chase ended when the car got stuck in a mud hole.

Masked suspects rob diner on restaurant patio

CA COSTA MESA — A group of masked people dressed in black ran onto a Southern California restaurant patio, or-

dered everyone down, then stole a diner’s purse before fleeing, police said.

At least one of the suspects may have been armed with a handgun during the robbery at Seasons52 restaurant at South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, police spokeswoman Roxy Fyad said.

Police are looking for three to five suspects, the Orange County Register reported.

Fishpond restoration reveals century-old grave

HI HONOLULU — Restoration of fishponds in Hawaii led to the discovery of a child’s grave from nearly 100 years ago.

A nonprofit group has been restoring the fishponds at Honouliuli stream in Ewa Beach. Earlier this month, the group’s founder saw a gravestone hidden in the tall grass, Hawaii News Now reported.

“All I could see was the top of it,”

said Anthony Chance. “When I pulled away the pickleweed, I noticed writing and what I know to be Japanese writing.”

He sent photographs to a friend who translated the inscription. It said a 1-year-old boy named Akira Matsuyama died in June 1927.

Through social media, Chance found members of the Matsuyama family who lived on the land in the 1900s.

Aileen Matsuyama Feldman said she remembers her grandparents’ home that once stood near the fishpond but doesn’t remember ever seeing the gravestone of a child who died 20 years before she was born.

\$3M lottery prize is couple’s second big win

MO POTOSI — An eastern Missouri couple recently won a \$3 million lottery prize — and it wasn’t the first time they’ve claimed a big lottery win.

The Missouri Lottery said the couple from Washington County, who asked not to be identified, purchased the winning ticket for the “Big Riches” scratcher game in Potosi while recently picking up groceries. They scratched off the ticket inside the store and celebrated with a hug.

Winning never gets old. The same couple won a \$250,000 lottery prize a few years ago.

WORLD

Russian coal mine fire kills at least 11

Associated Press

MOSCOW — A fire at a coal mine in Russia’s Siberia killed 11 people and injured more than 40 on Thursday, with dozens of others remaining trapped, authorities said.

Efforts to rescue those trapped in the mine were halted on Thursday afternoon because of an explosion threat, and rescuers were rushed out of the mine, administrators of the mine told the Interfax news agency.

The blaze broke out in the Kemerovo region in southwestern Siberia. Russia’s state Tass news agency reported, citing an unnamed emergency official, that coal dust caught fire, and smoke quickly filled the Listvyazhnaya mine through the ventilation system.

A total of 285 people were in the mine at the time of the incident, Kemerovo Governor Sergei Tsivilyov said on his page on the messaging app Telegram. He said 35 miners remained trapped underground, and their exact location was unknown.

Tsivilyov said in another Telegram post that a total of 49 people with injuries have sought medical assistance. He had earlier reported a toll of 60 injured people and hasn’t offered any explanation for the revision.

Earlier Thursday, Russia’s acting minister for emergency situations, Alexander Chupriyan, said 44 miners have been hospitalized with injuries. The difference in injury tolls re-

ported by different officials couldn’t be immediately reconciled.

Russia’s Investigative Committee has launched a criminal probe into the fire on charges of violating safety regulations that led to deaths.

President Vladimir Putin extended his condolences to the families of the killed miners and ordered the government to offer all necessary assistance to those who were injured.

The Russian leader on Thursday afternoon sat down for talks with his Serbian counterpart Aleksandar Vucic in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi, during which Vucic also offered condolences to the families of the victims. Putin noted that the situation at the mine, “unfortunately, is not getting easier.”

“There is a danger to the life of the rescuers... Let’s hope that (they) will manage to save as many people as possible,” Putin said.

In 2016, 36 miners were killed in a series of methane explosions in a coal mine in Russia’s far north. In the wake of the incident, authorities analyzed the safety of the country’s 58 coal mines and declared 20 of them, or 34%, potentially unsafe.

The Listvyazhnaya mine in the Kemerovo region wasn’t among them at the time, according to media reports.

The latest inspection of the mine took place on Nov. 19, Interfax reported. The report didn’t offer any details on the results.

Al-Shabab attack outside school in Somali capital leaves at least 8 dead

Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia — A large explosion outside a school in Somalia’s capital on Thursday killed at least eight people, including students, witnesses said. The extremist group al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attack.

The al-Qaida-linked group controls large parts of rural Somalia and continues to frustrate efforts at rebuilding the Horn of Africa nation after three decades of conflict.

The blast sent a plume of smoke above a busy part of Mogadishu during the morning rush hour. The blast shredded part of the school, with emergency workers looking through the collapsed roof beams

and wooden benches.

“We were extremely terrified by the blast,” said teacher Mohamed Osman, who said he was explaining a lesson to students when the explosion occurred. “We were disorientated and we were covered with dust and smoke.”

Police spokesman Abdifatah Adam Hassan said eight people were killed and 17 others wounded.

“This is a tragedy,” said Abdulkadir Adan of the Amin ambulance service, which rushed people to a hospital.

The casualties were fewer than might have occurred since Thursday is part of the weekend in Somalia, an overwhelmingly Muslim nation.

Al-Shabab in a statement carried by its Andalus radio said it targeted Western officials being escorted by the African Union peacekeeping convoy.

But a witness, Hassan Ali, told the AP that a private security company was escorting the officials and said he saw four of the security personnel wounded.

The attack occurred as Somalia faces major questions about its political and security future. The AU peacekeeping force was meant to withdraw from the country, but its mission could be extended amid concerns that Somali forces are not ready to assume responsibility for security.



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WORLD

Sweden's 1st female PM resigns just hours after being sworn in

The Washington Post

Sweden on Wednesday confirmed Magdalena Andersson as its first female leader, nearly 100 years after the Scandinavian country extended women the right to vote.

Her tenure was fleeting.

Hours after assuming office, Andersson resigned from the post when a member of the ruling coalition, the center-left Swedish Green party, quit the government

in protest after lawmakers passed a budget bill backed by three right-wing parties. Andersson's Social Democratic Party had put forward an alternative budget proposal that failed to pass.

Andersson had briefly joined the ranks of around two dozen current female heads of state and government, according to U.N. Women, the United Nations agency focused on gender equality. Around half of those women head Europe-

an countries.

Sweden was the last of its Nordic neighbors — Denmark, Norway, Finland and Iceland — to elect a woman to their highest offices. Scandinavian countries have a reputation for some of the world's most progressive gender policies.

Andersson was Sweden's finance minister before her brief foray as prime minister, which is also a rarity: Women ministers are



Sweden's Finance Minister and Social Democratic Party leader Magdalena Andersson holds flowers after a vote appointing her as Sweden's new prime minister in the Swedish parliament Riksdagen in Stockholm on Wednesday.

most commonly assigned portfolios that concern issues such as family, children, social issues, employment and women's affairs.

S. Korea to launch task force on potentially banning dog meat

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea said Thursday that it will launch a task force to consider outlawing dog meat consumption after the country's president offered to look into ending the centuries-old practice.

Restaurants that serve dog meat are dwindling in South Korea as younger people find dog meat a less appetizing dining option and pets are growing in popularity. Recent

surveys indicate more people oppose banning dog meat, even if many don't eat it.

In a statement, seven government offices including the Agriculture Ministry said they decided to launch the group comprising of officials, civilian experts and people from related organizations to deliver recommendations on possibly outlawing dog meat consumption. It said authorities will gather information on dog farms, restaurants and

other facilities while examining public opinion.

The statement noted that "public awareness of their basic rights and animal rights issues are tangled in a complicated manner" when it comes to dog meat consumption.

Public opinion suggests "people have negative views both about eating dogs and legally banning it," it added.

The government said the initiative, the

first of its kind, doesn't necessarily guarantee the banning of dog meat. The seemingly vague stance drew protests from both dog farmers and animal rights activists.

Farmers said the task force's launch is nothing but a formality to shut down their farms and dog meat restaurants, while activists argued the government's announcement lacks resolve to outlaw dog meat consumption.

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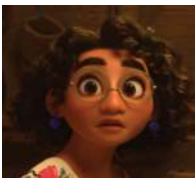


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WEEKEND



‘Encanto’ flips the typical script
Pages 15, 16



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GIFTS FOR ALL

Still seeking inspiration for hard-to-please recipients? From tech to TikTok to books to music to one-of-a-kind personalized finds, here are suggestions for everyone on your list.

Pages 26-31



HOT SHOTS DISTRIBUTING/AP

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



The Nintendo Switch OLED has a larger screen and better kickstand. For anyone looking for the most family-friendly game system with a long list of exclusive games — the Zelda, Mario, Metroid and Pokemon franchises can only be found here — this is a great alternative to the PS5 and Xbox.

DAN ACKERMAN/TNS

Grabbing the good gear

The early bird gets the best tech with these top picks from CNET editors

CNET.com

Before holiday shopping even gets into full swing, we’re already hearing rumblings about empty warehouse shelves for the hottest toys and gifts this year, thanks to everything from chip shortages, supply chain constraints and a shortage of workers at docks and ports. So for those of you who are on the hunt to stockpile some gifts, here’s a first pass at some of CNET’s favorite options.

The iPhone 13 family

The latest and greatest iPhones

CNET TAKE: Yes, some of the iPhone 13 improvements are subtler than others. But if you’re buying for anyone with an iPhone 11 or older, the 2021 models are an excellent upgrade, with improved cameras, more durable screens and far better battery life than their predecessors. Most people will find the baseline model (\$829 unlocked) to be more than enough phone, especially now that they finally — finally! — start at 128GB of storage, which will be more than enough for the average user. But the pair of iPhone Pro upgrades offer better camera options and — with the \$1,099 iPhone Pro Max — a jumbo 6.7-inch screen. A smaller iPhone remains in the line with the 5.4-inch iPhone 13 Mini, too. If that’s still too big of a plunge, the 2020 iPhone SE is available unlocked with 128GB of storage for a much more reasonable \$399, and it’s got a good old-fashioned Touch ID fingerprint scanner, too.

Nintendo Switch OLED

Bigger screen, better kickstand

CNET TAKE: This update of the Nintendo Switch adds a bigger 7-inch OLED screen, a much better kickstand and ships with 64GB storage on board.



SARAH TEW/TNS

The remote included with the Roku Streambar will control your TV’s power, too.

It’s not a must-have upgrade if you have the earlier Switch model, as the graphics and game catalog are identical. And you can still hook it up to the TV if you want to play on the big screen. But for anyone looking for the most family-friendly game system with a long list of exclusive games — the Zelda, Mario, Metroid and Pokemon franchises can only be found here — this is a great alternative to the PS5 and Xbox.

Roku Streambar

Easy upgrade for an older TV

CNET TAKE: Want the easiest upgrade for an older HDTV? Just plug in the \$130 Roku Streambar, and you’ll immediately add stronger audio and the best smart TV streaming system, with every app you can imagine. The remote included with this smart device will control your TV’s power, too.

The Streambar follows the footsteps of last year’s Roku Smart Soundbar with a smaller size and more affordable price. Usually the biggest issue with hybrid devices is that they’ve compromised too much in some area, and while the Streambar isn’t sonically perfect — lack of bass is its biggest weakness — it makes up for that with excellent sound for dialogue and an ability to fill a room that belies its tiny footprint. Sure, it lacks a subwoofer, but it can still beat your TV’s speakers without one.

GADGETS

An air purifier for the work/home environment

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

The Proscenic A9 Air Purifier is one of those appliances you don’t think you need, but you do. Having clean, filtered and allergy-free air is nothing but a good thing. The A9 is built with multiple filtration systems and is perfect for home use, especially with home hours extending with the work-from-home movement.

An air quality smart sensor inspects the PM2.5 air index in real time. Not knowing what a PM2.5 air index is, a quick Google search told me “it refers to atmospheric particulate matter that has a diameter of fewer than 2.5 micrometers, which is about 3% the diameter of a human hair.”

A front side LCD panel displays the PM2.5 readings along with a reminder when the internal filter needs to be replaced and a Wi-Fi indicator. Small backlit buttons to control turning it on or off, speed, child locks and a timer are on the top.

And of course, there’s an app for full functionality, which includes the speed, times and sleep mode. It even reminds you via Alexa or Google Home when the filter needs to be changed.

It’s AC-powered and built to sit on the floor (10.23-by-10.23-by-20.4 inches, 14.11 pounds). Air is pulled in through small holes on the front and then filtered air is released through air vents on the top. A high-performance motor circulates and sends out the air to ceiling levels.

Setting it up takes seconds. Just pop in a filter, then plug in the power cord and hit the power button. With four speeds, it gets a little louder with each speed, but keeping it at automatic seemed to be the way to go when I was home, and putting it on the timer with the high speed worked when I was away.

A blue standard 4-in-1 enhanced filter is included and is good for around 3,000 hours. Replacements are \$59.99. Four other available filters include an H13 true HEPA filter, an anti-bacterial filter, a pet allergy filter and a toxin absorber filter for \$49.99 each.

After a few minutes, the air quality of my office (which often has windows open and pets visiting me) displayed a 12 along with a green color-coded indicator. According to the user manual, that is good quality air.

An air quality smart sensor in the Proscenic A9 Air Purifier inspects the PM2.5 air index.

PROSCENIC/TNS

Yellow indicates moderate air, orange is unhealthy for sensitive groups and red is unhealthy.

Proscenia states that the A9 air purifier works in areas up to 592 square feet (circulating the indoor air five times per hour). The HDOF purifying technology has four filtration stages, which contains a primary filter, H13 HEPA, activated carbon and nano-silver ions, and absorbs 99.97% of fine particles and allergens and even larger pollutants such as dust, pet dander, smoke, mold and pollen.

Online: proscenic.com; \$179.99

The Cyber Acoustics Essential Speakerphone SP-2000 is perfect for any work-from-home office to improve the audio for audio or video calls, compared to using a computer’s built-in microphone.

The desktop speakerphone is another underestimated gadget, but after using it once, it’s an obvious necessity. It connects in seconds with USB to computers or Bluetooth with smartphones. Inside is a built-in 360-degree noise-canceling microphone with a 3-meter range. The rechargeable (USB-C, cable included) battery provides up to 12 hours of talk time.

The Essential Speakerphone SP-2000 is built with smart voice enhancement technology and reduced ambient noise technology. All this adds up to crystal-clear audio, which was confirmed by several test callers in both audio calls and Zoom meetings.

Incoming audio was crystal clear as well. Topside buttons control answering or ending calls, volume and the ever-important mute button.

Online: cyberacoustics.com; \$69.99



WEEKEND: MOVIES

Putting together a musical puzzle

Lin-Manuel Miranda draws from cross-cultural influences to become one of Disney's go-to songwriters

By MICHAEL CAVNA
The Washington Post

Lin-Manuel Miranda, wearing his heart on his fall sweater sleeve, pauses to admit a musical fear. He had penned seven songs for his newest movie, Disney's "Encanto," but still needed to create that staple of so many musicals: the lead character introducing a driving desire through tune.

"The song I'm always going to write last is our hero's 'I Want' song, just because it's intimidating to write that for Disney," Miranda says during a recent Zoom call, beaming in front of a blue screen. "You know it's going out there on a playlist with 'Out There' from 'Hunchback (of Notre Dame)' and 'Reflection' from 'Mulan.' It's just a scary place to be."



Miranda

Yet "Encanto" director Jared Bush knows that if there were an "I Want" song about Miranda himself, the lyrics would reveal a central truth: "He wants to be challenged."

How Miranda unlocked this lyrical puzzle for Mirabel, the lead teenager in the Colombian-set "Encanto" (in theaters now), involves cross-cultural perception and shared sense of invention — qualities that have made Miranda a continual go-to talent for Disney.

"He is hyper-collaborative — that is one of his greatest skill sets," says Bush, a veteran of such Disney hits as "Zootopia." "For someone as accomplished and acclaimed as Lin-Manuel is, he is a sponge for new ideas."

Those skills allow Miranda to take to Disney Animation characters and songcraft like, well, a Donald Duck to water. "Writing for animated films is like writing for the theater on steroids," he says. "Your collaborators include hundreds of animators. That give-and-take between my music and their visuals is really thrilling."

Miranda's creativity also thrives on having multiple projects at once, including his new Netflix directorial debut, "Tick, Tick ... Boom!" But he's been an especially big presence on Disney-banner titles in recent years, including performing in "Mary Poppins Returns" and contributing music for the Star Wars universe. Disney produced the 2020 film adaptation of his Broadway smash "Hamilton," and Miranda is teaming with Disney legend Alan Menken for the music on the live-action "The Little Mermaid" due out in 2023.

But it was while working together on Disney's 2016 animated hit "Moana" — which yielded Miranda's Oscar-nominated "How Far I'll Go" — that the composer vocalized an "I Want" wish to screenwriter Bush, who recalls: "He told me he wanted to write the definitive Latin America Disney musical."

Soon the two were talking with Bush's "Zootopia" collaborator and fellow brass musician Byron Howard, who would also become a writer-director on "Encanto" (as would Charise Castro Smith). They shared the experience of coming from large extended families. Out of that grew an "Encanto" story that spotlights a dozen main characters — "unheard of in Disney animation," says Bush.

Miranda knew the deal with Disney: Putting forth such a sprawling familia put some of the characters in narrative peril. "The storytelling process isn't kind to families," Miranda says with a laugh. Exhibit A: The title heroine in "Moana" originally had eight brothers — but as her narrative necessitated streamlining, "those brothers went away."

Early on during "Encanto," the filmmakers internally screened some footage before it had music. The studio feedback came in: This could be tough to pull off. Were the filmmakers sure they didn't want to trim the tale to, say, five main characters? Instead, "Lin said, 'I think it's 12, and here's the opening song to prove how that's possible,'" Bush recalls.

Miranda notes that he wrote that opener, "The Family Madrigal," even before "Encanto" had a second or third act. At the center of that song is Mirabel, a girl searching



DISNEY/TNS photos

"Encanto" introduces the Madrigal family, who have each been granted extraordinary gifts, except one, our heroine, Mirabel (Stephanie Beatriz), center left, and below, who has yet to discover her own personal magic.



Lin-Manuel Miranda, who wrote eight songs for "Encanto," told a collaborator that he wanted to write the definitive Latin America Disney musical.

for her purpose in a home brimming with magical realism. Miranda, deeply steeped in the Disney songbook, looked to a musical of his youth: "I was really inspired by Belle from 'Beauty and the Beast,' with that opening number that just lays out the town."

The upbeat number introduces each member of the Madrigals largely through Mirabel's eyes, underscoring how family dynamics play out. "In so many ways, that's really what the movie is about: Being able to see your family more fully and allowing your family to grow and change — not freezing them in the roles you think they ought to play."

The composer also drew inspiration from Team "Encanto's" research trip to Colombia several years earlier — an early step that Bush calls "rare" for a Disney songwriter.

One day, Miranda, his father and his fellow filmmakers gathered in the Andes and reveled in the rhythms of a mini-concert. Colombian performers serenaded them with regional songs. The visitors' enchantment — their sense of "encanto" — was complete.

About two years later, Miranda was trying to write that crucial tune for Mirabel, who is voiced by Stephanie Beatriz. Her "want" is to have a power like everyone else in her gifted familia. But how to underscore that message through melody?

The filmmakers reflected on how those musicians in the small mountain town of Barichara strummed guitars and the region's 12-string tiple in a waltz time signature. What if Miranda wrote Mirabel's big number, "Waiting on a Miracle," in that same time — unlike his seven other "Encanto" songs?

"She's in a different rhythmic universe than the rest of her family, and that was really from the Colombian music we were hearing," Miranda says. "That let me go to a 3/4 space and then I wrote it very quickly — so honestly, the research specificity is what takes it to the next level."

Other "Encanto" songs spotlight Mirabel's siblings: "What Else Can I Do?" tells the story of sister Isabela (Diane Guerrero) and her power with blooming flora; "Surface Pressure" shows how for sister Luisa (Jessica Darrow), possessing immense strength can be a burden.

Miranda cannot help but infuse such numbers with personal connections. For the former, his wife reminded him that he had a resident expert in his life: a former neighbor who specializes in Latin American botany. For the latter, he acknowledges a sibling who is 6 years older: "She takes on way more responsibility than I do — I was very aware that I was the baby brother who got away with everything — so 'Surface Pressure' is very much a love letter to my sister."

Miranda also picked up on the film's motif of butterflies and transformation to create the folk-like "Dos Oruguitas" (sung by Sebastián Yatra) — the first tune he has ever written beginning to end in Spanish. "The goal was: Write a song that feels like it's always existed," says Miranda, noting: "It's my wife's favorite song I've ever written."

Miranda says he reveled in his deep dive into Colombian music, which "for someone who has roots in Puerto Rico and Mexico," he says, "is like going to your cousin's house."

Bush appreciates why Disney continues to bring Miranda aboard its projects. "He writes songs that you just want to keep listening to," says the director, adding: "He can create an earworm that somehow isn't annoying." And the more you listen to lyrics, the more you appreciate their layered meanings.

How best to describe Miranda then? Bush considers it: "He's a unicorn."

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS



Adam Driver as Maurizio Gucci, left, and Lady Gaga as Patrizia Reggiani have designs on the family dynasty in “House of Gucci.”

‘House of Gucci’ is pure, unapologetic decadence

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Everything in “House of Gucci” is over the top. The accents. The performances. The fashion. The settings. The runtime. The music. The greed. This movie knows exactly what it is and, sweetie, it is gloriously decadent, ridiculous fun.

There is an alternate universe in which “House of Gucci” is a subtle Italian-language film. Perhaps it’s a more straightforward tragedy. Maybe it’s even a limited series taking the viewer back to the origins of the Italian luxury label, in 1921. But director Ridley Scott, and screenwriters Becky Johnston and Roberto Bentivegna, have chosen the route of operatic artificiality. You don’t cast Jared Leto as a clownish Fredo-type and have him act against a father played by Al Pacino by accident. Big is the point.

Based on a book by Sara Gay Forden, “House of Gucci” is about the dissolution of the Gucci dynasty. Their reign over the eponymous leather goods and fashion house lasted only three generations. But as any new money family knows, by the time the third generation takes over, no one is left to remember a time when there wasn’t extraordinary wealth and privilege.

And this is where we pick up with the Gucci family, with the business being run by founder Guccio Gucci’s sons Rodolfo (Jeremy Irons) and Aldo (Pacino). Scott’s film glosses over the other second-generation siblings in part to streamline an already sprawling story but mostly to hammer in the father-son themes. Aldo’s son is Paolo (Leto), a fool with delusions of grandeur and little talent to back it up. Rodolfo’s son is Maurizio (Adam Driver), who is smart but would rather study law than join in the family business.

Our entry to this world, however, is an outsider: Patrizia Reggiani (Lady Gaga), a local bomb-

shell and party girl who meets Maurizio by chance. Her eyes light up with manic purpose when she hears his last name is Gucci and she makes it her mission to become part of his life. This might sound sinister, especially if you know where it all ends up, but it’s actually quite charming at first. The beginning of their odyssey plays like a breezy romantic comedy, with Patrizia as the gentle hunter of Driver’s soft-spoken and bashful prey. Both are happy and in love and they stay together even after Rodolfo cuts his son off for choosing to marry someone beneath his station. And it’s true, Patrizia might not have much in the way of education or culture, but she has a way with people too and, we’ll come to find out, is a natural Machiavelli.

After a brief honeymoon period in which Maurizio gets to play poor and work at her family’s truck company, an opportunity back in opens when Aldo invites the newlyweds to his birthday. Maurizio emerges from the opulent proceedings even more convinced that the simple life is for him, but Patrizia won’t let this precious window evaporate. And soon they’re both in deep.

But this isn’t just about a reluctant heir and his ambitious wife pushing him toward his destiny. This film pokes a hole in the very concept of mass luxury and its central artifice. At the time, before “Dom and Tom” took over, Gucci was in a bit of a crisis, with Rodolfo being perhaps overly precious about expansion, Aldo a little too obsessed with profits and expansion and the “brand” in jeopardy of being devalued with fakes and oversaturation. These cracks in the veneer help Patrizia and Maurizio wrestle power for themselves, until he decides he’d rather go at it on his own. At that point, it really is the beginning of the end.

“House of Gucci” is rated R for some sexual content, language, brief nudity and violence. Running time: 117 minutes.

Disney’s ‘Encanto’ highlights the power in being ordinary

The only one in her family born without a special gift, Mirabel must find a way to save their broken home after the magic begins to fail

By MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Mirabel is extraordinary, in that when it comes to her family, she is totally normal.

That’s the setup for Disney’s absolutely charming new animated musical “Encanto,” which flips the typical children’s movie script. Instead of few magical people amid a sea of ordinary, here the ordinary is, well, weird.

