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EUROPE  
& PACIFIC  
**WEEKEND**  
EDITION



**MOVIES**  
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# STARS AND STRIPES®

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## Top admiral says readiness must be Navy's No. 1 priority

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A 355-ship fleet remains the Navy's North Star, though military readiness must come first amid growing threats from adversaries such as China, Adm. Mike Gilday, chief of naval operations, said Tuesday.



Gilday

Gilday said he won't sacrifice capability and readiness in exchange for a larger fleet.

"I think that we need a fleet that's more ready, more capable and more lethal more than we need a bigger fleet that's less ready and less capable and less lethal," the admiral said during a webinar with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a Washington think tank.

Speaking a day after the USS Firebolt fired warning shots at three Iranian Revolutionary Guard ships that came within 68 yards of the Navy patrol boat and a Coast Guard patrol boat, Gilday said investments in service members and "new training frameworks" must be a priority as strategic threats grow.

"I truly feel that if we do get in a scrap with an adversary that our fleet and its commanders are likely not to meet all of our expectations but will certainly fall to the level to which we have trained and prepared them for the fight," Gilday said ahead of the service's 2022 budget hearing before the House Appropriations Committee on Thursday.

Still, the Navy's top officer said shipbuilding remains a priority

SEE READINESS ON PAGE 5



MELINA MARA, THE WASHINGTON POST/AP

President Joe Biden addresses a joint session of Congress on Wednesday in the House Chamber of the U.S. Capitol.

# Going all-in on government

## Biden urges expanded federal programs to boost economy, social safety net

By JONATHAN LEMIRE AND JOSH BOAK  
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — In his first address to Congress, President Joe Biden called for an expansion of federal programs to drive the economy past the coronavirus pandemic and broadly extend the social safety net on a scale not seen in decades.

Biden's nationally televised address raised the stakes for his ability to sell his plans to voters of both parties, even if Republican lawmakers prove resistant. The Democratic president is following Wednesday night's speech by pushing his plans in person, beginning in Ge-

SEE BIDEN ON PAGE 9

### RELATED

In GOP response, Scott suggests Democrats use race as a political weapon **Page 9**

# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## EUROPE GAS PRICES

Unavailable at press time

## PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	Guam
Japan	..	\$3.599	..	\$3.189	\$2.949	\$3.359
Change in price	..	+2.0 cents	..	No change	+4.0 cents	+2.0 cents
Okinawa	\$2.939	..	..	\$3.189	\$2.949	\$3.609
Change in price	+2.0 cents	..	..	No change	+4.0 cents	+2.0 cents

\*DieselEFD \*\*Midgrade  
For the week of April 30 - May 6

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		South Korea (Won)	1109.88
Euro costs (April 30)	\$1.18	Switzerland (Franc)	.9113
Dollar buys (April 30)	0.8034	Thailand (Baht)	31.26
British pound (April 30)	\$1.36	Turkey (NewLira)	8.2330
Japanese yen (April 30)	106.00		
South Korean won (April 30)	1078.00		
Commercial rates			
Bahrain(Dinar)	.3770		
Britain (Pound)	1.3943		
Canada (Dollar)	1.2311		
China(Yuan)	6.4744		
Denmark (Krone)	6.1422		
Egypt (Pound)	15.6597		
Euro	.8261		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7637		
Hungary (Forint)	298.02		
Israel (Shekel)	3.2468		
Japan (Yen)	109.21		
Kuwait(Dinar)	.3011		
Norway (Krone)	8.2029		
Philippines (Peso)	48.40		
Poland (Zloty)	3.77		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7506		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3268		

(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.)

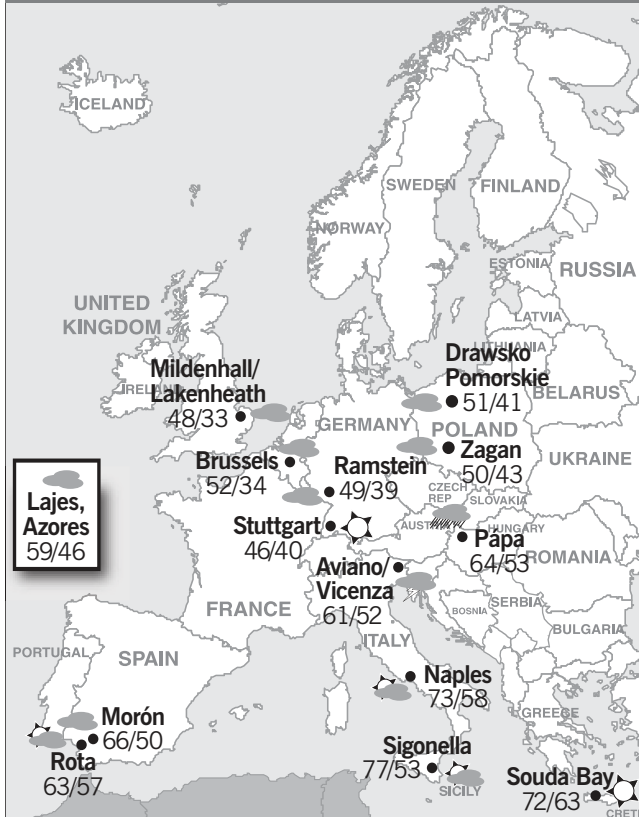
INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	3.25
Interest Rates Discount rate	0.75
Federal funds market rate	0.07
3-month bill	0.01
30-year bond	2.30

## WEATHER OUTLOOK

### FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



### FRIDAY IN EUROPE



### SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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# PCSing? STARS AND STRIPES RELOCATION GUIDE

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## MILITARY



RONALD GUTRIDGE/U.S. Navy

The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Charlotte prepares to depart Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, in 2010.

## Hawaii commander fired for 'command climate' problems

By WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The commander of the Pearl Harbor-based submarine USS Charlotte was relieved Tuesday in the wake of a command investigation sparked in part by a sailor's suicide last month, the Navy said Wednesday.

Cmdr. Joseph Lautenslager was dismissed from the fast-attack sub by Capt. Michael Majewski, who heads Submarine Squadron 7, after losing confidence in his ability to command, the Navy said in a news release.

Majewski took the action after an investigation "revealed leader-

ship and command climate problems," the Navy said.

Lautenslager took command of the Charlotte in March 2019. He has been temporarily assigned to the staff of Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, the Navy said.

The submarine is undergoing maintenance at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard.

On March 17, a 23-year-old torpedoman's mate third class died from a self-inflicted gunshot while on nighttime watch aboard the Charlotte, according to the Navy.

Majewski ordered the command investigation as the result of both the suicide and the command climate and leadership issues, Pacific Fleet Submarine Force spokeswoman Cmdr. Cindy Fields told Stars and Stripes in a

statement.

"Morale of the crew played a large factor in the decision to remove him from command," she said.

The deputy commander of Squadron 7, Cmdr. Christopher Hedrick, has assumed command of the Charlotte until a permanent replacement is named, the Navy said.

Lautenslager was commissioned in 1999, according to his official Navy biography. He served as executive officer aboard the fast-attack submarine USS Springfield from 2012-13.

Before taking command of the Charlotte, he served as deputy commander for readiness for Squadron 7, according to the bio.

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Lautenslager

## Bases used by US Marines in Australia getting \$582M in upgrades

By SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Australia will invest \$582 million to improve bases and training areas in its Northern Territory that are used by a rotational force of U.S. Marines, the country's Defense Department announced Wednesday.

Upgrades will be made to Robertson Barracks, home to Marine Rotational Force - Darwin during annual six-month deployments, as well as ranges at Kangaroo Flats, Mount Bunday and Bradshaw, where the Marines train, the department said in a statement.

The Marines' rotation Down Under will be back at nearly full strength this year, with 2,200 Marines in the Northern Territory by June, according to Australia's defense department. The onset of the coronavirus pandemic meant

**"Our focus is on pursuing peace, stability and a free and open Indo-Pacific..."**

Scott Morrison  
Australian Prime Minister

last year's force was cut by more than half, well short of the 2,500 Marines who traveled there in 2019.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said, in the statement, that the base and range upgrades are part of nearly \$6.2 billion in defense infrastructure work in the Northern Territory

over the next decade.

"Working with the United States and Indo-Pacific neighbours, we will continue to advance Australia's interests by investing in the Australian Defence Force, particularly across Northern Australia," he said. "Our focus is on pursuing peace, stability and a free and open Indo-Pacific, with a world order that favours freedom."

The country's defense minister, Peter Dutton, said the upgrades will ensure that the Australian Defence Force delivers world-class training and engagement with allies and other nations through joint exercises, including with the Marines.

The announcement comes amid deteriorating relations between Australia and its largest trading partner, China.

# US special ops chief for Europe heads to Ukraine

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — The head of U.S. special operations in Europe met with troops this week in Ukraine, marking the two-star general's first official visit to a country where a recent Russian military buildup sparked U.S. threat alerts.

Maj. Gen. David Tabor, who leads U.S. Special Operations Command Europe, said the United States is looking for ways to expand training efforts in Ukraine.

"U.S. forces in Europe remain committed to collective defense cooperative security alongside European allies and partners," Tabor said in a statement Wednesday. "By seeking out new training opportunities, we ensure that U.S., allied and partner forces maintain the ability to meet and defeat any number of threats."

Tabor met with U.S. and Ukrainian service members at the 142nd Training Center, which serves as a hub for that country's elite forces.

In recent years, U.S. special operators have worked closely with their Ukrainian counterparts to improve their crisis response capabilities. In February 2020, the U.S. gave \$1.5 million for improvements at the training site, located not far from the Ukrainian capital of Kiev.

Tabor's meeting in Ukraine was intended to serve as a demonstra-

tion of the "continued commitment to building the capacity of Ukraine's forces to defend more effectively against Russian aggression," SOCEUR said in a statement.

Tabor's visit came after Russia's decision last week to reduce the number of forces it had built up around Ukraine. The situation, which Western officials said involved more than 100,000 Russian troops, heightened concerns among allies that Russia was poised to invade.

Moscow said its troops were taking part in training drills. It still isn't clear how many forces or how much gear was left behind in the region by the Russian military.

The rapid troop buildup was the largest force assembled around the country since Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, the Pentagon said. In the years since, Russian-backed separatists have been fighting a civil war in Ukraine's east.

Russia also maintains a large naval presence off the coast of Ukraine, and Moscow said it will block all foreign naval vessels from transiting a part of the Black Sea known as the Kerch Strait until October. The area has been a flashpoint in the past between Russian and Ukrainian naval vessels.

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ter quality training options on a larger scale and in a wider range of environments, according to Ross Babbage, a former Australian assistant defense secretary.

"These new initiatives should help to make northern Australia an even more attractive location for many types of training and exercising by United States forces," he told Stars and Stripes in an email Thursday.

They will help disperse Australian and allied units across northern Australia in times of tension and conflict and contribute to initiatives designed to strengthen the sustainability and resilience of Australian and allied operations in and from the region, Babbage said.

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## MILITARY

# China says US has increased military activity

Associated Press

BEIJING — Activity by U.S. military ships and surveillance planes directed at China has increased significantly under President Joe Biden's administration, a spokesperson for the Chinese Defense Ministry said Thursday.

As an example, Wu Qian said the Navy destroyer USS Mustin recently conducted close-in observation of the Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning and its battle group.

That had "seriously interfered with the Chinese side's training activities and seriously threatened the safety of navigation and personnel on the both sides," Wu said. The ship was warned to leave and a formal protest was filed with the U.S., he said.

Activity by U.S. military ships

was up 20% and by planes 40% in Chinese-claimed areas since Biden took office in January over the same period last year, Wu said.

"The U.S. frequently dispatches ships and planes to operate in seas and airspace near China, promoting regional militarization and threatening regional peace and stability," Wu said at a monthly briefing held virtually.

China routinely objects to the U.S. military presence in the South China Sea, which it claims almost in its entirety, as well as the passage of Navy ships through the Taiwan Strait.

The country recently marked the 20th anniversary of the collision between a U.S. surveillance plane and a Chinese navy fighter near the Chinese island province

of Hainan that resulted in the Chinese pilot's death. He was called a hero who sacrificed himself for the defense of the motherland. The U.S. says its plane was in international airspace and the accident was the result of reckless flying by the Chinese side.

Wu also blasted moves to beef up monitoring of Chinese aircraft movements by Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy claimed by China as its own territory, to be annexed by force if necessary.

Efforts by Taiwan's government to stave off what China refers to as inevitable unification are like "a mantis trying to stop a chariot," Wu said.

The U.S. maintains only unofficial relations with Taiwan in defer-

ence to Beijing, but provides the island with defensive weapons and is legally bound to treat threats to it as matters of "grave concern." Increased activity by the Chinese military around Taiwan has been raising concern about the possibility of a conflict.

In an interview with Britain's Sky News, Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu reiterated recent warnings that the military threat from China is growing through "misinformation campaigns, hybrid warfare, and ... grey zone activities."

"And all these seem to be preparing for their final military assault against Taiwan," Wu told Sky.

"This is our country, this is our people and this is our way of life.

We will defend ourselves to the very end," Wu said.

Biden did not address such military threats in his address to Congress on Wednesday night, instead emphasizing that China and others were "closing in fast" in economic and technological terms.

"We're in a competition with China and other countries to win the 21st century," Biden said.

That drew a harsh response from China's Foreign Ministry, reflecting how hopes for an improvement in the tone, if not the substance, of relations under Biden have born little fruit.

"The U.S. always demands that others follow the rules while violating the rules themselves," spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a daily briefing.

## Marines team up with Philippine troops to help renovate school

By SETH ROBSON  
Stars and Stripes

When the coronavirus pandemic recedes in the Philippines, some children living near its capital city will return to a renovated school thanks to U.S. and Philippine combat engineers.

Seventeen Marines and a Navy corpsman from the 9th Engineer Support Battalion out of Camp Hansen, Okinawa, worked over the past month with about 20 members of the Philippine army's 564th Engineer Construction Battalion to improve Ilosong Elementary School in Quezon City.

"Humanitarian assistance projects are the second-best thing we can get besides a combat deployment as combat engineers," 1st Lt. Julian Taruc, 26, who led Marines involved in the project, said in a telephone interview Friday.

The Marines spent their first two weeks in-country quarantined at a hotel, then slept in the school's

empty classrooms during the work. The kids are at home learning virtually due to the pandemic, Taruc said.

Medical experts quoted Tuesday in the South China Morning Post warned that the Philippines could face the same sort of virus surge as India, which is experiencing 300,000 new cases each day. More than a million people in the Philippines have contracted the virus and nearly 17,000 have died of its complications, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center.

The pandemic forced the cancellation of last year's Balikatan drills but, this month, 736 Philippines troops and 225 U.S. service members trained together in the Southeast Asian nation, officially completing the exercise Friday.

Before and during Balikatan, the Marine engineers built a reinforced concrete classroom, 23 feet by 50 feet, at the school, which in-



KAYLEA BERRY/U.S. Air Force

**Philippine Army 1st Lt. Celestino Aporado Jr., left, and Marine Corps 1st Lt. Julian Taruc discuss the construction of a two-classroom building in Ilosong, Philippines, on March 29.**

cludes several buildings in poor repair, Taruc said.

"We probably wouldn't do this quality of construction in places like Iraq or Afghanistan," he said. "If we are doing a forward operating base, we build something temporary."

The project proved that U.S. and Philippines combat engineers can

work well together, Taruc said.

"They (Philippine troops) have different methods and ways of getting the same things done (but) we can work together with them pretty well on these type of humanitarian missions," he said.

Taruc — the son of Filipino parents who moved to the United States from Pampanga province

north of Manila when his father joined the Navy — encouraged his Marines to sample local food such as pancit, a noodle dish, he said.

The Marines were wrapping up the project and getting ready to head home, he said.

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## Court orders US Army to review thousands of 'bad paper' discharges

By NIKKI WENTLING  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A federal court approved a lawsuit settlement this week requiring the U.S. Army to review and potentially upgrade thousands of other-than-honorable discharges dating back 10 years.

The U.S. District Court for Connecticut finalized the agreement Monday. It orders the Army Discharge Review Board to reconsider thousands of cases where upgrades were denied, despite evidence that veterans were struggling with post-

traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or military sexual trauma when they separated from the military.

The board will review decisions made between April 17, 2011, and April 26, 2021, that partially or fully denied relief to post-9/11 veterans with other-than-honorable discharges.

The lawsuit was filed in 2017 by Steve Kennedy and Alicia Carson, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans denied discharge upgrades despite diagnoses of mental health condi-

tions. They were represented by the Yale Law School Veterans Legal Services Clinic. The court granted class-action status to the case in 2018.

During the process of the lawsuit, Kennedy had his discharge upgraded to honorable.

"What was most important going forward to me was that everyone else got the same review that I did," Kennedy said in a statement Wednesday. "And that's the opportunity that thousands of deserving veterans are going to receive in this

settlement."

The Defense Department instituted a policy in 2017 to give "liberal consideration" to veterans looking to upgrade their other-than-honorable discharges, or "bad paper," in situations where a service-related medical disorder could have led to their misconduct. Plaintiffs in the lawsuit argued that the Army Discharge Review Board ignored the policy and denied upgrades when they were warranted.

The wrongful discharges go back even further, according to the Gov-

ernment Accountability Office. The GAO has reported that the Pentagon didn't consistently apply previous policies going back to 2011 that required discharge review boards to take mental health issues into consideration.

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

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## MILITARY

# Activists who want Ramstein shut down set to protest outside base

By JENNIFER H. SVAN  
AND MARCUS KLOECKNER  
*Stars and Stripes*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Peace activists who allege that Ramstein Air Base unlawfully supports drone operations in the Middle East and elsewhere will protest by riding bicycles around the base Friday and Saturday.

German police and base officials said they don't anticipate violence during the "Stop Ramstein Bike Marathon." But they have advised people to avoid bike paths near the base and told drivers to expect delays near the installation during the protest, in which some 40 cyclists are expected to take part from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

The Air Force respects "the rights of others to voice their opinion and practice freedom of speech and assembly," an official with the 86th Airlift Wing said.

"Our primary aim here is to ensure a safe demonstration, both for those involved and for our

Airmen, personnel and neighbors," wing spokesman Lt. Col. Will Powell said in a statement.

The Berlin-based Action Office Campaign Stop Ramstein is organizing the protest against the largest U.S. military base in Germany. It has staged demonstrations outside the base at least five times since 2015.

The group says the base has violated international law by serving as a relay station for drone strikes in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa, and wants it shut down.

No drones "are directed, controlled or operated by any U.S. Air Force unit" on Ramstein, nor is data relayed through Ramstein for the operation of drones, Powell said.

The 693rd Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group at Ramstein analyzes data obtained from drones flown in theater but does not control their mission orders or flights, Powell said.

All operations on and from the base adhere to international law

and treaties, he said.

But a German high court said in 2019 there were "substantial indications" that U.S. drone missions assisted from Ramstein are, at least in part, "violating international law."

The demonstrators plan to complete two loops around the base. A map of the route indicates they will ride through or near Ramstein-Miesenbach, Mackenbach, Kindsbach and Landstuhl, and past the base's east and west gates.

German police will accompany the riders, who have to follow coronavirus protective measures, including maintaining distance from each other and wearing masks, said Andreas Wildberger, a detective with the Landstuhl police department.

A rally is planned at the end of the protest near the air show memorial outside the west gate on Saturday at 3 p.m.

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## Readiness: Navy ship goal still 355

FROM PAGE 1

for the service, which has publicly sought a 355-ship fleet since 2016. The Navy has 296 manned ships, according to an April 22 Congressional Research Service report.

"Every single assessment that has been done on our force structure since 2015 has called for a larger, more capable Navy in this era of great-power competition that not only deter but also to be able to respond if required," Gilday said.

The administration of former President Donald Trump released a document Dec. 9 that called for up to 446 manned ships and up to 242 unmanned vessels by 2045. But Gilday said Tuesday, within the service, the goal hasn't changed.

The document was considered the Trump administration's "own vision for future Navy force structure and/or a draft version" of the 2022 30-year Navy shipbuilding plan due to Congress later this year, according to the congressional report.

"The future naval force structure assessment sent up by [former Defense] Secretary [Mark] Esper certainly went far above 355, but 355 is the law of the land right now and I think given where

we are just shy of 300, that's not a bad target," Gilday said.

The administration of President Joe Biden has not said whether it will keep, change or throw out Trump's plan, but has said shipbuilding "will be a top area of focus for the administration's review of the Trump administration's defense plans and programs," according to the report.

Whether growing to a 355-ship fleet is possible remains to be seen. Gilday said recent projections indicated the Navy would need a 4.1% boost in its budget to achieve a 355-ship fleet within the next decade.

"But as you're probably well aware, the buying power of the Navy has been relatively flat since 2010," he said. "We're going to see us just hovering — lucky to actually keep pace with inflation."

Further, rising personnel and maintenance costs "typically rise at a rate higher than inflation," Gilday said, which will "potentially put a squeeze on the shipbuilding budget, unless money is found elsewhere outside of Navy's top line."

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## MILITARY

# Top US officials head to Mideast over concerns

By NICK WADHAMS  
AND TONY CAPACCIO  
*Bloomberg News*

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is sending a team of senior officials to the Middle East this week as the president seeks to ease allies' concerns over Iranian nuclear talks and address issues involving the United Arab Emirates' planned purchase of the F-35 joint strike fighter.

The team of officials from the State Department, National Security Council and Defense Department will be led by NSC Middle East policy coordinator Brett McGurk and State Department counselor Derek Chollet, according to several people familiar with the plans. Tentative plans call for visiting Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Jordan, according to the people, who asked not to be identified because the trip isn't public.

The group's visit comes amid deepening unease among American allies in the region that President Joe Biden will neglect them as he looks to reorient U.S. foreign policy toward countering China. They're also worried by his bid to bring the U.S. back into the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran that former President Donald Trump abandoned.

An administration official, who asked not to be identified discussing diplomatic matters, said the delegation will discuss important issues tied to U.S. national security and continuing efforts to de-escalate tensions in the Middle East.

Other members of the U.S. delegation include Joey Hood, the acting assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, and Dana Stroul, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Middle East, according to the people.

Another element of the Mideast

trip is tied to the Biden administration's decision to proceed with the sale of the next-generation F-35 jet to the UAE.

Upon taking office in January, the administration announced a review of the potential \$10.4 billion, 50-jet sale approved in the final days of the Trump administration, after the UAE and Israel reached a historic peace accord.

The administration is allowing the sale to go forward even though it has questions about the UAE's ties with China.

Specifically, one official said the U.S. has concerns about UAE technology security assurances that need to be addressed or clarified before the jet sale is completed.

The stealthy F-35 is the most visible part of a potential \$23 billion arms package that could take years to complete.

In a sign of the importance of the issue, Biden aide and former ambassador to the UAE Barbara Leaf is planning a separate trip to the Gulf nation to discuss concern that China could obtain U.S. technology once the Emirati military acquires the jet built by Lockheed Martin Corp. Leaf has overseen Middle East affairs at the NSC and is Biden's nominee to become assistant secretary of state for the region.

The issue of the UAE's China ties and its security guarantees regarding the F-35 is one that has been flagged by several American senators.

"I am very concerned about the Emirates' burgeoning military R&D relationship" with China, "and there is a lot we should be paying close attention to," Sen. Bob Menendez of New Jersey, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said in a statement to Bloomberg News.



ANTHONY WILLIAMS/U.S. Air National Guard

Pennsylvania Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Anthony Williams poses with John Gretton "Jocko" Willink, a retired Navy SEAL officer at Biddle Air National Guard Base, Pa., on April 19.

## Retired SEAL Jocko Willink makes surprise visit to Pa. Guard base

By CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

A security forces airman was guarding an air base in Pennsylvania when his idol, former Navy SEAL and podcaster John Gretton "Jocko" Willink rolled up to the gate and asked to enter.

Airman 1st Class William Guilfoyle prepared for basic training and pushed through technical school with the help of Willink's podcasts, but the native of Susquehanna, Pa., never expected to encounter the retired naval officer at Biddle Air National Guard Base in Horsham, Pa.

"I was just blown away to be able to meet him and shake his hand," Guilfoyle said.

Willink made the impromptu visit April 19 after some Pennsylvania Army National Guard soldiers ran into him making a promotional video, the Pennsylvania Air National Guard said in a statement this week. The soldiers from the 28th Infantry Division invited him to give a speech to some 275 mobilized guard members temporarily living on the base on state orders.

When Willink and his team showed up at the gate, Guilfoyle "stayed frosty," the statement said. He and Tech. Sgt. Anthony Williams, both with the 111th Se-

curity Forces Squadron, checked the visitors' identification, searched their vehicle, gave an operational security briefing and escorted them to the designated area. In a three-minute video of the talk with the soldiers, posted to Willink's social media accounts, a soldier off-screen describes a "scenario that's not all that great."

"Food's not great, non-ideal sleeping conditions, maybe the shower trailer's broke down," the unidentified man said. "All that starts adding up."

The crowd laughs and Willink grins before putting their plight in historical perspective.

"The worst possible day that you have on this base isn't 15 minutes of the pain that the guys felt at ... the Chosin Reservoir ... at Normandy, at Gettysburg," he said. "Whenever I face anything that's challenging, whenever anything sucks, I like it. It's going to make me tougher."

The military uses the "suckfest" of boot camp and challenging schools and experiences to build bonds between troops until they ultimately arrive in combat, "which sucks the worst of all" but makes units even tighter, Willink explained.

In Iraq, where he commanded SEAL Team 3's Task Unit Bruiser

15 years ago, his sailors became "very close" with the Army's 1st Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, headed by then-Col. Ron Clark, now a major general and chief of staff of Indo-Pacific Command.

The citation for Willink's Silver Star Medal earned during that deployment praises his leadership, vision and courage under fire. He spearheaded missions and led forces in "high-intensity and bloody urban warfare," it says.

During his speech, Willink credited the bonds developed through shared adversity as directly contributing to their successes.

"So, when something sucks? Good," he said. "Good! It's going to make me tougher and it's going to make us stronger."

By Thursday, the video had garnered some 673,000 views on Instagram.

Meanwhile, the security forces rookie Guilfoyle received praise from his leadership for keeping his cool around his idol.

"We could not be prouder of our security forces squadron," said the wing's Chief Master Sgt. Robert Ferguson.

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## Calif. man faces prison after guilty plea in \$100M Afghan scheme

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — A California man who attempted to cheat the Afghan government out of more than \$100 million has pleaded guilty to fraud in a Los Angeles federal court, the Justice Department said.

Saed Ismail Amiri, 38, admitted Tuesday to lying to Afghan authorities so that his company would be awarded a U.S.-funded contract to help build Afghanistan's power grid, a DOJ statement said.

He submitted a bid on the contract for

\$112,292,241, underbidding competitors by more than \$20 million, it said.

He faces up to 20 years in prison and is scheduled for sentencing Aug. 10.

Amiri and other employees of Assist Consultants Inc., an Afghan company, used fake documents in 2015 and 2016 to convince Afghanistan's national power utility that it was qualified to build five electric power substations, the statement said. The funds they were bidding for were provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development to help strengthen basic infrastructure.

The group claimed the company had been a subcontractor on substations for a cement factory in Uganda and a textile company in Nigeria that didn't exist.

Amiri instructed some of his co-conspirators to travel to the African countries to obtain false documents to help verify their claims, according to a joint investigation by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction and the USAID Inspector General.

Amiri sent documents to Afghanistan's national power utility that "he knew were

false and altered," including a fake letter claiming to be from the Ugandan government and false bank records, the DOJ statement said. After submitting the fraudulent documents, Amiri met with American law enforcement at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. Shortly afterward, he withdrew his company's bid and attempted to accuse another employee of submitting the documents, the statement said.

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## VIRUS OUTBREAK

# German town asks to add Americans to its virus tallies

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER  
AND KARIN ZEITVOGEL  
*Stars and Stripes*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Kaiserslautern officials are seeking a court order that would allow them to include tens of thousands of Americans who live in the region in coronavirus tallies, which would push incidence rates down and could allow many businesses to reopen.

"Including the U.S. armed forces and NATO members who actually live here would increase the population by around 50,000," Ramstein-Miesenbach Mayor Ralf Hechler and Kaiserslautern district councillor Ralf Lessmeister said in a statement posted Wednesday on Facebook. "That would have a significant effect on our incidence rate, which would regularly be below 100," the statement said.

A federal "emergency brake" law passed last week mandated that restrictions would automatically be put in place in cities and districts when there is a weekly average of over 100 new infections per 100,000 people.

Excluding thousands of American residents from the incidence calculation is "clearly wrong" and a violation of the basic rights of people living and working in the region, Hechler and Lessmeister said. Many Americans in the area have ties to Ramstein Air Base or Army installations.

As of Wednesday, the rate of new infections in the city of Kaiserslautern was 156 cases per 100,000 people, according to Germany's public health agency, the Robert Koch Institute. In the district, which includes Ramstein and Landstuhl, it was slightly lower, at around 138 new infections per 100,000 residents.

If the U.S. military community were counted, the rate for new cases would be 146 per 100,000 for the city and just under 118 for the district, data posted on Facebook by Lessmeister show.

The U.S. military community makes up around 40% of the district's population, according to statistics provided by Lessmeister in February.

RKI compiles the data shown on its website using information from the Federal Statistical Office, which does not include U.S. military communities, spokeswoman Susanne Glasmacher told Stars and Stripes.

The agency has no plans to change the way does its calcula-

tions because that would require including "not only the (U.S.) armed forces but also other groups of people who do not live in Germany," she said.

But Americans in Germany under the Status of Forces Agreement are considered legal residents of the country.

Glasmacher conceded that local authorities' knowledge of infection, population and other data in their region should factor into decisions on what measures need to be taken to contain the virus.

But the emergency brake regulations impose the same rules for all areas when the incidence rate exceeds 100 new cases per 100,000 people. The rules mean both Kaiserslautern city and the district have been under a 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew since last week, and restaurants, which had cautiously begun reopening outdoor dining areas, have gone back to takeout and delivery only.

Shopping for nonessential goods in the city of Kaiserslautern has required a negative coronavirus test and an appointment since last week, when the infection rate exceeded 150 new cases per 100,000 residents.

Kaiserslautern officials are briefed regularly by the U.S. military about coronavirus infections among local Americans, Lessmeister told Stars and Stripes in February.

Lessmeister sends infection data, including and excluding the U.S. military community, to state officials, who pass on both sets of numbers to RKI, Rheinland-Pfalz spokeswoman Stefanie Schneider said at the time.

But RKI posts only the higher incidence rate — not including the U.S. military population in its calculations, Schneider said. The health agency does, however, count individual Americans who are infected, she said.

The state has "pointed out this problem to the RKI and the Federal Ministry of Health several times, but is not authorized to issue instructions," Schneider said in an email.

There were no new infections among U.S. military members as of Wednesday and 69 new cases in the broader community, data posted on Lessmeister's official Facebook page show.

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# US bases in Japan and South Korea prepare to restart J&J vaccinations

BY ERICA EARL  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — As Japan's coronavirus cases continued to surge on Thursday, some U.S. military bases there and in South Korea announced they would resume administering the one-dose vaccine made by Johnson & Johnson as soon as Friday.

Meanwhile, seven people associated with U.S. Forces Korea tested positive for the virus between April 7 and April 23, the command announced via Facebook on Thursday. No new cases had been reported by bases in Japan as of 6 p.m.

The Defense Health Agency approved Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine again Wednesday after a two-week pause prompted by a handful of severe blood clots. That decision, which warned of that rare health risk, came after approval from the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Janssen shot will be available starting Friday for eligible beneficiaries at Yokota Air Base and Camp Zama near Tokyo, which on Thursday reached its highest daily case count since January. The city reported 1,027 new infections, according to public broadcaster NHK.

Misawa Air Base, in northeast-



AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

**Seaman Delano Freeman of the USS Blue Ridge receives a dose of the Moderna coronavirus vaccine at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on April 21.**

ern Japan, will resume distributing the Janssen vaccine starting May 11, according to an email Thursday from base spokesman Maj. Cody Chiles.

Spokespeople at Naval Hospital Yokosuka, south of Tokyo, told Stars and Stripes by phone Thursday that they were unsure of the Janssen vaccine's status at Yokosuka Naval Base and Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni. Spokespeople from Kadena Air Base, Sasebo Naval Base and Naval Air Facility Atsugi did not respond to queries.

Yokota, in western Tokyo, is vaccinating all beneficiaries who are 18 or older. Vaccine lines,

which require appointments, will be held at the Taiyo Community Center from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Camp Zama, just outside Tokyo, will host its first Janssen shot clinic at the Firelite Lounge from 8 a.m. to noon Friday for all service members, retirees, family members, contractors and DOD civilian employees, according to a Wednesday post on the base's Facebook page. Appointments are required.

Camp Zama intends to host similar clinics for the Janssen vaccine every Friday through the month of May, according to the post.

U.S. Forces Korea will also resume the use of the one-shot vaccine at its installations starting Friday. Service members who want to be inoculated should coordinate the shot through their chain of command, according to a news release Wednesday.

Of the seven new coronavirus patients announced by USFK on Thursday, four tested positive on a screening required when entering quarantine and three came up positive on a test required to exit quarantine, according to a post on the command's official Facebook page.

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## VIRUS OUTBREAK

# Indians turn to black market, unproven drugs amid surge

Associated Press

NEW DELHI — Ashish Poddar kept an ice pack on hand as he waited outside a New Delhi hospital for a black market dealer to deliver two drugs for his father, who was gasping for breath inside with COVID-19.

But the drugs never arrived, the ice that was intended to keep the medicines cool melted and his father died hours later.

As India faces a devastating surge of new coronavirus infections overwhelming its health care system, people are taking desperate measures to try to keep loved ones alive. Some are turning to unproven medical treatments, others to the black market for life-saving medications that are in short supply.

Poddar had been told by the private hospital treating his father, Raj Kumar Poddar, that remdesivir, an antiviral, and tocilizumab, a drug that blunts human immune responses, were needed to keep the 68-year-old man alive. Like most hospitals and pharmacies in the capital, stocks had run out. Desperate, Poddar turned to a dealer who promised the medicines after taking an advance of almost \$1,000.

"It's nearby" and "coming" read some of the texts that Poddar received as he waited.

"I wish he had at least told me that he isn't going to come. I could have searched elsewhere," the grieving son said.

India set another global record in new virus cases Thursday with



MAHESH KUMAR A./AP

**People wearing face masks as a precaution against coronavirus crowd inside a pharmacy to buy medicines in Hyderabad, India, on Thursday. With India's surge exploding, people are resorting to medical treatments that have not been approved internationally for COVID-19.**

more than 379,000 new infections, putting even more pressure on the country's overwhelmed hospitals. The country of nearly 1.4 billion people has now recorded over 18 million cases, behind only the U.S., and over 200,000 deaths — though the true number is believed to be higher.

The few medicines known to help treat COVID-19, such as remdesivir and steroids in hospitalized patients, are scarce. The most basic treatment — oxygen therapy — is also in short supply, leading to unnecessary deaths.

India's latest treatment guidelines mirror those of the World

Health Organization and the U.S. with a key exception: India allows mildly ill patients to be given hydroxychloroquine or ivermectin, drugs used for certain tropical diseases. There is little evidence they work against COVID-19, and the WHO strongly recommends against hydroxychloroquine's use for COVID-19 and against using ivermectin except in studies.

# Shutdowns to return in Pacific Northwest

Associated Press

When the coronavirus pandemic hit the Pacific Northwest states of Oregon and Washington, their governors quickly reacted with shutdowns. Now they are about to impose new restrictions again as infections and hospitalizations rise to alarming levels.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown is putting 15 counties that encompass the state's biggest cities into the state's extreme risk category starting Friday, imposing restrictions that include banning indoor restaurant dining. As Brown issued her order on Tuesday, she said rising COVID-19 hospitalizations threaten to overwhelm doctors.

"If we don't act now, doctors, nurses, hospitals, and other health care providers in Oregon will be stretched to their limits treating severe cases of COVID-19," Brown said.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee is expected to order new restrictions next week for several counties, likely including the state's largest, that would force businesses and churches to reduce their indoor gathering capacity from 50% to 25%.

Inslee will decide which counties need to be rolled back to Phase 2 of his reopening plan after an evaluation of public health safety benchmark numbers. The public health director for King County, which includes Seattle, expects it will be in-

cluded in Inslee's order.

"We might as well just get prepared for that and not just wait," Patty Hayes, director of Public Health — Seattle & King County, told the King County Council on Tuesday.

The moves come, ironically, as the supply of vaccines in many places is exceeding demand.

"There are appointments available right now all across the state," Brown said.

The restaurant sector objected to Brown's action, with the Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association declaring that the state lost more than 1,000 food service businesses in 2020 and that 200 more closed permanently so far this year.

"The move by the governor's office is tone deaf and offensive to tens of thousands of Oregonians working in restaurants and bars across our state attempting to pay their bills," said Jason Brandt, the group's president and CEO.

Brown's office said she is partnering with state lawmakers to approve a \$20 million small business emergency relief package to immediately support affected businesses in extreme risk counties through the commercial rent relief program.

In the Oregon Senate on Wednesday, Republicans accused Brown of "reimposing draconian, undemocratic lockdowns that threaten the livelihoods of tens of thousands of Oregonians."

# Jobless claims drop to 553K as economy heals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits dropped by 13,000 last week to 553,000, the lowest level since the pandemic hit last March and another sign the economy is recovering from the coronavirus recession.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that jobless claims were down from 566,000 a week earlier. They have fallen sharply over the past year but remain well above the 230,000 weekly figure typical before the pandemic struck the economy in March 2020.

The four-week moving average, which smooths out weekly gyrations, fell 44,000 to 611,750.

Nearly 3.7 million people were receiving traditional state unemployment benefits the week of April 17. Including federal program designed to ease economic

pain from the health crisis, 16.6 million were receiving some type of jobless aid the week of April 10.

"Layoffs are elevated but are gradually easing, consistent with an economy that is reopening," said Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics. "We expect further declines in filings as businesses move closer towards normal capacity which will boost job growth over coming months."

The job market has been bounding back in recent months. Employers added an impressive 916,000 jobs in March, and the Labor Department is expected to report next week that they hired another 875,000 in April, according to a survey from the data firm FactSet. The unemployment rate has dropped to 6% from a peak of 14.8% in April 2020. (Before the pandemic, unemployment was just 3.5% in February 2020.)

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### Read My Story



## NATION

# GOP's Scott belittles Biden's priorities

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. Tim Scott accused Democrats on Wednesday of dividing the country and suggested they're wielding race as "a political weapon," using the official Republican response to President Joe Biden's maiden speech to Congress to credit the GOP for leading the country out of its pandemic struggles and toward a hopeful future.

Scott, R-S.C., in his nationally televised rebuttal of Biden's address, belittled the new president's initial priorities — aimed at combating the deadly coronavirus and spurring the economy — as wasteful expansions of big government.

"We should be expanding options and opportunities for all families," said Scott, who preaches a message of optimism while remaining a loyal supporter of former President Donald Trump, "not throwing money at certain issues because Democrats think they know best."



Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., delivers the Republican response to President Joe Biden's speech Wednesday in Washington.

Citing the partisan battle over Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill, which Congress approved over unanimous GOP opposition, Scott said: "We need policies and progress that bring us closer together. But three months in, the actions of the president and his party are pulling us further apart."

But the Senate's only Black Republican saved some of his sharpest comments for the fraught subject of race. Scott recounted his rise from a low-income family and "the pain" of repeatedly being pulled over by police while driving but said, "Hear me clearly: America is not a racist country."

Asked Thursday about Scott's comment, Vice President Kamala Harris told ABC's "Good Morning America," "No, I don't think America is a racist country but we also do have to speak truth about the history of racism in our country."

Biden and other Democrats have cited institutional racism as a major national problem.

While acknowledging that "our healing is not finished," Scott suggested that Democrats and liberals have turned the race issue upside down.

"It's backwards to fight discrimination with different discrimination," he said, without providing ex-

amples of what he meant. "And it's wrong to try to use our painful past to dishonestly shut down debates in the present."

He added, "Race is not a political weapon to settle every issue the way one side wants."

Biden's address came three months into a presidency that's seen Republicans repeatedly accuse him of abandoning his campaign pledge to seek bipartisan compromises. While Biden cited a rosy roster of accomplishments and goals in his own speech — "America is on the move again," he said — Scott said it was Republicans who had bolstered the economy and began to tame the pandemic.

"This should be a joyful springtime for our nation," said Scott, citing the Trump administration's role in helping spur vaccine development and beginning a revival of the staggered economy. "This administration inherited a tide that had already turned. The coronavirus is on

the run!"

The address also came as Scott, a 10-year veteran of Congress who usually keeps a low profile, has found a spotlight leading his party in a bipartisan effort to overhaul police procedures. That drive was prompted by last May's slaying of George Floyd, a Black man, and energized anew by this month's conviction of a white former Minneapolis police officer for the killing.

"I'm still working. I'm still hopeful," he said of the talks.

Scott criticized many school systems' decisions to halt or limit in-person classes during the pandemic as a safety measure. Those closures, which were recommended by public health officials, have drawn fire from Republicans as an overreaction and become part of the GOP's culture war with Democrats.

"Locking vulnerable kids out of the classroom is locking adults out of their future," Scott said.

## Biden: President says his plans would put Americans back to work

FROM PAGE 1

orgia on Thursday and then on to Pennsylvania and Virginia in the days ahead.

In the address, Biden pointed optimistically to the nation's emergence from the coronavirus scourge as a moment for America to prove that its democracy can still work and maintain primacy in the world.

Speaking in highly personal terms while demanding massive structural changes, the president marked his first 100 days in office by proposing a \$1.8 trillion investment in children, families and education to help rebuild an economy devastated by the virus and compete with rising global competitors.

His speech represented both an audacious vision and a considerable gamble. He is governing with the most slender of majorities in Congress, and even some in his own party have blanched at the price tag of his proposals.

At the same time, the speech highlighted Biden's fundamental belief in the power of government as a force for good, even at a time when it is so often the object of

scorn.

"I can report to the nation: America is on the move again," he said. "Turning peril into possibility. Crisis into opportunity. Setback into strength."

While the ceremonial setting of the Capitol was the same as usual, the visual images were unlike any previous presidential address. Members of Congress wore masks and were seated apart because of pandemic restrictions. Outside the grounds were still surrounded by fencing after insurrectionists in January protesting Biden's election stormed to the doors of the House chamber where he gave his address.

"America is ready for takeoff. We are working again. Dreaming again. Discovering again. Leading the world again. We have shown each other and the world: There is no quit in America," Biden said.

This year's scene at the front of the House chamber also had a historic look: For the first time, a female vice president, Kamala Harris, was seated behind the chief executive. She was next to another woman, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The first ovation came as Biden greeted "Madam Vice President." He added, "No president has ever said those words from this podium, and it's about time."

The chamber was so sparsely populated that individual claps could be heard echoing off the walls.

Yet Biden said, "I have never been more confident or more optimistic about America. We have stared into an abyss of insurrection and autocracy — of pandemic and pain — and 'We the People' did not flinch."

At times, the president plainly made his case for democracy itself.

Biden demanded that the government take care of its own as a powerful symbol to the world of an America willing to forcefully follow its ideals and people.

He confronted an issue rarely faced by an American president, namely that in order to compete with autocracies like China, the nation needs "to prove that democracy still works" after his predecessor's baseless claims of election fraud and the ensuing attack on the U.S. Capitol.

"Can our democracy overcome the lies, anger, hate and fears that have pulled us apart?" he asked. "America's adversaries — the autocrats of the world — are betting it can't. They believe we are too full of anger and division and rage. They look at the images of the mob that assaulted this Capitol as proof that the sun is setting on American democracy. They are wrong. And we have to prove them wrong."

Biden repeatedly hammered home that his plans would put Americans back to work, restoring the millions of jobs lost to the virus.

He laid out an extensive proposal for universal preschool, two years of free community college, \$225 billion for child care and monthly payments of at least \$250 to parents.

His ideas target frailties that were uncovered by the pandemic, and he argues that economic growth will best come from taxing the rich to help the middle class and the poor.

Biden's speech also provided an update on combating the COVID-19 crisis he was elected to tame, showcasing hundreds of

millions of vaccinations and relief checks delivered to help offset the devastation wrought by a virus that has killed more than 573,000 people in the United States. He also championed his \$2.3 trillion infrastructure plan, a staggering figure to be financed by higher taxes on corporations.

His appeals were often emotive and personal, talking about Americans needing food and rental assistance. He also spoke to members of Congress as a peer as much as a president, singling out Sen. Mitch McConnell, the Republicans' leader, to praise him and speaking as one at a professional homecoming.