“I will stand on the side / When you shine,” Mirabel sings to her special brothers and sisters, though she confesses, “I’m not fine.”

It’s only appropriate that “Encanto” — fueled by eight original songs by “Hamilton” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda — turns into that most special thing of all: A triumph in every category: art, songs and heart.

It starts with Mirabel Madrigal, a saucer-eyed, sweet-hearted youngster from a magical family in Colombia, where their vibrant house holds many generations. Every Madrigal at the age of 5 reveals an inner magic, say, shape-shifting, talking to animals, super strength or powerful hearing. They, in turn, help the surrounding community.

But magic has somehow skipped over Mirabel (voiced by Stephanie Beatriz), who, as she grows into a young girl, still tries to be useful among a household of Avenger-like siblings.

“Gift or no gift, I am just as special as the rest of my family,” she says.

But soon not all is well for this family whose magic was built on tragedy. Cracks — literal — appear in their home’s foundations and their stern matriarch, Abuela Alma, worries quietly that their magic may be failing. It’s up to Mirabel to investigate what’s going on and save the family.

Directors Byron Howard, Jared Bush and Charise Castro Smith fill this tale with their own magic — expressive faces, acres of brilliant flowers, dancing rats, funny donkeys and a house that becomes a character itself, complete with wagging shutters for

waves and tiles that move excitedly.

The voice cast includes John Leguizamo, Wilmer Valderrama, Maluma, Adassa, María Cecilia Botero, Angie Cepeda, Diane Guerrero and Jessica Darrow.

Miranda takes a page from musical theater in his first song, “The Family Madrigal,” which sets the table by introducing the extended clan, and creates “Waiting on a Miracle” for Mirabel, our spunky, glasses-wearing heroine, who stops time to sing her plaintive tune.

He gives the rocking “What Else Can I Do?” to a beautiful sister who makes flowers bloom but is secretly restless, and he gifts the super-strong sister the song “Surface/Pressure,” which reveals the secret stresses she feels. And there’s the terrific, fun group tune “We Don’t Talk About Bruno,” about a family outcast. (Also listen to a little fun Miranda has with another Disney hit, “Let It Go.”)

The action, technically, mostly takes place in the rambling house, though there are magical parts of it that defy physics. There is no traditional villain, either, just an unease as the magic fades.

As always in a Disney animated movie, the visuals are a delight. Look at how a motif of butterflies is subtly represented in the pattern on Mirabel’s dress. There is also a panning shot of the Colombian community at dusk with its lights and candles blazing that is warm and welcoming.

“Encanto” is a film about the pressure of living up to high expectations and the fear of revealing imperfections. It’s about outcasts and misfits in plain sight.

“Sometime family weirdos get a bad rap,” is one line. “You’re more than just your gift,” is another message.

Behind all that is also a cheer for immigration and how we need to lend our gifts to the community. It is the Thanksgiving movie we need in 2021.

“Encanto” is rated PG-13 for thematic elements and mild peril. Running time: 99 minutes.



Mirabel, voiced by Stephanie Beatriz, tries to be useful among a family of super-siblings in “Encanto.”

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

Atmosphere, anticipation

Jane Campion's Western thriller 'Power of the Dog' worth the wait

By MOIRA MACDONALD
The Seattle Times

It's been a long wait for a new Jane Campion film — her transcendent love story “Bright Star,” about the poet John Keats, came out in 2009 — but sometimes waiting makes a gift feel even more special. Nobody makes period films quite like Campion, a master of atmosphere and nuance, and “The Power of the Dog,” set in 1925 Montana, shimmers with anticipation in every frame. You have no idea where this story is going, but you'll follow Campion's vision anywhere.

Based on a 1967 novel by Thomas Savage (it's been tossed around Hollywood for a while), “The Power of the Dog” is a Western thriller, with a strange triangle at its center. Phil (Benedict Cumberbatch) is a man of wealth and power who owns a ranch with his milder brother George (Jesse Plemons), but at heart he's a cowboy: speaking in a voice like cracked leather, walking as if he's still on horseback, more comfortable riding the range than sitting at a table.



Kirsten Dunst plays Rose Gordon in “The Power of the Dog.”

And he's got a cruel streak, as sharp as the knife he carries, which he applies to the widow Rose (Kirsten Dunst) and her gentle teenage son Peter (Kodi Smit-McPhee). George comforts Rose and finds himself in love with her; soon, they are married and Rose arrives at the brothers' longtime home, to Phil's consternation. All of this happens in the movie's early scenes: The table has been set, and a feast of cat-and-mouse tension can be served.

Majestically filmed by cinematographer Ari Wegner (“Lady



PHOTOS BY NETFLIX

Benedict Cumberbatch, right, is a ranch owner with a cruel streak in Jane Campion's “The Power of the Dog,” now in select theaters and streaming on Netflix beginning Dec. 1. Also pictured: Jesse Plemons.

Macbeth”), with New Zealand standing in for Montana, the film unfolds like the mountain views surrounding the ranch house: beautifully ominous and ever-changing, a story altered by a difference in the light. Cumberbatch, transforming himself into an American archetype, is mesmerizing — listen to the multiple shades of meaning he brings to a mockingly whistled tune, and watch as director and actor slowly reveal more colors in the character's portrait. Dunst, as sweet, shy Rose, is all softness; though this single mother has an inner

strength, Phil has a remarkable way of whittling that away, and Dunst lets us see Rose's petals fading in the sharp mountain sunlight. Plemons, in a more reserved role, conveys awkward kindness, and Smit-McPhee, all spidery teenage arms and legs, shows us a quiet boy who loves his mother — and who wonders, in an opening voice-over, what kind of man he would be if he did not save her.

Things happen in “The Power of the Dog” that we don't see, and what we do see carries extra meaning: the way a braided rope

looks like a snake; the quiet rebuke of George's empty, strapped-bare twin bed in the room he once shared with Phil; a spot of red blood on the endless yellow grasses. Jonny Greenwood's plaintive score seems to be asking the questions the characters can't. It's a unique ride of a movie, beautiful and disturbing and haunting — in other words, it's a Jane Campion film. Here's hoping we don't have to wait 11 years for the next one.

“The Power of the Dog” is rated R for brief sexual content/full nudity. Running time: 126 minutes. Now playing in select theaters, and streaming on Netflix as of Dec. 1.

Halle Berry ‘Bruised’ inside and out in directorial debut

By MICHAEL ORDOÑA
Los Angeles Times

Early in “Bruised,” down-and-out Jackie seems to intentionally provoke a raging reaction from her much-larger boyfriend. The confrontation turns into vigorous, consensual sex. Out of context, that could be problematic. In context, it's part of a no-punches-pulled portrait of a person limping around with some deep damage.

In her directorial debut, Oscar-winning actress Halle Berry plays Jackie Justice, a onetime UFC (mixed martial arts) champ whose will was broken in a devastating title loss. Four years later, she's cleaning houses, hiding from notoriety and boozing it up as secretively as she can in her manager/boyfriend's apartment. An unexpected incident proves she still has some fight, and she ends up working with a new trainer to get back in the ring. Then her past catches up with her: The young son she abandoned years ago is essentially left on her doorstep.

From there, “Bruised” hits most of the expected back-from-Palookaville beats, down to the training montage, the uncaring promoter and the late-developing romance. The deep wrinkle is the presence of the boy (played guilelessly by Danny Boyd Jr.), who hasn't spoken since



NETFLIX

Halle Berry plays Jackie Justice, a UFC/MMA champ who is mentally defeated following a devastating loss, and Valentina Shevchenko, a real-life MMA fighter, plays Lady Killer, Jackie's opponent in “Bruised,” now streaming on Netflix.

the murder of his father. He's a walking reminder of every bad decision Jackie has made, but his silent need and her wrenching guilt add dramatic dimension to an otherwise familiar story.

There are many indications from the first minutes of “Bruised” that this won't

be a vanity project, in the sense that the director-star is not concerned with her glamorous image. Berry is looking for the grit under the fingernails, the ache of the contusions inside that won't heal. Jackie is not OK. Some moments land with full force — usually ones centering on Man-

ny, thanks to an empathy-inducing turn by Boyd. Others glance off, unfortunately — particularly a confrontation between Jackie and her mother in which secrets come gushing out of old wounds torn open. That scene has to crush it, but its grip slips.

As to Berry-as-MMA fighter, the results are mixed to positive. In key moments when others say they see the eye of the tiger in Jackie, there's a hint of the timidity that seemed out of place in the actor's Ororo/Storm in the Bryan Singer “X-Men” movies. But when it comes to attacking the action, there's nothing held back. The superb fight choreography and committed execution by the two women in the ring (real-life UFC champ Valentina Shevchenko is convincing as Jackie's opponent), informed by Berry's skill as an actor conveying Jackie's desperation, make the final fight thrilling and cringe-inducing — in a good way.

Berry's willingness to go to dark places and her generosity toward her cast — allowing each of them moments to shine — can only be promising signs for the burgeoning filmmaker.

“Bruised” is rated R for pervasive language, some sexual content/nudity and violence. Running time: 129 minutes. Now streaming on Netflix.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Tiny trains

Now a popular holiday tradition in many cities, model displays return

By KATHARINE ROTH
Associated Press

Many holiday-season train shows were canceled or limited to fewer visitors last year because of the pandemic, but this year the popular attractions are back at botanical gardens, conservatories and elsewhere around the country.

The shows, now a tradition in many cities, feature a combination of model trains and painstakingly detailed models of landmark buildings made from leaves, twigs and other dried plant materials.

“It’s magical because people love to picture themselves in these small landscapes, with displays of greenery hiding whimsical elements surrounding the models of trains and ornate structures,” says Karen Daubmann, vice president for exhibitions and public engagement at the New York Botanical Garden, where the tradition started in 1992.

This year’s show features more than 175 models of New York landmarks and more than 25 different model trains wending their way past them.

Although model trains and holiday greenery have long been intertwined in the popular imagination, the history of this particular genre is as precise as it is surprising.

Almost 40 years ago, Ohio landscape architect Paul Busse took his quirky passion for trains, architecture and gardens public, setting up a garden railway exhibit at the 1982 Ohio State Fair. Throughout the 1980s, Busse developed his now-famous fanciful structures decorated with dried plant material. His “botanical architecture,” as he called it, along with his model train set-ups, were featured at prominent garden shows, primarily in the Midwest.

In 1992, the New York Botanical Garden, smitten by the concept and looking for a way to attract visitors in the winter, invited Busse and his team to create a “Holiday Train Show” there.

“That first year it only featured a couple train tracks and a handful of models of New York landmarks. But it was such a success that it became an annual tradition, with a few new models of landmarks added each year,” says Daubmann.

The idea soon spread. Similar holiday-themed train shows featuring the work of the Busse family and their team popped up at botanical gardens and other spots around the country, including the Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, in Columbus, Ohio; the United States Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C.; the Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Mich.; the Krohn Conservatory in Cincinnati; the Nicholas Conservatory and Gardens in Rockford, Ill.; and the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis.

Busse’s company, Applied Imagination, Ltd. — launched in 1991 in a tiny basement in Cincinnati — soon ran out of space and moved to Alexandria, Ky., where it is now based. It has a dozen or so full-time employees who build models in a studio stocked with plant materials.

“We’ve got everything from sticks of different colors and textures, to shelf fungus, to a huge array of pinecones. You can’t imagine how many types of pinecones there are out there,” says Busse’s daughter Laura Busse Dolan, who took the helm of the company five years ago.

To install all the shows, Applied Imagination’s teams — some tasked with creating model buildings and others working on tiny bridges and tunnels — pack their suitcases in October and travel “straight on until Thanksgiving,” she says. This year, they are putting together nine holiday shows, most at botanical gardens.

“It takes every individual in this company to pull this



PHOTOS BY SETH WENIG/AP

A train sits on a bridge Nov. 11 during the preparations for the annual Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden in New York. The show, which opened to the public Nov. 20, features model trains running through and around New York landmarks, re-created in miniature with natural materials.



Kieran Beam, left, works on the train tracks Nov. 11 as part of the preparations for the annual Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden in New York.



A miniature of the old Penn Station is displayed. A few new models of landmarks are added each year. The structures take 250 hours or more to construct.

“It’s magical because people love to picture themselves in these small landscapes, with displays of greenery hiding whimsical elements surrounding the models of trains and ornate structures.”

Karen Daubmann

V.P. for exhibitions and public engagement
at the New York Botanical Garden



A man works around miniature brownstone buildings Nov. 11 during Holiday Train Show preparations.

thing off,” says Dolan. Over the years, the company has learned a thing or two. “We now avoid using dried berries or acorns in our structures because they’re far too edible. Little creatures nibble on them while the pieces are in storage,” Dolan says. “One year, the squirrels ate one of our lampposts, so we learned the hard way.” Standout models at The New York Botanical Garden’s show include One World Trade Center (made using an upward branching pattern to symbolize the spirit of re-birth after 9/11); the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

(made largely of shelf fungus); the Statue of Liberty; the Apollo Theater; Coney Island; numerous brownstones; and some of the botanical garden’s distinctive buildings. “On average, we create about 50 structures a year for various locations,” says Dolan. “I would say we’ve made 2,000 to 3,000 total over the course of our existence. “The smaller ones take around 250 hours. Our biggest one, an 11-foot replica of the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, took nearly 3,000 hours. It is on display at the Biltmore Estate through the holidays this year,” Dolan says.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Living history can enliven your travels

On one of my earliest trips to Europe when I was just 14 years old, a family friend in a dusty village on the border of Austria and Hungary introduced me to a sage old man. I remember thinking he was a caricature of a classic old Austrian, with a handlebar mustache, a wardrobe that looked like it was stolen from a museum and an intricately carved pipe. Spreading lard on rustic bread, he shared his eyewitness account of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914, which sparked the beginning of World War I. I leaned forward as he described the motorcade, the archduke and his wife in an open car, the explosion of gunfire and the hysteria that followed. That encounter, beside an onion-domed village church and in the shadow of the Iron Curtain, helped spark in me a lifelong interest in history.

Decades later in Prague, I walked with my Czech friend Honza down the path that he walked in 1989 with 100,000 of his countrymen, demanding liberation from their Soviet overlords. Stopping in front of a grand building, Honza said, "Night after night we assembled here, pulled out our keychains, and all jingled them at the president's window, saying, 'It's time to go home now.' Then one night we gathered ... and he was gone. We had won our freedom." Hearing Honza tell this story as we walked that same route he did all those years ago made me understand — and really feel — the jubilation of a country winning its hard-fought independence.

In Northern Ireland, my guide Stephen made his country's struggles come alive for me when he took me to Belfast's "Felon's Club." Stepping through a black metal security cage to reach the door, he whispered, "Membership here is limited to



Rick Steves

those who have spent at least a year and a day in a British prison for political crimes ... but I think I can get you in." Once inside, I was spellbound, listening to heroic stories of Irish resistance while sharing a Guinness with a celebrity felon. His gift of gab gave me a deeper understanding of their struggles. The next day I walked along the green-trimmed gravesites of his prison-mates. Because of my time at the Felons Club, I better understood what these people sacrificed — why they starved themselves to death for the cause of a united Ireland.

My uncle Thor lived through the Nazi occupation of Norway. He took me into Oslo's grand City Hall to show me the huge "Mural of the Occupation" and share his story of those dark days with the visual support of powerful art. Walking slowly, with a soft voice, he narrated the story scene by scene in the present tense — as if the mural told his personal experience as it was happening: "The German blitzkrieg overwhelms our country. Men head for the mountains to organize a resistance movement. Women huddle around the



Rick Steves

As a boy (right), Rick met an eyewitness (left) to the start of World War I.

neighborhood well, traditionally where news is passed, while traitors listen in. While Germans bomb and occupy Norway, a family gathers in their living room. As a boy clenches his fist and a child holds our Norwegian flag — we love it so much — the Gestapo storms in. Columns lie on the ground, symbolizing how, by closing newspapers and the university, Germans did what they could to shut down our culture. Finally, years later, the war is over, prisoners are freed and Norway celebrates its happiest day: May 17, 1945." Thor's voice cracked as he added, "Our first Constitution Day after five years under Nazi control." He finished by wav-

ing his arm wide and saying, "And today, each December, the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in this grand hall."

We can go to places like Austria, the Czech Republic, Northern Ireland, or Norway to do some sightseeing yet learn nothing of their people's lives or their struggles. Or we can seek out opportunities to connect with people who can share eyewitness stories. Travel can — and should — change our perspectives and broaden our worldviews.

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

Light up your holiday season by visiting these displays

Think of Europe in the runup to the holidays, and chances are the first thing that comes to mind is cozy and cheerful Christmas markets. Wonderful they may be, but they're far from the only delight of the season. The stringing of holiday bling along the city streets is another means by which cities get residents and visitors alike into the holiday mood. When it comes to decking out for the season, here are a handful of places that throw out all the stops:



Karen Bradbury

Colmar: Even in France's Alsace region, an area famed for its magical Christmas atmosphere, Colmar's display of lights stands out. The illuminations given off by more than a thousand sources of light are conceived to highlight rather than conceal the architectural details of this canal-lined city brimming with half-timbered houses. Strolls through the Old Town reveal subtly illuminated monuments, museums and churches, some dating from the Middle Ages. The Place Rapp offers a skating rink as its centerpiece. The Christmas market at Little Venice, featuring colorful cottages and a nativity scene, is specifically geared toward young visitors. Online: noel-colmar.com/en/christmas-agenda

Hamburg: Germany's second-largest city shines brightly throughout the Advent season. Sights to see include the elaborately dressed shop windows along the Spitalerstraße, the Jungfernstieg boulevard awash in a sea of light and the Ditmar-Koel-Strasse, where seamen's churches host a Scandinavian-inspired market. The city center's Little Alster Lake is graced by a large tree whose lights shimmer in the waters below. In addition to its more conventional Christmas markets, the city offers cheekier alternatives, including a Winter Pride Christmas market and the Santa Pauli market, featuring live music and a strip tent. The Hamburger Winterdom, a massive



iStock

The small city of Vigo, Spain, hosts the largest display of illuminations in the country.

fun fair done up in neon lights, offers rides, games of chance, tasty treats and fireworks displays on Fridays.

Lisbon: Some 2 million light bulbs strung across the grand avenues and stately squares of the Portuguese capital create a shimmering and at times otherworldly atmosphere. The theme of the décor takes its inspiration from local culture: imagine whimsical sea creatures or intricate Portuguese lacework. The best installations are usually found along the Avenida da Liberdade and the historical center, particularly the Baixa and Chiado neighborhoods. Lisbon also boasts of displaying Europe's largest holiday tree, which is actually a metallic conical structure covered in lights and standing more than 200 feet high. "Presépios," or manger scenes, are also ubiquitous this time of year. Wonderland Lisbon, held in the Parque Eduardo VII, offers treats, arts and crafts, a skating rink and a Ferris wheel. It runs Dec. 1 through Jan. 2, 2022. Online: cultuga.com.br/natal-em-lisboa-portugal

London: In a city ablaze with spectacular seasonal décor, Carnaby Street's Christmas lights consistently stand out. Carnaby is a blanket term for 14 streets in the heart of London's West End known for their shops, restaurants, bars and cafés. This year's edition, named Carnaby Kaleidoscope, sends more than 600 hand-decorated butterflies into the skies above, as the Carnaby arch basks in a vivid pink glow. The "Choose Love" charity shop offers the chance to send shoes, blankets and other vital supplies to refugees. Online: carnaby.co.uk/christmas

Salerno: This port city southeast of Naples, Italy, greets the season with its annual Luci d'Artista, an extravaganza of Christmas lights meant to be taken in by means of a walking route through town. Each year, the decorations revolve around a certain theme; this year's topic will be revealed upon its opening date Dec. 3. Another sight not to be missed is the massive Christmas tree to be set up on Piazza Portanova. Online: lucidartistasalerno.com

Turin: This city in northern Italy shines bright with light installations as part of its own Luci d'Artista event. Inaugurated in 1998, this event's success led Salerno to launch its edition in 2006. The conceptions of contemporary light artists grace the main squares and city streets, as well as the Mole Antonelliana, a landmark building of massive proportions. The lights stay on through Jan. 9. Online: guidatorino.com/luci-d-artista-torino

Vigo: This small city in Galicia, on the coast of northwest Spain, is an unlikely place to host the country's largest illuminations, but Vigo's mayor has grand ambitions and Christmas in his sights. The work of stringing the roughly 10 million LED lights that make the city shine so bright commenced in August. Last year's display covered 334 streets and featured 450 trees, a number the city plans to double in 2021. Other attractions include a giant Ferris wheel, a slide covered with artificial snow, skating rinks and small trains to ferry visitors from one site to the next. Online: tinyurl.com/bd8zfsek

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



LIZA WEISSTUCH/For The Washington Post

By the late 1800s, Schiedam had multiple windmills dedicated to milling grains for the city's many distilleries. There are seven mills in Schiedam today.

Discover a Dutch spirit soaked in history

A foray into genever and the origins of classic cocktails

BY LIZA WEISSTUCH
Special to The Washington Post

The ferry ride from Rotterdam to Dordrecht is only an hour long, but it seems to take you centuries away. Boat seems the most appropriate way to travel to the oldest city in Holland, which thrived for centuries thanks to its location at the intersection of three rivers. Wood, grains and genever — a traditional Dutch spirit flavored with juniper — were among the goods local merchants shipped out to the rest of the world. In the 1870s, some of the genever was made by Simon Rutte, whose distillery still stands, seven generations later, in a square about a 15-minute walk from the harbor along winding cobblestone streets.

From the outside of this modest three-story building, you'd never imagine the extent of what goes on in what you might call the flavor factory inside. In the tasting room, adorned with vintage family photos, there are about two dozen dark-glass spritz bottles, each labeled hazelnoot, Kaffir lime, oranje-bloesem and an assortment of other fruits, nuts, herbs, flowers and spices. They're the aromas of the individual distillates that are blended to craft various genevers, such as Old Simon, the founder's recipe involving roasted hazelnuts and almonds, cinnamon, mace and celery.

"It's the broadest category in the world," said Myriam Hendrickx, master distiller and former food scientist, of genever. "You have all elements from gin in terms of having flavors from so many botanicals, and all the variables in whiskey, grain-wise and aging-wise. Plus you can age it or not."

Downstairs in the vintage-style store, the shelves are

lined with hundreds of bottles, a kaleidoscopic assortment of liqueurs, gins and all kinds of genevers: wood-aged varieties, single oat, single malt. Genever is often explained as the predecessor of gin, and it is, but to describe it as such is to understate it, as I found out on visits to distilleries and bars throughout the Netherlands this past summer. (Though the Dutch traditionally write "jenever," "genever" is typically the U.S. spelling.)

I had gone there on a quest to learn about the spirit, which played a huge role at the dawn of cocktail culture in the United States in the latter half of the 19th century. In fact, it was the original spirit in many classic cocktails we know today as gin-based, such as the Collins. Genever is traditionally distilled from grains, like whiskey, to make a malt wine, which is then redistilled with botanicals, including jeneverbes, or juniper berries. It's distinguished by a maltiness that calls to mind a gentle Irish whiskey. In the first half of the 17th century, the Dutch East India Company was thriving, establishing the Netherlands as an influential commercial force. Genever production grew around England — sort of. Local distillers stripped down the process, infusing the botanicals into less costly neutral spirit. Gone was the maltiness; here to stay was juniper flavor in high definition.

It was hardly only America that clamored for the stuff. Experts estimate that, at points between 1850 and 1880, 1 million liters of genever were exported from the Netherlands each week. Around 1880, it went into free fall with the widespread use of the column still, a more efficient piece of equipment that allowed for cheaper production and much lighter flavors than spirit made in a pot still,

SEE GENEVER ON PAGE 21



Genever is traditionally served in a small tulip glass, filled to the point that it creates a meniscus for easy slurping.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Genever: Spirit played a key role in cocktail culture in America

FROM PAGE 20

which was common until then. If you had cash, you didn't want cheap stuff. Its reputation spiraled.

These are all things I learned at the Jenever Museum in Schiedam, the country's historic genever capital, located a short drive from Rotterdam in a former distillery across from a canal that feeds directly into the Atlantic. A century-plus ago, distilleries lined the street. Barrels were rolled directly onto the ships and sent off to the rest of the world. The museum is jam-packed with vintage advertising posters, antique bottles, miniature models of distilleries and paraphernalia, including mid-century decanters shaped like traditionally dressed Dutch matrons, sassy vixens and Uncle Sam.