The president spoke against a backdrop of the weakening but still lethal pandemic, staggering unemployment and a roiling debate about police violence against Blacks.

He also used his address to touch on the broader national reckoning over race in America and to call on Congress to act on the thorny issues of prescription drug pricing, gun control and modernizing the nation's immigration system.



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## Biden is going big, and momentum is on his side

BY GARY ABERNATHY

*The Washington Post*

The main message from President Joe Biden on Wednesday to a joint session of Congress — made eerily skeletal by COVID-19 concerns — was that although we've spent unprecedented trillions over the past year, trillions more will be needed if he's going to check off all the items on his wish list.

After quickly fist-bumping down the socially distanced aisle, Biden soon established his big theme: "America is on the move again." He boasted about his 100 days of accomplishments, and launched into a defense of his "consequential" American Rescue Plan. He offered up anecdotes about how far we've come in the COVID fight, and then grew passionate about his American Jobs Plan, which he described as the largest such effort since World War II.

The whole speech pushed in one direction. He neatly tied the climate change issue into a way to create "jobs, jobs, jobs." He gestured at bipartisanship by commending Republicans for coming up with their own jobs plan, only to warn that "the rest of the world is not waiting for us. ... Doing nothing is not an option." Biden's bipartisanship clearly has its limits. He said that he would only raise taxes on the rich — a claim that will be closely monitored.

And he ticked off a laundry list of other proposals, including the obligatory nod to gun control that he knows will go nowhere. After more than an hour, he wrapped up with lofty rhetoric, saying, "There is not a single thing, nothing — nothing — beyond our capacity. We can do whatever we set our minds to do, if we do it together."

Candidate Biden campaigned as a middle-of-the-road, unifying pragmatist, but Presi-

dent Biden has been such a free-spending, tree-hugging, southern-border-erasing progressive that even Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., has had to stop to catch her breath.

"I do think that the Biden administration and President Biden have exceeded expectations that progressives had," Ocasio-Cortez said with glowing admiration last week in what qualifies as the understatement of the year. "I'll be frank, I think a lot of us expected a lot more conservative administration." Let's all be frank — so did everyone else.

At some point after he was declared the winner of the 2020 election, Biden must have considered history remembering him as a dependable caretaker content to heal the nation with somber, unifying outreaches and actions on the heels of the norms-busting, psyche-rattling bulldozer that was Donald Trump.

But Biden has clearly had an epiphany that it had been at least six decades since the country had a full-blown liberal spending spree, and, hey, didn't it deserve to party after surviving four years of Trump? Most prognosticators are forecasting bad times for Democrats in 2022, so if you're going down, why not go down after the biggest progressive splurge in history?

And so, Biden grabbed the national credit cards, ordered the limits obliterated and started calling all his friends, urging them to add their items to the cart ASAP — because checkout will happen as soon as there are 50 votes (plus Vice President Kamala Harris' tiebreaker) in the Senate, which shouldn't take longer than a few promises of future favors to Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz.

Conservatives in Congress will pay Reaganesque lip service to worries about the debt

and deficit, but they lost their credibility on spending after they partied on with Trump. The U.S. turned the corner into socialist-style waters when "trillions" became an acceptable term for a single spending package last year, and again this year, and now Biden wants at least two more with the T-word attached.

On Wednesday, Biden made several poignant remarks about social justice, this moment in history and our American ideals. "We have to come together to heal the soul of this nation," he said.

But what will live in history was Biden's call for spending at a level that would make the New Deal and Great Society seem like examples of fiscal restraint.

There are those who believe the COVID-19 pandemic was politicized by the left, with many unnecessary restrictions, shutdowns and job losses, to justify the kind of government-to-the-rescue response Biden is now preaching. Whether that's correct no longer matters. Biden is embracing the opportunity, shunting aside a career-long reputation as a moderate pragmatist and surrendering to the kind of old-school liberalism that promotes big government as the solution, not the problem. Attaching it all to COVID recovery is becoming more unnecessary by the day as grass-roots Americans — both Democrats and Republicans — merrily welcome the government largesse.

Progressives such as AOC originally feared that Biden wouldn't go big enough. After Wednesday, their doubts should be erased. Biden is going big, and momentum is on his side.

Gary Abernathy, a contributing columnist for The Washington Post, is a freelance writer based in southwestern Ohio.

## The right to anonymity unites liberals, conservatives

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

*Washington Post Writers Group*

It is rare these days to find anything that unites liberal and conservative groups in common cause, but a Supreme Court case may have done just that.

The justices heard oral arguments Monday in a case that's been winding its way through the court system for years. The story began when the California attorney general's office asked nonprofit charities to provide names and addresses of top donors — and the amount of their contributions — upon registering with the state.

The state attorney general at the time, Xavier Becerra — who is now President Joe Biden's secretary of health and human services — argued that the state needed the information to aid in charitable fraud cases, should they arise. The Americans for Prosperity Foundation and the Thomas More Law Center are now challenging the rule with the support of dozens of other nonprofits that have filed amicus briefs with the court.

To clarify, the AFPF is not the same as its more well known sister organization, Americans for Prosperity, though both were created by billionaire libertarians Charles Koch and his late brother, David — peddlers of kryptonite to people on the left. The foundation isn't a political entity — it doesn't pay for political ads and donations are tax deductible — but was established as a 501(c)(3) and "has been educating and training citizens to be advocates for freedom" for more than 20

years.

Americans for Prosperity, on the other hand, is organized as a 501(c)(4) "social welfare" organization and can pay for political advertisements — and does with gusto.

The crux of the case is whether California's demand for charities' donors' names violates the First Amendment's free speech and association rights. The AFPF's position is that donating to a cause is akin to gathering with like-minded citizens to have a conversation or stage a protest, and so cannot be limited.

What makes this case so interesting is that a number of liberal organizations that also rely on donors known and unknown — the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the ACLU among them — have filed amicus briefs supporting the AFPF. In a joint brief, the NAACP and the ACLU wrote that the right to join together is "fundamental to our democracy," and if "the State could categorically demand disclosure of associational information, the ability of citizens to organize to defend values out of favor with the majority would be seriously diminished."

There is good reason to think so. The NAACP cut its teeth on a similar case decades ago, when Alabama demanded the organization's membership list in hopes of shutting down the group's activities. The civil rights group turned over its business records but refused to disclose its members' identities to avoid violent repercussions. The fight for the group's donors went to the Su-

preme Court in 1958.

Ruling unanimously in the NAACP's favor, Justice John M. Harlan II explained that the First Amendment's protection of the right of association and assembly is "an inseparable aspect of the 'liberty' " that is protected by the due process clause of the 14th Amendment.

In so doing, the court expanded the scope of the rights of association. The NAACP had every reason to expect reprisals in Alabama had its donors been named. But so does the AFPF, which catalogues in its legal brief incidents of bomb threats, cyberattacks, violent protests, boycotts, and other harassment and reprisals via phone, email and social media.

California argued that donor confidentiality can be protected even after the donors' names are disclosed to the state. Unfortunately, this hasn't been the case. The state agency that had collected the AFPF's donors' information in the past bungled the task, resulting in some names being briefly published online. Innocent citizens participating in a legal activity were harassed as a consequence. The AFPF's case seeks to make certain it never happens again.

Philanthropic reports consistently show that Americans are the most charitable people in the world. In the U.S., charity has been key to civic engagement and countless strides forward; anonymity, in many cases, makes people more likely to give. This seems to be something the right and left agree on.

Why would we want to "fix" that?

## NATION

# US pushes nuke plans ahead despite concerns

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN  
Associated Press

The Biden administration appears to be picking up where former President Donald Trump left off, as the federal agency that oversees U.S. nuclear research and bomb-making has approved the first design phase for a multibillion-dollar project to manufacture key components for the nation's nuclear arsenal.

The National Nuclear Security Administration in a decision announced Wednesday stated that planning and construction could cost upwards of \$4 billion initially.

The agency did not articulate what exactly that money would be spent on, nor does it include the cost of other preparations that

would be needed for Los Alamos National Laboratory to begin producing 30 plutonium cores per year.

The push to resume production of the nuclear triggers has spanned multiple presidential administrations, with supporters arguing that the United States needs to ensure the stability and reliance of its arsenal given growing global security concerns. The nuclear agency has also said most of the cores in the stockpile date back to the 1970s and 1980s.

Democratic members of New Mexico's congressional delegation have supported production at Los Alamos because of the billions of dollars in federal funding and thousands of jobs that are at stake.

But watchdog groups have been sounding alarms over the potential for more security and safety lapses at the northern New Mexico lab and the potential for environmental contamination.

Another concern is the nuclear waste that would be generated by the work.

Watchdog groups have said that the cost estimate outlined by the agency in its decision is about double the projections made just last year.

Greg Mello with the Los Alamos Study Group said the ballooning budget and uncertainty over whether the lab can meet the federal government's mandated production schedule "throw further doubt on the wisdom of proceeding

with industrial pit production" at Los Alamos.

"LANL's facilities are simply too old and inherently unsafe, its location too impractical," he said. "Even with a much smaller stockpile, LANL could not undertake this mission successfully."

Some groups have threatened to sue the U.S. Energy Department and the National Nuclear Security Administration, saying a more comprehensive review should have been done on the plans to produce plutonium cores at Los Alamos and at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina. They have argued that nearby communities have already been saddled with legacy contamination from previous defense work.

Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico called the federal government's plans "unnecessary and provocative," saying more production will result in more waste and help to fuel a new arms race.

The nuclear agency in a statement said it expects to set cost and schedule baselines in 2023 as part of the ongoing process. It also plans to continue reviewing the project "to improve the fidelity" of price and timeline estimates.

Lab Director Thom Mason is scheduled Thursday evening to host a community meeting to talk about the lab's work — which also includes projects related to space exploration, the coronavirus pandemic, water supplies in the arid West and wildfires.

## Feds raid Giuliani's home, office, raising criminal probe

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Federal agents raided Rudy Giuliani's Manhattan home and office Wednesday, seizing computers and cellphones in a major escalation of the Justice Department's investigation into the business dealings of former President Donald Trump's personal lawyer.

Giuliani, the 76-year-old former New York City mayor once celebrated for his leadership after 9/11, has been under federal scrutiny for several years over his ties to Ukraine. The dual searches sent the strongest signal yet that he could eventually face federal charges.

Agents searched Giuliani's Madison Avenue apartment and Park



Giuliani

Avenue office, people familiar with the investigation told The Associated Press. The warrants, which required approval from the top levels of the Justice Department, signify that prosecutors believe they have probable cause that Giuliani committed a federal crime — though they do not guarantee that charges will materialize.

A third search warrant was served on a phone belonging to Washington lawyer Victoria Toensing, a former federal prosecutor and close ally of Giuliani and Trump. Her law firm issued a

statement saying she was informed that she is not a target of the investigation.

The full scope of the investigation is unclear, but it at least partly involves Giuliani's dealings in Ukraine, law enforcement officials have told the AP.

In a statement issued through his lawyer, Giuliani accused federal authorities of a "corrupt double standard," invoking allegations he's pushed against prominent Democrats, and said that the Justice Department was "running rough shod over the constitutional rights of anyone involved in, or legally defending, former President Donald J. Trump."

"Mr. Giuliani respects the law, and he can demonstrate that his

conduct as a lawyer and a citizen was absolutely legal and ethical," the statement said.

Trump told Fox Business on Thursday that Giuliani was "the greatest mayor in the history of New York" and "a great patriot."

"It's very, very unfair," he said of what happened Wednesday. "Rudy loves this country so much, it is so terrible when you see things that are going on in our country with the corruption and the problems and then they go after Rudy Giuliani."

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Thursday on CNN that the White House was given no heads' up on the fact the raid was coming. The Justice Department, she said, "is independent now.

They're gonna make their own decisions, take their own actions. That's how the president wants it."

Bernie Kerik, who served as New York City's police commissioner during the Sept. 11 attacks and is a longtime Giuliani friend, said the former mayor called him as agents were searching his home on Wednesday morning. Kerik, who was pardoned by Trump for felony convictions that put him behind bars for three years, declined to describe his friend's mood or reaction, but expressed alarm at the raid, saying agents "shouldn't have been there in the first place."

"I think it's extremely concerning," he said.

## US seeks significant rollback of Iran sanctions in order to revive nuke deal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is considering a near wholesale rollback of some of the most stringent Trump-era sanctions imposed on Iran in a bid to get the Islamic Republic to return to compliance with a landmark 2015 nuclear accord, according to current and former U.S. officials and others familiar with the matter.

As indirect talks continue this week in Vienna to explore the possibility of reviving the nuclear deal, American officials have become increasingly expansive about what they might be prepared to offer Iran, which has been driving a hard line on sanctions relief, demanding that all U.S. penalties be removed, according to these people.

American officials have refused to discuss which sanctions are being considered for remov-

al. But they have said they are open to lifting any sanctions that are inconsistent with the nuclear deal or that deny Iran the relief it would be entitled to should it return to compliance with the accord. Because of the complex nature of the sanctions architecture, that could include non-nuclear sanctions, such as those tied to terrorism, missile development and human rights.

Biden administration officials have said this is necessary because of what they describe as a deliberate attempt by the Trump administration to stymie any return to the deal. Under the 2015 agreement, the United States was required to lift sanctions tied to Iran's nuclear program, but not non-nuclear sanctions.

Administration officials have denied they will remove all non-nuclear sanctions, but declined

to identify those which they believe Trump improperly imposed on grounds of terrorism, among others.

"Any return to the JCPOA would require sanctions relief, but we are considering removing only those sanctions that are inconsistent with the JCPOA," said State Department spokesman Ned Price. "Even if we rejoin the JCPOA — which remains a hypothetical — we would retain and continue to implement sanctions on Iran for activities not covered by the JCPOA, including Iran's missile proliferation, support for terrorism and human rights abuses."

Current officials say no decisions have yet been made, and nothing will be agreed in Vienna until everything regarding sanctions relief and Iran's return to compliance with the nuclear deal has been settled.

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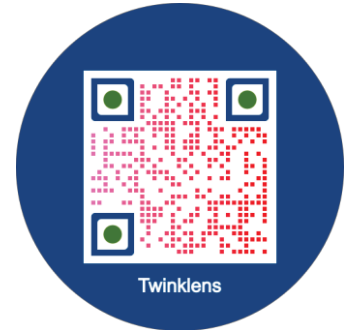
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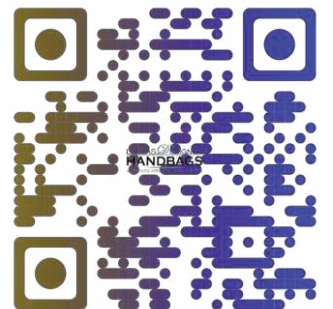
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# WEEKEND



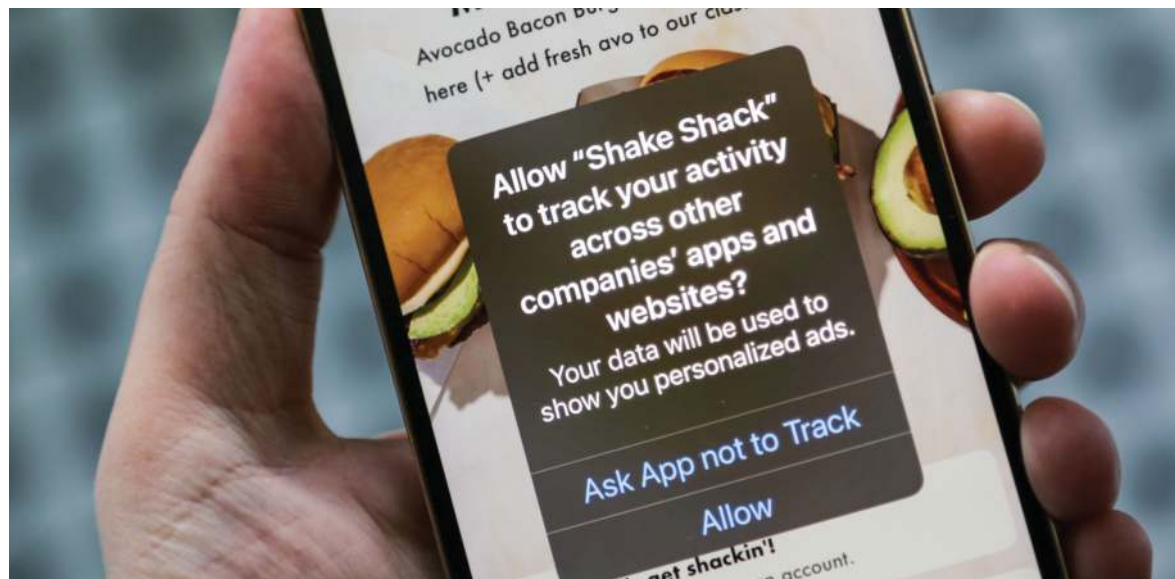
Warner Bros. Pictures

## GAME OVER, or GAME ON?

After years of misfires and flops, 'Mortal Kombat' and other recently released films based on video games indicate that the often-derided genre seems to be leveling up

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## WEEKEND: GADGETS &amp; TECHNOLOGY



GEOFFREY A. FOWLER/The Washington Post

The Shake Shack app, like all iPhone apps, now has to seek your permission to track your phone.

# A win for online privacy

## Facebook, other apps now need permission to track your iPhone

By GEOFFREY A. FOWLER  
The Washington Post

If you haven't already, you'll see a surprising message pop up on your iPhone from Facebook in the next few weeks: Do you give it permission to track you?

To make your iPhone more private, tap "Ask App not to Track."

Do not tap "Allow," unless you love creepy online ads.

To prevent this same pop-up from appearing for lots of different apps — and to limit some of the other digital tracking in your life — you also should change two other settings right now.

What's going on? With a software update that arrived this week called iOS 14.5 and iPadOS 14.5, Apple is finally forcing apps to come clean about a kind of surveillance they've been conducting on us for the past decade. Behind the scenes, apps can probe your phone for personal information that helps them target you with ads or even sell data about you to others. Now marketers and data brokers can't access a valuable way to identify your phone unless you explicitly say it's OK.

Some apps, such as The Sims, Venmo and Shake Shack, have been seeking permission to track for a few weeks now. Facebook and its sister app Instagram began asking permission on Monday and the company says it will roll out the pop-up — and a screen arguing why you should allow it to track — over the next few weeks.

Facebook and other apps that make money by collecting our data and showing us hyper-targeted ads aren't happy about having to ask permission. Mark Zuckerberg and friends have deluded themselves into thinking people enjoy feeling as though Facebook is eavesdropping on their conversations.

I think Apple should have gone even further, making "Don't track me" the default for everyone. But even if the new pop-ups are more work and more confusing than they ought to be, this is still a win for our privacy.

With iOS 14.5, an app simply can't access your phone's Identifier for Advertisers unless you tell the operating system it's OK. And if you ask not to be tracked, apps also aren't supposed to pass other kinds of personal information to marketing companies and data brokers. That includes your email address, location and other sneaky ways to identify your phone. Apple says it's going to police that policy through its App Store review process. We'll have to see how well Apple does this. The company has begun requiring app makers to fill out what

essentially are privacy nutrition labels to explain how they gather your data — but in my tests, these aren't necessarily always useful, or even accurate.

### How to stop tracking

You'll have to take action to be protected. When an app prompts you, tap the button labeled "Ask App not to Track."

If you messed up and accidentally gave an app permission to track, you can make a new choice one app at a time under Settings, then Privacy, then Tracking.

If you have more than one Apple device, such as an iPad, you'll have to say no on each device.

If an app isn't asking you for permission to track, that means either the app has gotten out of the tracking business, or the app's maker hasn't posted an update yet. Until the app updates and asks for permission, iOS 14.5 won't allow it to access your phone's ad-tracking identifier, the IDFA.

### Also do this

Here's an even better idea: You can adjust one setting that tells all apps not to track you, so you won't keep being prompted by different apps. Go to Settings, then Privacy, then Tracking, then make sure "Allow Apps to Request to Track" is switched to off.

The virtual button should be on the left, and you shouldn't see any green. Yes, this is extra confusing.

While we're adjusting settings, there's one more I highly recommend for Facebook members. Tell the social network to stop using your "off-Facebook activity."

Here's why: Even after you tell the Facebook app not to track your iPhone, the social network still will try to collect lots of information about what you do elsewhere — such as on your laptop or when you make a purchase at a store.

Of course Facebook really buried this setting, too. In the Facebook app, tap on the three lines in the right bottom corner, then scroll down and tap on "Settings & Privacy," then tap on "Privacy Shortcuts." Then scroll down to and tap on "View" or clear your off-Facebook activity."

You'll see a creepy page that shows you all the apps, websites and other businesses where Facebook has been tracking you. You can tap "Clear History" once (like clearing your history in a Web browser). Or even better, tap "More Options," and then "Manage Future Activity," and then toggle "Future Off-Facebook Activity" to off.

# No drilling, wires required for this security camera

By GREGG ELLMAN  
Tribune News Service

The answer: It's as easy as screwing in a lightbulb.

If you must know the question: How easy is it to install the Amaryllo Zeus indoor biometric auto tracking lightbulb security camera?

I'm not kidding. Amaryllo touts it as no drilling, no wires, no hassle when mounting in recessed lighting fixtures, which is all true. It's just as easy using it on a flat surface or if you purchase a mounting bracket. Using it this way, you will need a USB cable to supply the needed power.

While the features of the camera are most important, the installation of electronic devices often scares people away. The Zeus has both easy installation and is loaded with just about every feature you would want in a simple home security camera.

The Zeus is built with 360-degree auto-tracking, video is recorded in 1080p, and two-way communication and notifications are triggered by motion and audio. Even in the dark, the night vision works well to keep your areas covered with eight built-in infrared LEDs.

The camera has an 85-degree diagonal field of

view and works off existing Wi-Fi. The accompanying free Amaryllo app runs smoothly to control the settings and view the uploaded recorded content. Full reports are available by periods to see what the camera saw. Extended storage plans are available for purchase.

Controlling the settings, live view, auto-tracking, remote pan, tilt and all other features with the app takes a little time. Not because it is difficult, but because there are many, and you want it customized for your needs.

Recordings can be stored with micro SD memory cards up to 128GB in the SD card slot. An intruder alarm can be set for face detection for humans and pets and in both day and night modes.

The power comes from the lightbulb base it's screwed into. An easy mistake to make is using it in a fixture controlled by a light switch that's turned off.

Online: amaryllo.us/zeus; \$249.99

V-Moda recently launched the M-200 ANC over-the-ear headphones, which feature everything you would want in a top-of-the-line sound machine headset. Most importantly, the sound is outstanding and can be fully customized to any ear.

The first thing you notice about the M-200 ANC is the stunning looks, which have been a V-Moda staple from the start. Not only are they incredibly durable, but the comfort is never-ending. Often I've tried headphones that start comfortable, but in time they feel like I have a clamp tightening on my head.

The M-200 ANC weighs 11.3 ounces, and has extreme padding and an adjustable headband that allow me to wear them all afternoon before I need a break. The outside shields, as with other V-Moda products, are fully customizable to words, patterns, logos, colors and 3D-printed customization on the laser engrave shields.

As for the sound, the active noise cancellation is a nice addition to the V-Moda line.

A great way to test ANC is with street noise, so I took the headphones out for a walk along with a variety of playlists. Instantly you hear the effect as they block ambient noises including oncoming traffic, birds and planes.

The free V-Moda sound mobile app allows you to choose between 10 ANC levels to adjust for the environment

where you'll be using them, considering safety first.

V-Moda is well known for highly engineered sound, and the tradition continues with the M-200 ANC's incredible sound coming from each 40mm driver. Any mix I put on sounded perfect, so I didn't feel a need to customize the sound with the app's equalizer, but that option is there.

Since these are high-end headphones, many will welcome the M-200 ANC's audiophile-grade audio codecs like Qualcomm aptX HD and AAC. Bluetooth 5.0, built-in microphones for hands-free calls and 20-hour battery life (USB-C charging) add to the performance, along with an option to go wired with an auxiliary cable.

A new feature called Voice In lets you cover the left ear cup with your hand, instantly lowering the volume and pausing the ANC, enabling you to hear something that might need your attention.

Online: v-moda.com; \$499.99



The Amaryllo Zeus home security camera offers wire-free 360-degree viewing.

## WEEKEND: MOVIES



PARAMOUNT PICTURES/AP

After undergoing some pre-release retooling of the character's appearance, "Sonic the Hedgehog" became the genre's highest grosser in 2020; a sequel is already underway.

# On the right track

Film adaptations of wildly popular video games finally seem to be unlocking the secrets to cinematic success

BY JAKE COYLE  
Associated Press

Is there a more woebegone movie genre than the video game adaptation? This is the pantheon of "Max Payne," "Wing Commander" and "Assassin's Creed." In the 27 years since the first video game movie, "Super Mario Bros.," these adaptations have been so regularly mocked that you might think the genre was — like a teetering fighter in "Mortal Kombat" surrounded by chants of "Finish him!" — on its last legs.

And yet, Hollywood is increasingly viewing video games as one of the ripest, richest veins of intellectual property outside of comic books. Even as much of the film business slowed over the last year, the hunt for the kind of IP that has fueled an overwhelming share of worldwide box-office ticket sales has continued unabated.

The video game movie isn't finished. It might even be just pressing "Start."

On April 23, Warner Bros. released a new, rebooted "Mortal Kombat" 26 years after the first adaptation of the martial arts fighter. It was then just the fourth video game movie, coming on the heels of "Double Dragon"

and "Street Fighter," with Jean-Claude Van Damme. This was well before the IP land rush started by Marvel's success more than a decade later. "Apollo 13" was the No. 2 film at the box office in 1995.

Now, a bloodier, R-rated "Mortal Kombat" signals a new cycle for video game adaptations. After years of misfires and flops, it's lately seemed like a new level has been unlocked for one of the movies' most derided genres. In 2019, "Detective Pikachu," based on the Nintendo game, grossed more than \$400 million worldwide for Warner Bros. Last year, "Sonic the Hedgehog" became the genre's highest grosser; a sequel is already underway. Netflix, which this month suggested it may invest more deeply in gaming, has found one of its biggest hits — the streamer's answer to "Game of Thrones" — in "The Witcher." The Henry Cavill-led series is based on a fantasy novel series that found fame as a popular video game.

No one is engraving Oscars or Emmys yet. But it may be that video game adaptations aren't cursed, after all. They were just going through some growing pains.

"Comic-book IP is the biggest

IP in the world right now and yet it took 40 years to really get into the spotlight and it took 50 years to become the biggest thing," says Matthew Ball, a venture capitalist and former head of strategic planning for Amazon Studios. "Video game adaptations have been happening since the early '90s, but we see a lot of evidence that people are learning — they're training. At some point in the near future, I would be shocked if we didn't have on a recurring basis one of the biggest films and TV series of the year coming from video games."

Hollywood's hunt for IP with built-in global fanbases has found more dead ends over the past decade than new directions. But gaming is unique in its scope and growth. Last year, the gaming industry was worth more than \$150 billion. By 2023, revenue will reach \$200 billion, Juniper Research has forecast, exceeding the size of the film industry. A study released last week by consulting firm Deloitte found that the top entertainment activity of Gen Z — those aged 14-24 — is playing video games, ranking over movies or music by a wide margin.

"There's an appetite and desire to make things that might have



20TH CENTURY FOX/AP

Michael Fassbender plays Callum Lynch in "Assassin's Creed," a 2016 film based on the video game of the same name.

seemed more niche at some point," says "Mortal Kombat" filmmaker Simon McQuoid, an in-demand director of commercials who's previously worked on ad campaigns for Sony's PlayStation and "Halo." "I get the feeling people are OK pushing that forward and being a little mainstream with things."

Many video game adaptations have had prolonged or even torturous developments, suggesting the industry is still figuring out how to tackle these properties. "Mortal Kombat" was in development for a decade. Infamously, "Sonic the Hedgehog" was forced to redesign its animated protagonist after an outcry from fans. There are reasons that video game movies get ranked

SEE ADAPTATIONS ON PAGE 16



NETFLIX/AP

Henry Cavill stars in the Netflix series "The Witcher," based on a fantasy novel series that found fame as a video game.

## WEEKEND: MOVIES



WARNER BROS. PICTURES/TNS photos

Hiroiyuki Sanada, left, is Scorpion/Hanzo Hasashi and Joe Taslim is Sub-Zero/Bi-Han in "Mortal Kombat."

## Updated 'Mortal Kombat' not flawless, but still fun

BY KATIE WALSH  
Tribune News Service

Real '90s kids know "Mortal Kombat," and real '90s kids truly appreciate "Mortal Kombat." That techno beat drops, that guy screams "mortal kombat!" and it's like we're back at the arcade, hammering sticky buttons in order to "finish him!!" as 8-bit blood spurts in pixelated bursts. The goofy but lovable 1995 movie adaptation, directed by maximalist action auteur Paul W.S. Anderson, was the entertainment for many pizza-fueled sleepovers, so if there's one audience a remake has to please, it's the '90s kids (who are pushing 40 now). Somehow, director Simon McQuoid, in his feature directorial debut, has managed to update the film while also capturing that silly, digital-blood soaked magic.

There are certain things a "Mortal Kombat" remake simply must not be without: the characters of Liu Kang (Ludi Lin), Sonya Blade (Jessica McNamee), Jax (Mehcad Brooks), Kano (Josh Lawson), Lord Raiden (Tadanobu Asano) and a certain four-armed nemesis are nonnegotiables. Liu Kang should have a sweet mullet, and there should be many "fatalities." Check, check, check. But screenwriters Greg Russo, Dave Callaham and Oren Uziel have created a new champion who is impelled to enter the Mortal Kombat tournament on behalf of the Earthrealm. Cole Young (Lewis Tan) is a struggling MMA fighter with a young family, brawling for a couple hundred bucks when he is scooped up by Jax, who has clocked the strange dragon marking on his chest.

With the chillingly immortal Sub-Zero (Joe Taslim) in pursuit, Cole accepts the destiny that Jax and Sonya claim is his, and so it's off to the realm of Lord Raiden, for the supernatural martial arts tournament to save the world. Cole sets to training at the hands of Liu Kang and Kung Lao, attempting to unlock his secret superpowers, deep within his soul, informed by an auspicious heritage.

This new "Mortal Kombat" is obviously a step up from the original in terms of effects and locations, but it also feels like a bigger film in its lore, and indeed, the actual combat. McQuoid, who made his reputation in commercials, including a "Star Wars"-themed Duracell Super Bowl spot, can certainly stage an action scene. While the sets are nothing like the over-the-top wonders of Anderson's film, cinematographer Germain McMicking captures the fight scenes in fluid camera movements, allowing the audience to see the unbroken action of



Tadanobu Asano, left, as Lord Raiden and Chin Han as Shang Tsung are two of the stars of "Mortal Kombat," which includes plenty of the gore that the original video game is known for.

the fights between legendary screen martial artists like Taslim ("The Raid: Redemption") and Hiroiyuki Sanada ("Royal Warriors"). Every punch, kick, leg sweep and spine rip is presented in all its gory beauty for the audience to enjoy, because that's why we're here, right?

Some of the acting is a bit wooden, but it's a video game movie, and harkens to some of the endearing lo-fi qualities of the original film. Plus, there's space for actors like Lawson to really play. As the bawdy mercenary Kano, the script lets him rip, and he just about steals the whole movie. Lin and Max Huang as Kung Lao are also standouts.

There will certainly be quibbles to be found, especially for die-hard fans, in casting and costume and what's missing. One major oversight is that the theme song, an updated version of "Techno Syndrome (Mortal Kombat)" by The Immortals, is used only sparingly, though Benjamin Wallfisch's score does reference it. But if you embrace that inner child, high on sugar and eye-popping violence, "Mortal Kombat" proves to be, while not quite a "flawless victory," a fun one nevertheless.

"Mortal Kombat" is rated R for strong bloody violence and language throughout, and some crude references. Running time: 110 minutes. Now playing in select theaters and streaming on HBO Max.

## Adaptations: Source material a consideration

FROM PAGE 15

from "least bad to absolute worst."

Some have suggested the mediums are inherently distinct. Roger Ebert maintained that video games aren't art and "by their nature require player choices, which is the opposite of the strategy of serious film and literature, which requires authorial control."

But someone, eventually, may crack the code of the video game movie. In the years since Ebert wrote that in 2015, games have developed in atmosphere, narrative and character. They are more cinematic. More filmmakers are gamers themselves, and they're interested in plumbing virtual worlds while staying true to a game's spirit.

"The importance of the source material has become something that 20 years ago people didn't really care about. They nodded at it," says Johannes Roberts ("47 Meters Down"), director of the upcoming "Resident Evil" reboot, "Welcome to Raccoon City." "There's definitely a real understanding that you need to believe and love in it. I think studio execs get that, that it is an important thing, that you can't just take the name and run with it."

Roberts' film, currently in post-production, follows six "Resident Evil" films, the longest-running video game movie franchise. It's set for release in November from Sony Pictures,

which next February will unveil a long-awaited adaptation of the game "Uncharted" by director Ruben Fleischer ("Venom," "Zombieland"), with Tom Holland and Mark Wahlberg.

Pipelines are getting crowded. A long-in-development, Steven Spielberg-produced "Halo" series is planned for early next year on Paramount+. Netflix will premiere a "Resident Evil" series in June; the streamer also has an "Assassin's Creed" series in the works. Last month, Sony and PlayStation Productions said they would produce an adaptation of the hugely popular game "Ghost of Tsushima" with "John Wick" director Chad Stahelski.

Launched in 2019, Sony's PlayStation Productions is uniquely poised between moviemaking and video games. The production company is also making an HBO series of "The Last of Us," a celebrated third-person post-apocalyptic adventure game. That the project attracted "Chernobyl" creator Craig Mazin is for many observers a sign of a rising stature for video game adaptations.

"I've noticed in the last year that there is this awareness that they're sitting on something that is quite interesting and not as mined as it should be, or could be," says Roberts, who says he's approaching "Resident Evil" the way he would a Stephen King novel. "I'm interested to see how all the other movies tackle it. It's a fascinating time for sure."



WARNER BROS. PICTURES/AP

Pikachu was the adorable computer-generated star of 2019's "Pokémon Detective Pikachu," which grossed more than \$400 million.

Pipelines are getting crowded. A Steven Spielberg-produced "Halo" series is planned for early next year. Netflix will premiere a "Resident Evil" series in June; the streamer also has an "Assassin's Creed" series in the works.

## WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

# Hugs, drugs and family struggles

Familiar addiction drama 'Four Good Days' elevated by powerful performances

By MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN  
*The Washington Post*

Anyone who saw the movie "Beautiful Boy" — the fact-based 2018 addiction drama starring Steve Carell and Timothée Chalamet as a father and son struggling with the younger man's drug dependency — will already be familiar with the narrative rhythms of the similarly themed "Four Good Days." Much like Felix Van Groeningen's movie, based on dueling addiction memoirs by Nic Sheff and his father, journalist David Sheff, "Four Good Days" tells a lightly fictionalized version of a harrowing true story, first presented by Washington Post reporter Eli Saslow in his powerful 2016 article about a Michigan mother's efforts to help her adult daughter kick heroin. (Saslow co-wrote the screenplay with director Rodrigo García.)

The ebb and flow of the new film aren't new — or, sadly, even uncommon. Lies, pleading, desperate promises and relapse are among the patterns of behavior on the part of Mila Kunis' addict Molly; with repeated capitulation, followed by zero tolerance, and then more capitulation on the part of Glenn Close's weary but still caring mother Deb.

What sets "Four Good Days" apart from the many other films of its ilk are Close and Kunis, who sharpen and elevate its well-worn



Vertical Entertainment

**Mila Kunis, left, is trying to kick a opioid habit and Glenn Close is her loving, but weary, untrusting mother in "Four Good Days."**

contours with vivid performances that are honest and grounded. These are characters you can connect to, on both sides of the equation.

The film picks up their journey about 10 years into Molly's battle with opiates, which began with a prescription for painkillers after an injury, before segueing to crack, Adderall, heroin and Methadone — and the opening of a painful rift between mother and daughter. As the film gets underway, Deb is agreeing, despite her best instincts and resolve, to again take Molly in, although she's not yet clean.

A new drug therapy — the "opioid antagonist" Naltrexone, which promises to block the effect of opiates with a monthly shot, taking away the high that feeds addiction — beckons. There's only one catch: Molly can't start taking it until her system is completely free of all the substances she's been abusing. She's got four more days to go.

What transpires is what you'd expect, made viscerally real by two strong actors.

Close is at her best when Deb is struggling to feel normal — during a quick catch-up lunch at a diner, for instance, with her "good" daughter (Carla Gallo) — as Deb suddenly realizes that she's forgotten her wallet at home. She can't enjoy 15 minutes of downtime, we learn, because Molly could be looking for cash to buy a fix.

That tidal pull Deb feels — part love, part mistrust, part guilt — is palpable, as palpable as the hunger of the monkey on Molly's back. And Kunis does her best to keep up with Close, in a performance that's raw and unglamorous.

Saslow's story captured that rawness and power. If the movie based on it isn't quite so visceral as the true story was — transplanted here from Detroit to the California desert, it feels a bit prettified — "Four Good Days" is nevertheless effective. It hurts where it should, yet lands with a touch of hope.

"Four Good Days" is rated R for drug use, crude language throughout and brief sexuality. Running time: 99 minutes. Now playing in select theaters and available May 21 on demand.

## Air shortage makes 4 a crowd in space drama 'Stowaway'

By ADAM GRAHAM  
*The Detroit News*

A three-person crew is on a journey bound for Mars when a fourth person is discovered on board. The more the merrier? Not in this case, as there's only enough oxygen on board for three. So either someone needs to hold their breath, or an awkward discussion needs to happen.

That's the setup for "Stowaway," which looks like a sci-fi thriller but unfolds like a straightforward moral play. It's a simple numbers game: someone's gotta go. But how do you measure the value of a life under extreme circumstances?

Zoe (Anna Kendrick), Marina (Toni Collette) and David ("Lost's" Daniel Dae Kim) are the small crew on a two-year journey headed to Mars. Not long into their mission, a member of the launch crew, Michael (Shamier Anderson), is discovered inside one of the ship's panels;

turns out he was knocked unconscious during liftoff and was trapped on board. And now it's a little late for him to step off the ship, so he pitches in and helps out where he can.

Except there's not a lot of extra room, extra food or extra oxygen aboard the spacecraft. (Sidebar: the idea that this extra body would not somehow be accounted for back on the ground is more than a bit clunky.) And when David's algae plants don't absorb carbon dioxide at the rate they were supposed to, it turns out they have even less oxygen than they expected. So, does anyone want to volunteer to abort the mission early?

Co-writer and director Joe Penna (2018's "Arctic") doesn't bog down the narrative with insidious side plots or crew infighting (or by introducing an alien to fight against); he presents the problem and lets the characters work through it. He



Stowaway Productions

**Shamier Anderson is the "fourth wheel" of the three-person crew of Anna Kendrick, Daniel Dae Kim and Toni Collette in "Stowaway."**

manages to stage a tense sequence that follows two crew members on an audacious mission to secure extra oxygen. And he maximizes a simple premise by spinning it into an intriguing story about the difficult decisions

that need to be made when best-laid plans go sideways. Sometimes it's scarier when there's not a monster on board.

"Stowaway" is unrated, but contains adult language and situations. Running time: 116 minutes. Streaming on Netflix.

## 'Demon Slayer' thrilling, confusing

By MICHAEL ORDOÑA  
*Los Angeles Times*

Japanese animation (anime) can dazzle, delight and captivate with gorgeous worlds. It can also make uninitiated viewers feel as if they're jumping on a moving train, which in this case, they sort of would be.

During Japan's Taisho period (1910s-'20s), Tanjiro is a good-hearted boy living in the mountains with his family. When they're attacked by a demon, the only other survivor is his little sister, Nezuko, whom the attack transforms into a demon. Tanjiro joins the Demon Slayer Corps to fight the monsters and cure Nezuko.

He makes friends with fellow novices Inosuke, a boy raised by boars who runs around shirtless, wearing a boar head and thirsting to use his twin swords, and Zenitsu, a coward when awake; while sleeping, his body becomes a super-fast fighter. The boys are sent to meet seasoned demon slayer (hashira) Kyojuro Rengoku on a train; Kyojuro is there on the hunt.

What ensues is a sometimes mind-bending adventure both on the train and in dream worlds, with protagonists facing down personal demons while also fighting the literal one.

"Demon Slayer's" characters are memorable, with often hilarious behavior. The animators place a premium on expressiveness, enjoying occasionally absurd extremes. Kyojuro is one cool cat. He's a formidable fire-wielding fighter who really likes train food. Nezuko sleeps in a box that Tanjiro carries on his back and is cute until she assumes demon form and rips foes to bloody shreds.

The distinctive visual style is notably fluid and detailed. The layout artists craft lovely painted environments with rich textures. The action is enjoyable and character-specific. As one would expect from an anime this popular, the imagination is off the charts. The character design, especially of the various demons, is impressive and creepy. As is par for the genre, the emotional moments can be operatic.

The "Demon Slayer" movie is a must for fans. For those boarding late, it will likely be an enjoyable but sometimes confusing ride.

"Demon Slayer — Kimetsu no Yaiba — The Movie: Mugen Train" is rated R for violence and bloody images. Running time: 117 minutes. Now playing in select theaters.

## WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



Modus Games

**Lost Words: Beyond the Page** is a relatively straightforward puzzler geared for a younger audience.

# Kind words for Lost Words

Gentle puzzle-platformer's design, animation deserve appreciation

BY CHRISTOPHER BYRD

Special to The Washington Post

Being a child, or especially inclined to children's fiction, might be required to fully appreciate the wide-eyed story contained within *Lost Words: Beyond the Page*. However, its beautiful design and fine animation can be admired by all ages. When the holidays roll around and friends with young kids ask me for video game recommendations, I'll probably mention it.

Written by Rhianna Pratchett, *Lost Words: Beyond the Page* is an ode to the dogged pursuit of creative writing. The game unfolds through the perspective of Isabelle Barbara Cook, a vivacious young girl who goes by the name of Izzy. When we first meet her she is given a journal by her maternal grandmother, whose wisdom and easygoing manner she reveres. As Izzy makes her first attempts at finding her voice and

articulating her ambition, we watch her words slowly materialize along the page as if she were trying out different forms of line spacing, like an experimental poet.

The fanciful spacing lends itself to some whimsical platforming sections in which players move around a tiny girl who can run along the top of the words. By jumping on certain brightly-colored words, the avatar can drive Izzy's narration forward until, eventually, a little tear appears on the page, serving as an exit that results in a page flip or a change of setting. Some words can be detached from sentences and moved about to create steppingstones so that the avatar can leap to otherwise out-of-reach places. Occasionally, words must be shifted about to form simple sentences that express the pearls of wisdom Izzy has received from her grandmother — like the motivational tautology, "A writer is a person who writes."

After briefly considering different genres, Izzy decides to pen a fantasy story about a little girl growing up in Estoria, "a place of peace and magic." Her hero, whose name players can select from three different options — Grace, Robyn or Georgia — is an apprentice to the village guardian Elder Eva, who bears an obvious resemblance to Izzy's grandmother. As players move the young apprentice around the land of Estonia, the words of Izzy's

narration scroll across the background as though written by an invisible skywriter.

Upon meeting Elder Eva in her treetop abode, Grace (what I named her) is given a spell book to hold magic words. The first word she receives is "rise," which allows her to lift certain objects. By clicking on the left trigger, one can open Grace's spell book and then use the right thumbstick and trigger to select a word and guide it to where it can be used in the environment. Soon after using her first magic word to complete a sacred ritual, Grace is named the new village guardian by Elder Eva, who then announces her plans for retirement.

Alas, not long after Izzy drafts the first episode of her story, she learns that her grandmother has suffered a stroke and been hospitalized. In the pages of her journal, she tries to make sense of her feelings, which come to be refracted in her fantasy story. To that end, a dragon lays waste to Grace's village. Eager to confront the destroyer, she sets out on a quest that takes her to a desert where she meets a djinn who feels guilty for not protecting the realm that was entrusted to him; a cavernous area where she encounters an angry giantess made of flames; a forest where she finds merchants who exchange gifts for memories and voluntary sacrifices; and a grayish landscape where Grace is assailed by doubts and anxiety.

Across her journey, Grace acquires additional words for her spell book such as "break," "repair" and "ignore." These allow her to get past simple obstacles — e.g. mend fallen bridges, slip past those who would otherwise block her way, etc. *Lost Words: Beyond the Page* is the easiest puzzle-platformer I've played in who-knows-when, but I don't hold that against it. Priority is given to the game's art direction and narration, which benefit from being taken in at a quick clip like a storybook or a cartoon.