I should note here that genever is a complex spirit category. In 2008, the European Union granted it protected geographical indication, the same standard as Champagne and cognac. It established genever as a product that can be made only in Holland, Belgium and small regions of France and Germany. Today, E.U. law defines several styles of genever, including jonge (young) and oude (old). Dutch law further defines korenwijn, which can omit juniper altogether. Here's where it can get tricky: Jonge and oude aren't indications of age, but of recipe. Oude, the Old World style, has to contain at least 15% malt wine but can contain more, while jonge, a newer style, can contain no more than 15% malt wine but often contains less. All genever must have some measure of juniper. It can be aged, but that's not a requirement. Today, an estimated 98% of genever sold is jonge. But traditional styles are making a comeback as smaller distilleries emerge.

At the museum's tasting room, I met Rutger Vismans, whose passion is so evangelical that I actually considered renouncing all other spirits forever. Or at least for the rest of my time in the Netherlands.

"I really love genever — I love the smell, the flavor, the historic part," said Rutger, head distiller at the museum, as he poured me a sample of Old Schiedam, the house expression, made with 100% malt wine and no botanicals other than juniper. He distills on-site with a team of five volunteers — local retired men, an avuncular crew of nostalgic hobbyists. He led me through the distillery, which smelled of fresh-baked sourdough, and invited me to meet him in Haarlem, just under an hour from Rotterdam by train, where he works as distiller for Jopen, a brewery where the owners know a thing or two about vintage drinks. Jopen is known for reviving lost styles of Dutch beer with recipes unearthed from city archives. And he makes his own brand, Rudy's. Like I said: passionate.

The museum encompasses the Walvisch, or the Whale, a faithful reconstruction of a centuries-old windmill that burned in 1996. It's one of seven mills in Schiedam today, where once there were 24 making flour for distillers and bakers. From the upper deck, stories above, it became clear just how thoughtfully the city was designed around the industry. In its heyday, Schiedam had about 400 distilleries. It was known as Zwart Nazareth, or Black Nazareth, because of the canopy of black smoke from all the production. No building in the densely packed streetscape



LIZA WEISSTUCH/For The Washington Post

The Bols Distillery in Amsterdam was originally constructed in 1575. It's still a working distillery with a proeflokaa, or tasting pub, and a shop upstairs.

is higher than 2½ stories, so nothing interferes with the wind powering the mills' blades.

"Want to see it in action?" one of the millers shouted. He locked the gears and proceeded to scramble, super-hero-like, up the wood lattice of one of the blades to attach a heavy sail to the frame, which would catch the wind and turn the blades. He hauled the heavy ropes up and nimbly hooked it to the top of the frame. He scrambled halfway down and swung the rope like a lasso, unfurling the tarp and swiftly tying knots to secure it at the midpoint. Then he darted down to the base and fastened it into place there. Henk, a retired university professor of aeronautics who volunteers at the mill, watched approvingly.

"It's all the technology of motion and power," he told me, explaining how aeronautics was not all that different.

Genever distilleries proliferated in other cities, too, so I traveled to The Hague, a half-hour train ride from Rotterdam, to visit Van Kleef, one of van Gogh's watering holes, as legend has it. It sits on a narrow street, and its facade hasn't changed much since it opened in 1842. Today, it's a store, tasting room and museum. Much of the distilling happens off-site. Owner Fleur Kruyt, a convivial host, showed me The Hague's first phone book from 1883, where Van Kleef Distillery held a distinguished position of the first listing and the phone number "1." She explained "drankorgel," or drinking organ, the tradition of knocking on barrels to determine the volumes of their contents. And she poured me a flight of soft, cardamom-accented wheat genever, a spicier, musky rye variety, and a robust yet velvety five-year-old.

The next day I lit out to Haarlem, where I joined up again with Rutger at Jopenkerk, which is located in a former church on a main square. We tried a few Gospel genevers, including a caraway-accented, soft and citrusy barrel-aged Piet Honingh, distilled from Jopen beer, then strolled a few blocks to Bar Wigbolt, a genever-focused cocktail bar decked out with old-

fashioned tan ceramic genever jugs. (Seek out van Gogh's more obscure paintings and you'll spot a few.) Bob van den Bree, an owner, presided over the bar. If we really want to get a sense of what genever does for a cocktail, he said, try a Happy Bob, made with Old Duff 100% malt wine genever, an Old World style produced entirely with malt wine, no neutral grain spirit. There were several strong-flavored ingredients in the drink — lemon juice, Campari, IPA syrup — yet the brawny maltiness popped through.

"A lot of people say, 'My grandfather drank genever; I don't like it,'" Bob lamented. "That's because they drink jonge genever. But as we see older styles introduced more, it's easier to explain to people why they should be proud of the heritage. It's working. Young people spend more for better products."

I had one last stop on my circuit: a small urban outpost of Dutch giant Bols. The compact distillery on a narrow pedestrian street is the same location that Lucas Bols opened in 1575. He started as a liqueur maker and would later make genevers with exotic spices and herbs the Dutch East India Company brought to the city. Having been known throughout the 20th century for its liqueurs, Bols changed course in 2008 to focus on its genever-making tradition.

In this small facility, head distiller Monique ten Kortenaar redistills malt wine to make the individual botanical distillates that are blended with straight malt wine or grain spirit at a larger facility to fashion the genevers. She also makes a product independently. Otenba is a cross between gin and genever that highlights Asian botanicals, a nod to her grandfather, a perfumer who specialized in fragrances for the Far East market. (A tattoo of flowers in a vintage perfume bottle is another tribute to him.) She designed the spirit to pique curiosity of younger drinkers who think of genever as too fuddy-duddy, she told me.

After we toured the distillery, which still boasts some of the building's 16th-century construction, we went up to the Victorian-

If you go

Where to eat

Bar Wigbolt
Address: Smedestraat 41, Haarlem
Online: barwigbolt.nl
Phone: 011-31-23-202-5970
This stylish cocktail bar features a wide assortment of genevers, creative cocktails and a staff with a deep knowledge of the spirit and its history. Cocktails from about \$10. Open Tuesday through Thursday and Sunday 6:30 p.m. to midnight; Friday and Saturday 5 p.m. to midnight.
Rutte Distillery
Address: Vriesestraat 130, Dordrecht
Online: rutte.com
Phone: 011-31-78-613-4467
Since its founding in 1872, Rutte Distillery has made a vast assortment of genevers, liqueurs and gins, and it's known for its creative takes on traditional styles. Shop Monday to Saturday 9.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Distillery open to visitors for tours without reservations 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.
Bols Distillery/Wynand Fockink Bar
Address: Pijlsteeg 31, Amsterdam
Phone: 011-31-20-639-2695
Online: wynand-fockink.nl
First opened in 1575, this distillery produces the botanical distillates that are blended into Bols' genevers. The old-timey bar and store are operated by Wynand Fockink, a different brand. Tickets for tours and tastings can be purchased through Wynand Fockink. Tasting and tour tickets are about \$20 per person. Tours Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Bar and shop open daily 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.

What to do

Jenever Museum
Address: 74-76 Lange Haven, Schiedam
Online: jenevermuseum.nl
Phone: 011-31-10-246-9676
A broad history of genever, from when the Dutch East India Company brought exotic spices to the Netherlands to today, is on view at this canal-side museum. Also features working distillery and tasting room. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entrance about \$14 per person; tastings about \$11 for three samples and about \$22 for six.
Van Kleef
Address: Lange Beestenmarkt 109, The Hague
Online: museumvankleef.nl
Phone: 011-31-70-345-2273
This compact distillery, established in 1842, is the last one in The Hague. Its museum features vintage equipment and a variety of historical documents, antique books and paraphernalia. Drinks from about \$1 per tasting glass, cocktails about \$12. Bites such as olives and cheese plates from about \$2.80. Open Tuesday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Ninety-minute tour with tasting session about \$23 per person. Tours offered noon and 2 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday.

Information: holland.com/global/tourism.htm

accented proeflokaal, or tasting pub, where I was about to learn how the Dutch traditionally drink genever. It's called kopstootj, or "little head butt." The bartender pours genever into a tulip glass to the point of near-overflow. Then he presents a glass of beer.

"It's poured to a meniscus, because Dutch people want to get their money's worth. OK, put your hands behind your back," she instructed. "Now bend over, slurp the surface, then pick up the glass and drink the rest. And the beer."

If that doesn't call for Dutch courage, I don't know what does.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



PHOTOS BY JOHN VANDIVER/Stars and Stripes

The big wine barrels with detailed carvings, including the old Stuttgart city hall, are one of the highlights of a visit to the Stuttgart Museum of Viniculture, located in the Uhlbach section of town.



An old wine presser is among the artifacts at the Stuttgart Museum of Viniculture, which tells the history of local winemaking.

The grape escape

Visitors will find Stuttgart wine museum just vine

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Statistics are hard to come by, but it seems unlikely that any big German city drinks more wine per person than Stuttgart.

In a country renowned for its beer, Stuttgart, with its own municipal winery and surrounded by vineyards, is all about the grape.

But if some outsiders turn up their noses at the local trollinger or lemlberger wines consumed in the region — and not many other places — Stuttgart can't seem to get enough of the stuff.

To better appreciate the overlooked history of winemaking in Stuttgart, the place to go is the museum dedicated to celebrating it. In nearby Uhlbach, which is at the heart of area grape-growing, the Stuttgart Museum of Viniculture puts you in touch with tradition.

The museum is quite small, and there isn't a ton to see. But for just 3 euros, it's worthwhile for wine buffs and can be navigated in under an hour.

Luckily, there are English explanations at exhibits to provide details. Wooden winemaking tools of generations past, such as

On the QT

Address: 4 Uhlbacher Platz, Stuttgart
Hours: November to March, 2-6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday; Sunday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. April to October, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursday-Sunday.
Cost: Admission is 3 euros. The wines cost between 2.50 euros and 5 euros per glass.
Information: Phone: 0711-325718; Online: stuttgart-tourist.de/en/a-viniculture-museum-stuttgart

John Vandiver

grape pressers, are among the items displayed.

There also are interesting informational tidbits. Apparently, some historians believe that wine production, and the profits that came from it, was a reason Stuttgart become a home for medieval royalty.

It was possibly even more of a reason than the wealth brought by horse breeding and the stud farms from which Stuttgart got its name, according to the museum. The winemaking tradition in Stuttgart is believed to go back some 2,000 years, thanks to the Romans.

Massive wine barrels from more than 100 years ago, including one with a carving of Stuttgart's old city hall, also are

showcased. There are explanations about soils in the area and how they contribute to the character of various vintages and the unique aspects of local wine.

Best of all, visitors can sample local offerings at the wine cafe on site.

While I'm no expert, I would say that the wine that most comes to mind when thinking of Stuttgart is the red known as trollinger. It is Germany's fourth-most-planted red wine vine.

Virtually all trollinger production is in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, notes the Oxford Companion to Wine. Stuttgart is the state capital.

"An astonishing statistic when one considers that virtually all of the resultant pale red is drunk by Wuerttembergers," the book says.

It was all the more reason on my recent visit to the wine museum to try the maligned yet locally cherished trollinger. My review: light and easy to drink and not a thing wrong with it if appreciated on its own terms.

But while bottles of local wine can be purchased for takeaway, I decided to leave empty-handed.

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The Stuttgart Museum of Viniculture, in the city's Uhlbach section, takes visitors through the long history of winemaking in the area. The museum also has a tasting area with local wines.



In addition to history, the Stuttgart Museum of Viniculture also spotlights contemporary vintners in the area.

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Rheinland-Pfalz eatery elevates burgers

Cure meaty cravings with a trip to Bruno's Burger & Lieblingsgerichte

By ALEXANDER RIEDEL
Stars and Stripes

During a recent cold night exploring the nearby Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, I was overcome with a craving for the comforting, warm bite of a good ol' juicy burger.

A quick internet search led my wife and me to Bruno's Burger & Lieblingsgerichte (favorite dishes), a small restaurant in Neustadt's old city center.

On our way inside, we admired the historic building's beautifully restored trusswork. Bruno's is located along what was once a creek used for washing off by-products from the tanneries shops upstream.

Because of this, the area was considered an industrial and less desirable part of town. Today, though, the alley leading to the restaurant is lined by swanky wine bars, cafes and a plethora of sit-down restaurants.

Bruno's is a relatively new addition to this old city core, having opened in 2017. Its namesake is the dog of one of the co-owners, and Bruno the beagle's picture symbolically guards the front door.

We walked into the small space, where the open kitchen welcomes customers. A friendly waitress was more than polite and said she could squeeze us in between reservations at one of the two-seater tables.

The interior blends the historic with a modern touch. Most of the furniture is utilitarian and consists mainly of benches or spartan stools with cushions held in place by industrial tie-down straps.

Large lamps and electronic candlelight provide a warm glow, resulting in a casual yet stylish vibe.

A burger joint may have once been the antithesis not only of fine dining but also of a healthy or vegetarian diet, but Bruno's is inclusive in its burger culture, offering both gluten-free and vegetarian options.

And for those looking for something else entirely, there are such favorites as grilled salmon with caramelized ginger or chicken salad.

Although Bruno's unashamedly focuses on the ground round, vegetarians have the option of the Veggie-Magic, which surprisingly consists not of a veggie burger or mock-meat patty but of a decidedly delicious and hearty cut of grilled halloumi cheese accompanied by a mango-lemongrass chutney.

Although fantastic and filling, the burger seemed more like a great summer snack to me. The side salad was equally summer-oriented and refreshing with a light vinaigrette dressing.

The restaurant offers hip sodas and organic lemonades with flavors such as pomegranate and rhubarb. Of course, there are German beers as well as local wines.

While we waited for our burgers, we were delighted by the fresh blackberry lemonade, which is made in house and was bursting with real fruit flavor.

For nonvegetarians, burger choices range from the classic Route 66 to the shrimp-topped Garnelikuss. This isn't Texas, but we figured "go big or go home" and ordered the German High Roller, a double cheeseburger with tomato, lettuce, cucumber, onions, mustard, mayonnaise and wild garlic pesto.

The burger didn't disappoint. A generous helping of cheese accompanied moist, well-seasoned patties seasoned with a healthy dash of pepper and a sauce with hints of curry.

The burger was well-paired with a side of homemade potato wedges baked to a delicious golden-brown with the skin on and smothered in melted cheese.

Bruno's buns come from a local bakery and are miles beyond their foamy cousins at fast-food places. This also applied to the gluten-free option, which was just as fluffy as its wheat-containing counterpart.

It was a truly appreciated surprise for my wife, who has dietary restrictions that often force her to eat burgers sans bun — but not on Bruno's watch.



PHOTOS BY ALEXANDER RIEDEL/Stars and Stripes

The "German High Roller" burger at Bruno's Burger & Lieblingsgerichte restaurant in Neustadt an der Weinstrasse. Burgers and additional dishes are made with mostly locally sourced ingredients and prepared fresh, in house.



Bruno's in Neustadt an der Weinstrasse is named after Bruno the Beagle, the owner's dog.

Bruno's Burger & Lieblingsgerichte

Address: Zwerchgasse 17, Neustadt an der Weinstrasse

Hours: Tuesday, 12-5 p.m.; Wednesday-Friday 12-5 p.m. and 5:30-9 p.m.; Saturday 2-9 p.m.

Prices: Burgers range from 6.90 euros to 12.50 euros. Sides dishes from 3.50 euros to 6 euros. Favorites plates are offered from 9.90 euros to 11.80 euros. Dessert options, including creme brulee, are 3.50 euros to 4.50 euros. Drinks, depending on size, range from 2 euros for bottled soft drinks to 3 euros for iced tea and from 2.40 euros for beer to 32 euros for some wine selections.

English menu: No, but most staffers speak English and are happy to assist.

Contact information: Phone: +49 (0)6321-3554426; email: info@brunos-liebblingsgerichte.de; online: brunos-liebblingsgerichte.de; Facebook: /BrunosBurgerundLieblingsgerichte

Alexander Riedel

We rounded out the meal with a chocolate tart topped with a raspberry drizzle, one of two items on the admittedly limited dessert menu. But after the delicious burgers, we didn't have much room to spare anyway.

The traditional hamburger has come quite a ways from its industrial image of a loveless ground beef patty between two bread rolls. In Neustadt, though, Bruno's stands alone.

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Bruno's in Neustadt an der Weinstrasse. The restaurant offers a modern eatery in the historic downtown zone.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Kyushu is the place for shochu

For an authentic experience, take a tasting tour of the Japanese spirit distilleries in Miyazaki prefecture

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Many who've spent time in South Korea have enjoyed soju, a liquor mostly made from ethanol that's fueled more than its share of big weekends on the peninsula.

Japan has its own version, known as shochu, that's been distilled in small, family-owned operations for generations.

Miyazaki prefecture, on Japan's southern island of Kyushu, is the perfect place to enjoy locally made shochu. A recent press tour stopped at four distilleries to see how the beverage is made.

The first stop was the Yanagita Distillery in Miyakonojo City, where we met Tadashi Yanagita, the fifth generation to run the family business.

The distillery has a small lounge where Yanagita poured samples of a few of his products. Each has a distinctive taste with some providing a stronger alcoholic kick and others tickling the mouth like whiskey.

Shochu typically has between 25% and 35% alcohol content. Distilleries sell 1.8-liter bottles for the equivalent of about \$20.

Yanagita uses spring water from the Kirishima Mountains and local rice, barley and sweet potatoes in his products. The region's high temperatures and high humidity are ideal for fermentation, he said.

Also in Miyakonojo, the Watanabe Distillery prides itself on growing its own potatoes, according to chief executive Koichiro Watanabe.

The young shochu maker showed off his factory and spoke about the importance of local microbes in the process of making the alcohol.

Watanabe leaves the windows of his distillery open to allow local flavors to waft in on the wind and proudly shows off the sweet potatoes he grows nearby.

The potatoes are mashed and mixed with yeast before being left to ferment. The mixture is stirred regularly and cooled to stop it overheating before it's fed into a still where alcohol condenses to produce shochu.

In Nichinan City, the Furusawa distillery is operating in ancient buildings that include a bunker built to protect the shochu from Allied bombing during World War II.

From the street you can watch locals sort potatoes in a shed and see very old ceramic pots used for shochu fermentation.

A drinking area includes a view of a small garden. We tasted four types of shochu there, along with the sort of local fish snacks a Japanese worker might eat with a tittle after work.

The Inoue Shuzo Co. is also in Nichinan. This large shochu factory employs uniformed staff to produce copious quantities of alcohol that's sold all over Japan.

The operation includes a fish farm where sturgeon imported from Russia are raised to produce caviar. If you're willing to splash out about \$80 for a small jar, it goes nicely with crackers and a glass of shochu.

You can find plenty of shochu on Japanese supermar-



PHOTOS BY SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

Workers at the Furusawa distillery process sweet potatoes for shochu making in Nichinan City, Japan.



Tadashi Yanagita stirs fermenting sweet potatoes at his family shochu distillery in Miyakonojo City, Japan.

ket shelves and a mass-produced variety, akin to the Korean soju, is mixed with carbonated fruit juice to make Chu Hai, sold in cans at convenience stores.

But if you want an authentic Japanese shochu experi-



Boxes of shochu are stacked at the Inoue Shuzo Co. distillery in Nichinan City, Japan.

ence, it's worth visiting a distillery, and Miyazaki is the perfect place to do that.

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How many candies are in the jar?

Best guesses win a gift card!

Visit Facebook.com/StripesPacific to enter.

STARS AND STRIPES

\$75

Exact Guess: \$

75

Closest Guess: \$

25

Nov. 22nd to Dec. 5th

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Freshness guaranteed

Taste pole-fished bonito at Hotel Maruman on Kyushu island in Miyazaki prefecture

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Meitsu Port in Japan's Miyazaki prefecture is the home of pole-fished bonito, known locally as katsuo.

Early each weekday morning, local restaurants and hotels send staff to bid on freshly caught fish at a dockside market. Seabirds flutter about the boats as they unload their bounty pierside before an

auctioneer starts the bidding on the day's catch.

The market has everything from snapper to lobster, but the port's most famous fish is bonito, also known as skipjack tuna.

A dockside museum is devoted to the bonito fishery and includes old navigation equipment and bamboo fishing poles that were used before fiberglass and carbon poles were introduced a few decades ago.

Visitors can put on a pair of virtual reality goggles and see what it's like for fishermen catching bonito from boats that follow the fish north to Hokkaido along Japan's east coast.

Bonito fishing boats typically have a crew of 20 to 25. The crew uses binoculars and sonar to track schools of fish and lure them close to the vessel by dropping bait and spraying water to simulate jumping anchovies.

When the bonito are close, the fishermen can haul them in on hooks decorated with rooster feathers. The hooks don't have barbs on them, which allows the fishermen to flick fish into the boat and snap the line back into the water in a matter of seconds.

Visiting the fish market and museum requires approval from local officials, but anyone can taste bonito sashimi, along with other locally caught seafood, for lunch at Hotel Maruman, a short walk from the pier.

During my recent visit to the port, I ordered a 1,100-



PHOTOS BY SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

Visiting the fish market Meitsu Port in Miyazaki prefecture, Japan, requires approval, but anyone can taste bonito sashimi, along with other locally caught seafood, at Hotel Maruman, a short walk from the pier.



Bidders vie for the best catch from the pierside market at Meitsu Port in Miyazaki prefecture, Japan.

yen (about \$9.65) meal that included bonito. The reddish fish tastes a little like fatty tuna.

The fish is usually caught in Miyazaki only from February to early May. Bonito travel north along the Japanese east coast following the Kuroshio current during the year.

Local seafood features in most of Hotel Maruman's meals, including Gyoudon Teishoku for 1,650 yen.

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Hotel Maruman

Location: Otsu-4893 Nangocho Nakamura, Nichinan, Miyazaki 889-3204
Directions: A 15-minute walk from Nango Station.
Lunch hours: 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Prices: 1,100 to 1,650 yen
Dress: Casual
Information: Phone: 0987-64-1788; Online: hotel-maruman.com/daymeal.html

Seth Robson



Meitsu Port in Japan's Miyazaki prefecture is the home of pole-fished bonito, known locally as katsuo.

A Parmesan crust adds texture, flavor to this cheesy salmon dish

BY LINDA GASSENHEIMER
Tribune News Service

Here's a new way to serve salmon. It's baked with a crisp, crunchy Parmesan crust that adds texture and flavor to this meaty fish. Good-quality Parmesan cheese makes a difference. Look for Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese or the best quality you can find.