Rhianna Pratchett captures the voice of an earnest young girl and bends it only slightly to make, age-wise, unusually keen observations. Although the game's story beats were too straightforward for my taste and I couldn't bear its syrupy music at times, I can well imagine a friend of mine enjoying this with his 7-year-old daughter.

*Lost Words: Beyond the Page* is an exercise in obvious emotions, but its visual style gives it an undeniable charge.

**Platforms:** PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch

**Online:** [lostwordsgame.com](http://lostwordsgame.com)

## New Pokémon Snap developer discusses game's big changes

BY SHANNON LIAO

The Washington Post

The original *Pokémon Snap*, released in 1999, featured a young photographer (Todd Snap) taking photos of more than 60 Pokémon types with cameras of the time. Released on Nintendo 64, the game charmed players with its focus on photography and impressing Professor Oak with skillful snapshots.

New *Pokémon Snap*, set for release Friday on the Nintendo Switch, brings that formula into the smartphone era. Players can photograph more than 200 Pokémon, earn ratings from Professor Mirror and share favorite moments with friends.

"The world in which wild Pokémon live is rendered to the best of the Nintendo Switch's hardware capabilities, and the aim of the game is to investigate that world," Haruki Suzuki, New *Pokémon Snap* director at Bandai Namco Studios, wrote. "Once you've taken a photo, you can edit and share it online with people around the world."

"We took that concept [of photographing Pokémon in their natural surroundings] and adapted it to the Nintendo Switch's hardware in a way that fits today's photo culture," Suzuki wrote. "The result is a simple game of taking pictures in a world where Pokémon are alive and well in nature, but at the same time there is a variety of contemporary ways to play with photography."

Instead of catching Pokémon, the goal in this game is to capture images. Players can work toward completing the Photodex picture album by taking photos of each Pokémon. Shots can be edited, cropped and filtered.

The game takes place in the new Lental Region, composed of islands of varying environments, such as beach and forest. Pokémon including Pikachu, Squirtle and even newer ones like Scorbunny and Sobble will be present. Interacting with those Pokémon by playing the flute can make them dance, which generates better photos.

*Pokémon Snap* on the Nintendo 64 featured a point system that awarded players if Pokémon were well-positioned in a photo. The 2021 game adds to this with a star system that rates pictures by rarity.

"The system is designed to help you get to know a Pokémon better by capturing various scenes of it, from ordinary to special moments," Suzuki said. "For a certain Pokémon, for example, walking is one star, eating is two stars, playing is three stars and dancing with friends is four stars."

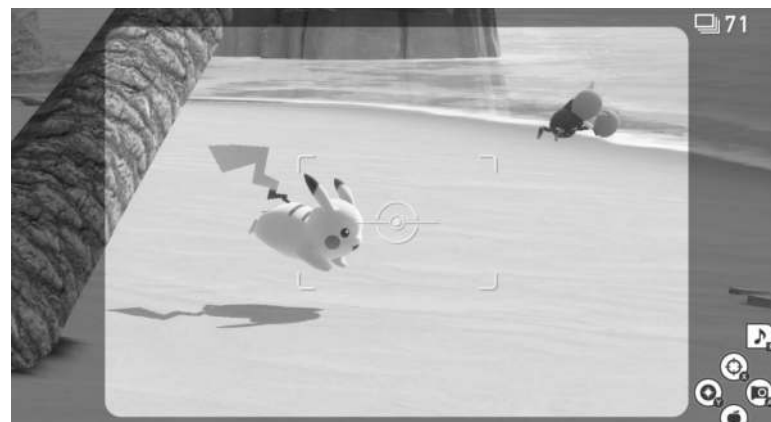
Suzuki said the original developers of the Nintendo 64 *Pokémon Snap* were consulted for this project, although a new team is responsible for the upcoming title. With the Switch's updated graphics, the new game shows more-detailed environments and the playful creatures' expressions.

It also has a nighttime phase, which was not present in the 1999 version. At night, nocturnal Pokémon will appear and players can use a new item, the Illumina Orb, to get different reactions for their photo shoot.

New *Pokémon Snap* also uses the Switch's gyroscope to sense when the controller is moved, emulating the sense of "controlling a real camera," according to Suzuki.

The game has grown more progressive. In 1999, players threw Pester Balls at Pokémon to knock out or stun them and generate an irritated response. In 2021, the game replaces this with Fluffruit, which resembles an apple and triggers reactions from Pokémon that can make for interesting photographs.

"There is no Pester Ball. ... One of the reasons is that the ball can be perceived as something a little less kind in current times," Suzuki said. "However, the Pester Ball was an important element to bring out a Pokémon's reaction in the Nintendo 64 *Pokémon Snap*, so we decided to add the role of the Pester Ball to the Fluffruit in New *Pokémon Snap*."



Nintendo

More than 200 Pokémon await players in New *Pokémon Snap*.

## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

# Paying extra for room to breathe

Some leisure travelers seeking refuge from COVID considering an upgrade to business class

BY ANGUS WHITLEY  
Bloomberg

**B**usiness class was that silent and spacious sanctuary for the well-heeled, at least until the pandemic destroyed global aviation. But as flights creep back, this once-exclusive haven is being invaded by the masses.

Flush with cash and a record number of air miles after a year on the ground, leisure travelers are splurging on premium seats for their first trips back. They're not just after the plated food, champagne and little cosmetics that typically come with the higher fares. Rather, they're trying to minimize the risk of catching COVID in the cheek-to-cheek jostle of coach.

The popularity of these lucrative seats — especially among passengers who'd usually shoehorn into economy — is an unexpected boon for airlines weathering a crisis that's forecast to have cost them a staggering \$174 billion in losses by the end of 2021. As vaccinations roll out at pace in the Middle East, the U.K. and the U.S., free-spending vacationers are emerging as a new market to exploit for carriers desperate to claw back revenue.

New York resident Jennifer Arnold, an avid scuba diver, is flying to the Maldives via Doha on Qatar Airways in May. Though vaccinated, Arnold, who is retired, said securing a business-class seat was essential.

"It was strictly to try to sit in an area with fewer people," said Arnold, who used points for the outbound leg and paid for her return flight. "I wouldn't have taken this trip if I had to fly in coach while the virus is still raging in so much of the world."

There's every chance these people will become permanent residents of the pointier end of the plane. Carriers from Deutsche Lufthansa AG to Virgin Atlantic Airways Ltd. are now starting to question whether business travel as the world once knew it will ever return to pre-crisis levels. That means for the next few years at least, there will be a steady supply of premium-class seats priced to sell to the general public — for cash, loyalty points or a mix of both.

Fares are already way off their peak as airlines stimulate a recovery. Transatlantic business-class tickets on Delta Air Lines Inc., British Airways and American Airlines Group Inc. in late May are going for a little more than \$3,000. Those seats, particularly for last-minute bookings, could have cost as much as \$9,000 before COVID, said Brian Kelly, founder of travel-advice website The Points Guy.

Flying to Miami from New York last month, Kelly found first-class seats were sold out on every single flight from all New York airports three weeks in advance. "I've been traveling New York-Miami for years and I've never seen that," he said.

"People are swimming in points," Kelly said in an interview. With more than 3 million people getting coronavirus jabs every day in the U.S. alone, air-travel demand "is about to skyrocket," he predicts.

According to Qantas Airways Ltd., leisure passengers are taking up a larger share of the business-class cabin as they upgrade or redeem loyalty points. Redemption flights meanwhile more than doubled to record levels when domestic travel restrictions eased in November, the airline said. A representative for Delta said customer

**"It was strictly to try to sit in an area with fewer people. I wouldn't have taken this trip if I had to fly in coach while the virus is still raging in so much of the world."**

Jennifer Arnold

health crisis would be less stressful.

"I was trying to make some part of this journey easy," said Paine, 51. "I had to get health insurance, COVID insurance, a certificate of entry, a visa — which isn't usually needed — and quarantine bookings. It was challenging."



ALEX KRAUS/Bloomberg

**Leisure travelers eager to take to the air again are cashing in miles and spending the extra money to upgrade to business class, but it's not for the amenities. They're after the extra space premium seating provides, which may help minimize the risk of catching COVID. Sales of the premium seating could be a boon as airlines struggle to recover.**

appetite for "premium experiences" has grown along with travel demand.

Leisure passengers' desire to sit in a classy cabin is partially offsetting a stunted recovery from traditional business-class customers. Companies around the world have scaled back travel, either out of caution or to save money. And executives who used to fly at the drop of a hat for face-to-face meetings are more often making do with the video calls that have characterized remote work in the crisis.

"I personally believe that business travel is going down," Virgin Atlantic Chief Executive Officer Shai Weiss said at the World Aviation Festival last week. "We're going to see the emergence of the premium leisure market. People have saved a lot. They're going to treat themselves."

Jeff Paine, a Canadian who lives and works in Singapore, used points and cash to fly business class last month to Bangkok, and then onto Phuket with Singapore Airlines Ltd. He felt flying premium in the middle of a

Premium-economy cabins, which can be even more profitable than business-class sections, might play a key role in any aviation recovery, said Rob Morris, global head of consultancy at aviation data and analytics company Cirium. A quasi-blend of spartan economy and opulent business class, premium economy could capture those corporations flying on tighter budgets as well as leisure passengers wanting a little more comfort, he said.

"I can see premium economy becoming a bigger part of the overall real estate," Morris said.

To be sure, traditional business travel may bounce back faster than anticipated once vaccinations in multiple countries make widespread quarantine-free travel possible. That would likely push up premium cabin fares and squeeze out some leisure fliers.

For now, though, pent-up demand to see friends and family is so strong in some markets that it's the corporates that are getting squeezed. Qantas has seen only 65% of business traffic return, even as travel in Australia booms. Delta's domestic leisure bookings have reached 85% of normal levels, while the corporate recovery is "slow but steady," the U.S. airline said this month.

"Summer is going to be about managing leisure demand," Delta President Glen W. Hauenstein said on an earnings call. "There's a little less opportunity in terms of saving that last seat for the business customer."

Tim Clark, president of Gulf airline Emirates, sees echoes today from the global financial crisis more than a decade ago, when business traffic also fell away. But even if that happens again, airlines can sell out their business class and premium economy cabins by dropping fares 15% to 20%, Clark said.

"You take what you can get and you ensure you fill your aircraft," he said.

## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

## Norway: The old country and a new outlook

Here's a reminder of the fun that awaits us in Europe at the other end of this crisis.

I'll never forget my first trip to Europe. I was a gangly 14-year-old, dragged to the old country by a conspiracy of grandparents and parents solely to visit strangers who happened to be Norwegian relatives. I didn't want to go. It just made no sense.

Jet lag wasn't the problem. It was teen culture shock: No Fanta. No hamburgers. Far beyond the reach of my favorite radio station. Their "Top 40" had nothing to do with my "Top 40." But after a few days I was wild about Solo (Norway's orange pop), addicted to the long and skinny pølse wieners, and enjoying new music. Noticing stunning women ... with hairy armpits ... I began to realize that our world is intriguing, and exploring it can be endlessly entertaining.

Norway is both breathtakingly scenic and expensive. It's long and skinny — the distance from Oslo to its northernmost point is greater than from Oslo to Milan — and sparsely populated, with less than six million people. It's never really crowded with tourists, either.

Visiting the house where my great-grandmother was born, I imagined the courage it must have taken to leave Norway and her entire family for America a century ago.

Sitting with my cousins on their living room floor in 1969 to watch the Apollo moon landing, I began to see the world differently. Hearing them translate Neil Armstrong's words ("Ett lite skritt for et menneske, ett stort skritt for menneskeheten"), it dawned on me: That first big step was more than just an American celebration. It was a human accomplishment.



Rick Steves

In Oslo's Vigeland Park, I was grossed out by the nude statues by sculptor Gustav Vigeland. But I also experienced an important revelation in that same park that I share every chance I get: As I watched towheaded kids splashing with their parents in a fountain, I realized those parents loved their kids as much as mine loved me. This planet is home to billions of equally precious children of God. Travel was causing me to think bigger. And it was prying open my hometown blinders.

These days, I don't visit Norway just to visit family. The roots I seek are also cultural. It's stimulating to learn about different social systems (many of which confound Americans). A friend in Oslo introduced me to the ideas of Norwegian philosopher Erik Dammann, who in the 1970s started a movement called "The Future in Our Hands." His book by the



RICK STEVES

A perch above Bergen, Norway, attracts those wanting to drink, socialize and reflect.

same name lit a political fire in my belly that burns to this day. Dammann argued that a successful society can rise above materialism and that being content with your material wealth is a virtue. Dammann (and Norway) helped me imagine a society where consumption was not the goal.

Sure, I love Norway partly because I've

got family there. But I also appreciate the chance to rein in my Ameri-centricity. I admire a smart and creative land where well-being is not preceded by the word "material."

Rick Steves ([www.ricksteves.com](http://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](mailto:rick@ricksteves.com) and follow his blog on Facebook.

## Hikes through history provide education as well as exercise

Despite the pithy wisdom, all roads don't lead to Rome. While the origins of the expression may speak to the popularity of pilgrimages back in the Middle Ages, Europe is crisscrossed by a number of trails that have nothing to do with journeys undertaken for spiritual reasons. Borders, battles and the caprices of nature are the groundwork upon which these themed trails were conceived.

## Hadrian's Wall Path, England

Around 122 A.D., the Roman emperor Hadrian ordered the construction of a defensive fortification marking the northwest boundary of the Roman Empire, a massive construction project that historians believe must have taken an army of some 15,000 men at least six years to complete. Most of the wall is constructed of stone, with other sections fabricated from turf. A small fort marked every Roman mile, and two observation turrets stood in between.



Karen Bradbury

The Hadrian's Wall Path stretches alongside its partially intact remains, a distance of 84 miles, across northern England. The National Trail runs between Wallsend, Newcastle upon Tyne on the east coast to Bowness-on-Solway in Cumbria on the west coast. Reasonably fit walkers generally complete the trek between the two points within six or seven days. The route passes through field and mountainous terrain, with the 23-mile section between Chollerford and Birdoswald considered the most difficult. Highlights along the route include a pair of Roman forts, the Vindolanda archeological site and the Roman Army Museum. Hostels and bunkhouses provide inexpensive accommodation along the way. Country pubs and "glamping" facilities are more upscale options. From April through October, the AD122 Hadrian's Wall Country Bus provides transportation along the route. Online: [hadrianswallcountry.co.uk](http://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk)

## Cammino nelle Terre Mutate, Italy

On April 6, 2009, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake rocked the Abruzzo region of central Italy, causing huge damage



iStock

A World Heritage Site since 1987, Hadrian's Wall is an astounding feat of Roman engineering. An 84-mile walking path stretches alongside its crumbling remains.

to the city of L'Aquila, some 50 miles northeast of Rome, and surrounding communities. Over the following three months, thousands of aftershocks rippled through central Italy. More than 300 people were killed and some 60,000 left homeless.

The Cammino nelle Terre Mutate, or "walk in changed lands," is a 160-mile, 14-stage trek along the fault line of the tragic event. Running between Fabriano and L'Aquila and traversing the Marche, Umbria, Lazio and Abruzzo regions, as well as two vast national parks, the trail poses a challenge even for seasoned hikers. Termed a "solidarity trail," the route shines light on the people and projects fostering rebirth and regeneration in the economically devastated region and brings with it much-needed jobs within the area of sustainable tourism. Hikers can overnight in "agriturismo" farmhouses, bed-and-breakfasts, bare-bones accommodation or even a handful of monasteries. Online: [camminoterremutate.org](http://camminoterremutate.org)

## Harzer Grenzweg, Germany

From 1949 to 1990, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) were separated by the Innerdeutsche Grenze, or Inner German border. The heavily fortified 870-mile divide ran from the Baltic Sea to the town of Hof in Bavaria. The cleared strip so tragic for families caught on opposing sides proved a boon for nature, and since reunification, the "Green Belt" unites an array of biotopes in which trees, birds, insects and animals reside.

In 2006, the Harzer Grenzweg, or Harz Border Path, was created upon the dead zone where mines and automated shooting systems once stood. It passes by remains of walls, warning signs and metal fences and over the concrete slabs that once formed the "Kolonnenweg" for the transport of men and materials, as well as moors, mixed forests and trickling streams. The route also incorporates the Harz's highest mountain, the Brocken, an off-limits zone during the time of East Germany. The 56-mile path begins at a border watchtower in Rhoden and finishes in Bad Sachsa, where the Grenzlandmuseum adds a poignant touch to this walk. Online: [en.harzinfo.de/pure-nature/the-green-belt-in-the-harz](http://en.harzinfo.de/pure-nature/the-green-belt-in-the-harz)

## Remembrance hikes in Luxembourg

Lest younger generations forget the horrors of World War II, the Grand Duchy has organized five themed routes through field and forest, over hills and past man-made structures. None of the way-marked routes are too long or strenuous, and due to the country's diminutive size, none are too far away from one another.

The "Passeurs" path in Troisvierges offers both an eight- and a six-mile route along the once-secret pathways winding through the Ardennes forest and into Belgium. The two-mile Schumann's Eck path near Doncols winds past foxholes used by German and American forces fighting in the Battle of the Bulge in 1944-1945 and takes in the National Liberation Memorial. The 1.6 mile "Spurensuche World War II" trail is an easy urban hike winding past 12 significant WWII historic sites and memorials. Online: [tinyurl.com/54yd7x3r](http://tinyurl.com/54yd7x3r)

## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

# A waiting game

Despite being vaccinated, many trips are still out of reach for Americans

BY ALEX PULASKI

Special to *The Washington Post*

A year ago, as George Griffith watched his plans for a July 2020 African safari fade in the fog of a worldwide pandemic, an extra 12 months didn't seem long to wait.

When George, a retired attorney, and his wife, Ginny, a retired contracting officer, received their coronavirus vaccinations in recent weeks, their summer 2021 safari departure appeared all that much closer. That was until March 26, when Kenya's president announced a crackdown that includes restrictions on travel in and out of Nairobi for an undetermined period of time.

Like many Americans, the Griffiths, who are in their mid-70s and from St. Simons Island, Ga., are discovering that the newfound optimism that vaccine progress would speedily reopen the world to air and cruise travel appears to be, well, a little too optimistic. U.S. vaccinations are proceeding apace, but emerging variants, infection numbers and vaccination rates vary by country and region. On March 31, French President Emmanuel Macron announced a third national lockdown.

Griffith, however, is not giving up hope. "I think this trip is still possible for summer," he said. "And I'm confident that international travel is going to come back for all of us. The question is when."

The Griffiths are far from alone in playing a waiting game. Online discussions in travel forums on sites such as Rick Steves', FlyerTalk and Reddit are packed with stories about delayed plans and cautionary tales about the risks of returning to international travel too quickly.

For example, Dennis Irschara, 31, a writer and graphic artist who lives in Italy, warned prospective travelers on Reddit that the vaccination process is moving slowly there. To save on time, money and nerves, he suggested reconsidering "your travel plans to Italy this summer."

"I think that short-(term) long-distance travel (e.g., a hop over to Thailand for a week) isn't going to come back anytime soon," Irschara told me via email.

Two February polls found Americans rather pessimistic about travel in the short term. In a Gallup poll, a majority of American adults of most ages said they expected disruptions to

travel, school, work and public events in the country to continue beyond June. The exception was adults age 65 and older; 47 percent expected the disruptions to last that long. When polled by YouGov, 50 percent of respondents said they did not feel confident they could have a normal summer vacation this year, 24 percent said they did, and 25 percent said they didn't know.

Lura Smith, 73, a retired attorney, and Bill Schubach, 76, a retired physician, of Seattle, who canceled plans for two trips to Italy last year, share other Americans' continuing concerns around travel. Even though they are vaccinated, they plan to stay close to home this year and hope to visit Italy in 2022.

Similarly, Mary Boggs, 64, a retired IT business analyst, and Rick Boggs, 69, a retired retail manager, of Murrells Inlet, S.C., canceled plans for a trip to Malaysia, Bali and Singapore last year. They are planning an extended road trip to Western states this fall.

"We currently aren't planning any international trips for fear of everything being canceled," Mary Boggs said. The couple is hoping to see Egypt and Jordan in fall of 2022.

While the European Union is weighing plans for a vaccine passport to allow movement between countries for E.U. residents, most of Europe remains off-limits for American travelers. The notable exception is Iceland, which announced last month that it would begin allowing vaccinated U.S. visitors March 18.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention only recently changed its travel guidance. Until April 2, it had discouraged all but essential travel; the new guidance says fully vaccinated individuals can safely travel domestically.

At the same time, the U.S. travel industry is urging the Biden administration to ease restrictions on international travelers visiting the United

**"If someone thinks a vacation in Europe is a vacation from masks and social distancing, then Europe doesn't want you. When you go, you need to be prepared to be flexible and follow local regulations and remember you're an invited guest."**



iStock

**Vaccinated Americans eager to travel are playing a waiting game hoping that by fall, restrictions will be lifted and they'll be able to take the vacation they postponed in 2020. Most foreign destinations are still off-limits, with some countries weighing the option of vaccine passports to get tourism back on track.**

States, which could open reciprocal arrangements. Amid this uncertainty and rapidly changing requirements, questions abound.

Guidebook author Cameron Hewitt, who has visited Europe extensively as content manager of Rick Steves' Europe Inc., said the company has canceled all its European tour plans through midsummer and is waiting to see about fall.

"We're not ruling out fall tours, but not counting on them either," Hewitt said. "We don't want to have inflated hopes, we don't want to have false starts, and we don't want to disappoint people."

He warned that as European destinations gradually reopen, there's a danger that the stereotype of the Ugly American will rear its head.

"If someone thinks a vacation in Europe is a vacation from masks and social distancing, then Europe doesn't want you," He-

witt said. "When you go, you need to be prepared to be flexible and follow local regulations and remember you're an invited guest."

Although national park visitation dropped by 28 percent overall last year largely because of spring park closures, July-to-October visitor numbers set records at parks such as Yellowstone and Great Smoky Mountains.

The outdoors revival has created a boom in demand for recreational vehicle rentals. Jon Gray, CEO of RVShare, said summer 2020 booking volume had tripled from the previous summer.

GoCamp, a boutique camper-van rental service operating in seven Western states, expects bookings this year to at least triple from 2020.

The reversal from early last year is striking, said Deborah Kane, GoCamp's CEO and found-

der. Cancellations started pouring in through spring 2020, but by summer, the company could barely keep up with demand. "I still have whiplash just thinking about last year," Kane said.