Parmesan Crusted Salmon

Ingredients
Olive oil spray
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 tablespoons panko breadcrumbs
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons olive oil
3/4 pound salmon fillet
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Directions
Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking tray with foil



LINDA GASSENHEIMER/TNS

Parmesan-Crusted Salmon with Spaghetti and Spinach.

and spray with olive oil spray. Mix the Parmesan cheese, breadcrumbs, garlic and cayenne pepper together in a bowl. Add the olive oil and mix well until the mixture is moist. Place salmon fillets skin side down on the foil-lined sheet. Spray salmon with olive oil spray. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to

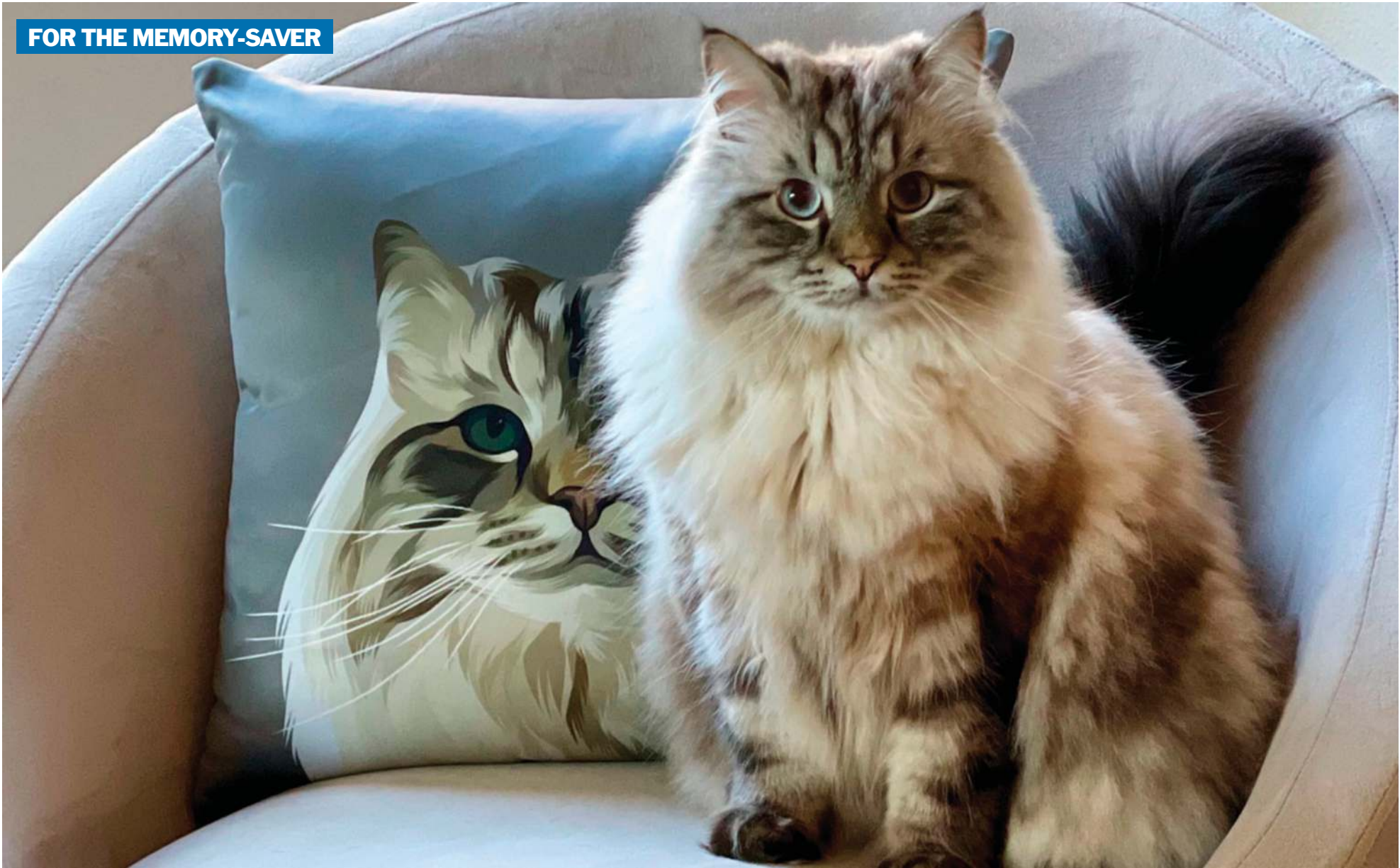
taste. Press Parmesan mixture onto the salmon covering the fillets. Place the tray in the oven for 15 minutes. If crust starts to burn, cover the salmon with foil. A meat thermometer should read 125 degrees. Divide between two dinner plates.

Spaghetti and Spinach

Ingredients
1/4 pound whole wheat spaghetti
4 cups fresh spinach
2 teaspoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Directions

Bring a large sauce pan three quarters filled with water to a boil. Add the spaghetti and boil 9 minutes or according to package instructions. Add the spinach. Remove 2 tablespoons of the water to a bowl. Drain the spaghetti and spinach and place in the bowl with the reserved water. Add the olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Divide between two dinner plates with the salmon.
Serves 2.

WEEKEND: HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



FOR THE MEMORY-SAVER

STACEY SACHS, SAM AND JACK/AP

Sam and Jack will take a photo of your beloved pet and turn it into everything from a framed illustrated portrait to a personalized throw pillow like the one above.

Keepsakes to be cherished, not re-gifted

By ALICIA RANCILIO
Associated Press

Some gifts, such as a candle or a bottle of wine, are great in the moment or for the short term. Others make memorable keepsakes or are so personal they can't be re-gifted.

Here are some gifts that, besides amusing and delighting the receiver now, are meant to be cherished for years.

CUSTOM CLUTCH: Newport, Calif., designer and boutique owner Talia Hancock sells hand-beaded clutch handbags that can be customized with letters and colors. If there's a bride-to-be on your list who is changing her name, she might love a clutch with her maiden name on one side and her married name on the other. A new sorority pledge might impress her sisters with a clutch made with her school's colors and the Greek letters. Or how about a clutch adorned with your kids' names? "The sky's the limit," Hancock said. She prefers to facilitate orders through the "text to order" option on her TALIA Instagram account so she can have a dialogue with customers. Clutches are \$198 for one-side customized, \$238 for two-sided.

CUSTOM DENIM JACKET: Also from Hancock's store TALIA, a customized denim jacket. The back of the jacket is hand-painted. You can request a name, date, initials, phrase or image that will

guarantee you get noticed. If you don't want the back painted, consider customizing the collar instead, so when you pop it, it makes a statement. "I never wear my clutch or wear my jackets without getting stopped and asked where I got them," Hancock said. Jackets come in blue or black denim and start at \$198 (some designs might cost extra.)

PRESERVED TEXTS: Do you have a funny text conversation with friends that you'd love to save? Or a loved one whose texts you never want to delete? Keep them forever in a book of text messages called Keepster. The company can take

messages from apps including iMessage, WhatsApp and Hike, and compile them into the format of your choice.

PERSONALIZED PODCAST: If you'd like to have an oral history from a loved one, check out Artifact. The company enlists professional interviewers — many say they are "moonlighting journalists" — to conduct an interview with your subject. An interview focuses on a "chapter" of a person's life, such as childhood and the teen years. The audio is then edited to a 20-minute, studio-quality episode. The cost is \$119 per episode or \$99 per episode for three. A finished product is delivered within five days of the recording.

PET PORTRAITS: The pandemic has seen a surge in pet ownership, and Sam and Jack is one of the companies offering a way to celebrate or remember these beloved family members. They'll take a photo of your pet and turn it into everything from a framed, illustrated portrait to a personalized throw pillow. They also customize smaller items including water bottles, mugs and phone cases.

VIDEO MESSAGE: For the person who has everything, an original gift might be a group video message or tribute by Tribute.co. They can send out the invites and compile the videos. There's no maximum length, so messages can be hours long. The company's founder, Andrew Horn, says he's even had customers rent out



KENDALL DI TOLLA, TALIA/AP

California designer and boutique owner Talia Hancock sells hand-beaded clutch handbags that can be customized with letters and colors.

theaters to play their tributes. Prices vary depending on the package: If you edit the videos yourself using Tribute.co's editing platform, the cost is \$29. If you use their concierge service, they'll take care of the outreach coordination and get the video edited for \$99. They can present it via a link that can also be downloaded, or if you prefer to present a physical gift, for \$174 the company will give you a greeting card that has a video screen with audio inside to play your message.

WEEKEND: HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE



URBAN ARROW/AP

Electric cargo bicycles, such as this one from Urban Arrow, have become popular among climate lovers the world over.

Gifts that run the gamut from van adventures to James Bond

BY LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

Sometimes, gifting is a crap shoot. You dig around and hope for the best, and you just might come up with gold.

Here's some serendipitous inspiration for those in need:



WALDEN CAMPERVANS/AP

A look inside a customized van from Walden Campervans. The company offers rentals with plenty of amenities, perfect for people who found or rediscovered their love of the open road during the pandemic.

VAN LIFE: Whether in vans, campers or school buses, the pandemic grew a new crop of folks who took off on wheels after tricking out their rides. Why not gift a van-life adventure? A company outside Boston, Walden Campervans, has nicely done rentals with solar and hot water systems — and plenty of add-ons, including toilets. One of their rides is pet-friendly with a cozy crate. Gift cards can be had and never expire. A three-night minimum rental is required. The maximum is 30 days. No one-way trips. Prices are generally in the \$300-a-night range, depending on van, season and extras. Walden-campervans.com.

ANIMATRONIC PETS: Isolation, loneliness, cognitive decline. The pandemic hasn't been easy on anybody, including dementia patients. Why not give a gift of companionship with an animatronic dog or cat? Research is encouraging that such toys can do a world of good without the responsibility of a real pet. One brand, Ageless Innovation, offers several with built-in sensors that respond to motion and touch. The heartbeat can be felt and their coats are lifelike. The cats purr and the dogs can bark back in response to a voice. Dogs are \$139.99 and cats \$124.99. Kids might like them, too. Joyforall.com.



AGELESS INNOVATION/AP

Research shows that companion toys, such as the animatronic "Joy for All Companion Pet Pup," may help dementia patients.

BLACK HAIR: "There is something radical about loving your hair in a world that tells you not to; it shows an incredible amount of strength and self-love." So wrote St. Clair Detrick-Jules in the introduction to her book, "My Beautiful Black Hair." The filmmaker and photographer turned to friends and strangers for 101 natural hair journeys. The book is part love letter to her younger sister, Khloe, who struggled after white classmates called her hair ugly. Detrick-Jules combines the candid portraits she took and narratives she collected with letters of inspiration to her sibling written by some of the women. Chronical Books. \$24.95.

SEE GAMUT ON PAGE 29

WEEKEND: HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Gamut: Consider hot sauce and self-heating coffee cans

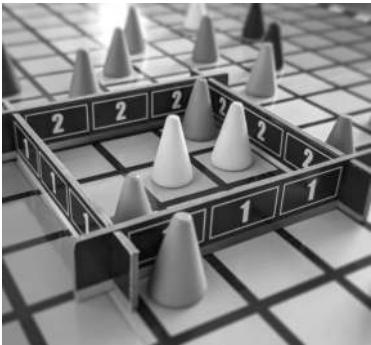
FROM PAGE 28

HOT SAUCE: Alice Cooper and hot sauce is a pairing that doesn't roll off the tongue, but in the world of celebrity deals in the food and beverage industry, why not the 73-year-old rocker? Turns out, the OG has always been something of a hot sauce fan and was hands-on in developing three of his own named for some of his hits: Welcome to My Nightmare (mild), Poison (reaper hot) and No More Mr. Nice Guy (medium). Cooper's favorite part of the process? "Tasting the sauces as we went along to get them right," he said via email. Made from reaper peppers, one of the hottest around. \$29.95 for all three. Also sold separately. [UnitedSauces.com](#), [TheChivery.com](#) and other top retailers.

HUES & CUES: This vibrant, color-guessing game took flight on TikTok and has made its way into the hearts of families. It's also a great party game. A cue master pulls a card and lends clues on one of 480 hues displayed on the board without using the actual names of primary colors. So no red, blue, yellow, etc. Play takes about 30 minutes for three to 10 people. It looks complicated but is amazingly simple — for folks with vocabularies that differentiate hues, anyway. Guessing "grape" or "apple" won't get the job done. \$24.99 from [The Op](#). Widely available.

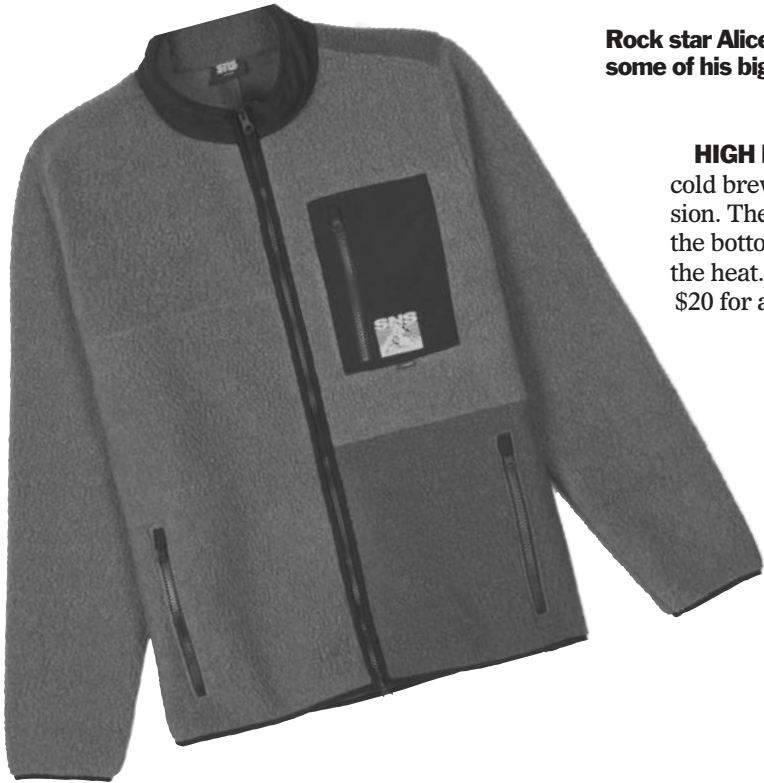
COMFY FLEECE: [Sneakersnstuff.com](#), also known as SNS, has a great-looking patchwork Polartec zip jacket and pants set that works for all genders. The color palette screams fall in moss, brown and earthy blue. Available on the site and in the company's brick-and-mortar stores in Stockholm, London, Paris, Berlin, New York, Los Angeles and Tokyo. The jacket costs \$169 and the pants \$149.

SNS/AP



THE OP/AP

The board game Hues & Cues took off during the pandemic thanks to TikTok.



HYDROW ROWER: The company that makes this high-end home rowing machine calls it the Peloton of rowers. It's sleek, quiet and — for \$38 a month — comes with a Peloton-like membership full of pre-loaded watery workouts and live events displayed on a 22-inch touchscreen. It's heavy at 145 pounds but folds upright for storage with the help of a kit, sold separately. It uses an electromagnetic fabric strip as the drag mechanism to simulate the pull of water. The drag is screen controlled. It requires Wi-Fi but is not enabled for third-party apps like Netflix or Spotify. \$2,295 with free standard delivery included. [Hydrow.com](#).



Hydrow/AP



HOT SHOTS DISTRIBUTING/AP

Rock star Alice Cooper has hot sauces named for some of his biggest hits.



TASCHEN/AP

"The James Bond Archives: 007" is a hefty, high-end history of the spy franchise.

THE BONDS: With "No Time to Die" recently out and the 60th anniversary of the James Bond franchise next year, Taschen is out with a hefty, up-to-date book for the coffee table covering the making of every single movie. It's filled with more than 1,000 images, and features oral history from 150 members of casts and crews. Edited by Paul Duncan, "The James Bond Archives: 007" costs \$200. [Taschen.com](#).

HIGH BREW: You may have heard of this Austin, Texas-based company selling cold brew coffee in cans, but you might not be familiar with its self-heating version. The can uses a solid-state chemical reaction to warm the liquid. Simply twist the bottom of the can, wait two minutes and shake gently three times to distribute the heat. Pull the tab on the lid, which looks like a regular go cup top, and enjoy. \$20 for a four-pack. Six packs are \$30. [Highbrew.com](#).



WARNER BROS. CONSUMER PRODUCTS/AP

This mug is just one of the products available for "Ted Lasso" fans.

TED GEAR: Until we meet again, Ted Lasso, Warner Bros. has a shop full of gift options for the super fan. There's the AFC Richmond V-neck sweater for \$59.95, a team jersey for the same price, and a nice selection of hoodies, shorts, T-shirts and accessories, from socks to a "Be a Goldfish" mug. Go to the [Ted Lasso shop at Wbshop.com](#) while we wait for Season 3 of the Apple TV+ hit show.

WEEKEND: HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

FOR THE MUSIC LOVER

Presents that strike a chord

By MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

Music-related gifts are an easy choice this holiday season. Everyone likes music, right? Here are some outstanding record collections for lovers of rap, metal and pop, a pair of fascinating books and some clothes that help musicians in need.

PIANO MAN: Billy Joel is celebrating 50 years of making music this year and he’s reminding us all how it started. “Billy Joel — The Vinyl Collection, Vol. 1” contains nine LPs: His first six solo studio albums (“Cold Spring Harbor,” “Piano Man,” “Street-life Serenade,” “Turnstiles,” “The Stranger,” “52nd Street”) with his first live album (“Songs in the Attic”) and “Live at The Great American Music Hall — 1975,” a previously unreleased concert recording available for the first time in the box set as a double-vinyl album. The box also includes a 50-page booklet highlighting Joel’s early career through archival photos, his insights on his songs and tributes from fellow musicians, artists and celebrities. Price: \$250.

BOOK NOTES: “Music Is History” by Questlove is both very personal and sweepingly grounded in the historical, one of the most fascinating music-based books of the year. The Roots’ five-time Grammy-winning producer and drummer picks one song per chapter from 1971-2001 and lets his encyclopedic mind fly, explaining the tune in its context, reaching back to its influences, connecting it to its

influencers and exploring pop culture and U.S. history. It’s a tour de force. Take 1976, which highlights Stevie Wonder’s “Sir Duke,” then spotlights Duke Ellington and connects it all to Richard Nixon, the Republican Party and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Questlove also includes great lists, like the best E-minor songs or hip-hop deep cuts. Cost: \$30.

HEAVY BOX: Metallica’s 1991 self-titled LP, generally known as the “Black Album,” is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, and one way to join in is by listening to a whole lot of people who aren’t in Metallica. “The Metallica Blacklist” is a four-hour, 53-track behemoth of covers by artists including Phoebe Bridgers, Miley Cyrus, St. Vincent, Weezer and Elton John. They tackle legendary tracks from the album, including “Enter Sandman,” “The Unforgiven,” “Nothing Else Matters,” “Wherever I May Roam” and “Sad But True.” The seven-LP vinyl box set retails for \$150, a 4-CD version is \$30 and the digital download costs \$50. All profits go to the charities of each contributing artist’s choice along with Metallica’s own foundation, All Within My Hands.

RAP THIS UP: Lil Wayne has dropped the vinyl box set “Tha Carter Singles Collection,” which features 19 of the rapper’s hit 45 rpm records, including “A Milli,” “Hustler Musik,” “How to Love” and the unreleased until now “Carter III”-era song “Ya Dig.” Two liner lithographs and a booklet filled with never-before-seen photos are included in the box, which is decorated with Lil Wayne’s tattoos. “Tha Carter” peaked at No. 5 in 2004 on the Billboard 200, “Tha Carter II” reached No. 2 a year later, and “Tha Carter III” “Tha Carter IV” and “Tha Carter V” all reached top spots in 2008, 2011 and 2018, respectively. Cost: \$200.

THE GIFT OF BILLIE: How did Billie Eilish become Billie Eilish? You can learn in her songs or the Apple+ doc “Billie Eilish: The World’s a Little Blurry.” But there’s also the hundreds of photos of her growing up in Grand Central Publishing’s “Billie Eilish.” There’s one of her as an infant in a sling worn by her father as he plays the piano, and another of her and her brother, Finneas, looking mischievous as



COLUMBIA RECORDS/AP

“Billy Joel — The Vinyl Collection, Vol. 1” is a box set that collects the Piano Man’s first six albums and also includes a previously unreleased concert recording from 1975.



By—
Billie
Eilish

GRAND CENTRAL PUBLISHING/AP

“Billie Eilish” shows how she grew into a Grammy-winning artist through hundreds of photographs.

small children. “I just want you to see me and see my life, with your own eyes,” she writes in the introduction. “I want to give you a big pile of pictures that speak for themselves.” They are at the same time deeply intimate snaps of a future Grammy-winning artist and yet often just ordinary shots of a child growing up in what seems like a loving home. Cost: \$35

DO GOOD, LOOK GREAT: The nonprofit Sweet Relief Musicians Fund provides assistance to all types of career musicians who are struggling to make ends meet while facing illness, disability or age-related problems. One way

to help Sweet Relief help others is to help yourself or your loved ones to some cool music-themed merch, from totes, T-shirts, tank tops, caps, mugs, bags, sweat-shirts and more. Check out their “Music Heals” and “Music Is Love” lines. Proceeds from each purchase go to help those in need.

CANDID CAMERA: Singer-songwriter Graham Nash has been taking photographs longer than he’s been making music.

His collection of images over the years — “A Life in Focus: The Photography of Graham Nash,” out Nov. 30 — captures unguarded many fellow celebrities like Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Mama Cass Elliott, Twiggy and, of course, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. “I’ve been a very lucky man in some very strange places,” Nash writes in the introduction. Many of the images have a surreal flavor, some have a political vibe and some are just random subjects he encountered on a street. Cost: \$60.



ABRAMS BOOKS/AP

Get in tune with history by reading Questlove’s latest book.



Buying a T-shirt from Sweet Relief is just one way you can help the organization that helps musicians in need.

SWEET RELIEF/AP

WEEKEND: HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

FOR THE TIKTOKER

Unique ideas to help you stay trendy

BY LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

Look no further than TikTok and its pandemic-expanded ranks for unique holiday gifts, from the hot Halara athleisure dress to a miracle cleaning paste called The Pink Stuff, worthy of any neat freak's Christmas stocking. The short-form video platform was a hit for millions during quarantine times, and the hashtag #TikTok-MadeMeBuyIt endures. The hashtag has been viewed more than 5.6 billion times, driving TikTok to boost its direct shopping tools. There's something for everybody down that yellow brick road for the holidays. Try one of these:

THE HALARA: Nothing says viral quite like the sporty, ultra-popular Halara dress, specifically the tank-top version that comes in a range of colors and sizes up to 3X. It's called the In My Feels Everyday Dress-Wannabe, and it includes attached shorts and handy pockets. It's super soft and stretchy. The brand followed up with the In My Feels Everyday Chill Dress-La La Land, a version with a midi slit skirt. The tennis-looking original sells for \$49.95. The newer one goes for \$44.95. **Both are available on Halara.com.**

THE PINK STUFF: The basic ingredients in this all-purpose cleaning paste are baking soda, quartz, sodium silicate and soap, lending an abrasive feel. It's a stocking stuffer extraordinaire for uber-cleaners and the rest of us who don't want to break a sweat. Fans on TikTok are most impressed by its muscle on built-up greasy things. Best part: It's only \$8.15 on Amazon for 17.6 ounces. There's a bathroom foam cleanser and multi-purpose spray cleaner as well.

THE WORK ROBE: With so many people still working from home, top-only dressing remains a thing. The WorkRobe, as thousands of TikTokers have noted, just



STARDROPS/AP

The Pink Stuff all-purpose cleaning paste has been praised for its power on grease.

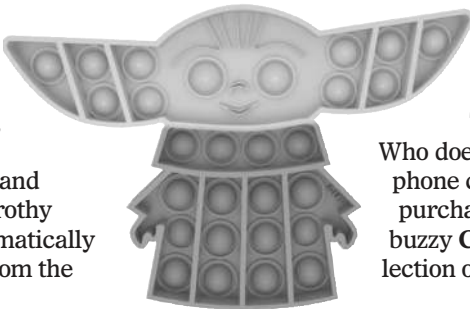
makes comfy sense. It's a belted women's robe that looks like a Zoom-worthy top in three styles: button-down collared, cross-over blouse and cowl neck. It even has cuffs. There are black, white and gray options. The robe sells for \$70. **Shop at Myworkrobe.com.**

THE ALMOND COW: Plant-based everything is the rage, and that's ever-present when it comes to milk. This carafe requires nuts to be thrown into the base, water to be added, a button to be pressed and voila, 5 to 6 cups of frothy almond milk. It automatically separates the milk from the pulp. Users can add coconut, dates or whatever extra ingredients they like. It takes just a minute with no mess and easy cleanup. The milk lasts three to five days in the fridge. The magic extends to cocktails, creamers, dressings, soups and more. It goes for \$195. **Available on Almondcow.co.**



WORKROBE/AP

The WorkRobe, available in three styles and colors, grew in popularity with top-only dressing teleworkers.



BUFFALO GAMES, LLC./AP

Simulating bubble wrap, popping toys like the Grogu and other types of fidget toys gained popularity on TikTok.

never leaves home without one. Prices range from \$39.99 to \$59.99. **Buy at Mobot.com. Also available on Amazon and Nordstrom.com.**

THE MIZZEN + MAIN: This company did it the TikTok way: It amped interest in its men's shirts through hilarious videos mocking work life, both in the office and fresh out of bed at home. Sell me a shirt without telling me you're selling me a shirt. The thing is, the shirts are quality in no-tuck gingham, city flannel and moisture-wicking dress. They come fitted and relaxed, in polos and vests, stretchy and not so much. There's a color or print for just about everyone no matter how good or bad at his job he may be. Prices from \$78 to \$125. **Head to Mizzenandmain.com.**

THE FANCY COTTON: Le Coton at Chanel.com to be exact. There's a bounty of videos on TikTok and elsewhere with creators hunting down the cheapest items on various luxury sites. They came up with the bougiest cotton squares ever. The fun is in the unboxing. The signature white Chanel packaging is elegant, and complete with sealed tissue paper and a couple of sample products thrown in. One gets 100 squares of cotton embossed with the brand's double C monogram. Gifters

report glee from giftees, though some of the latter anticipated far pricier treasure. **\$20. Chanel.com.**

THE PHONE CASE: Who doesn't love a new, fun phone case one doesn't have to purchase for oneself? The buzzy Casetify has a huge selection of uber compostable cases for Apple and Samsung devices made of a proprietary blend of biopolymers, starch and bamboo grain. The company promises the cases are 100% compostable — 90% in 180 days. There's something for dog people, cat people, flower people, art lovers, pop art lovers and this in black, based on a Pi-



MOBOT/AP

The Mobot water bottle doubles as a foam roller for sore muscles.

casso quote: Everything You Can Imagine is Real, with topsy-turvy letters. Good for a drop of 6.6 feet. The hashtag #casetify has more than 755 million views on TikTok. \$55. For an extra cost, they can be customized using imprinting or soybean ink.

THE POP ITS: TikTok drove hordes to scoop up silicone toys with bubbles that make a popping sound. While not as satisfying as bubble wrap itself, people went crazy for them as the fidget toy trend spread last summer. Warning: The noise may be annoying in class now that schools are back in session. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and from numerous companies. Some experts believe kids with ADHD, anxiety, autism and other disorders can benefit from these and other fidgets. The company that makes the Pop Its! brand is coming out with Star Wars, Marvel and Disney characters in time for the holidays at \$9.99 each. **Look for them at Target, Walmart and Amazon.**



ALMOND COW/AP

The Almond Cow Milk Maker, which requires just nuts and water, can make 5 to 6 cups of almond milk in one minute. It automatically separates the milk from the pulp.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Santa's wish list for safety

Wary of COVID, many mall Kriss Kringles will still be masked, distanced this year

BY LEANNE ITALIE
Associated Press

Santa is back this year, but he pleads caution as he continues to tiptoe through the pandemic. “Be smart. Be caring. If you have the tiniest tickle in your throat, the tiniest feeling, worry about yourself and worry about everybody else, and know Santa will always be there next year,” said 57-year-old Kevin Chesney, who’s been donning the big red suit since he was a kid.

Amid a downturn in jolly old elves — about 15% fewer in one large database — Chesney is busier than ever from his North Pole in Moorestown, N.J. The photo studio where he works quickly sold out its 4,500 appointments to sit with him and the seven other Santas in the studio’s stable.

They’re among the brave in Santa’s ranks with full-contact visits, lap sitting included, though Chesney wears a mask until just before the photos are taken.

Other Santas might not be wearing masks or plastic face shields, or hanging out in protective snow globes like many did last year, but it seems 50-50 this season that they’re not quite ready for hugs, whispers in their ears for secret wishes and kids smiling or sobbing on their knees.

Some Santas will remain behind barriers that popped up last year for safety. At Minnesota’s Mall of America, the big man will be housed in a log cabin behind a window with guests seated on benches in front of him. At 169 locations for the outdoor retailers Bass Pro Shops and Cabela’s, benches will also be used, with plastic partitions deployed at some stores for Santa’s photo ops.

Other retailers and Santa hosts are offering the option of no or full contact, even when mandates to distance aren’t in place. And many require or encourage reservations online to cut down on the number of people waiting.

More than 10 million U.S. households visited Santa in a mall or store in 2019, according to GlobalData Retail’s managing director, Neil Saunders. Nearly 73% of them also spent money at nearby restaurants or stores, he said. Last year, the



PHOTOS BY JIM MONE/AP

Santa, Sid Fletcher, sits behind a glass barrier as he hears Kendra Alexander of St. James, Minn., during her visit Nov. 15 at The Santa Experience at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn. A microphone in the greenery picks up conversations. Where allowed, some malls and big-box stores are offering Santa’s guests a choice of full contact or social distance.

company’s research found that 6.1 million households visited Santa, with fewer retailers and malls offering the holiday star in person. Of those visitors, 62% ate or shopped nearby.

Saunders said projections this year have about 8.9 million households expected to visit Santa in person, with virtual visits still a big option.

“Lingering concerns about the virus and ongoing restrictions in some states and localities continue to act as a brake on visiting Santa in person,” he said.

Chris Landtroop, a spokeswoman for Santa vendor Cherry Hill Programs, is optimistic. The new rollout of vaccinations for children 5 to 11 will certainly help.

“Santa is so back and we are super excited about that. Last year was incredibly tough,” Landtroop said.

The company has been sourcing Santas all year for the 800 malls, big-box stores and other locations it serves, with options for no-contact visits, too. Cherry Hill requires its Santas and other employees to be vaccinated and those with ex-

emptions to be tested regularly.

“At the end of the day, we want guests to feel comfortable,” Landtroop said.

Luther Landon has been providing the Santa Experience at Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., for nearly two dec-

ades. Last year, he hit on the log cabin idea but was shut down after a day due to the pandemic. He pivoted to virtual Santa and this year will offer both.

“We think that it would be very irresponsible of us to just ignore it and pretend like everything’s back to normal,” he said of the pandemic. “We’ve hidden some microphones so Santa can hear just fine. I know from our Santa community and knowing so many other Santas that the majority of them are reluctant, highly reluctant, to go back to the way it was before the pandemic. But we also have some who are just like, you know what, I don’t care. Having both of those groups is what’s happening in the country, too.”

Russell Hurd in Royse City, Texas, has been playing Santa since 2017, after he retired from the Army. He’ll be in his red suit to go with his long — and very real — white beard at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center near Dallas. His visits with the throngs are distanced and masks are required. He longs for that to end.

“The way it used to be, it’s meaningful for us Santas, too. I mean, we’re human beings. We crave that interaction, but for now we do what we can,” Hurd said.

Hurd is unvaccinated and tests regularly for COVID-19.

“I know a lot of unvaxxed Santas across the country. I mean, it’s not just Texas,” he said.

Count American Dream, a mega mall of 3 million square feet in East Rutherford, N.J., is among retailers offering distanced Santa. He’ll be on ice, skating the indoor rink with visitors, and also tooling around with guests in hot pink golf carts.

At Macy’s stores, Santa will be making his list and checking it twice from behind a desk, with guests seated on the other side.

“We’re encouraging everyone to maintain masking throughout their visits,” said Kathleen Wright, senior manager at Macy’s Branded Entertainment. “Santa has been a part of the Macy’s tradition since 1862, so we’re overjoyed that we can safely continue the tradition this year.”

At Oakbrook Center, a mall in suburban Chicago owned by Brookfield Properties, Santa’s spot is a tricked-out motor home with his fans allowed inside. Santa will be at 117 of 132 malls Brookfield owns in 43 states. The company is following local mandates on safety protocols but will distance anyone who asks. The same goes for CBL Properties, which owns 63 malls in 24 states and offered Santa visits from a safe distance last year.

“We’re bringing back a more traditional Santa experience this year,” said CBL spokeswoman Stacey Keating. “Visitors who wish to do so will be able to sit on Santa’s lap or on Santa’s bench. Masks will not be required at the set or during photos unless there’s a local mandate in place.”

And, bonus: “We’re also bringing back pet photo nights with Santa,” she said, “as well as Santa Cares, a reservation-only event that caters to those with sensory sensitivities and for whom the traditional experience may be too overwhelming.”

The pandemic has taken its toll on Santa in other ways.

Stephen Arnold, the 71-year-old head of IBRBS (formerly the International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas) said his organization of about 2,000 Santas and Mrs. Claus has lost 57 Santas to COVID-19.

“Most of us are overweight, diabetic, with heart conditions,” said Arnold, a long-time Santa working this year both virtually and in person in Memphis, Tenn. “I mean, we’re prime targets for a disease like COVID.”



Social distancing signs featuring the names of Santa’s reindeer lie on the floor at The Santa Experience in the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn.

WEEKEND: FAMILY



When bedfellows are furry

Experts explain the pros, cons of letting your pet sleep with you

BY ANGELA HAUPT

Special to The Washington Post

Emma Farrauto’s nightly spooning partner is as long, soft and cushiony as the most deluxe body pillow: Riley, her 9-year-old golden retriever, who weighs a snuggly 67 pounds. “I get to wrap my arms around her furry neck, and she pushes her full body weight into mine,” says Farrauto, 31, a home stager who lives in Hamilton, Ontario. Sometimes, as the duo settles into their shared pillow, they even start breathing in sync. “It’s glorious,” she says — to everyone except her human partner, who would prefer that Riley not hog so much of the queen-size bed.

Sleeping with a dog or cat is, to many pet owners — or parents, as we might prefer to describe ourselves — a no-brainer. To other people, it’s a clear violation of boundaries, not to mention one of the most divisive bedroom arguments some couples face.

In some cases, the co-sleeping decision is clear. It’s never a good idea, for example, to share a bed with a brand-new puppy: Dogs need to learn how to sleep by themselves in their crates first, says Steve Brooks, a dog trainer and canine behavior expert. “If I get a new dog, I want him to learn that it’s OK to sleep in a room away from me.” Brooks also would want to make sure that the dog is potty-trained, knows basic commands, like “sit” or “down,” and understands that entering the bed is by invitation only.

Another case where co-sleeping is a no-no is if you have a dog who causes you to “feel any trepidation and fear,” Brooks says. If you roll over and irritate an aggressive dog, you risk getting bitten. Brooks adds that beds aren’t a place to play with toys or wrestle, and suggests spreading a blanket or towel across the bottom of the bed to create a spot your dog knows belongs to him or her.

If you have an older, even-tempered dog, the conversation becomes about the pros and cons of co-sleeping with your pet.

The pros

Research shows that animals can improve our mental health; for example, studies suggest that human-animal interactions lessen depression while lowering levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

Raj Dasgupta, an assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California who specializes in pulmonology and sleep medicine, believes those interactions can

also help overnight. Slumbering with a pet “may help out with anxiety and depression, because a dog is like a weighted blanket — it gives you that snuggling and cuddling effect,” he said.

According to a small study published in the journal Social Sciences, people who suffered from long-term chronic pain (and as a result, sleep problems) found that snoozing with their pooches was overwhelmingly positive. The companionship and cuddles “were a distraction, so they weren’t lying there worrying about what was going to happen,” says study author Cary Brown, a professor of rehabilitation medicine at the University of Alberta. Sleeping with their pets helped participants feel relaxed and increased their well-being, while countering the loneliness that often accompanies chronic diseases.

According to a Mayo Clinic study, humans were able to get good sleep when they had a dog in their room, but their sleep was slightly better if the dog wasn’t on the bed. So, sleeping with your dog nearby — perhaps in a crate — is a good way to maintain restful sleep while still benefiting from a canine’s presence.

The cons

There are, of course, some downsides to sharing your bed with another creature, whether it’s a human or animal. The most obvious is that your sleep could be disturbed. Cats are nocturnal, and dogs are polyphasic sleepers, which means they have about three sleep/wake cycles per hour at night, says Jerry Klein, the American Kennel Club’s chief veterinary officer. Plus, he points out, a natural guard-dog tendency means your pooch will stay alert for sounds and abnormal movement. And, as with any human bedmate, he or she might also snore or hog your part of the bed.

What about germs? Though animals can transmit diseases to humans, or spread such parasites as fleas and ticks, ringworm or mites, that’s unlikely to happen if you’re taking care of your pet and staying up to date on preventive medication and vet checkups. “The hygiene germ issue is really more of a theoretical risk,” says veterinarian Cori Gross, who owns Feline Behavior House Calls and suggests wiping your pet’s paws with a towel before allowing him or her into your bed if you’re concerned.

Dander is more difficult to eliminate, however, and if you’re allergic to animals, sleeping with your cat or dog can irritate allergies that you otherwise manage with medication.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Surviving the holidays with elderly relatives

Being stationed overseas in the military has its perks. No, I’m not talking about sightseeing and travel. I’m not referring to history and culture. I’m not discussing foreign language immersion. What I mean is this: When you PCS overseas, you won’t have to endure as many visits from relatives.

There, I said it.

Unless you’ve been stationed in Hawaii — in which case your home has probably become a revolving door for free-loading family and friends — living overseas affords you a layer of protection against unwanted company, and gives you an excuse to enjoy the holidays however you wish. As in, “The airline tickets cost \$700 each ... Looks like we’ll be Zooming you on Thanksgiving again this year, Aunt Millie.”

When our family was stationed overseas, we couldn’t afford to fly home for the holidays, and our relatives couldn’t afford to visit us often either. At first, it seemed strange celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas without visits to and from extended family members. But ultimately, we enjoyed some of our most memorable holidays skiing in the Alps, renting a cottage in France, pubbing in Ireland, visiting German Christmas markets, touring Prague, hiking in Switzerland, roaming around Italy. Left to our own devices, we managed to create grand family adventures.

Enjoy the freedom living overseas affords while you can, because you will, one day, receive orders back to the continental U.S. And as they say, “Payback’s a ...” Well, you know. Your other relatives have been covering for you during your overseas tours. While you gallivanted around in lederhosen, they endured Easter with grumpy Gramps. While you wolfed down Christmas KFC and strawberry shortcake in Japan, they dealt with Gramma Jean’s incontinence. While you ordered another round of tapas in Barcelona, they overheard sis-in-law Peggy complaining about the canned cranberries.

And guess what? Now it’s your turn.

After returning from our last overseas tour in 2011, I thought it would be easy hosting parents and in-laws who had aged significantly while we were overseas. I mean, how hard could it be? Change some sheets, scramble a few eggs, make a dinner or two, do a little sightseeing, right?

But I soon discovered that roasting the perfect prime rib for Christmas supper is the easy part. It’s learning to keep my cool when my mother-in-law looks at me and says, “Your pants are so tight, if you break wind you’ll blow your shoes off.” It’s taking deep cleansing breaths when my sister-in-law shakes her head at my home decor and declares, “It’s so ... so ... you.” It’s not reacting when Pap blurts that his granddaughter “dresses like a streetwalker.” It’s feigning concern when Grams tells us she’s worried Father Benedict has the hots for her. It’s playing along when Uncle Ron claims he’s a direct descendant of the Vanderbilts. It’s taking it on the chin when Aunt Marjorie accuses me of stealing the silver tea set she gave to charity five years ago. It’s trying not to burst out laughing when Grammy points to the flowering vine growing on my porch rail and says, “I see you have chlamydia.”

In addition to mental preparations, I also prepare my home for our special visitors by cranking up the heat, turning on our television’s closed captioning and purchasing lots of puppy training pads, Tylenol, extra blankets, snacks, tissues, Febreze, coffee (which they drink with everything), booze and an elevated toilet seat unless I want my towel racks torn out of the wall.

Most of all, I try to convince myself that my old relatives are just like cute little babies: They have no filter, they’re fussy, they get hungry every two hours, they don’t sleep through the night, they get confused and they wet their pants. This realization fills me with the nurturing compassion I need to survive our family’s holiday visitors without hopping the next flight back overseas.

Read more at themeatandpotatoesoflife.com, and in Lisa’s book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com.

FACES



TURNER ENTERTAINMENT/AP

Despite having no part in the movie series, Helen Mirren hosts the quiz show “Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses.” The four-part series debuts Sunday stateside on TBS and Cartoon Network.

Mirren makes regal bow as Potter quiz show host

BY LYNN ELBER
Associated Press

Helen Mirren is oddly absent from the Harry Potter film franchise that proved close to a full-employment act for Britain’s acting greats. But she’s found her own path into its magical world.

Dame Helen, as the Oscar, Emmy and Tony-winning actor is properly addressed, makes her debut as a quiz host with “Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses.” The weekly, four-part series begins Sunday stateside on TBS and Cartoon Network.

In episode one, contestants representing the Gryffindor and Hufflepuff houses field trivia questions about J.K. Rowling’s novels-turned-films in a bid to claim a championship trophy and prizes.

Mirren left the cramming to the players and is unworried about being a novice game show emcee.

“I can certainly play a strict host,” she said, drolly.

Mirren’s willingness to take on something different shouldn’t surprise. She’s celebrated for her regal roles — including “The Queen,” “Elizabeth I” and “Catherine the Great” — but also counts the Fast & the Furious movie franchise among her credits.

Her return to a comic book-based project is upcoming: She plays a mythological goddess in “Shazam! Fury of the Gods.” Mirren’s baptism in the genre came with the film “Red” and its sequel.

In an interview with The Associated Press, she discussed her admiration of the Potter canon, making a TV fashion statement, and female bonding on the set of the DC Comics-based film. Remarks have been edited for length and clarity.

AP: You’ve had an eclectic acting career, and now you’re adding your first game show to the résumé.

Mirren: Absolutely, which is why I signed up for it. I’m always up for a bit of an adventure. Also, of course, it’s a wonderful subject and at a great moment, the 20th anniversary (of “The Sorcerer’s Stone,” the first Potter film). And the very fact I was never in any Harry Potter movies — much to my chagrin, I might add. It was a great way to be able to par-

ticipate in the whole extraordinary phenomena that is Harry Potter.

Are you a fan of the stories?

What I remember very clearly was when the whole world of Harry Potter started rising. The most magical thing is the way the books were passed from hand to hand amongst kids, and adults sort of didn’t know anything about it. It wasn’t like it was published with great fanfare. A lot of the people who’ll be competing (on the show), they will be in their 20s, 30s, 40s, but they will have past experience with Harry Potter as a kid.

Have you watched any TV competition shows for tips or sought advice on hosting?

I thought I’d just play it by ear and be as natural as I could. I’m personally very excited about it, so hopefully I’ll communicate that. I’ll be probably as nervous as the contestants themselves, and I’ll try to hide that.

You aren’t playing a role with the costume dictated by your character, but was there a certain look you wanted as a host?

That’s an interesting question. The set, as you will see, it’s so extraordinary, it’s a beautiful, beautiful Harry Potter world that they’ve constructed. So I did want what I wore to reflect a slight costuming feel. And in a way, I’m playing a kind of a character. So, yes, I wanted it to be a sense of costume and presentation. It’s got a slight sense of vintage about it, and a sense of belonging in that world.

In the sequel to “Shazam!” you play Hespera, daughter of Atlas. Is she a hero or villain?

I’m not going to tell you the answer to that. You’re going to have to ascertain for yourself. I’m a member of three goddesses: Lucy Liu as Kalypso and the third goddess played by Rachel Zegler, who will be a huge star in a very short space of time. So there are three of us together, and that was really a great experience because it’s so infrequent that you get to spend a whole of a movie with two other women. So often you’re the only woman in the cast. Here we were a trio, and that was great. I loved it.

Batiste: From bandleader to 11 Grammy nominations

BY AUGUST BROWN
Los Angeles Times

Best known as the bandleader and music director for “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert,” 35-year-old jazz-R&B composer Jon Batiste would never have been predicted to earn the most Grammy nominations of any act this year.

But with his Grammy-leading 11 nominations across seven categories that span genre, composition and medium, the Jan. 31 ceremony could end up being Batiste’s very own variety show.

The pianist and singer scored nominations for album and record of the year, for his “We Are” LP and its brassy, exultant single “Freedom,” both of which will compete against splashy, big-budget releases from the likes of Olivia Rodrigo, Justin Bieber and Lil Nas X. (“We Are” spent just one week on the Billboard 200 upon its April release, peaking at No. 86.)

“We Are” is also nominated for R&B album, and three more songs from “We Are” have nominations in different genre categories: “I Need You” for traditional R&B performance; “Movement 11” for contemporary classical composition; and “Cry” for American roots performance and American roots song.

After two years of protests and deep introspection about the sanctity of Black life and art in America, “Cry” hit a plaintive note about upheaval: “Who you do you love when push comes to shove?” he sings. “How does it feel when it’s getting too real?”

Meanwhile, Batiste’s music for the animated Pixar film “Soul” earned nominations for improvised jazz solo, jazz instrumental album and score soundtrack for vi-

sual medium.

“Freedom” was also nominated for music video.

Batiste has already enjoyed a fruitful year at awards shows, pulling down a Golden Globe and an Oscar for “Soul,” which he shared with Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross. His work on the film, which follows a



Batiste

Black jazz pianist through the afterlife and reincarnation, made him the second Black composer to win the Academy Award for original score, after jazz legend Herbie Hancock.

Like Hancock, who won album of the year in 2008, or Esperanza Spalding, the jazz bassist who beat out Justin Bieber for new artist in 2011, Batiste is the kind of consummate instrumentalist that Recording Academy voters have rewarded in the past, sometimes to the bewilderment of popular music fans and TV viewers.

The scion of a legendary New Orleans jazz family, Batiste has released eight studio albums and five live albums, and collaborated with acts ranging from Stevie Wonder to Willie Nelson to Ed Sheeran. He joined “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” as bandleader and music director in 2015.

“You know what’s deep is God gave us 12 notes, it’s the same 12 notes that Duke Ellington had, that Bach had, Nina Simone,” he said after winning his Oscar. “I’m thankful to God for those 12 notes.”

The 64th Grammy Awards will take place on Jan. 31 in Los Angeles.

‘General Hospital’ actor Burton quits rather than get vaccine

New York Daily News

“General Hospital” star Steve Burton is the second actor to walk off the long-running soap’s set over the vaccine mandate.

“I know there’s been a lot of rumors and speculations about me and General Hospital. I wanted you to hear it from me personally,” the 51-year-old actor, who plays Jason Morgan, said in an Instagram video late Tuesday.

“Unfortunately, ‘General Hospital’ has let me go because of the vaccine mandate. I did apply for my medical and religious exemptions, and both of those were denied, which, you know, hurts.”

Representatives for the ABC daytime soap opera did not immediately return a request Wednesday to confirm that Burton had applied for exemptions.

Burton has played Jason Mor-

gan on and off since 1991. On the most recent episode, his character was buried in a collapsed tunnel after a shootout in Greece, drawing suspicion from fans that he was being written off the show. It’s also possible that Burton will simply be replaced by another actor, as has been done previously.

In mid-August, he tested positive for COVID-19, saying he’d been “exposed at work,” but never specified that it was at “General Hospital.”

“Maybe one day if these mandates are lifted, I can return and finish my career as Jason Morgan. That would be an honor,” Burton said Tuesday.

Burton’s co-star Ingo Rademacher, who frequently posts anti-vax sentiments online, also recently quit the show over the mandate.



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OPINION

Expensive enthusiasms will cost Dems at polls

By GEORGE F. WILL
Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON
President Joe Biden has been ever a willow, never an oak, bending under progressive winds. Now, however, congressional Democrats should consider tempering their enthusiasm with lucidity. That is, their enthusiasm about their many expensive enthusiasms, with lucidity about the electorate.

This is likely their only way to avoid a dispiriting, for them, 2022: Losing control of either congressional chamber would extinguish Biden’s legislative agenda. So, as the Democrats’ kamikaze caucus contemplates a (properly scored) \$4 trillion-plus Build Back Better gusher to punctuate a year that has seen the highest inflation in 31 years, this caucus should ponder some data:

Biden’s agenda for swollen government resembles Franklin D. Roosevelt’s in 1933 and Lyndon B. Johnson’s in 1965. The stark differences are the popular-vote margins that put the three into the presidency: FDR, 17 percentage points; LBJ, 23 points; Biden, 4.5 points. So, in 1933, there were 59 Democratic senators (out of 96) and 313 Democratic representatives. In 1965, there were 68 Democratic senators and 295 Democratic representatives. Today, the numbers are 50 and 221. Analyst Charlie Cook says of 2020: “The presidential race came down to 125,084 votes spread across Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. A flip of just 62,543 votes and Donald Trump would now be [well] into a second term. In the Senate, the Georgia seat that put Democrats over the top was a matter of Jon Ossoff win-

ning just 59,944 more votes than David Perdue. The margin in the House was 31,751 votes across five districts.”

In 2020, five states — Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania — were won by margins of 1.5 percentage points or less. Biden won all but North Carolina. If Trump had won the three that Biden carried by less than 1 point — Georgia, Wisconsin, Arizona — he would be president.

The 2012 presidential election was the most recent one in which the Democratic candidate carried even 40% of whites without college educations. Today, according to David Shor, a Democratic consultant, “If you look inside the Democratic Party, there are three times more moderate or conservative *nonwhite people* than very liberal white people, but very liberal white people are infinitely more represented” (emphasis added). And between 2016 and 2020, Trump increased his success with non-white working-class voters. Biden won a smaller share of both the white and non-white working class vote than Barack Obama received in 2012.

This is one reason Trump is the first incumbent president to increase his vote total — he did by 10 million — while failing to win reelection. Another reason is that just 10% of those who voted for Obama in 2012 and Trump in 2016 voted for Biden in 2020.

Ticket-splitting has declined: In 2020, only 16 of 435 congressional districts were won by a presidential candidate of one party and a House candidate of the other. In 2008, about 71% of Senate elections were won by the party whose presidential candidate carried the state. In 2020, the figure was 95.6%,

No asylum seekers should have to wait years in limbo

By ANDREA BARRON
Special to The Washington Post

Genet Lire Dobamo was a 17-year-old elite sprinter with the Ethiopian national team when she defected at Dulles International Airport outside Washington in 2014, terrified of returning to her native Ethiopia. She held Ethiopia’s national title for the 400-meter race and had an excellent chance of representing her country in the 2016 Olympics. But Dobamo had been severely beaten by police for opposing Ethiopia’s one-party dictatorship and was frightened of being tortured again or even killed if she returned home.