On the seas, the CDC is facing industry pressure to modify restrictions in place through Nov. 1. The Cruise Lines International Association is hoping that large ships can return to service by July 1.

The popular Alaska cruise season was canceled in 2020, and sister lines Holland America Line and Princess Cruises and others have eliminated all Alaska departures through late June and any 2021 voyage that includes a Canadian port.

Dan Blanchard, CEO of UnCruise Adventures, a small-ship cruise line that specializes in Alaska, said smaller lines have a unique opportunity in Alaska this season; the CDC restrictions apply only to vessels with more than 250 passengers.

UnCruise's planned May 16 departure on the Legacy out of Juneau is expected to be the first fully vaccinated cruise in the United States.

"The likelihood that there will be a major cruise line in Alaska this summer is looking quite glum," Blanchard said. "The smaller lines, including ours, are going to have Alaska pretty much to ourselves this season."

Cameron Hewitt  
Guidebook author

## WEEKEND: FOOD &amp; DINING



PHOTOS BY KYLE ALVAREZ/Stars and Stripes

The farm shop at La Hogue in Ely, England, just 30 minutes from Mildenhall, offers the same farm-fresh, locally sourced foods used to prepare meals in the adjacent café.

# From farm to table

## Visitors to La Hogue Farm Shop and Café can feast their senses on farm-fresh fare

BY KYLE ALVAREZ  
Stars and Stripes

The smell of bacon and freshly baked bread wafted from the table to my left. From the right, I could smell the aroma of barista-made coffee, and in front of me, my eyes feasted on a free range egg and cress sandwich.

It was breakfast time at La Hogue Farm Shop and Café in Ely, Cambridgeshire, about 16 miles from Mildenhall. Just looking at and smelling the food had built up my appetite.

The food served in the café and sold in the adjacent farm shop is locally sourced and of “extremely good quality,” said Jo Reeks, who owns and runs the farm with her husband, Chris.

“We opened up our shop in 2002 and, back then, we had a team of chefs creating ready-to-eat meals for the local community using the best local ingredients,” she said. “We knew there was a demand for our style of cooking because the meals were a success around the community. Once we had the funds, we opened the café.”

I had a farmer’s breakfast — an over-easy, farm-fresh egg served with hash browns that were crunchy on the outside and warm, soft, and packed with flavor on the inside; British sausages and black pudding — a delicacy in these parts usually made from pork blood, with pork fat or beef suet, and a cereal, often oatmeal.

Some people are put off by the descrip-



### La Hogue Farm Shop and Café

**Address:** Chippenham, near Newmarket, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5PZ

**Directions:** Available on their website. [lahogue.co.uk/contact-find-us](http://lahogue.co.uk/contact-find-us)

**Hours:** The café is open Monday through Saturday between 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sundays 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Last orders for hot food are at 3 p.m. Closed on New Year’s Day, Easter, Christmas Day, Boxing Day (Dec. 26) and December 27.

**Prices:** Breakfast ranges from \$6.90 to \$13.80, lunch from \$7.25 to \$15.10, and the grill section from \$13.80 to \$17.90. Beer and wine are available, as is a children’s menu.

**Information:** +44 (0) 1638 751 128; [info@lahogue.co.uk](mailto:info@lahogue.co.uk); menu online at [lahogue.co.uk/farm-cafe](http://lahogue.co.uk/farm-cafe)

Kyle Alvarez

tion of black pudding, but I had been told I must try it. It was delicious, with an earthiness that complemented the rest of the meal.

The café opened in 2011. In 2017, it was a finalist in the Suffolk Food and Drink Awards’ family dining category and two years later, it was awarded a Tripadvisor Certificate of Excellence.

The café and shop are located opposite a



Chris and Jo Reeks opened La Hogue shop in 2002 and the cafe nine years later after the success of their homemade ready-to-eat meal recipes.

black barn of historical significance.

The barn was built using timber from a battleship that fought in the maritime battle of La Hogue off the coast of Normandy in 1692 during the Nine Years’ War. English and Dutch ships fought against the navy of French King Louis XIV, who, in addition to having the palace of Versailles built, was a bit of a warmonger with expansionist ambitions. France lost the battle and, eventually, the war. The victorious British “brought the timber from the battleships back to England where it was used to construct the main farmhouse and some of the farm buildings at La Hogue farm,” according to the farm’s website.

Your eyes are treated to a feast while you eat at the café and gaze out over open fields and local wildlife, kept away from the crops and farm animals by fencing. There is also a small playground for children.



La Hogue Farm Shop and Café offers a variety of homemade desserts and cakes.

As the U.K. starts to reopen, La Hogue is a welcome change from staring at living-room walls.

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# WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



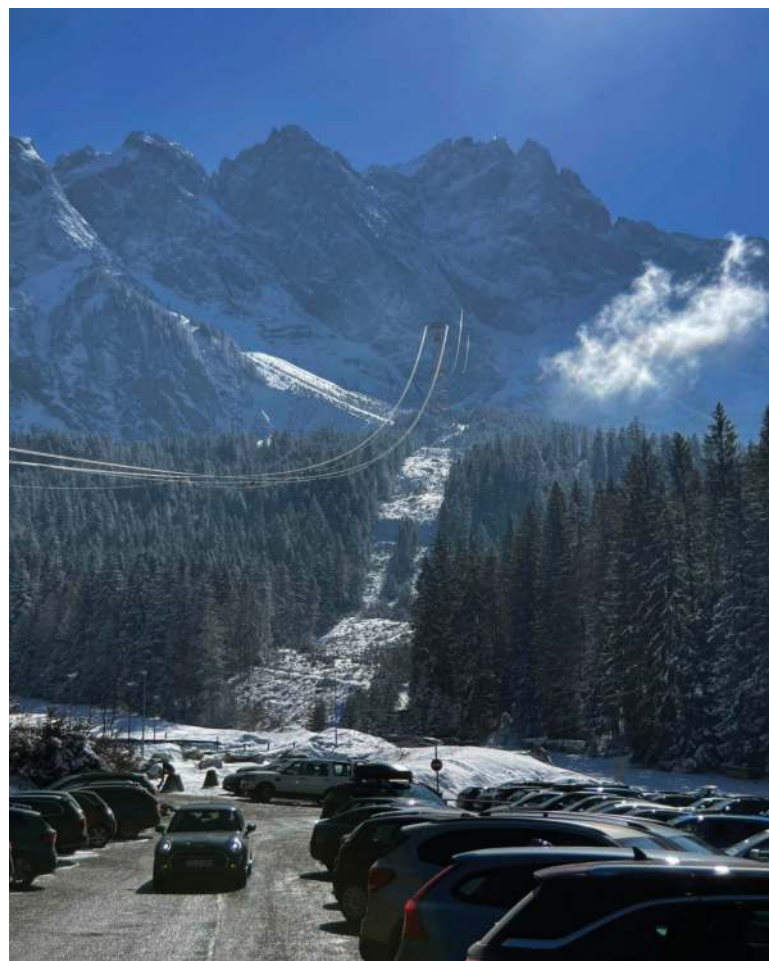
IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

A person walks across the frozen Eibsee on March 6 in Grainau, Germany. The lake at the base of the Zugspitze, Germany's tallest mountain, is the starting point of a number of hiking trails that vary in difficulty, including a gentle trail with stunning views around the lake.



ERIK SLAVIN/Stars and Stripes

A girl throws a rock into the Eibsee at the base of the Zugspitze, Germany's tallest mountain, in March 2020.



IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

The front of the Zugspitze cable car path on March 6 in Grainau, Germany. Although the Zugspitze is closed and despite the recent snow, visitors pack the parking lot to access the surrounding trails.

## Choose your effort level

Whether you prefer the scenery or the hiking to take your breath away, the area near Eibsee lake is one of Bavaria's most scenic

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

There are plenty of great hiking trails in southern Bavaria, but few compare to the trekking not far from the Alpine resort town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Germany's highest peak — the Zugspitze.

At the base of the great mountain lies the Eibsee, a stunning lake that provides a starting point for all types of hikes.

The 9,000-foot mountain towers over the nearby villages, where some of the houses are adorned with traditional Bavarian painted scenes. On a clear day you can see peaks in Austria, Switzerland, Italy and much of southern Germany.

The Zugspitze itself is closed to sightseers, with the skiing season canceled this year due to the coronavirus restrictions.

Fortunately, the hiking trails are open. They range from simple and peaceful walks to the sort of adventure that requires spiked shoes and ropes. I was up for the former this time around.

It had snowed a couple days beforehand, as it frequently does in spring, on the weekend I embarked on my journey.

The trail I chose went around the Eibsee, south of Garmisch in the village of Grainau. There is parking either at the mountain or nearby the Eibsee Hotel, where the roughly 4-mile trail begins.

The lake was frozen and the panoramic views of the surrounding hills and meadows were breathtaking.

The trek could plausibly be called a hike when it gains some elevation, but it's mostly a gentle stroll on a level path. It does meander into the surrounding forest a few times, where it provides some great vantage points for photos of the lake, which shimmers in turquoise and aqua hues on sunny, warm days.

If you decide to stay at the Eibsee Hotel, which may be closed subject to coronavirus restrictions, they'll give you some hiking poles and even pack you a lunch for a fee.

While the snow and ice are beautiful, I recommend paying

### On the QT

**Directions:** The Eibsee bus leaves from several points in Garmisch and takes about 40 minutes from the main train station stop. A cogwheel train also runs to the nearby Zugspitze. It's a little over three hours away by car from Grafenwoehr or Stuttgart.

**Food:** Unavailable at the lake, but there are several takeout options in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

**Time:** Open 24 hours to hike  
**Cost:** Free to walk around; parking is extra.

**Information:** Online at [grainau.de/en/mountaineering-walking](http://grainau.de/en/mountaineering-walking)

Immanuel Johnson

this place a visit in warmer weather when life returns to normal, when you can take a paddleboat on the lake and relax at a restaurant along the shore. If you're part polar bear, you can even jump in for a swim when the rules allow it.

I also recommend packing a backpack with snacks, plenty of water and a camera to make some memories.

[johnson.immanuel@stripes.com](mailto:johnson.immanuel@stripes.com)  
Twitter: Manny\_Stripes



IMMANUEL JOHNSON/Stars and Stripes

The Zugspitze welcome center in Grainau, Germany, is currently closed, but visitors can park nearby and hike the surrounding trails.

# WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS



ERICA EARL/Stars and Stripes

The vibrant Hotaru inn in Urasa, Japan, used to be a Buddhist temple and retains most of its original altars and craftsmanship. Guests will be enchanted by the architecture, art and history of the ornate structure.

# Enchanting getaway

## Hotaru is a temple-turned-inn offering a unique experience in Japan's countryside

By ERICA EARL  
*Stars and Stripes*

Nestled in a ski resort town in Niigata prefecture, Japan, the Buddhist temple Hotaru is a unique inn that is beautiful to visit year-round.

The 250-year-old wooden structure is the only temple-turned-inn in Japan, according to co-owner Yoko Kuroiwa.

The temple moved location once since its founding more than two centuries ago but retains most of its original architectural details and relics, Kuroiwa said.

Hotaru is hauntingly beautiful and incredibly detailed. While Hotaru has been renovated to include modern plumbing and heating, it still possesses a unique and ancient feeling. The inn has a pleasant scent of wood and incense, and from the moment guests enter the temple and are greeted by ornate dragon carvings inside, there is a distinct feeling of walking back in time.

Part of the joy in staying here is wandering through the temple and looking at the architecture, art, statues and altars and imagining its rich history. The enchanting space is ideal for a quiet retreat for couples or a peaceful solo trip.

Hotaru is in Urasa, a small town in a snowy area of rural

Japan surrounded by mountains and rice paddies.

It is a popular destination for snowshoeing and skiing, but there is also plenty to do in spring and summer. There are 13 hot springs in Urasa. Tejimaya Onsen is the closest option to Hotaru and allows visitors with tattoos.

The Uonoma No Sato sake factory is also nearby for those interested in learning how Japan's famous fermented rice drink is made. Tastings are available, and the expansive grounds are fun to roam. Even when most of the cherry blossom petals had fallen by mid-April in Tokyo, many trees were still in full bloom in chillier Urasa.

The temple is also near hiking trailheads, including the 33 Deities Pilgrimage. This 2 1/2-hour winding hike passes 33 statues of deities. According to legend, after completing this journey, believers are supposed to be free from past sins and guaranteed a place in heaven.

Behind the temple, there is a 200-year-old traditional library where monks kept their Buddhist scripts. The library houses more than 30 Buddhist sculptures and 600 scripts, which were handwritten 300 years ago.

The library was partially dam-

**SEE HOTARU ON PAGE 25**



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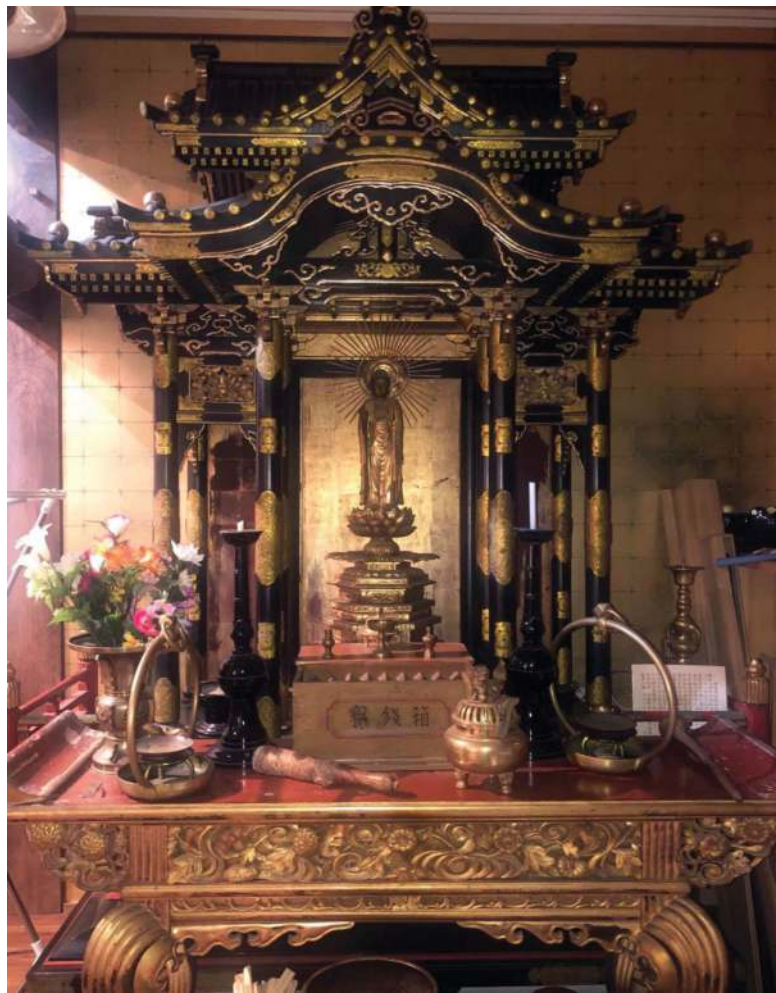
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# WEEKEND: TRAVEL



ERICA EARL/Stars and Stripes

**Hotaru, a 250-year-old temple that now serves as an inn in Urasa, Japan, is filled with altars and Buddhist artwork.**

## Hotaru: Retreat in peace

FROM PAGE 24

aged in the 2011 earthquake and has since become a small museum. These libraries, called kyoza, are considered sacred and are usually open only to monks, so visiting is a rare opportunity, Kuroiwa said. The entry fee is 2,000 yen, or about \$18.

The temple has four futon-style beds, all in one tatami room. It also includes a bathroom, shower and small kitchen. The center of the temple is a spacious area with a kotatsu, a low, heated table popular in Japanese homes.

Despite its location in a rural area with no real downtown to speak of, Hotaru is surrounded by a diverse offering of restaurants within a 10-minute drive, including American diner-style food, Italian, Fijian-style cuisine and traditional Japanese fare such as sushi and ramen.

Hotaru, which means “firefly,” used to be a Buddhist temple called Yuinenji. After the temple’s monk relocated, parishioners requested to have Yuinenji removed from the faction’s list of temples, Kuroiwa said. The building was then designated as a community hall where elders and locals could organize some events, but mostly sat vacant.

Kuroiwa’s father bought the property, and the family decided to make it an inn in July 2018.

“To use it just as a community center once a month is a waste,” Kuroiwa said.

### On the QT

**Directions:** Ko-2-1 Ichinoe, Minamiuonuma, Niigata. A three-hour drive from Toyko on the Ken-o Expressway; \$41 in tolls. Google Plus Code: 5W56+94 Minamiuonuma, Niigata.

**Times:** Open year-round. Peak season is during prime skiing December-February

**Costs:** \$66-\$138 per night, depending on time of the year. There is also a one-time cleaning fee of \$46.

**Food:** The area has a variety of restaurants, including American, Italian and Japanese cuisine.

**Information:** On Airbnb.com, type “Niigata” in the location search bar. After hitting search, select “more filters” in the top left corner. Select “unique stays” and select “hut.” Hotaru should be the first option that appears.

Erica Earl

Kuroiwa, a native of Urasa, left at age 15 to travel and later worked around the world as a journalist and a United Nations worker. He said while he found Urasa a little boring as a kid, he rediscovered its beauty when he returned after his wife’s death in 2016.

Kuroiwa likes talking with travelers and offers itinerary suggestions as well as private sushi-making and yoga classes for additional fees.

The property is available for booking through Airbnb. Through the website, visitors can contact Kuroiwa for information about booking classes.

earl.eric@stripes.com  
Twitter: @ThisEarlGirl

## Hong Kong to Singapore travel taking off

BY FELIX TAM AND KYUNGHEE PARK  
*Bloomberg*

A quarantine-free air travel bubble between Hong Kong and Singapore is finally slated to get off the ground with a start date of May 26, following setbacks that led to the plan initially being shelved last November.

Largely shut off from the rest of the world during the pandemic, the two sides have been in talks for months to revive the travel corridor. In statements and briefings Monday, they laid out details and requirements for would-be travelers, with Hong Kong saying people must have had two vaccine doses at least 14 days before flying. There’s no such requirement from Singapore.

Cathay Pacific Airlines and Singapore Airlines will operate the flights, with the first Cathay trip slated to leave Hong Kong at 9:10 a.m. on May 26. Singapore Air’s departure that day is 8:40 a.m. They will start daily flights in the bubble from June 9 or 10. The agreement limits each flight to 200 travelers.

The travel bubble could lift traffic for both airlines by up to 3%, according to Bloomberg Intelligence transportation analyst James Teo, who called it a “small but significant step forward.”

Preparations for the travel corridor between the two major financial hubs have stuttered ever since it was shelved in November after coronavirus cases picked up in Hong Kong. A recent plan to announce its revival was canceled last week by Singapore, people familiar with the matter said at the time.

“It has been a long few months, but the conditions are now ripe again,” Singapore’s Transport Minister Ong Ye Kung said in a statement. “Both sides will need to stay very vigilant in the next month so that we can launch the first flights smoothly.”

Despite occasional flare-ups, including at a dormitory for migrant workers in Singapore last week, COVID-19 caseloads in both cities are low and life is returning to normal. Hong Kong may reopen bars

later this week and lengthen restaurant opening hours, among other steps to ease social distancing. Bringing outbreaks under control was key to opening the travel bubble.

Hong Kong Commerce and Economic Development Secretary Edward Yau said the requirement to get vaccinated, which doesn’t apply to children under 16, was designed to encourage people to sign up for inoculations. Only about 11% of the Hong Kong population has received at least one dose of a vaccine, according to Bloomberg’s COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker — less than half the rate in Singapore.

Travelers will have to take COVID-19 tests and can’t have visited any places other than Hong Kong or Singapore in the two weeks before departure. Travelers from Hong Kong will have to use Singapore’s TraceTogether mobile app, while those coming from Singapore will need the LeaveHomeSafe app in Hong Kong. Records will be retained after the trip.

Singapore Airlines called the travel bubble “an important milestone” in its recovery from the pandemic, while Cathay also welcomed the agreement and said it could be a showcase for the opening of similar lanes with other popular destinations.

Hong Kong and Singapore have tight restrictions on travel. The former has been essentially off limits to non-residents and even they face lengthy stays in designated quarantine facilities upon arrival, which means that many people haven’t traveled at all since the start of the pandemic more than a year ago. That’s been reflected in Cathay’s numbers: The airline flew just 598 passengers a day on average in March.

Singapore last week eased restrictions on travelers from Hong Kong, who now can stay in home isolation for seven days rather than two weeks in a government-chosen hotel. Among its efforts to open up its borders, Singapore set up an area near Changi Airport to host business travelers without them needing to quarantine, provided they don’t leave the facility.

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## WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



PHOTOS BY EUGENE HOSHIKO/AP

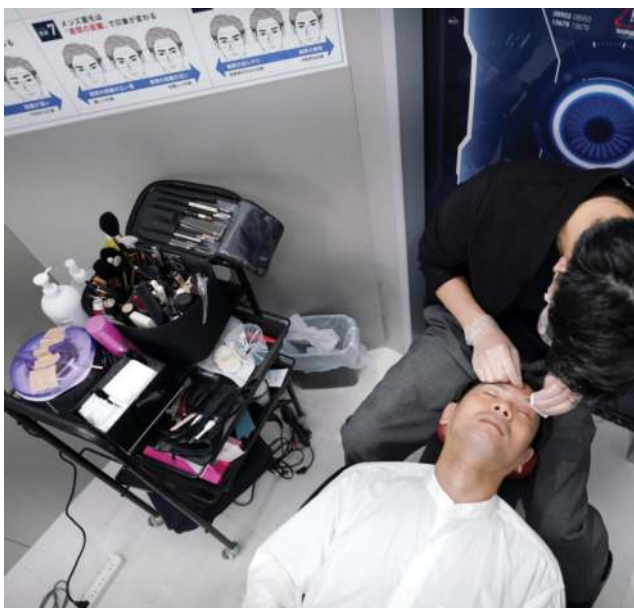
Naruhiko Ito, assistant brand manager of Shiseido Group, demonstrates the brand's latest lip balm for men in Tokyo, April 15. A large personal care company, Shiseido, says one of its male makeup lines has seen double-digit growth during the coronavirus pandemic.

## Getting men webcam-ready

The men's cosmetic industry has grown during the pandemic as Japanese businessmen seek out ways to improve their appearance in online meetings



Ito demonstrates Shiseido's artificial reality makeup filter for men to use during online meetings April 15 in Tokyo. Shiseido released makeup filters for women last year.