She applied for asylum in March 2015 and was featured in a Washington Post story on elite Ethiopian runners seeking asylum in the U.S. The Post reporter said the asylum process can take “months, sometimes more than a year.” Six years later, Dobamo has still not been interviewed by an asylum officer at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, part of the Department of Homeland Security.

Mohamed Abdelsatar was an accountant in Egypt and a human rights activist when he was kidnapped by Egypt’s national security police in 2015 and imprisoned for almost a year. His “crime”: criticizing the military regime on social media. Abdelsatar was blindfolded, handcuffed and tortured with an electric shock device and prevented from speaking to his family or a lawyer.

Abdelsatar traveled to the United States in 2017 and applied for asylum. He has been waiting more than four years for an interview with USCIS. He has nightmares about being sent back to Egypt. He is angry that Egyptians

who applied for asylum in 2021 have already been interviewed. “It’s so unfair,” he says. “People like me who applied in 2017, we should be interviewed before those who applied after us.”

Lewis Kunze is a gay man and family therapist from Zimbabwe who was persecuted because of his sexual orientation and his leadership in the only organization in Zimbabwe that serves the LGBT community. He suffers from a major depressive disorder because of the abuse he experienced, made worse by waiting more than six years for his asylum interview. Kunze wonders: “What will come first, my asylum interview or my death certificate?”

Like many torture survivors, Dobamo, Abdelsatar and Kunze are caught in the affirmative asylum backlog, with more than 400,000 pending cases. Affirmative asylum seekers enter the United States legally with visas, then apply for asylum based on what the Immigration and Nationality Act describes as a “well-founded fear of persecution” on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a “particular social group,” such as the LGBT community.

Most of the survivors I work with were tortured by repressive governments because they condemned their governments for corruption, human rights abuses or sham elections, or because of their sexual orientation. After filing for asylum, they expected to be interviewed in one or two years at the most. Instead, they have been waiting four, five or even six years with no end in sight.

Already traumatized by torture and persecution at home, these asylum applicants must endure long separation from their families

the same as with House districts. But the three states Biden carried by the largest margins (Maryland, 33.2 points; Massachusetts, 33.5; Vermont, 35.4) have Republican governors.

In the 2021-22 post-census redrawing of congressional districts, Republicans control legislatures in states with 187 districts, and Democrats have complete control in states with just 75. Furthermore, House races are susceptible to national waves, and since World War II, average midterm House losses for the president’s party are slightly *worse* in presidents’ first terms (23) than on average (22). Also, the most recent president to escape a first-term contraction of his party’s Senate caucus in midterm elections was John F. Kennedy in 1962.

So, Biden could become the fifth consecutive president to see his party lose control of both the House and the Senate during his tenure. He could even lose both in the first midterm elections of his tenure. This most recently happened not recently — in 1994 and 1954, during Bill Clinton’s and Dwight D. Eisenhower’s first terms, respectively.

Today’s polarization is not unprecedented. When a 1936 Gallup poll asked, “Do you believe the acts and policies of the Roosevelt Administration may lead to a dictatorship?” 9% of Democrats said yes, 83% of Republicans said yes. Today, however, there is broad agreement among Americans about something: Last week’s Post-ABC News poll revealed that a landslide 59% are concerned that Biden would “do too much to increase the size and role of government.”

Now, about that Build Back Better gusher ...

and prolonged uncertainty about their status. The wait can be unbearable. What makes their plight even worse is that USCIS has been interviewing people who applied in 2020 and 2021 before those who applied in 2015, 2016 or 2017. These earlier applicants are simply asking for a chance to present their cases.

President Joe Biden promised a “fair, orderly and humane immigration system.” But Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas has continued the same unfair, inefficient and inhumane system of prioritizing interviews as the Trump administration. Torture survivors are sent to the back of the line in the interview queue; USCIS considers them “low priority.”

On Sept. 9, 40 House members recognized their plight in a letter to Mayorkas and USCIS Director Ur M. Jaddou. Their letter urges USCIS to address the affirmative asylum backlog by assigning a portion of asylum officers to interview asylum applicants who have been waiting five or more years. This would not require any legislation or cost additional funds. Unfortunately, two months have passed and Mayorkas still has not responded.

Biden faces enormous challenges on the southern border; it is understandable that many asylum officers have been assigned to interview migrants there. But his administration should not forget about the claims of torture survivors who believed in America, just like the son of refugees who leads the department in charge of their fate.

Andrea Barron is the advocacy program manager at the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International, based in Washington.

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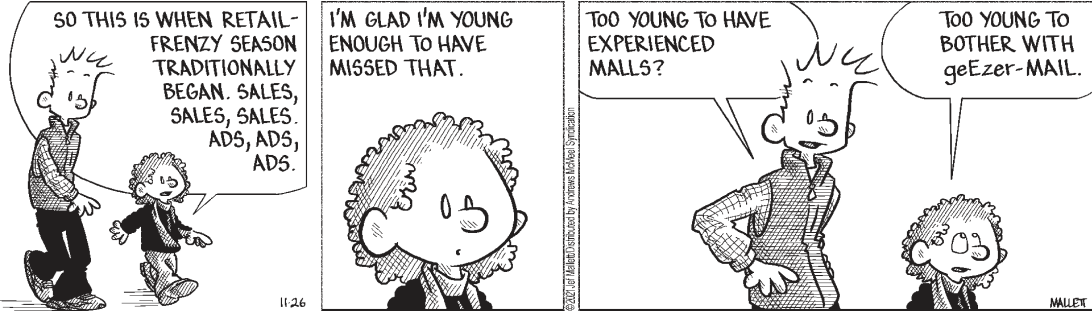
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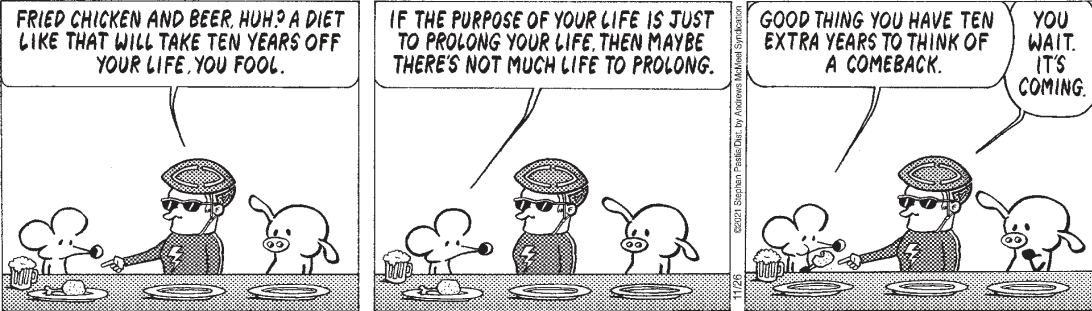
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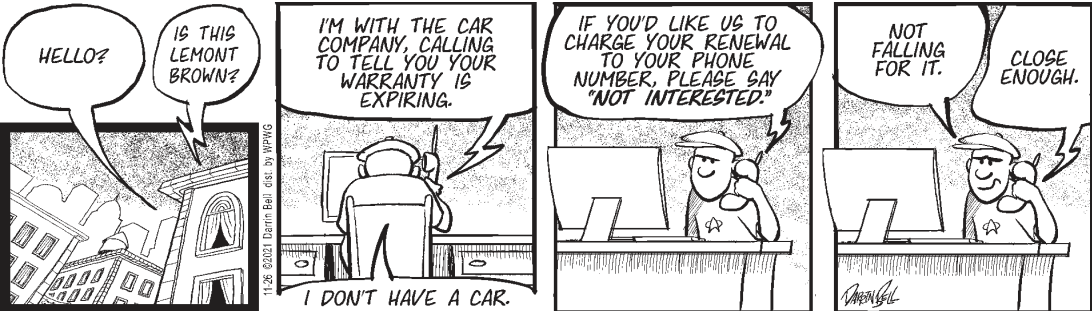
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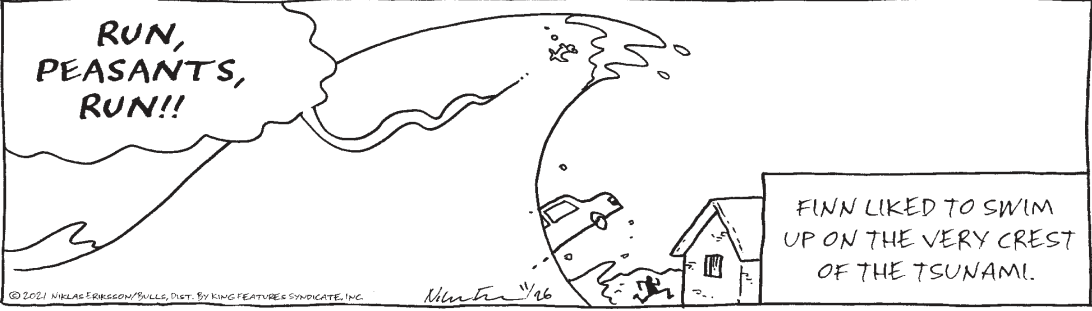
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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- ACROSS
- DOWN
- 26 Ballot dangler
- 27 Prom rental
- 28 Blood type, for short
- 29 "Uh-huh"
- 32 Troubling omen
- 33 Lesley of "60 Minutes"
- 35 Brock of baseball
- 36 Bistro, for one
- 38 Theater awards
- 39 Coffin stands
- 42 Slightly
- 43 Italian "dear"
- 44 Leading man?
- 45 In shape
- 46 Wedding words
- 47 Actress Aniston, to friends
- 49 To and —
- 1 Blond shade
- 4 Rocky outcrop
- 8 Gunk
- 12 — Beta Kappa
- 13 Seized wheels
- 14 Leak slowly
- 15 Zero refinement
- 17 Stir up
- 18 Veer
- 19 Droop
- 21 Granola grain
- 22 Wedding parties?
- 26 Influence
- 29 Tibetan bovine
- 30 Conceit
- 31 Intimate
- 32 Garden area
- 33 Wound cover
- 34 Soul, to Sartre
- 35 Napkin's place
- 36 Short jackets
- 37 Act charitably
- 39 Sheep call
- 40 Train alternative
- 41 Cornell's home
- 45 South Pacific nation
- 48 Remorseful words
- 50 Nantes notion
- 51 Mutt's warning
- 52 401(k) alternative
- 53 Oodles
- 54 Inquisitive
- 55 Quarterback Brady
- 1 LAPD alerts
- 2 "Pygmalion" writer
- 3 Conceal
- 4 Necktie
- 5 Bowling-lane button
- 6 Suitable
- 7 Spoils
- 8 Welsh pooch
- 9 Kanga's kid
- 10 Submachine gun
- 11 Singer Lana — Rey
- 16 Lake denizen
- 20 Noah's vessel
- 23 1920s art style
- 24 "Manhattan Beach" author Jennifer
- 25 Weeps

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	S	I	F		R	O	A	M		N	O	D
L	O	G	E		A	R	T	E		I	R	E
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11-26 CRYPTOQUIP

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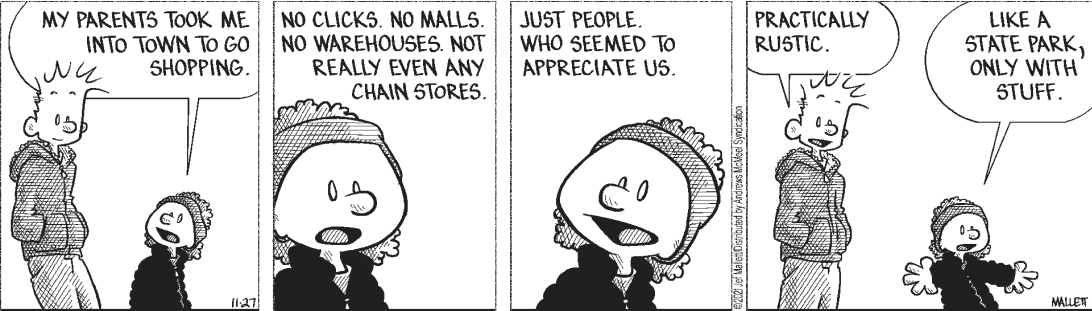
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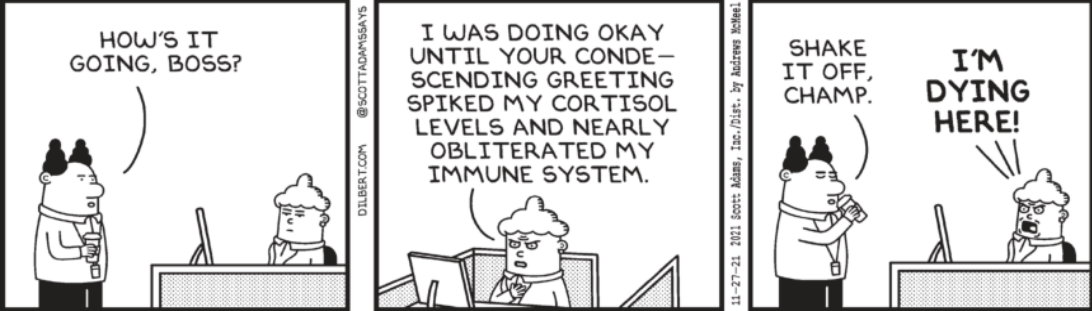
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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals N

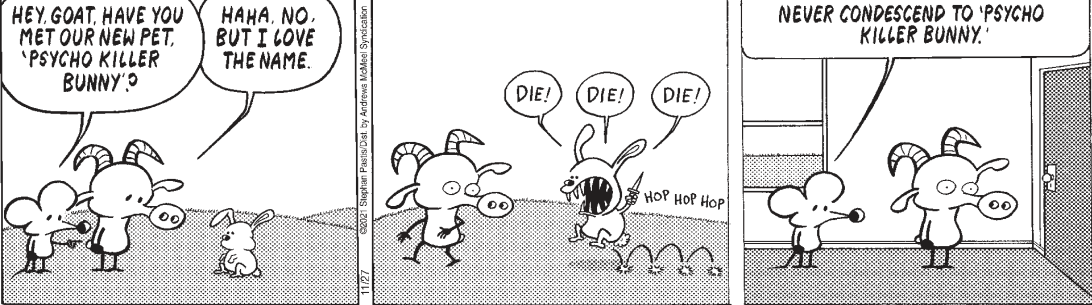
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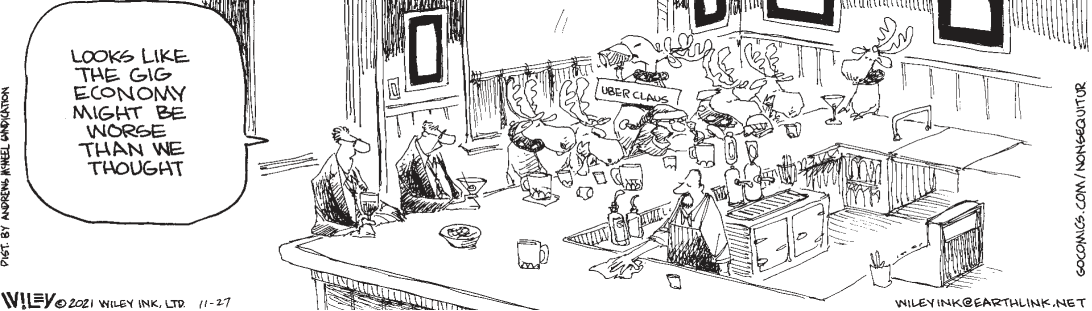
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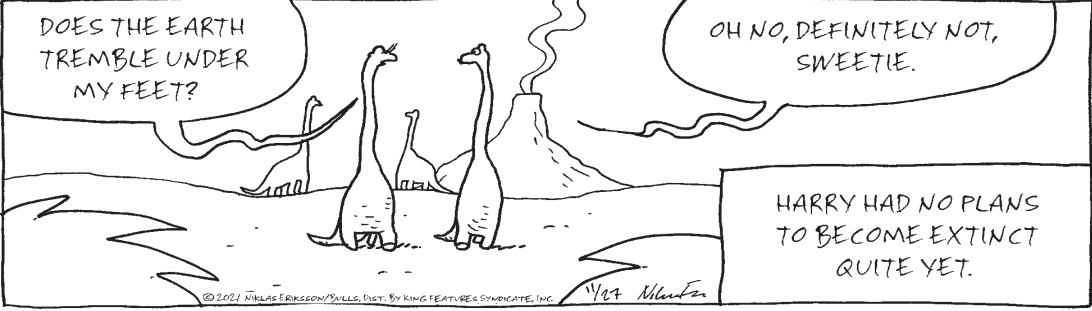
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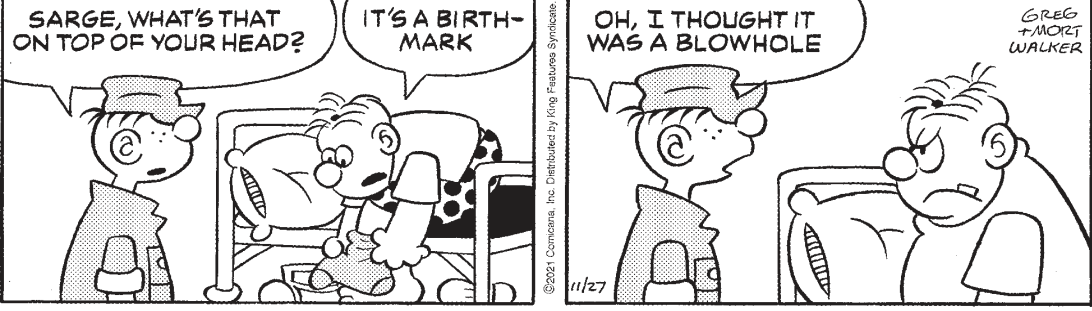
Candorville



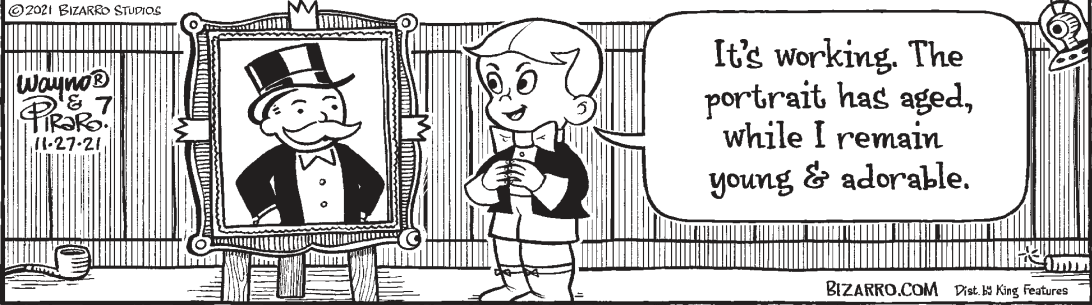
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Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



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42	43			44	45				46	47	48	49
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- ACROSS
- 56 Speed checkers
- 57 Feel
- 24 Abbr. in an email
- 25 "So that's it!"
- 26 Ship-repair site
- 28 Compositions
- 30 Rocker Nugent
- 31 MGM motto start
- 33 King, in Cannes
- 34 Gore and Green
- 39 Not as ruddy
- 41 Relay stick
- 42 Katy Perry
- hit song
- 43 Region
- 45 Lawman Eliot
- 47 — and crafts
- 48 Ceremony
- 49 Green prefix
- 51 "Homeland" org.
- 53 Hot temper
- DOWN
- 1 Blaze
- 2 Shortly
- 3 More darling
- 4 Summer in Arles
- 5 Carriage
- 6 Wolf's cry
- 7 Humiliate
- 8 Sun. talk
- 9 Tea's companion
- 10 Sediment
- 11 Icelandic saga
- 12 Fuel stat
- 18 Graceful
- 21 Scratch (out)
- 23 Workout unit

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	S	H		C	R	A	G		C	R	U	D
P	H	I		R	E	P	O		O	O	Z	E
B	A	D	T	A	S	T	E		R	O	I	L
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11-27 CRYPTOQUIP

“BDRRTIQ GZ ECI QGGB” MGZK

RDQISEIR VE ECI FDTTVKI’M

SVQEGKQVWCIQ: “YVWYVHIQ,

YVWYVHIQ.”

Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: A NOVICE GUITAR STUDENT SENT A MESSAGE TO A PROFESSIONAL PLAYER SAYING “I NEED STRUM ADVICE.”

Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals M

AROUND THE LEAGUE

No Thanksgiving benchmark

Injuries, COVID-19 throw wrench into usual comparison

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
Associated Press

Bruce Boudreau does not believe in the NHL's Thanksgiving rule. Which teams occupied playoff spots on the annual U.S. holiday had long been a strong indicator of who makes and misses the postseason. Recent 82-game seasons have put cracks in that theory, and a number of high-profile injuries and COVID-19 protocol absences make it even less of a factor this year.

"It's an inordinate amount of injuries that seems to (happen) every day and with the COVID and everything else, the deadline seems a little premature, I would think," Boudreau said. "But you're asking the wrong guy. I've always believed you could make the playoffs."

Boudreau coached the Anaheim Ducks to the Pacific Division title in 2015-16 after sitting four points out of a playoff spot on Thanksgiving. He also took over the Washington Capitals when they were last in the league on Thanksgiving in 2007 and won the Jack Adams Award as coach of the year for guiding them to the Southeast Division championship.

Is there a team that could pull off a similar worst-to-first run this season? Maybe the New York Islanders from last place in the Metropolitan Division — considering they opened with a 13-game road trip and have been without cap-



RICK SCUTERI/AP

New York Islanders left wing Matt Martin says there isn't a sense of panic about the Islanders being last in the Metropolitan Division. "But there should be a sense of urgency. We know we're a good hockey club."

tain Anders Lee, forwards Josh Bailey, Kieffer Bellows and Ross Johnson and defensemen Adam Pelech and Andy Greene (all COVID-19 protocol), and defenseman Ryan Pullock because of injury.

The Islanders have lost 10 of their first 15 games.

"Obviously this isn't what we envisioned coming into this season with our record where it's at and the things that have been thrown at us as of late," veteran forward Matt Martin said. "I

wouldn't say there's a sense of panic. But there should be a sense of urgency. We know we're a good hockey club."

Ray Ferraro is more worried about the Islanders than, say, the Pittsburgh Penguins, who also lost 10 of their first 15 games without center Evgeni Malkin and were missing captain Sidney Crosby for long stretches before a winning streak boosted their chances. The former player-turned-ESPN analyst thinks the offseason attrition of losing Jordan Eberle to the Seattle expansion draft and Nick Leddy in a salary-cap saving trade has cut into New York's depth.

Still, Ferraro concedes, "The Islanders, yeah, there's lots of road left in front of them."

Upcoming games against the division rival New York Rangers, Penguins and Philadelphia Flyers give the Islanders an opportunity that could make or break their season.

"I've got to believe the Islanders are better than their record shows," Boudreau said. "That's a team that can easily go on a seven-game win streak over the course of the year and be right back."

If the Islanders or Boston in the East or Colorado in the West are going to get into playoff position, someone has to falter. Maybe the young Rangers or Blue Jackets in the East or Anaheim or Nashville in the West.

"It's going to be hard for Anaheim to take as big a step as

they've taken already apparently in the first 20 games," Ferraro said. "Troy Terry's not going to score every game, although it sure seems like he's going to. They're going to need offense past that top line, and will they get it?"

The past two times the NHL had an 82-game season, 12 teams in playoff position on Thanksgiving actually made the postseason in 2018-19 and 11 in 2017-18, including the Vegas Golden Knights in their inaugural year. The expansion Seattle Kraken would need a Boudreau-esque leap from 10 points out to do the same thing.

That's unlikely but not impossible given all the uncertainty and the extra variable of the Olympic break in February.

"I think there's an unpredictability to the season," Ferraro said. "I think there's some wild swings that could happen to teams, more so this year than would have been in the past."

Ovi 31-for-31

Alex Ovechkin's goal against the Kraken on Sunday completed his sweep of scoring against each of the NHL's other 31 teams. The Washington Capitals captain has his most against the Tampa Bay Lightning: 49 in 74 regular-season games.

Game of the week

The Rangers visit Boston for the NHL's annual "Thanksgiving Showdown" matinee on Friday.

NHL scoreboard

Eastern Conference								
Atlantic Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Florida	19	14	2	3	31	73	48	
Toronto	21	14	6	1	29	57	47	
Tampa Bay	18	11	4	3	25	59	52	
Detroit	21	9	9	3	21	58	69	
Boston	16	10	6	0	20	51	44	
Buffalo	19	7	10	2	16	54	66	
Montreal	21	5	14	2	12	47	76	
Ottawa	17	4	12	1	9	44	65	
Metropolitan Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Carolina	18	14	3	1	29	58	36	
Washington	20	12	3	5	29	70	47	
N.Y. Rangers	19	12	4	3	27	55	52	
Columbus	17	11	6	0	22	60	51	
Pittsburgh	19	9	6	4	22	58	53	
New Jersey	17	8	5	4	20	50	52	
Philadelphia	18	8	6	4	20	44	50	
N.Y. Islanders	16	5	9	2	12	32	51	
Western Conference								
Central Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Minnesota	19	12	6	1	25	67	61	
St. Louis	19	10	7	2	22	63	53	
Winnipeg	19	9	6	4	22	55	51	
Colorado	16	10	5	1	21	66	51	
Nashville	19	10	8	1	21	52	55	
Dallas	17	8	7	2	18	47	52	
Chicago	19	6	11	2	14	42	63	
Arizona	20	4	14	2	10	37	74	
Pacific Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Calgary	20	12	3	5	29	68	38	
Edmonton	19	14	5	0	28	74	57	
Vegas	20	12	8	0	24	64	61	
Anaheim	20	10	7	3	23	65	56	
San Jose	19	10	8	1	21	52	54	
Los Angeles	19	8	8	3	19	49	52	
Vancouver	20	6	12	2	14	47	66	
Seattle	19	6	12	1	13	54	69	

Wednesday's games

Boston 5, Buffalo 1
Columbus 3, Winnipeg 0
Pittsburgh 4, Vancouver 1
Florida 2, Philadelphia 1, OT
Washington 6, Montreal 3
Detroit 4, St. Louis 2
Minnesota 3, New Jersey 2, SO
N.Y. Rangers 4, N.Y. Islanders 1
Vegas 5, Nashville 2
Colorado 5, Anaheim 2
Seattle 2, Carolina 1
Toronto 6, Los Angeles 2
Edmonton 5, Arizona 3
San Jose 6, Ottawa 3

Thursday's games

No games scheduled

Friday's games

N.Y. Rangers at Boston
Carolina at Philadelphia
St. Louis at Chicago
Winnipeg at Minnesota
Ottawa at Anaheim
Florida at Washington
New Jersey at Nashville
Montreal at Buffalo
Seattle at Tampa Bay
Vancouver at Columbus
Colorado at Dallas
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Islanders
Toronto at San Jose

Saturday's games

Seattle at Florida
Buffalo at Detroit
Edmonton at Vegas
Montreal at Pittsburgh
Ottawa at Los Angeles
Columbus at St. Louis
Dallas at Arizona
Nashville at Colorado
Winnipeg at Calgary

Sunday's games

Washington at Carolina
Tampa Bay at Minnesota
N.Y. Islanders at N.Y. Rangers
Philadelphia at New Jersey
San Jose at Chicago
Vancouver at Boston
Toronto at Anaheim

Scoring leaders

Through Thursday				
	GP	G	A	PTS
Leon Draisaitl, EDM	19	20	20	40
Connor McDavid, EDM	19	14	22	36
Alex Ovechkin, WSH	20	15	18	33
Nazem Kadri, COL	16	7	18	25
Evgeny Kuznetsov, WSH	20	7	17	24
Johnny Gaudreau, CGY	20	9	14	23
Elias Lindholm, CGY	20	8	14	22
Steven Stamkos, TB	18	10	12	22
Troy Terry, ANA	19	12	10	22
Kyle Connor, WPG	19	12	10	22



PAUL SANCYA/AP

With his goal Sunday against the expansion Seattle Kraken, Capitals left wing Alex Ovechkin has scored against all of the other 31 teams.

NBA

Booker, Paul help Suns win 14th in row

By TOM WITHERS
Associated Press

CLEVELAND — With the Suns’ long winning streak in serious danger, Devin Booker and Chris Paul knew exactly what had to be done.

Phoenix’s season is still rising. Booker scored 35 points, Paul had 12 assists and made four free throws in the final 8.8 seconds, and the Suns extended their winning streak to 14 games by holding off the Cleveland Cavaliers 120-115 on Wednesday night.

Phoenix’s streak started with a win at home over Cleveland on Oct. 30, which came after a 1-3 opening to the season for the defending Western Conference champions. The surge has also corresponded with allegations of racism and misogyny surfacing against Suns owner Robert Sarver.

“That’s just coincidence,” Paul said of the timing. “Our plan wasn’t to start out 1-3. We’ve got a great group, a great locker room. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

For nearly a month, the Suns have won in a variety of ways and Wednesday they improved the NBA’s best road record to 7-1.

It wasn’t easy.

The young Cavs gave the Suns everything they could handle, and if not for Paul, a couple of calls that could have gone either way and Cleveland’s Ricky Rubio missing three free throws in the final seconds, the streak might have ended.

The win was also the 100th with the Suns for coach Monty Williams, who is in his third season with the club.

“We know we can win ugly games,” Williams said. “We know we can win slug outs. I wish we could win by 30 every night. But they have a really good team. We’re just finding ways to win.”

Jarrett Allen had 25 points and 11 rebounds, and Cedi Osman added 23 points for Cleveland, which dropped its fifth straight. Darius Garland scored 19 before fouling out late.

Paul finished with 17 points and JaVale McGee added 13 points and 12 rebounds in 20 minutes off the bench.

Williams pointed to a key sequence down the stretch when Mikal Bridges blocked Osman and Paul got Garland to bite on a rip-through move for his sixth personal.

“The biggest thing was just to get him out of the game because he’s so shifty,” Paul said. “When I’m at home he’s one of the guys I love to watch.”

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Brooklyn	14	5	.737	—
New York	10	8	.556	3½
Philadelphia	10	9	.526	4
Boston	10	9	.526	4
Toronto	9	10	.474	5
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	12	7	.632	—
Washington	11	7	.611	½
Charlotte	12	8	.600	½
Atlanta	10	9	.526	2
Orlando	4	15	.211	8
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	12	7	.632	—
Milwaukee	11	8	.579	1
Cleveland	9	10	.474	3
Indiana	8	12	.400	4½
Detroit	4	14	.222	7½
Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Dallas	10	7	.588	—
Memphis	9	9	.500	1½
San Antonio	4	13	.235	6
New Orleans	4	16	.200	7½
Houston	2	16	.111	8½
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	12	6	.667	—
Portland	10	9	.526	2½
Denver	9	9	.500	3
Minnesota	9	9	.500	3
Oklahoma City	6	12	.333	6
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	16	2	.889	—
Phoenix	15	3	.833	1
L.A. Clippers	10	8	.556	6
L.A. Lakers	10	10	.500	7
Sacramento	7	12	.368	9½
Tuesday's games				
Miami 100, Detroit 92				
New York 106, L.A. Lakers 100				
Portland 119, Denver 100				
Dallas 112, L.A. Clippers 104, OT				
Wednesday's games				
Charlotte 106, Orlando 99				
Phoenix 120, Cleveland 115				
L.A. Lakers 124, Indiana 116, OT				
Brooklyn 123, Boston 104				
Milwaukee 114, Detroit 93				
Utah 110, Oklahoma City 104				
Toronto 126, Memphis 113				
Houston 118, Chicago 113				
Minnesota 113, Miami 101				
New Orleans 127, Washington 102				
Atlanta 124, San Antonio 106				
Golden State 116, Philadelphia 96				
Sacramento 125, Portland 121				
Thursday's games				
No games scheduled.				
Friday's games				
Detroit at L.A. Clippers				
Chicago at Orlando				
Minnesota at Charlotte				
Phoenix at New York				
Atlanta at Memphis				
Toronto at Indiana				
Washington at Oklahoma City				
Boston at San Antonio				
Milwaukee at Denver				
New Orleans at Utah				
Portland at Golden State				
Sacramento at L.A. Lakers				
Saturday's games				
Minnesota at Philadelphia				
New York at Atlanta				
Phoenix at Brooklyn				
Charlotte at Houston				
Miami at Chicago				
Orlando at Cleveland				
Washington at Dallas				
New Orleans at Utah				
Sunday's games				
Golden State at L.A. Clippers				
Milwaukee at Indiana				
Boston at Toronto				
Sacramento at Memphis				
Detroit at L.A. Lakers				
Calendar				
2022				
Jan. 5 — 10-day contracts may now be signed				
Jan. 10 — All Standard contracts are guaranteed for the remainder of the season				
Jan. 20 — All Two-Way Contracts are guaranteed for the remainder of the season				
Feb. 10 — NBA Trade Deadline (3 p.m. ET)				
Feb. 18-20 — All-Star 2022 (Cleveland)				
Feb. 18-23: All-Star break				



WINSLOW TOWNSON/AP

Patriots tight end Jonnu Smith wasn't disgruntled when he left Tennessee in free agency after four seasons this past offseason. He was simply looking for a place to, in his words, "start a new chapter."

TE Smith still finding footing with Pats; former team next

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Patriots tight end Jonnu Smith wasn't disgruntled when he left Tennessee in free agency after four years last offseason.

He was simply looking for a place to in his words, "start a new chapter" and make "a fresh start on the journey."

"It was some of the greatest four years I've ever had, I learned a lot," Smith said of his time with the Titans. "One year with (Mike) Mularkey, three years with (Mike) Vrabel. I learned a lot from both guys. ... I got nothing but love for the organization. That did right by me. I went out there and gave my all for them."

But as the resurgent Patriots (7-4) prepare to host his former team, Smith is still looking for his first signature game in New England, having notched just 22 catches and one touchdown through 10 games.

It's not the season he expected to be having in the first year of the four-year, \$50 million deal he signed back in March. Still, he says he's not concerned about his role and is applying the same patience and dedication to the process that the team has done to get back in the playoff picture following a 2-4 start.

"It is what it is right now," Smith said. "I'm thankful to be in the position that I am. Whatever it is that I'm called or asked to do, that's what I'll do. I don't necessarily worry about the role ...

Tennessee Titans (8-3) at New England Patriots (7-4)
AFN Atlantic
7 p.m. Sunday CET
3 a.m. Monday JKT

that's the coaches' job. Our job is to go out there and execute. So that's all I can worry about."

One of the things that drew the 26-year-old to New England was how much the Patriots utilized the tight end position in all facets of the offense, particularly in the passing game.

That excitement grew when the team also added tight end Hunter Henry, as both envisioned the possibility of becoming the another incarnation of the dual tight end sets the Patriots employed so well during Rob Gronkowski's tenure.

So far, it's Henry who's flourished the most in the offense, catching seven touchdowns in the past eight games to help propel a unit that has found a rhythm behind the steady play of rookie quarterback Mac Jones.

During their five-game win streak the Patriots have outscored opponents by 125 points.

Offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels said this week that Smith may simply still be adjusting in what he called a "foundational year" he often sees for players new to the Patriots' system and playing under coach Bill Belichick.

"These guys that come in, it's their first opportunity because they're still learning similar to

some of the rookies," McDaniels said. "They might have heard NFL vernacular and been around NFL football. But sitting in Bill's squad meetings, listening to what we do and what we try to do on a weekly week basis, fitting in to how we change the offense from one week to the next to try to attack the defense's weaknesses or protect our weaknesses."

As a result, Smith has primarily been used as a blocker in recent weeks, though he said he doesn't think his learning curve or a recent shoulder issue that kept him sidelined in Week 10 against Cleveland, has held him back.

"You get to anywhere the first time in your life and it's an adjustment. It's just about how well you adjust," he said. "Whatever it is that I'm called or asked to do, that's what I'll do. I don't necessarily worry about the role ... that's the coaches' job. Our job is to go out there and execute. So that's all I can worry about. ... We're gonna keep playing good football, keep progressing and keep improving."

As for Sunday's matchup with the Titans (8-3), Smith said he's looking forward to trying knock his former team off their current perch atop the AFC.

"We're gonna be ready to play. It's gonna be a hell of a game," he said. "Treat it like any other game. That's the mindset we have, week in and week out. We don't look at the logo. We don't take any opponent lightly. We're just gonna play our brand of football."

NFL/COLLEGE BASKETBALL

2-game skid has Stafford, Rams adjusting again

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — At least until the past two games, Matthew Stafford had smoothly handled just about every aspect of the enormous adjustment in moving from the Detroit Lions to the Los Angeles Rams.

This week, he faces another new challenge: A Thanksgiving without a football game to play. “I loved playing on Thanksgiving,” Stafford said after practice on a 77-degree Wednesday with the Rams (7-3), who travel to Green Bay on Sunday. “For the tradition, for the game, for all of that, but also ... because I was back in my house at 5, 5:30. Could have a normal Thanksgiving meal, watch some football with your family. Almost felt like a fan for a little while. And then it was fun having the next couple of days off so you could eat leftovers.”

Stafford grew to enjoy the Lions’ annual fixture of a holiday game on a short week, but he’s got plenty of work to do this week with the Rams, who are on the first losing streak of his tenure.

Back-to-back defeats heading into their bye week have forced the Rams to take stock of themselves after an eight-game start in which Stafford appeared to be capable of leading this team to the Super Bowl with a supporting cast and a coaching staff to maximize his talents.

Stafford passed for 309.6 yards per game with 22 touchdowns, four interceptions and a 118.0 rating in the Rams’ first eight games. His play in a new offensive system was undeniably impressive and worthy of MVP discussion.

In Los Angeles’ two losses since,

Stafford has passed for 268.5 yards per game with two touchdowns, four interceptions and a 69.4 rating while getting sacked seven times. Those four interceptions were critical: Stafford made glaring mistakes on three of the picks, and two of the four were returned for touchdowns that contributed to putting Los Angeles in a hole it couldn’t escape.

Fixing those problems at Lambeau Field is a particularly difficult task, as the quarterback knows well. Stafford faced the Packers 20 times during his dozen seasons with Detroit, going 7-13 with 37 touchdown passes — the most he has thrown against any opponent — and 20 interceptions. Stafford and Aaron Rodgers went head-to-head 16 times, with the Packers winning 12 of those.

“It’s one of my favorite places to play in the NFL,” Stafford said. “Got to do it a bunch of times. Played some fun snow games. I loved playing in the snow there. That’s what you dream about as a kid, is getting to play the Packers at Lambeau Field in the snow. Don’t think it’s going to snow this week, but it’s going to be nice and chilly this week, which is always fun.”

Offensive coordinator Kevin O’Connell repeatedly pointed out fundamental areas for improvement in the past two games, most related to winning the turnover battle and not falling into early deficits.

“We’ve got to get off to better starts on early downs and be efficient,” O’Connell said. “I think we can kind of, as a group, coaches included, we can all get into a rhythm early and figure out how we want to attack opponents.”



Tony Avelar/AP
Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford, left, and teammates sit on the bench during the second half of a loss to San Francisco on Nov. 15.



Tim Aylen, Bahamas Visual Services/AP
Connecticut forward Tyler Polley is congratulated by coach Dan Hurley after making a three-point basket against Auburn during the second overtime of their game Wednesday at Paradise Island, Bahamas.

Hurley brothers get a chance to connect at Battle 4 Atlantis

By AARON BEARD
Associated Press

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas — For once, Dan and Bobby Hurley are together for Thanksgiving — sort of.

The brothers are coaching in the Battle 4 Atlantis this week. Dan’s No. 22 UConn has advanced into the winners’ bracket while Bobby’s Arizona State team is playing in the consolation rounds. That ensures they won’t have the Hurley-vs.-Hurley matchup both dreaded in this eight-team tournament, and instead can now try to squeeze in a few conversations or maybe a brief get-together while bouncing between the locker room, arena and hotel towers around the Atlantis resort.

“I’m thankful that I’m going to see him and that he’s here and usually we’re always playing somewhere generally over Thanksgiving, and we don’t get to see each other,” Bobby said in an interview with The Associated Press. “So it’s just a blessing to see him, I think moreso than (having a Thanksgiving) meal and things.”

The brothers said their first encounter here came as they happened to pass by each other while walking through the casino Tuesday.

“Good to see big brother,” Dan said with a chuckle.

They hadn’t seen each other since the summer recruiting season, and that followed more than a year of being separated amid the COVID-19 pandemic while leading programs on different sides of the country.

Both said the goal in the Bahamas was figuring out when there might be opportunities to connect throughout their stay for the three-day tournament, even though that

would take some work.

“We’ve got practice times that are different times, we’re watching film with our teams at different times,” Bobby said. “We all have our own kind of schedules.”

“It’s always better if we can do it before we start playing because then if things don’t go well for either one of us, then you really go into hiding a little bit more and you’re not as accessible for each other. That’s usually how it works for us: one guy loses and then that guy needs a little time to decompress.”

A day later, Dan’s Huskies survived a wild double-overtime win against No. 19 Auburn to earn a Thanksgiving Day matchup with Michigan State. Those extra sessions pushed back the rest of the first-round schedule, meaning Bobby’s Sun Devils ultimately ended up meeting sixth-ranked and reigning national champion Baylor in Wednesday’s final game about 45 minutes later than scheduled.

Arizona State lost that one, sending it into Thursday’s final matchup against Syracuse in the consolation bracket.

That meant the sons of legendary New Jersey high school coach Bob Hurley Sr. would continue to avoid having to coach against each other a little longer. Their only time competing in college basketball came in a 1992 matchup as players in the NCAA Tournament’s Sweet 16: Bobby with Duke on its way to a repeat championship, Dan with Seton Hall.

Bobby got his coaching start as an assistant under Dan, first at Wagner and then at Rhode Island before becoming head coach at Buffalo. He’s now in his seventh season with the Sun Devils, while Dan is in his fourth with the Huskies.

“I just think a lot of times as you

Scoreboard

Top 25 Fared	
Wednesday	
No. 1 Gonzaga (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. No. 5 Duke, Friday.	No. 2 UCLA (5-1) did not play. Next: at UNLV, Saturday.
No. 3 Purdue (5-0) did not play. Next: vs. Omaha, Friday.	No. 4 Kansas (3-0) did not play. Next: vs. North Texas, Thursday.
No. 5 Duke (6-0) did not play. Next: vs. No. 1 Gonzaga, Friday.	No. 6 Baylor (5-0) beat Arizona St. 75-63. Next: vs. VCU, Thursday.
No. 7 Villanova (3-2) did not play. Next: vs. La Salle, Sunday.	No. 8 Texas (4-1) beat California Baptist 68-44. Next: vs. Sam Houston, Monday.
No. 9 Memphis (5-0) beat Virginia Tech 69-61. Next: Iowa State, Friday.	No. 10 Alabama (4-0) did not play. Next: at Iowa, Thursday.
No. 10 Kentucky (4-1) did not play. Next: vs. North Florida, Friday.	No. 12 Houston (5-1) beat Oregon 78-49. Next: vs. Northwestern St., Tuesday.
No. 13 Arkansas (5-0) did not play. Next: vs. Penn, Sunday.	No. 14 Illinois (3-2) did not play. Next: vs. Rio Grande, Friday.
No. 15 Tennessee (3-1) did not play. Next: vs. Tennessee Tech, Friday.	No. 16 St. Bonaventure (5-0) did not play. Next: vs. N. Iowa, Saturday.
No. 17 Arizona (5-0) did not play. Next: vs. Sacramento St., Saturday.	No. 18 BYU (5-0) beat Texas Southern 81-64. Next: at Utah, Saturday.
No. 19 Auburn (3-1) lost to No. 22 UConn 115-109, 2OT. Next: vs. Loyola of Chicago, Thursday.	No. 20 Michigan (4-2) beat Tarleton St. 65-54. Next: at North Carolina, Wednesday, Dec. 1.
No. 21 Seton Hall (4-1) beat California 62-59. Next: vs. Bethune-Cookman, Sunday.	No. 22 UConn (5-0) beat No. 19 Auburn 115-109, 2OT. Next: vs. Michigan St., Thursday.
No. 23 Florida (5-0) beat Ohio St. 71-68. Next: vs. Troy, Sunday.	No. 24 Southern Cal (4-0) did not play. Next: vs. Saint Joseph's, Thursday.
No. 25 Xavier (4-1) lost to Iowa St. 82-70. Next: vs. Virginia Tech, Friday.	

get older, you give yourself maybe a couple of minutes a day where you do appreciate our journey and how this all began for us,” Dan said, “as like little kids growing up in Jersey City and playing basketball in the park. ... Now we both end up here at big-time programs, having a lot of success. Sometimes your mind does drift to, like, it’s been a hell of a journey.”

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Defense brought Cowboys to first Big 12 title game

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
Associated Press

LUBBOCK, Texas — Mike Gundy was an Oklahoma State quarterback who handed the ball off to Barry Sanders and Thurman Thomas. As the Big 12's longest-tenured coach, he has overseen many big-play and high-scoring offenses led by other All-Americans.

Now Gundy is just trying to stay out of the way with the seventh-ranked Cowboys being defensive-minded and headed to their first Big 12 championship game.

"It's just important that we stay the course," Gundy said. "I just let everybody do their job, not mess with them."

The Cowboys (10-1, 7-1 Big 12) have a suffocating defense that is demoralizing opposing teams and their quarterbacks, allowing 164.3 yards per game and only one offensive touchdown over their past four games. The latest was a 23-0 win over a Texas Tech team that hadn't been shut out at home since 1987 — when Gundy, now the 17th-year coach, was still quarterback for the Cowboys playing in a different league.

Asked if he could sense on the sideline how much the defense wanted a shutout Saturday night, when the Cowboys locked up their title game spot, Gundy responded, "I stay as far away as I can, so I don't mess them up."

Before playing in the Big 12 championship game, Oklahoma State hosts Bedlam at home in what could be the first of two games in two weeks against 10th-ranked Oklahoma (10-1, 7-1). The six-time defending Big 12 champion Sooners get into the Dec. 4 ti-

No. 10 Oklahoma (10-1, 7-1 Big 12) at
No. 7 Oklahoma St. (10-1, 7-1 Big 12)
AFN-Sports
1:30 a.m. Sunday CET
9:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

tle game with a win over the Cowboys on Saturday night, or a loss by ninth-ranked Baylor (9-2, 6-2) earlier that day to Texas Tech.

"This is why I came back ... to get a Big 12 championship, and honestly beat OU," said linebacker Devin Harper, one of Oklahoma State's super seniors.

For these Cowboys, who haven't beaten Oklahoma since 2014 or won a conference title since 2011 when there wasn't a Big 12 championship game, there could be even bigger things this season.

Oklahoma State moved up from ninth to seventh in the latest College Football Playoff rankings this week after lopsided losses Saturday by Oregon and Michigan State ahead of them. The Cowboys then have the opportunity to get two victories over 10-win teams, whether twice over Oklahoma or once each over the Sooners and Baylor, which would have to get its 10th win to play in the Big 12 title game.

"We take it game by game. We've been in the water forever, we see land and we've just got to keep pushing," Harper said. "We've got to beat OU, and whoever we play in the Big 12 beat them, and talk about the playoff then."

Texas Tech, which had scored in 302 consecutive games since a shutout loss at Nebraska in 1997 a decade after last being held scoreless at home, didn't even reach 100 yards in total offense until a 25-yard pass on the final drive.



BRAD TOLLEFSON/AP

Oklahoma State's Brendon Evers sacks Texas Tech's Donovan Smith. The Cowboys shut out the Red Raiders for the first time since 1999, a stretch of 302 consecutive games with at least one score.



KEITH SRAKOCIC/AP

Pittsburgh quarterback Kenny Pickett throws a pass against North Carolina during the second half of a game on Nov. 11 in Pittsburgh. For the first time since the College Football Playoff was introduced in 2014, the ACC will not be part of the four-team elimination format.

Parity comes at a price: no CFP appearance for ACC

BY WILL GRAVES
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Pat Narduzzi still can't make up his mind.

Back in July, the longtime Pittsburgh coach thought the College Football Playoff should stand pat at four teams. Now, with the 20th-ranked Panthers assured of a spot in the ACC title game after wrapping up the Coastal Division title, he's not so sure.

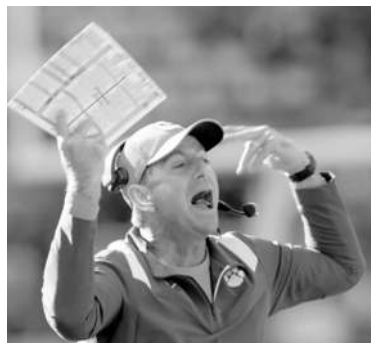
"I've gone back and forth," Narduzzi said.