Office worker Yoshihiro Kamichi, 44, gets his hair and makeup done by a makeup artist at Ikemen-Works, a makeup salon for men, in Tokyo on Feb. 3.

BY CHISATO TANAKA  
Associated Press

The coronavirus pandemic has pushed many businesses in Japan to the edge of financial ruin, but Takumi Tezuka, who owns a makeup and hair salon for men in Tokyo, has seen his customer base expand.

Japanese businessmen in their 40s, 50s and 60s who had little interest in cosmetics before the pandemic are increasingly visiting Tezuka's salon, Ikemen-Works, hoping for a better look in online meetings.

A large personal care company, Shiseido, says one of its male makeup lines has seen double-digit growth during the pandemic. Company officials give a similar reason: Men, repeatedly confronted with the sight of their faces during online meetings, want to improve what they see.

"Before, most of our customers were males in their teens and 20s, but thanks to remote work we now have more businessmen," Tezuka said.

Unlike many younger men, who want a drastic makeover, older businessmen want to show a slightly better version of themselves by using makeup, he said.

The men's beauty industry has been expanding in Japan. According to research company Fuji Keizai Group, the men's cosmetic market grew from about \$5.5 billion to an estimated \$5.7 billion from 2018 to 2019.

Tezuka said older businessmen tend to spend more money and visit more regularly than those in their 20s and 30s.

One customer, Yoshihiro Kamichi, 44, recently came to Tezuka's salon to buy makeup for the first time.

Kamichi chose makeup for his eyelids and had foundation applied to his face. A makeup artist carefully trimmed his eyebrows and contoured his nose and face with brown shadow powder.

"Who is this person? I was surprised at how different I look," Kamichi said while looking at himself in the mirror.

Shiseido, one of the world's oldest cosmetics companies, released free online makeup filters last month that let male users look like they are wearing men's beauty products such as blemish balms and foundation.

After releasing makeup filters for women for online meetings like Zoom last year, comments from businessmen flooded into its social media accounts requesting filters for men.

Uno, Shiseido's men's care brand, is now expanding its target age for cosmetics from men in their early 20s to men in their 40s.

"I think the coronavirus has created a certain condition that urges businessmen to be more aware of their skin condition," said Uno's assistant branding manager, Yoshiyuki Matsuo. "We have seen double-digit growth even amid the pandemic."

Matsuo wouldn't provide more details about Uno's growth.

To make cosmetics accessible to men, Japanese cosmetics store @Cosme Tokyo created an entire section dedicated to male and unisex makeup items last year at their newly opened shop in front of Harajuku Station, a trendy Tokyo area.

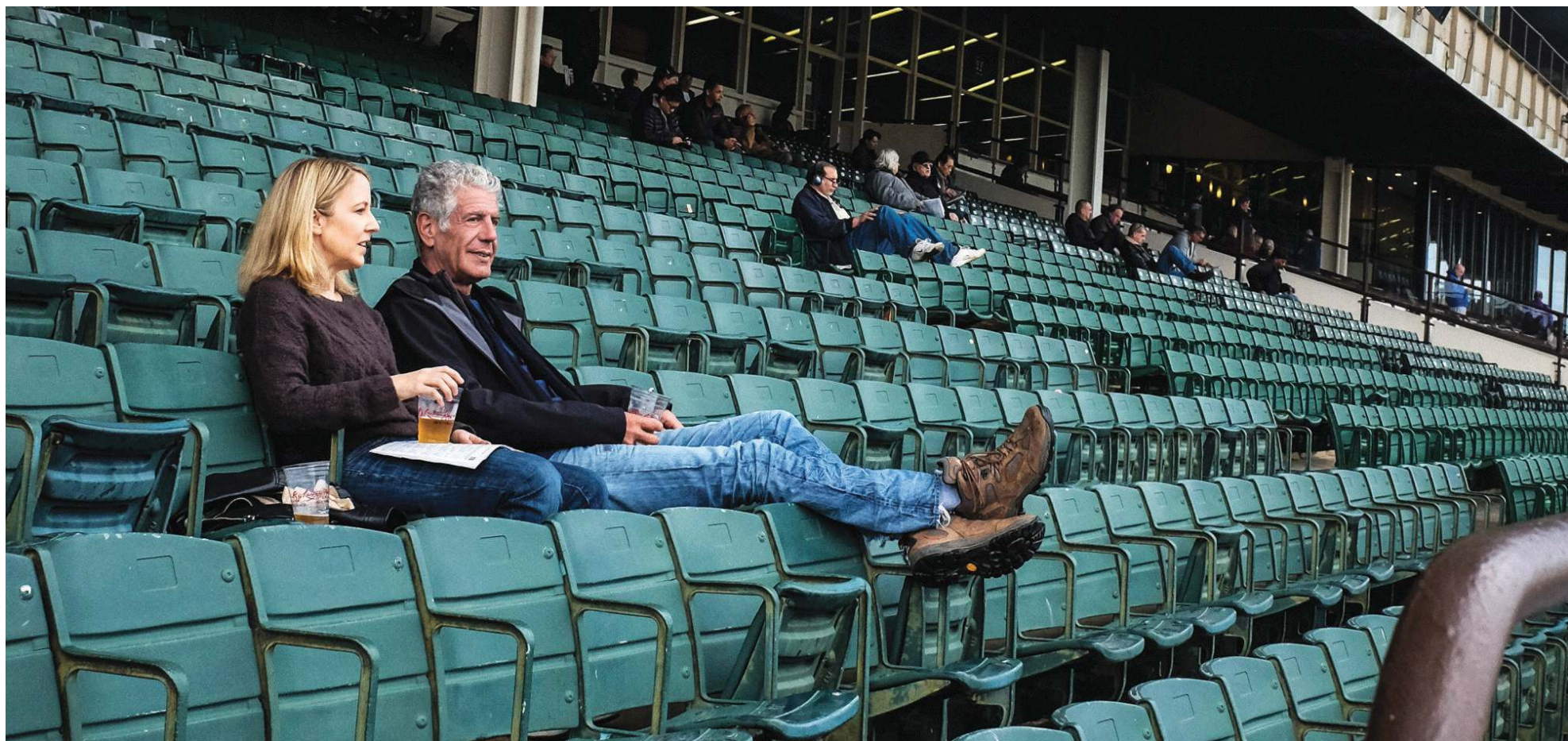
One recent customer, Kenta Yamashita, 24, a hairdresser, has been using cosmetics daily.

"There are men who cannot buy cosmetic products because it's hard for them to casually drop in. I think it's nice we now have this section," Yamashita said. "But I wish they would make the section bigger so that men can more casually drop in."

**"Before, most of our customers were males in their teens and 20s, but thanks to remote work we now have more businessmen."**

Takumi Tezuka  
owner of Ikemen-Works salon for men

## WEEKEND: BOOKS



CNN

Laurie Woolever and Anthony Bourdain sit together at Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens, N.Y. The two collaborated on a number of projects throughout their decade-plus relationship.

# Seeing the world through his eyes

Bourdain's longtime collaborator discusses her work on his posthumous travel guide and how it affected her emotionally

BY TIM CARMAN  
*The Washington Post*

She has been described as his lieutenant, his assistant, his gatekeeper and his co-author. Now Laurie Woolever has a new duty in the universe of the late Anthony Bourdain: She is a custodian of his memory, and history. It's a job she takes very seriously.

Her name appears in small print under Bourdain's on the cover of his new posthumous book, "World Travel: An Irreverent Guide," even though she was responsible for pulling together its 480 pages, without any new material from the man with the marquee name. It was a project that she and Bourdain had discussed before his death by suicide in 2018. During a nearly hourlong interview with *The Washington Post*, Woolever described working on the book as a form of grieving, which should give you some insight into another aspect of her decade-plus relationship with Bourdain.

She was also his friend.

Woolever started working with Bourdain for his "Les Halles Cookbook," published in 2004, in which the chef and budding TV host described her as "the lone professional in a monkey house. The book could never have been done without her." She returned to Bourdain's employ in 2009 and worked with him right up to his death. Aside from the travel guide, in which she had to rely largely on old shows and transcripts, Woolever has another book in the works, "Bourdain: The Oral Biography," scheduled to publish this fall.

The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**The Washington Post: How should people use "World Travel" until they feel safe to get on an airplane again?**

**Woolever:** A lot of people really loved what Tony did with his writing and with television and were never going to be travelers in that way. But they were able to learn about the world through his travel and storytelling, and I think this book fits that need. Then for people who have traveled quite a bit and are feeling nostalgic for that travel, there's something sort of pleasurable about reading Tony's experiences. I say this in the introduction: The book is not a comprehensive guide to the world.

**The book is almost as much a compendium of Tony's observations as it is a travel guide, sort of like "The Incomplete Anthony Bourdain." That idea is reinforced by the way the book is printed. All of Tony's words are boldfaced for easy reference.**

When you're watching the shows, he's such a brilliant writer and so brilliant on his feet, and so much of that would go by so quickly as you're watching the beautiful visuals and the cinematography. So to have the words that he carefully chose, to have them in this format, I think it is a different experience altogether.

**I'm curious about the conversation that you had with Tony that served as the blueprint for the book. What was the gist of what he wanted to do?**

One of our early inspirations for how we wanted the book to feel, beyond just being things that Tony loved or things that were weird, was the "Atlas Obscura" book. That's a really beautiful book and has maybe one or two attractions from every place in the world. So, you know, there's plenty of stuff in

the book that isn't weird, that's very middle of the road.

**How did the book evolve as you went along in the process?**

On the day we had this conversation, he wasn't recalling a lot about Lebanon. And, of course, anyone who followed him knows that Lebanon was hugely important to him. He and his crew were caught in a war there in 2006. He went back twice, and it was a place that he loved. Were he around, he would have said, "Listen, we got to do Lebanon," but I kind of let it go in the service of finishing the whole thing. Then someone from the publisher said, "You have to include Lebanon," and so I did go back and make a Lebanon chapter. I know that, were he around for this process, it would be a very different book. There would have been much more original writing from him.

**Did you come away with new or different insights on Tony as you were reviewing his shows and transcripts?**

It was interesting to bounce around different time periods — to see him be very young, in his mid-40s and just starting out and the nervousness, and then the next hour watching something from 2017, where he has all this experience and this deeper kind of gravitas. It's like looking at a photo album of your kid when, day-to-day, you don't see the changes but then you look and you realize how this person has grown and evolved over the years. It was really striking to see how much, like any of us, he changed over the course of close to 20 years on television.

**What was it like emotionally, for you to go through all that?**

It was a very lonely endeavor, save for all of the conversations I got to have with people who knew Tony. But, you know, we were all grieving. So it was hard, but I'm really glad

that I had a project. Had Tony died and the chapter of my life working with, and for, him ended right there, that would have been a much harder thing than to have this book, and the next book, to kind of slowly disengage from that life of working with him.

**Was working on the book, in a way, a grieving process for you?**

Yeah, absolutely. I was very lucky to have this opportunity, not only to continue to support myself, but also to do so in a way that allowed me to really appreciate who Tony was, the work that he did, his humor. Things that I think I appreciated when he was alive, and I was kind of steeped in his everything, but you kind of take for granted. So there was no reason for me, when Tony was alive, to sit down and re-watch a bunch of episodes and read transcripts. He was there.

**What has life been like for you without him around?**

It feels like a much smaller life, in some ways, a smaller world in part because I've just been home writing these books. So things are quieter just because he was a force field of energy, and that's not here. I don't mind it. I mean, I would take the excitement back. I would take it all back if Tony were still around. But that's not a possibility.

**So the other book that you're working on, can you talk about it?**

It's called "Bourdain: The Oral Biography." It is exactly that: an oral biography of Tony's life. I started it at the same time that I really started in earnest on the travel book, interviewing people from all aspects of his life, about 100 interviews, and taking parts of those interviews to tell the story of Tony. Many people's story of Tony, from the time he was a little kid, all the way through to the end of his life.

## WEEKEND: MUSIC



WILLIAM DESHAZER/For The Washington Post

Tyler Mahan Coe of the country music podcast “Cocaine & Rhinestones” sits in front of a card catalog in the archives of the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville.

# An epic storyteller

Tyler Mahan Coe created the ‘War and Peace’ of country music podcasts, ‘Cocaine & Rhinestones’

BY GEOFF EDGERS  
The Washington Post

## At 1:37 a.m.

on a recent Wednesday, Tyler Mahan Coe, son of the outlaw country singer David Allan Coe and creator of what is easily the best country music history podcast ever made, put on his headphones and launched into a lengthy segment about ice cream. Ice cream?

Season 2 of “Cocaine & Rhinestones” is supposed to center on legendary singer George Jones. But with blankets hanging over the sides of a small sound booth he bought online, Coe leaned into a microphone in his apartment and delivered an opening sequence that referenced 16th-century Italian noblewoman Catherine de’ Medici, the true meaning of Little Richard’s “Tutti Frutti” — hint, it’s not about something served at Baskin Robbins — and the waffle cones sold at the 1904 World’s Fair.

Finally, after 11 minutes and 32 seconds, he circled back to Owen Bradley, the late producer he believes was unfairly overshadowed by Chet Atkins as the creator of the famed “Nashville Sound.” The “C&R” theme came next, a slowed-down version of the fingerpicking intro to Dolly Parton’s “Jolene,” and then Coe’s catchphrase: “I’ve heard these stories my whole life. As far as I can tell, here’s the truth about this one.”

It’s an odd tag considering how exacting Coe, 36, is when he talks about truth. In the crowded music podcast market, “Cocaine & Rhinestones,” which launched its long-awaited second season April 13, stands out for its host’s devotion to setting the record straight through a show that could be filed under educational if it wasn’t so entertaining.

In interviews or his Twitter feed, Coe has no problem calling out those he feels have failed, because they were overfunded dilettantes (Ken Burns), pompous hacks (Malcolm Gladwell) or simply fell for false narratives fed by record companies, lazy writers and sometimes the artists. The best way to honor the music, Coe believes, is to properly acknowledge the innovators by researching, analyzing and presenting their stories. To that end, he doesn’t cut corners, accept conventional wisdom or care if it takes more than 10 minutes to wind into his intro. There is plenty of time to get to the birth of the Grand Ole Opry, the formation of Nashville’s “A-Team” and why “Jingle Bell Rock” is as country as it gets. The second episode of Season 2, with a working title of “Owen - Ice Cream,” clocks in at 124 minutes and 14,318 words.

“He is the ‘War and Peace’ of country music podcasts,” says Elizabeth Cook, the singer and Sirius XM Outlaw Country station host. “Nobody has the patience for nuance, the patience for long term. But he’s insisting on it. That the details are important. I grew up steeped in this culture, I’ve played the Opry hundreds of times, and the episode he did on Loretta Lynn — oh my gosh, I had no idea.”

That episode, about Lynn’s 1975 ode to birth control, “The Pill,” came out on Oct. 31, 2017 — a lifetime ago in podcasting terms. Which speaks to another aspect of Coe’s approach: Even with the stunning success of Season 1 — its 14 episodes topped the iTunes chart, earned a rave in the New Yorker, and led to approaches from big-brand distributors — there was nothing that could make Coe rush out Season Two. He wouldn’t hire a research assistant or even recruit an intern to so much as press the record button. “Even I have said, ‘Is there anything I can do to help you?’” says Aileen, Coe’s wife of 17 months. “No. He just knows that it’s his mountain to climb, and he’s not going to let anybody else do it.”

That goes for taking on investors. Coe has lived off the \$1,000 a week he says he’s getting from supporters on Patreon, the artist-funding platform. He had plenty of chances to sell out after his first season, which he says has been played millions of times. Coe barely listened to the pitches as soon as anybody raised the idea of buying his intellectual property.

“Oh, I could definitely be a millionaire right now,” says Coe. “It’s not an exaggeration for me to say that. But if someone is coming to me with that much money in their hand, it’s because they think they’re going to get that much money out of it. I don’t care to spend my time arguing with them about all the ways they’re not going to do that.”

SEE STORYTELLER ON PAGE 29

## WEEKEND: MUSIC

**Storyteller:** Podcaster chooses personal touch over bigger profits

FROM PAGE 28

**Country music scion**

Tyler Mahan Coe is fretboard thin, just under 6 feet tall and 160 pounds. He favors Western shirts and boots when he's posing for photos or DJ'ing at clubs or country cruises, but is just as likely to be wearing a Black Sabbath T-shirt and a hoodie when he's at work on the podcast.

He did not finish high school, though he eventually earned his General Education Development diploma. And his thirst for books is obvious as he fluently shifts a conversation from psychologist Carl Jung to Eastern religions to demographics to country singer LeeAnn Rimes. The deep reader also comes through in his writing for "C&R," which ranges from punchy and conversational to richly descriptive analogies.

Coe's mother, Jody, was 22 and working at a bar at the Opryland USA theme park in Nashville when a friend introduced her to David Allan Coe in 1983. The singer was twice her age and had already been married multiple times. He had also done time for petty theft and earned a reputation for writing heart-wrenching ballads ("You Never Even Called Me by My Name") as well as swaggering send-offs ("Take This Job and Shove It.")

This would not be Ozzie and Harriet. To hear his family tell it — the 81-year-old Coe declined a request to talk about his son — David Allan Coe's admiration for Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson included the way they incorporated family into their careers. Tanya Montana, his younger sister and one of Coe and Jody's four children, would inspire a 1987 single named after her.

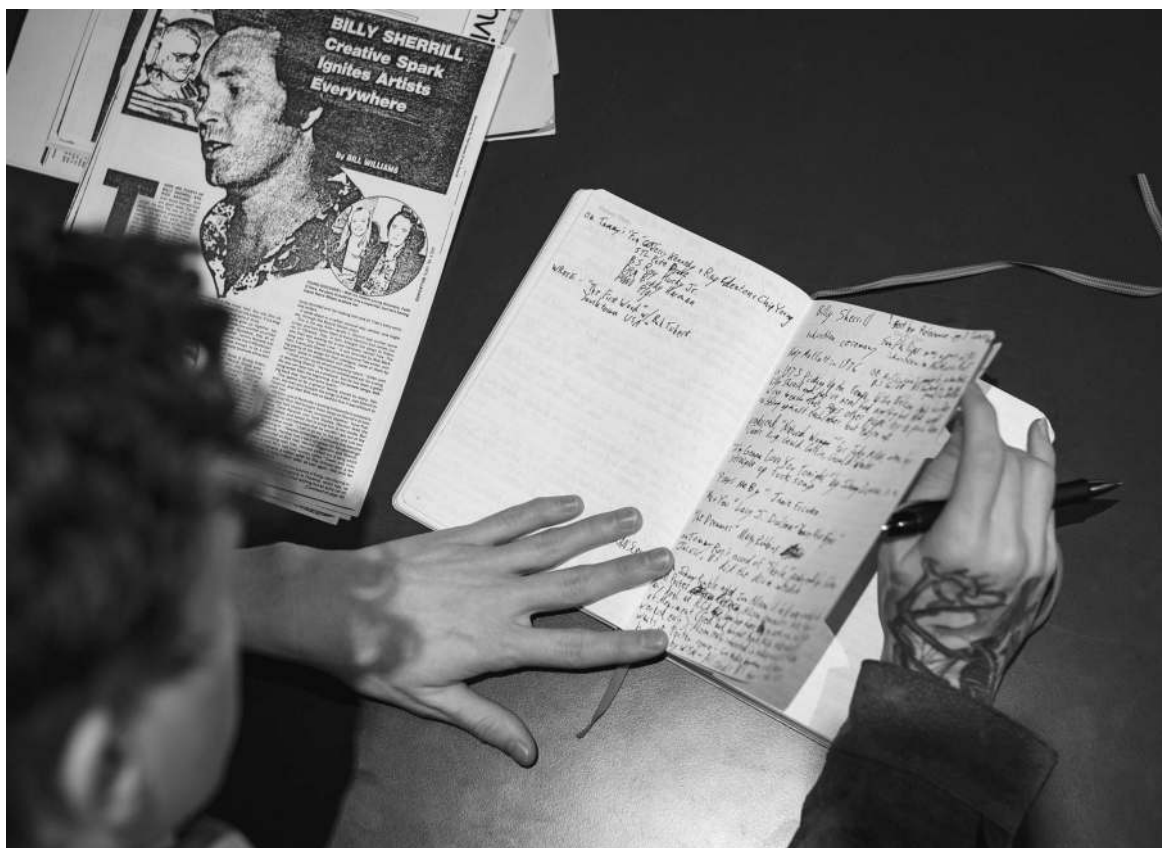
"He would introduce us on-stage and then he'd barely say anything to us," Tanya says today from Nashville, where she runs a boutique and records her own music.

And that's Tyler on the cover of 1986's "Son of the South," a toddler sitting on his daddy's lap, wrapped in a Confederate flag.

"His use of the flag was always in the 'it means rebellion, not racism,' way," says Coe. "It's totally ignorant and divorced from the actual meaning, but it's the same thing all kinds of people still believe and repeat. If I was a little older than 2, I probably would have said it was dumb and we shouldn't do it."

The marriage would last just over 10 years, much of it with David on the road.

Of all the kids, Tyler seemed to have figured out a way to connect. He was a straight-A student in school, Jody remembered, though she never saw him open a book. What she didn't know was that he was loading up Fruitiona



WILLIAM DESHAZER/For The Washington Post

**Tyler Mahan Coe goes through the archives at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville while researching record producer Billy Sherrill. Coe's meticulously researched podcast has been a hit with listeners, critics and potential big-brand distributors, but Coe has resisted sponsorship.**

bottles with her pink zinfandel so he could get sloshed at school. One day around his 15th birthday, Coe came home and found that a friend of Jody's had mailed her a pamphlet for military school. She never intended to send him, but he didn't know that. The boy left home and had a talk with his father that led to him joining his dad's band for the next 12 years. Coe recalls this exchange:

"You been practicing your guitar chords?" David asked.

"Yeah," Tyler said, lying.

"Good. I'm recording a live album in three days. You're on it."

**Giving up the gig**

For years, Coe thought he would always be in his father's band.

Early on, he had barely been able to play. But by his later teens, he was comfortable and felt a sense of responsibility standing there with his Gibson SG, trying to keep one of his musical heroes on track.

David Allan Coe was not the easiest person to play behind. Covered in tattoos and a waist-length, dyed wig, he would sit in a chair with his guitar cranked up to overcome his hearing loss. His tax problems — he would eventually be forced to pay more than \$1 million in back taxes to the IRS — meant he had to keep up a robust touring schedule, even when he'd rather be home in Florida playing the slots.