With good reason. For the first time since the College Football Playoff was introduced in 2014, the ACC will be on the outside looking in when the final four is unveiled on Dec. 5 regardless of who walks off the field in Charlotte the night before with the league's championship trophy in tow, regardless of whether it's the Panthers, Wake Forest, Clemson or N.C. State.

All four enter the final weekend of the regular season with at least two losses. All four are well outside the CFP's top 10 with just two weeks to go.

While the wide-open nature of the ACC in 2021 may be good for the league over the long term — the ability for coaches to go into a recruit's living room and pitch the idea of playing in a league where a championship isn't Clemson's birthright but a realistic, tangible goal for multiple schools — in the short term, parity comes at a price. Literally and figuratively.

The ACC will take a modest \$2 million hit for not placing a team in the CFP. It also won't reap the benefits of the weeks-long hype machine that leads up to the two semifinals on New Year's Eve and now must battle the perception that it's



BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

With head coach Dabo Swinney and his Clemson team having a down year, the ACC has balance but no dominant team. The top teams in the league all have at least two losses.

either in the midst of a "down" year or simply not that good in general, something that's dogged the wildly uneven Pac-12 for much of the CFP's existence.

Expanding the playoff to at least eight teams, with the winners of each of the Power Five's conference championships receiving an automatic bid regardless of their record, would make the hand-wringing over the ACC's status moot.

"I think (expansion) opens things up for other teams to have an opportunity to be in that (playoff) conversation for sure," he said.

A conversation that — for this year at least — has largely gone on with the ACC failing to get a word in edgewise.

Clemson's early season struggles knocked it all the way out of the Top 25 for the first time in seven years. Wake Forest's flirtation with a perfect season has come crashing back to earth following losses to North Carolina and North

North Carolina (6-5, 3-4 in ACC) at
No. 24 North Carolina St. (8-3, 5-2)
AFN-Sports
1 a.m. Saturday
9 a.m. Saturday

Carolina State. Pitt's résumé includes an emphatic home win over the Tigers but also a baffling home loss to Western Michigan in September that tempered any thoughts of crashing the CFP.

North Carolina was the preseason favorite in the Coastal Division. Now the Tar Heels need a win over the Wolfpack on Saturday to avoid a .500 season. Coach Mack Brown welcomes the league's unpredictability in 2021 but hopes it's just a one-off.

"We need to get it back where the winner goes to the playoff," Brown said. "And that would be really, really important for us but Clemson's got to stay strong. The rest of us need to keep stepping up."

Whether being left out of the CFP — at least under its current format — is a blip or a trend that won't be known for at least another year. Yet the Tigers, who have ripped off four straight wins since falling to Pitt on Oct. 23, fully expect to have their issues weaponized on the recruiting trail.

"Obviously, I think people will try and negative recruit against it, but we're not worried about that," Clemson offensive coordinator Tony Elliott said. "Once people get here on campus, they'll feel and see and understand why we're built to win championships for the long run."

AP Sports Writers Aaron Beard, Hank Kurz Jr., Charles Odum, John Kekis and Pete Iacobelli contributed to this report.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Game: Harbaugh winless against Ohio State as Wolverines' coach

FROM PAGE 48

"We've just been preparing for that team all winter, all summer," Ohio State senior defensive end Tyreke Smith said. "Got that game always on our minds."

For the 24th time, The Game will be a top-10 matchup.

The Buckeyes (10-1, 8-0 Big Ten, No. 4 CFP) have dominated the series of late, winning the last eight matchups and 15 of the last 16.

Ohio State also has won the last four Big Ten championship games. The Wolverines (10-1, 7-1, No. 6 CFP) are looking for their first-ever appearance in the Big Ten title game, which was first played 11 years ago. Michigan hasn't won the conference since 2004.

A glaring subplot in all this is that Jim Harbaugh has never beaten Ohio State in five tries as the Michigan coach, a continuous source of frustration among Wolverines fans and gleeful Schadenfreude in Columbus.

This may be Harbaugh's best team and best chance yet. The Michigan defense is among the top 10 in the FBS and might have a chance to slow down the Buckeyes and the nation's most prolific offense (560 yards, 47.2 points per game).

Redshirt freshman quarterback C.J. Stroud was 32-for-35 for 432 yards and a school record-tying

six touchdowns — all in the first half — in last Saturday's 56-7 rout of Michigan State, a week after he threw for five TDs in a blowout of Purdue.

The Ohio State defense had one of its best games of the season, neutralizing Michigan State's Heisman hopeful running back Kenneth Walker III, who gained just 26 yards.

The Buckeyes' loss to Oregon in Week 2 is a distant memory.

"The chemistry has been built on the field," Ohio State defensive tackle Haskell Garrett said. "Each week we've gotten better."

Michigan also enters the game on a high note. Cade McNamara threw for two touchdowns and Hassan Haskins ran for two in the Wolverines' 59-18 win over Maryland last Saturday.

"We're a confident team. We know what we're capable of," McNamara said. "We're fired up and we're ready. This is the week."

The only blemish on the Michigan record is a 37-33 loss to Michigan State on Oct. 30.

"Everything that was planned, built for, all the energy that was put in since way back in early 2021 — January, February — all the things that the guys have done, the coaches have done, has put us in this position," Harbaugh said. "That's the position we wanted to be in, and we want to finish it."



Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh has never beaten Ohio State in five tries as the Wolverines' coach.



JULIO CORTEZ/AP

Maryland running back Tayon Fleet-Davis, center, is tackled by Michigan defensive lineman Donovan Jeter (95) and linebacker Michael Barrett during the Wolverines' 59-18 win on Saturday in College Park, Md.

Michigan defense braces for high-octane Buckeyes

By MITCH STACY
Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State's dazzling offensive stars are about to run into one of the best defenses they've seen this season.

This year's edition of The Game could come down to how well the revamped defense of No. 6 Michigan can slow down the prolific scoring march of quarterback C.J. Stroud and the No. 2 Buckeyes.

The Wolverines have held opponents this season to an average of 16.3 points per game. Ohio State scored 49 last week — in the first half.

Something's got to give Saturday in the Big House.

"I think that's something that all the coaches and players on both teams are trying to figure out right now," said Jim Harbaugh, who is 0-5 against Ohio State as the Michigan head coach. "Been spending weeks, spending every minute they can to answer that same question."

There are huge implications. The winner moves on to the Big Ten championship game on Dec. 4 and stays in contention for the College Football Playoff. The loser drops out of the spotlight.

Stroud, a Heisman Trophy hopeful, has the Buckeyes (10-1, 8-0 Big Ten) roaring. They're averaging an FBS-leading 560 yards and 47.2 points per game.

The redshirt freshman, who threw his first pass in a college football game less than three months ago, tied a school record



JAY LAPRETE/AP

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day shouts to his team during last week's 56-7 win over Michigan State in Columbus, Ohio.

with six touchdowns — all in the first half — as Ohio State rolled up a season-high 655 yards in last week's blowout of then-No. 7 Michigan State. He's averaging 345.8 passing yards.

Receivers Chris Olave, Garrett Wilson and Jaxon Smith-Njigba have combined for nearly 3,000 yards and 30 touchdowns.

"Their route-running ability, their catching ability, their speed to all parts of the field — really outstanding," Harbaugh said.

True freshman running back TreVeyon Henderson's average carry of 7.32 yards is second-best in the nation.

"We've been confident the

whole year, but being able to click on all cylinders these past few weeks has boosted our confidence a lot more," Olave said. "I feel like we're having a lot more fun, spreading the ball around."

Said Buckeyes tackle Nicholas Petit-Frere: "The only thing that can stop us is ourselves."

Michigan made changes at the top after last season's pandemic-shortened 2-4 season, replacing defensive coordinator Don Brown with Mike Macdonald, the 34-year-old former Baltimore Ravens linebackers coach.

Macdonald has leaned on a pair of top-notch edge rushers, Aidan Hutchinson and David Ojabo, and linebacker Josh Ross to help contain the run and Daxton Hill to lead the secondary.

The Buckeyes have not faced a better pass defense this season. The Wolverines (10-1, 7-1) have limited eight of their 11 opponents to fewer than 200 passing yards. After allowing a season-high 293 to Washington in Week 2, Michigan's opponents have managed an average of just 164 through the air.

"It's going to be a big challenge for our guys in protection and for (Stroud) and everybody," Ohio State coach Ryan Day said. "But, it's also going to be the receivers, to make sure they're getting open with separation. It's everybody across the board. It's the running backs picking up things. Very, very talented (defense). Very powerful on the edge. They mix up their rushes — big challenge."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

WEEKEND PREVIEW

Rivalries carry title aspirations

More than that on line for The Game

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

No rivalry has produced more big games than Michigan-Ohio State.

The Wolverines and Buckeyes get together Saturday for their annual Big Ten grudge match and it will be the 24th time both are ranked in the top 10 of the AP poll at kickoff.

That's seven more than the next-closest rivalries (Notre Dame-USC and Nebraska-Oklahoma). Among the rivalry games in the spotlight over Thanksgiving weekend, Alabama-Auburn has had eight top-10 matchups in its history and Oklahoma-Oklahoma State has just two. The 10th-ranked Sooners and No. 7 Cowboys will make it three Saturday in Stillwater.

Of the all the rivalry games being played this weekend, the one with the second-most top-10 matchups is Florida-Florida State with 14. The Gators and Seminoles are decidedly unranked this season.

Still, it's a rivalry so interest abounds, as it will across the country over three days when you can gorge on college football.

Best game

No. 2 Ohio State at No. 6 Michigan: Bedlam makes a strong

case, but Buckeyes-Wolverines gets the slight nod because of the greater likelihood of offensive fireworks.

Ohio State possesses the best offense in the country, fueled by a Heisman Trophy contender at quarterback.

C.J. Stroud has thrown 36 touchdown passes and completed 71.1% of his passes, guiding an offense that averages almost 8 yards per play.

The Wolverines have two of the nation's best pass rushers in Aidan Hutchinson and David Ajabo (combined 20 sacks), but the real counter for Michigan is its powerful running game.

Hassan Haskins (1,063 yards rushing and 13 touchdowns) and Blake Corum (5.98 yards per carry) are the one-two punch.

The winner takes the Big Ten East, a spot in the conference title game and will be a step away from the College Football Playoff.

Heisman watch

Will Anderson Jr., OLB, Alabama: The Heisman race clarified last week with Stroud and No. 3 Alabama's Bryce Young taking the role of favorites, but Young's teammate deserves attention.

Anderson has been the most consistently dominant player in



BRODY SCHMIDT/AP

Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy is 2-14 against in-state rival Oklahoma. The seventh-ranked Cowboys are favored Saturday when they host the 10th-ranked Sooners in Stillwater, Okla.

the country this season, with 26.5 tackles for loss, including 13.5 sacks. The NCAA record for tackles for loss in a season is 32 by George Selvie of USF in 2007.

In the Iron Bowl, Anderson has a chance to feast on an Auburn offense that has gotten out of sorts with a backup quarterback during a three-game losing streak.

Numbers to know

2-14 — Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy's record against Oklahoma. Among high-profile rivalries, Bedlam is one of the most historically lopsided (90-18-7) because Oklahoma State spent much of its existence closer to Kansas than the superpower with which it shares a state. The Cowboys have closed the gap under Gundy but still rarely beat the Sooners. This year, they are the

favorites.

4 — Cincinnati's ranking in the College Football Playoff Top 25. The Bearcats are positioned to become the first team from outside the Power Five conferences to reach the playoff, if they can win out. They play at East Carolina on Friday.

6 — Number of consecutive years Clemson has played in (and won) the Atlantic Coast Conference title game. That streak is not quite dead yet for a Tigers team that had three losses before November. Clemson plays in-state SEC rival South Carolina on Saturday, but if No. 21 Wake Forest loses at Boston College and No. 23 North Carolina State loses to North Carolina, Clemson wins the ACC Atlantic.

2014 — The last time Rutgers played in a bowl game. The Scar-

let Knights play at Maryland on Saturday and the winner gets bowl eligible. The Terps last reached the postseason in 2016.

Hot seat

David Cutcliffe, Duke: It is doubtful any coach is going to save or lose his job based on this weekend's results, but it certainly looks as if the end of an era is coming at Duke.

The 67-year-old Cutcliffe has had remarkable success (six bowl games and an ACC championship game appearance) in 14 seasons at a program that has rarely climbed out of the bottom of the ACC over the last 50 years. But the Blue Devils are 3-8 heading into their game against Miami and the slippage over the past three seasons suggests it is time for a change in Durham.

Third-ranked Alabama flawed but battle-tested

By JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

This Alabama team is still winning football games but that aura of seemingly invincibility that normally looms over the Crimson Tide is long gone.

Last year Alabama made it look so easy in its season-long romp to the national championship, being truly challenged only once. That was in the Southeastern Conference championship game against Florida.

The third-ranked Crimson Tide have been beaten once this season — a three-point loss at No. 14 Texas A&M — and three of Alabama's 10 wins have come by a touchdown or less entering Saturday's visit to rival Auburn.

Alabama coach Nick Saban has insisted the issues preventing the Tide from putting teams away so easily are fixable, though they're



VASHA HUNT/AP

Bryce Young had to bail Alabama out of last week's game against Arkansas by throwing for 559 yards and five touchdowns.

still surfacing deep into the season.

"You always have to respect the

competitive character of the players, whether they have to make stops at the end of the game or we have to move the ball at the end of the game, whether it's take the air out of it or score," Saban said Monday. "So these experiences are always beneficial, I think, and certainly, we've had our share of them this year."

The Tide (10-1, 6-1 SEC, No. 2 CFP) dropped a spot in the rankings with a nip-and-tuck win over No. 25 Arkansas, jumped by Ohio State following the Buckeyes' 56-7 rout of then-No. 7 Michigan State.

Alabama still has clinched a spot in the SEC title game against No. 1 Georgia before its game against Auburn (6-5, 3-4). The Tide's playoff hopes are still very much intact, but the road to a repeat national title is hardly paved with any level of certainty.

The offensive line hasn't dom-

inated consistently. The running game isn't so potent without Najee Harris. The execution not so flawless.

Alabama has squeaked past Florida, which subsequently went into a free fall, and had to hold off a sub-.500 LSU team along with the Razorbacks.

■ Alabama blew most of a 21-3 lead before stopping a botched two-point conversion to hold on for a 31-29 win over then-No. 11 Florida. It looks even less impressive considering what happened to the Gators since, culminating with coach Dan Mullen's firing on Sunday. Afterward Saban praised the offense for responding but said the team needed to maintain its intensity for 60 minutes, which would become a familiar theme.

■ Alabama rushed for just 6 yards and missed an extra point in a 20-14 win over LSU, a 29.5-point

underdog according to FanDuel Sportsbook. The game wasn't decided until the Tigers' Hail Mary fell incomplete, and the Tide had to turn away three fourth-quarter trips across midfield by LSU.

Said Saban afterward: "Sometimes we have an expectation that we're going to win easy, but sometimes it's not so easy."

■ The Tide held on to beat Arkansas 42-35 despite losing a fumble at the goal line and giving up a sack to move out of field-goal range late, among other issues. It took Bryce Young's Alabama record 559 passing yards and five touchdowns.

■ Then there was the one that got away, a 41-38 loss to unranked Texas A&M after allowing two scores in the final three minutes. It snapped the Tide's 100-game winning streak over unranked teams.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Iron Bowl grades out as top rivalry

Writers pick Alabama-Auburn ahead of Ohio State-Michigan

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

The best college football rivalries can change over time depending on the state of the programs involved.

Go back 25 or 30 years and Miami-Florida State probably would have been near the top of most lists. Nowadays, while still heated and entertaining, 'Canes-'Noles just doesn't capture the attention of the nation the way it did when at least one those two was at the top of the sport.

Of course, some rivalries have just gone away altogether. For decades, Nebraska-Oklahoma was a lock to be one of the biggest games of the season. Texas-Texas A&M, too. Conference realignment has relegated those to the history books.

The Associated Press asked 42 sports writers and broadcasters to rank the five best rivalries in college football, with points given on a sliding scale (five for a first-place vote, four points for second, etc.).

Four longstanding series separated themselves from the rest according to the results released Tuesday. The top two, as it happens, will be renewed this weekend, with high stakes on the line for three of the four teams involved.

Alabama-Auburn

165 points, 18 first-place votes
Nickname: Iron Bowl.
Trophy: Foy-ODK Sportsmanship Trophy, named after James E. Foy, a former dean at both schools.
Meetings: 85, Alabama leads 47-37-1.

Signature moment: The Kick-Six, one of the most memorable plays in the history of college football. Top-ranked Alabama was tied with Auburn at 28-28 and challenged to get 1 second put back on the clock for a 57-yard field goal try that came up short. Auburn's Chris Davis fielded the kick from the back of his own end zone and sprinted up his own jubilant sideline for a touchdown on the final play to send the fourth-ranked Tigers to the 2013 Southeastern Conference title game and eventually the BCS championship game.

Biggest upset: In 1972, No. 7 Auburn beat No. 2 Alabama on the strength of two blocked punts in what became known as the "Punt 'Bama Punt" game.

Ohio State-Michigan

150 points, 10 first-place votes
Nickname: The Game.
Reward: Before the Big Ten split into divisions in 2011, the winner of the Ohio State-Michigan game earned the conference title 22 times. Bragging rights for these two massive fan bases also cannot be underestimated.
Meetings: 116, Michigan leads 58-52-6.

Signature moment: No. 1 Ohio State and No. 4 Michigan played to a 10—10 tie in Ann Arbor in 1973, creating a deadlock atop the Big Ten standings. The treasured Rose Bowl bid came down to a vote of conference athletic directors, won by Ohio State. Michigan coach Bo Schembechler never got over it.

Biggest upset: In 1969, the Buckeyes entered the season finale No. 1 in the country and unbeaten, with eyes on a national title. They were knocked off by a Michigan team that came in 7-2. This game kicked off what is known as the Ten Year War in the rivalry between Schembechler and Ohio State coach Woody Hayes.

Army-Navy

125 points, 12 first-place votes
Nickname: None needed.
Reward: Commander-in-Chief's Trophy, though Air Force also gets a say in where that resides.
Meetings: 121, Navy leads 61-53-7.

Signature moment: Less than a month after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, Army-Navy played what turned out to be one of their most memorable games. Trying to upset Heisman winner Roger Staubach and the second-ranked Midshipmen, Army reached Navy's 2-yard line, trailing 21-15 in the closing seconds, but time ran out

Biggest upset: No. 2 Army was unbeaten under Hall of Fame coach Red Blaik entering the 1950 game with 2-6 Navy and carrying a 28-game winning streak. The Midshipmen won 14-2 and the rivalry began to shift in Navy's favor after a string of six years when Army didn't lose.

Oklahoma-Texas

88 points, 2 first-place votes
Nickname (unofficial): Red River Shootout.
Reward: Golden Hat.
Meetings: 117, Texas leads 62-50-5.
Signature moment: Texas coach Darrell Royal accused Oklahoma and coach Barry Switzer of spying on his practices leading up to the 1976 game, which ended in a 6-6 tie



Southern California's Reggie Bush (5) pushes quarterback Matt Leinhardt (11) into the end zone for the final margin of victory over Notre Dame on Oct. 15, 2005 in South Bend, Ind.



Auburn cornerback Chris Davis returns a missed field-goal attempt 100-plus yards to score the winning touchdown against No. 1 Alabama as time expires on Nov. 30, 2013 in Auburn, Ala.

and wound up being Royal's last in the rivalry. Years later, Switzer conceded in his autobiography, that, yes, there was some spying going on for OU. The 1984 game was a memorable 1-2 matchup that ended 15-15. This year's wild Sooners' win deserves an honorable mention.

Biggest upset: In what turned out to be Mack Brown's last season as Texas coach, the 3-2 Longhorns beat the No. 12 Sooners 36-20 behind backup quarterback Case McCoy.

Florida-Georgia

19 points
Nickname (unofficial): World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party.
Reward: Okefenokee Oar.

Meetings: 99 or 100, depending on which school you ask. Georgia leads either 53-44-2 or 54-44-2.

Signature moment: The Gator Stomp. After scoring a touchdown early in the 2007 matchup, Georgia players participated in a full-team, end-zone celebration, incurring a 15-yard penalty that didn't bother Bulldogs coach Mark Richt one bit. The next season, Florida coach Urban Meyer used two late timeouts with his team up 49-10.

Biggest upset: Florida was ranked No. 1 for the first time in school history when No. 17 Georgia beat the Gators 24-3 in 1985.

Ole Miss-Mississippi St.

18 points
Nickname: Egg Bowl.
Reward: Golden Egg Trophy.
Meetings: 117, Ole Miss leads 63-48-6.
Signature moment: In 2019, after scoring a potential game-tying touchdown for Ole Miss, receiver Elijah Moore celebrated by mimicking a dog lifting his leg to urinate in the end zone. The move drew a 15-yard penalty, pushing back the extra point try — which was missed to give Mississippi State a 21-20 victory. Ole Miss fired coach Matt Luke within days, but the victory helped Mississippi State coach Joe Moorhead keep his job — for about a month. He was fired after team's bowl game.

Biggest upset: In 1970, Ole Miss was 7-1, No. 10 in the country, bowl-bound and trying to finish the season strong despite having lost star quarterback Archie Manning earlier in the season to a broken arm. The Bulldogs won 19-14 in Oxford to snap a three-game losing streak.

Notre Dame-USC

14 points
Nickname: None, though it is often called college football's most storied intersectional rivalry.
Reward: Jeweled Shillelagh

Meetings: 92, Notre Dame leads 50-37-5.

Signature moment: The Bush Push in 2005. Defending national champion USC had won 27 straight games, but the Fighting Irish had the Trojans in trouble in South Bend. Quarterback Matt Leinart sneaked in from the 1-yard line with a big push — against the rules at the time — from star tailback Reggie Bush for the winning TD.

Biggest upset: In 1964, Notre Dame was unbeaten, No. 1 and lined up to win a national championship when unranked USC rallied from 17-0 down and scored the winning touchdown with 1:35 left in the game on a fourth-and-8.

Florida State-Miami

13 points
Nickname: Sunshine Showdown.
Reward: Used to be a chance to play for a national title. Now, the winning head coach gets to keep his job.

Meetings: 66, Miami leads 35-31.
Signature moment: Wide right. In consecutive seasons (1991-92), the game was a matchup of top-three teams. The Seminoles missed crucial field goals in the waning seconds in both — wide right each time — to give Miami victories that propelled the Hurricanes to a chance to play in a bowl game with a national championship on the line.

Biggest upset: Florida State was No. 1 in the country when it opened its season against No. 6 Miami in 1988. The upset itself wasn't so stunning as much as how it went down. The 'Canes dominated 31-0 and went on to finish No. 2 in the country. The 'Noles didn't lose again and finished No. 3.

Honorable mention

BYU-Utah (9 points), Michigan-Michigan State (8), Alabama-LSU (3), Florida-Florida State (3), Harvard-Yale (3), Lehigh-Lafayette (3), Minnesota-Wisconsin (3), Pitt-West Virginia (2), Amherst-Williams (1), Cal-Stanford (1), Clemson-South Carolina (1), Oregon-Washington (1).

SPORTS



Thanksgiving break
Rams using bye week to adjust after two-game skid » **NFL, Page 43**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



Ohio State quarterback C.J. Stroud was 32 of 35 for 432 yards and school record-tying six touchdowns — all in the first half — in last Saturday's 56-7 rout of Michigan State, a week after he threw for five TDs in a blowout of Purdue.

High-stakes Game

More than bragging rights on the line between rivals No. 2 Ohio State and No. 6 Michigan

BY MITCH STACY
Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — This year's version of The Game could hardly be bigger.

The annual clash between Ohio State and Michigan, held this year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, is already juiced by a century of tradition, mutual hatred and fanaticism.

A lot more than bragging rights are at

stake this year in Ann Arbor for the No. 2 Buckeyes and No. 6 Wolverines.

The winner clinches the Big Ten East and advances to the conference championship game Dec. 4 — and stays alive for the College Football Playoff.

The loser picks up a second loss and will consider the season ruined.

SEE GAME ON PAGE 45

INSIDE

Wolverines' defense will be tested by Buckeyes, Heisman-contending QB Stroud **Page 45**



PHOTOS BY JAY LAPRETE, TOP, AND JULIO CORTEZ, ABOVE/AP

Defensive end Aidan Hutchinson and the rest of the Michigan defense, rated among the top 10 in the FBS, match up against Ohio State, the nation's most prolific offense at 560 yards and 47.2 points per game, on Saturday.

Booker, Paul help Suns extend win streak » **NBA, Page 42**