The senior Coe often sang only snippets of songs, or a single medley, or walked off after only a

**The pacing also marked a departure from Spotify-trained attention spans. For his episode on the Louvin Brothers, Coe opened with the swirling sounds of ocean waves, slid into a series of plucked guitar strings and finally played a clip of a Mongolian throat singer.**

few minutes. He had gotten married to Kimberly Hastings, and she and Tyler didn't get along, partly because Tyler didn't appreciate her taking the microphone during performances. He had stopped riding on his father's bus, preferring to hang with the band and Coe's longtime road manager, Bruce Smith.

In 2013, David Allan Coe was home in Florida when he ran a red light and got hit by a semi-



Lila Hempel-Edgers

**Tyler Mahan Coe, the son of country musician David Allan Coe, was featured on the cover of his father's 1986 album "Son of the South." Tyler played in his father's band for several years, but the men are now estranged.**

truck. The photos of his smashed SUV made the rounds and the singer would cancel a slew of shows. Smith and Tyler Coe say they wanted to visit, and Coe says he shared a record company's offer to produce a tribute album for his father, but they suspect that Kimberly did not relay their efforts. (Kimberly Coe did not respond to interview requests.) At Willie Nelson's annual July Fourth picnic, David Allan Coe showed up to perform and announced from the stage that his manager and entire band had abandoned him after his accident. "Everybody quit me," he said. "Except my wife."

In November of that year, Tyler Coe posted his side of the story on his blog. He also included a link to an annotated list of what he considered David Allan Coe's 50 best songs.

"Despite my clarifications

within this article, many people seem to think I'm lambasting my father and criticizing his career," Coe added at the top of the post.

"That is not the case. I'm a bigger David Allan Coe fan than you are — hands down, no question."

"I want his career to flourish," says Coe. "I'm a big fan of his music. But him as a person is not something I need. I will never try to talk with him again."

**Filling a market void**

After splitting with his dad, Coe paid his bills by donating plasma twice a week and teaching guitar. Back in Nashville, he launched a marketing business and, in 2015, created DrunkMall, an online shopping site playfully based on SkyMall, which scored a plug from Johnny Knoxville.

Creating a podcast was not a lifelong dream. In fact, when you hear Coe describe his decision to make "Cocaine & Rhinestones," it almost sounds like a chore. Something "daunting" that he "had to do."

"If I didn't make 'Cocaine & Rhinestones,'" he wrote on the website, "it was never going to exist, and I couldn't bear the thought of it."

It started when Coe tried to find a good country music history podcast to listen to. He says there were none, so he ordered a microphone and recorded his first episode, on Western swing star-turned-murderer Spade Cooley.

As he progressed, Coe established his approach. He used dozens of song clips in each episode to illustrate his points. He never interviewed others, whether experts or the artists themselves. There was also The Voice.

Coe delivered each line with a twang-less, overpronounced clarity, as if he were being paid by the syllable. The pacing also marked a departure from Spotify-trained attention spans. For his episode on the Louvin Brothers, Coe opened with the swirling sounds of ocean waves, slid into a series of plucked guitar strings and finally played a clip of a Mongolian throat singer. This was meant to help explain the difference between two regular people singing together and the otherworldly, blood harmonies of Charlie and Ira Louvin.

After Season 1, an editor at the podcasting company Gimlet sent Coe an email offering to staff the show and give him a salary, benefits and a percentage of profits. "All that said, we are interested in owning the IP for the show," she wrote. "That's primarily because we'd be bringing high monetization to the product, and it's standard practice for us at Gimlet on shows like this to own the IP."

Coe's two-word response came 73 minutes later: "No thanks."

## WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

# Showing care by donating pandemic hair

Charities overwhelmed by interest from those using quarantine tresses for good

BY ASHLEY FETTERS  
The Washington Post

**D**iane Brewer couldn't enjoy her pandemic hair. Her strawberry-blonde locks, which typically grazed her shoulder blades, now flowed to her waist for the first time since elementary school — which would have been an enviable look in a more normal time. But no one ever saw it. She had zero special occasions on her calendar, and at the Denver hospital where she works as a nurse anesthetist, "Everybody had to wear scrub caps all the time. So nobody saw my hair. It was always in a bun and under the cap," said Brewer, 47.

She yearned for a haircut, but she didn't want to undertake the exposure risk of going to a salon. Then she had an epiphany. She waited until March, three months after she was vaccinated for the coronavirus, to visit a hair salon. She walked out with a short bob and a Ziploc baggie containing 14 inches of braids, which she plans to donate to a charity that might be able to use it for a wig.

The coronavirus pandemic has made the needs of others more visible, motivating some Americans to give what they can. And even in a year when many are struggling financially, one thing they can still give, after a year with no haircuts, is hair. As a result, charities that turn donated hair into wigs have been swamped in recent months.

Many of us saw pandemic hair as a borderline-annoying predicament. A test of vanity. Others, like Brewer, saw their newfound abundance of hair in a different way: as an opportunity to do good.

Suzanne Chimera is co-founder of the Long Island-based Hair We Share, which makes wigs out of donated hair and provides them at no cost to adults and children with medical hair loss. She started to see the uptick in interest at the start of the pandemic.

"A lot of people in the beginning were saying, 'Well, my salon

is closed, and I just want to cut my hair now. So I'll cut it and send it to you,'" Chimera said.

But salons would need the business as soon as they could reopen. So she and her team encouraged would-be donors to keep growing their hair out, and in the meantime start crowd-funding pages where friends and family could "sponsor" their future hair donation, with proceeds making up for Hair We Share's canceled fundraising events.

Eventually the donation boom came once salons reopened. According to Chimera, Hair We Share's individual hair donor base has increased about 230% over the past year.

More men are asking how they can donate their wild, unkempt hair once they can finally get haircuts, Chimera said. When she spoke to The Washington Post in mid-April, six men had reached out about donating their hair in the past 24 hours.

"Before, we didn't get six men in a month," she said.

Often, Chimera has to explain to them that hair donations need to be, at minimum, eight inches long.

"With eight inches of hair, we only end up with a four- to six-inch wig, and most of the people getting wigs are women and young girls. Most of them want long hair," Chimera explained. When she asks the men if they can hang in there for one or two more months, a surprising amount of them do.

Hair We Share has also been receiving more gray-hair donations than usual — it's one of the few charities that accepts them.

Founder Martino Cartier's New Jersey-based Wigs & Wishes assembles its wigs for cancer patients on-site — which means its warehouse is, at present, overflowing with hair. It recently received two shipments from a Texas salon that, together, contained 90 pounds of hair — more than it usually receives in a month.

"Oh, my gosh. It looks like, it looks like a carnival on the last



Diane Brewer

**Diane Brewer cut off 14 inches of her hair and is planning to donate it to a charity that makes wigs.**



HANNAH YOON/For The Washington Post

**Donated hair sits on a bin at the Martino Cartier Studio in Sewell, N.J., on April 20. Cartier founded Wigs & Wishes, a nonprofit that gives away wigs to those who need them.**

day, after no one cleans it up," said Cartier, who's also a hair stylist and salon owner, with a laugh. "I've just got wigs everywhere. I got wigs in cabinets. On the countertop. In my office. I just — there's just wigs, wigs, wigs."

Inevitably some donations get thrown out. Hair that's sent wet becomes too moldy, and sometimes hair is just too damaged from treatments. In 2007, the New York Times reported that at Locks of Love, perhaps the most recognizable hair-donation charity, most donations were unusable for wigs. (It did not respond to The Washington Post's requests for comment on pandemic hair donations.)

At Wigs & Wishes, some 90% of donated hair is eventually put into a wig, according to Cartier. At Hair We Share, an even larger amount gets used, and monetary donations are used to pay for the labor of making hair into wigs. (One wig requires about six hair donations, according to Chimera.)

The pandemic "made people want to help other people," Chimera said. "Growing their hair was a way that they could do it while still quarantining."

The charities that spoke to The Washington Post for this story said their monetary donations had risen too.

"Some people, when they get some of their stimulus money, they decide to make a small donation to us," said Regina Villemure, founder of Children With Hair Loss, which is based in South Rockwood, Mich., and provides wigs to kids and adults with hair loss from medical causes. "Because it's like, 'You know what, our family's OK. Maybe we need to help another family.'"

Like Brewer, Jerika Nguyen, a 28-year-old pharmacist in Grand Rapids, Mich., spent most of 2020 and early 2021 growing her hair out. In March, she donated nine inches of her hair to Children With Hair Loss, one of the few charities that would accept her highlighted hair.

Nguyen compared the experi-

ence to the first time she donated blood — in late 2016, after a tumultuous year.

"I decided to donate blood for the first time in 2016, which, I'm sure you remember, was a very tumultuous year, with a presidential election and the Orlando shooting and Brexit and Zika and the Dakota Access Pipeline and, just everything," Nguyen said. "Fast-forward to now, and I feel like it was kind of a similar thought process, where there's no shortage of events and issues to care about ... I was like, 'What else can I do that's tangible to bring a little bit more light into the world?' And I'd already skipped going to the hair salon for so long," she said.

Nguyen thinks her donation could be the first of several. With a laugh, she explained that the first time she ever cried over her hair was a year or so ago, after a bleaching job went awry. "And I just thought, if I was going to be dramatic about that, then think about how someone with complete hair loss feels."

## WEEKEND: TELEVISION



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC FOR DISNEY+/AP

An orca in New Zealand hunts for stingrays in a scene from “Secrets of the Whales,” a new National Geographic docuseries on Disney+.

## ‘Secrets of Whales’ aim: Reveal ‘who’ whales are

BY GARY GERARD HAMILTON  
Associated Press

When a killer whale slowly circled back toward wildlife photographer Brian Skerry in the middle of the ocean after discarding the giant stingray it was devouring, panic is not what came to mind: “Part of my brain is thinking, ‘I can’t believe what I’m seeing,’” Skerry recalled. “Don’t screw it up.”

It’s a fascinating moment between man and ocean predator revealed in “Secrets of the Whales,” a new National Geographic docuseries premiering on Disney+. The incredible four-part series follows various whale species across 24 locations around the globe.

“The latest greatest science is showing that they have cultures; they have traditions,” said Skerry, who released a book of the same title this month. “If we can begin to see our planet through the lens of culture with these charismatic ambassadors for the ocean, maybe it’s a bit of a game changer — we change our view of how we see our own planet.”

Executive produced by Academy Award-winning director James Cameron and narrated by Oscar nominee Sigourney Weaver — Weaver was asked personally by Cameron, who directed her in 2009’s “Avatar,” to lend her voice — the series is split into four episodes focusing individually on orcas (killer whales), humpbacks and belugas, with the final episode featuring both sperm whales and narwhals.

Cameron is no stranger to the world’s oceans. In 2012, he dove a deep sea submarine he built nearly 7 miles down to the deepest point of the Mariana Trench. The filmmaker, who’s produced various-ocean themed projects, documented the dive in his film “Deepsea Challenge 3D.”

“What this series strove to do was to make them a who, not a what,” said Cameron from his New Zealand editing studio where he’s working on “Avatar 2.” “What we learn from what we see, including a lot of things that

have never been recorded before, is that they are like people. They have family bonds ... They have love. They have grief. They’re very much like us in many ways.”

Skerry, an 11-time award winner in the prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition and who’s performed thousands of various ocean dives, said several factors had to align to gather the stunning footage including weather, sunlight and finding whales who didn’t mind showing their good sides to the camera.

Each episode is approximately 45 minutes long and edited along a tightly woven storyline, but the series, which began streaming on Earth Day, was filmed during a three-year period. Patience was as vital as the ultra-high-tech filming equipment.

“Things don’t always go right: In Dominica, I did a five-week trip in 2018. In the first three weeks, we didn’t see a whale. And the scientist who’s been there for 15 years says, ‘Well, this has never happened before.’ And that’s not what you want to hear,” said Skerry, laughing. “But that being said, the shot list that we had, the things that we hoped to accomplish were achieved, and then we got so much more.”

The team is thrilled that many deep-sea secrets will finally surface. Skerry remembers showing a scientist footage he captured revealing how a 30,000-pound sperm whale nursed her calf, an act some researchers believed might never be known, let alone filmed.

“(The scientist) said, ‘Brian, there’s an old saying in the whale biology world that says, ‘Some day, we will know everything there is to know about whales—except how a sperm whale calf nurses,’” Skerry remembered. “But now we’ve got this frame-by-frame analysis.”

He continued: “From a scientific standpoint, that’s really important. But for me, just being trusted by those animals was great.”

# ‘You just have to stay solid’

‘American Masters’ documentary explores Amy Tan’s unintended journey

BY LUAINE LEE  
Tribune News Service

When Amy Tan’s first book, “The Joy Luck Club,” hit the bestseller lists, most people around her were overjoyed. But not Tan. She was terrified. “It was actually frightening, because this is not anything I’d ever dreamt of,” she says.

“I was a very practical person, and I think because of the way that I was raised, I could never be an artist or an author, because who would make money doing that? I knew I had to do something practical,” she recalls. “So I thought it was impossible I even had a short story published. And when this book came out and suddenly it started gaining momentum — thanks to independent booksellers, by the way — I thought somebody else was in control of my life.”

She was scared: “This was out of control. And I actually became depressed, because I’d had a life in childhood that was so out of control. My mother was out of control. All these traumas that had happened — the death of my father and brother — this feeling of out-of-controlness, even though you might think it’s good, was terrifying.”

But Tan didn’t submit.

“I did settle into it,” she admits. “But one thing that I did, I wrote down things that were important and I said, ‘Do not lose yourself. You can get sucked into this kind of success, and you might believe you’re better than you are ... or worse than you are, because that’s what you’ll hear from people. And you just have to stay solid. And I know the reasons why you write and what’s important.’ And that has served me really, really well.”

Another thing that serves her well is PBS’ “American Masters” documentary on her life titled “Amy Tan: Unintended Memoir” premiering May 3.

Tan opens up to late documentary filmmaker Jamie Redford because, she says, she trusted him.

“One of the things that was very key in working with Jamie, and his asking me the questions, I perceived very early on that this was a film about us. It wasn’t just a film about me. It was about him. It was about the people who would watch this film,” she says. “It was about trauma, pain, the past, childhood, things that were not understood, things that nobody ever apologized for, that you felt slighted. And it was about resilience and hope,

that you can change the past, you can change also what is happening now.”

Even as a child there were hints of Tan’s talent. “I was from the very early ages a storyteller. And I have evidence of that in an interview done with my parents when I was 6 years old, that I had started telling stories and illustrating them, or drawing and then telling a story,” she says.

“When I first started, I had no idea I’d get published. I was doing it because I enjoyed it, the craft of it. And, also, because I discovered in those early stories that I would come across a moment when I had an aha! moment, an epiphany. That was one of the greatest feelings I could possibly have. And so, I knew I was going to continue to do that. But it seemed rather unrealistic for me to imagine I’d ever get published,” she says. “That meant that I was writing in a vacuum of me and my room and this machine in front of me. And that feeling of being alone, alone in a room, was something I had loved since I was a child, and I was able to write quickly without a sense of expectation.”

But soon all that changed.

“Once I got published and it was a surprise hit — surprise to everybody, really surprising to me — I found I lost the quiet room,” she says. “I had many people in there watching over me. ‘Can she do it again?’ ‘Will she write the same thing?’ And that made it very difficult.”

Writing, she says, becomes more onerous with time.

“I have found over the years that it is even more difficult with every book. At one point I thought it was just me, but I asked a number of great writers if they felt that was true. And they all feel it’s true,” she says. “You do not want to repeat yourself. You want to get better. You also feel these expectations now from publishers and critics. So that awareness, I think, has made it more difficult.”

It was when she was engaged in technical writing that she began to seek a more rewarding outlet: “The craft of writing (and) reading stories appealed to me, and so I did begin writing short stories just for myself for personal enjoyment, and found that a surprising thing happened. And that was that if I made revelations, I discovered things about myself that were quite meaningful. Such elation when I found out! And at that moment, I was a writer.”



Memorabilia from the life of author Amy Tan is shown above. Tan is the subject of PBS’ next edition of “American Masters,” “Amy Tan: Unintended Memoir,” premiering May 3.

## WEEKEND: HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Still have your COVID-19 vaccination card?

Health experts discuss personal immunization records, what to do with them after receiving your shot

By ALLYSON CHIU  
The Washington Post

There are various ways to document that you received a coronavirus vaccine. Some people have snapped selfies proudly displaying the Band-Aid on their upper arm. Some vaccination sites are handing out stickers. But the official form of documentation is the small white vaccination record card issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which you receive after your first shot.

“You do want to make sure you keep it safe,” says Kelly Moore, deputy director of the Immunization Action Coalition. “You do want to make a copy of it and keep that on file, not because it’s the only record, but because it’s the one that you control.”

Here’s what Moore and other experts say you need to know about the cards and what you should do after receiving one.

## Washington Post: What is the purpose of a vaccination card?

**Experts:** The primary function of a vaccination card is to serve as a personal immunization record, Moore says, much like your childhood immunization records. “These cards that you’re given when you’re vaccinated are important for you to keep up with because they’re your personal record of what you have had and they remind you of when your next dose is due.”

In its guidance on getting a coronavirus vaccine, the CDC says you should receive a card at your first appointment that tells you which vaccine you received, its lot number, the date and the vaccination site. If you need a second dose, referencing the card is a quick way for providers to make sure you’re getting the right shot at the right time without having to access your electronic records. The card should then be updated with details about the second shot.

The cards also can be convenient proof of coronavirus vaccination, but experts emphasize that they are not legal documents and should not be thought of as such at this point in the pandemic.

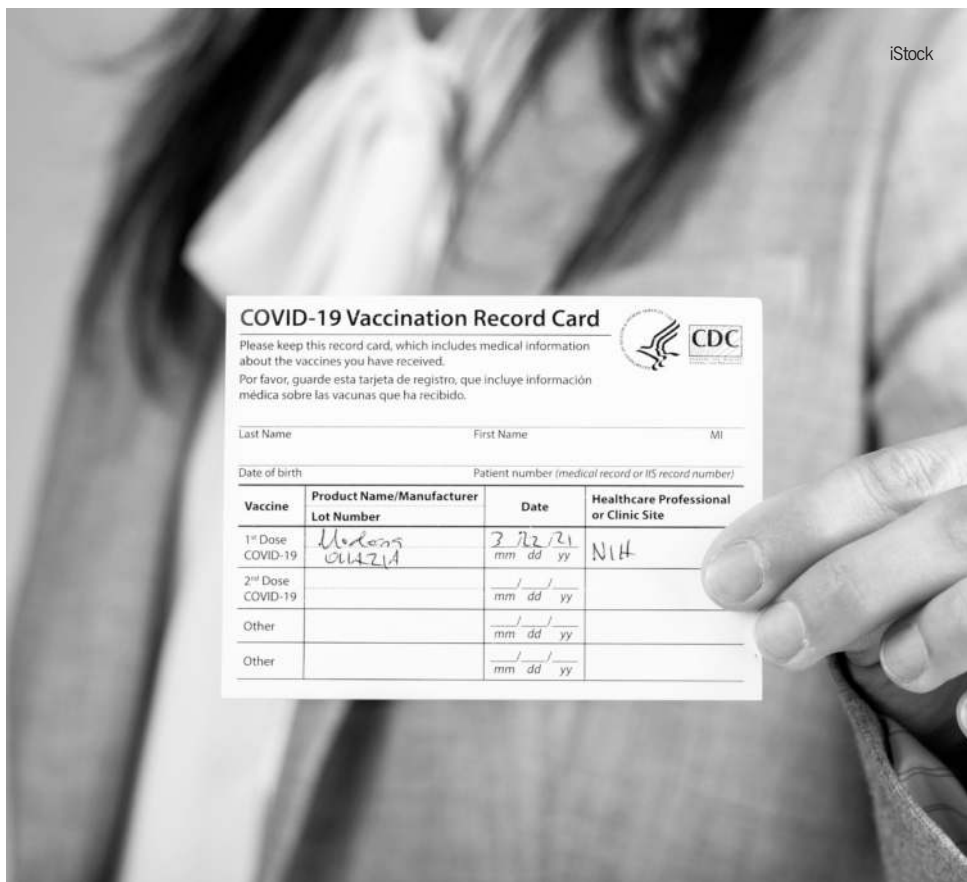
“It is not magical. It is not the only record that exists,” Moore says. Still, she notes, if you have the card, “it’s much easier than having to go back to your doctor’s office or to some health department to request a copy of your proof of immunization. It can save you a lot of hassles down the line if you maintain your personal copy of this official record.”

## What should I do with my card after getting it?

It’s widely recommended to take a photograph of the card as a backup copy and then keep the original stored in a safe place where you can easily access it if needed.

“It’s not something I recommend taking around everywhere, at least not at this point, because it’s not required,” says Michael Knight, an assistant professor of medicine and the patient safety officer at George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates. “I’d much rather you keep it with your secure documents.”

Neysa Ernst, nurse manager of the



Biocontainment Unit at Johns Hopkins Medicine, says she keeps her card with her passport. In addition to taking a photo, also consider making hard copies of the card and keep those secure as well, Ernst says. Try to avoid losing the original or any copies and be careful about posting photos of your card on social media without obscuring your personal information.

“Your name is on there, your date of birth, the lot number of the vaccine that you receive,” Knight says. “You don’t

**“It is not magical. It is not the only record that exists.”**

Kelly Moore

deputy director, Immunization Action Coalition

want an opportunity for individuals to have personal information that they can use for identity theft or other untoward activities.”

Additionally, you may want to bring your card to your next appointment with your primary care provider, Knight says. Your doctor should be able to input your vaccination information into their records, which means you will have another way to access it.

## Should I laminate my card?

Lamination could be a way to safeguard against wear and tear, but some experts have raised concerns that it may complicate updating the card if booster shots are needed in the future.

“When you get your booster dose, they can add that booster dose to your personal record, so you can keep all the information in one place,” Moore says. “For that

reason, laminating it might not be the best idea because it is a living record.”

It is possible, though, that a new supplementary card will be issued for booster shots, so laminating the original would be fine, says William Schaffner, medical director of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. If you want to avoid modifying the actual card, Ernst suggests laminating a copy.

If you do choose to laminate, take care to ensure that it’s done correctly and doesn’t damage the card in the process.

## Will I need my card to get my second shot?

While it’s recommended to bring your card to your second appointment so it can be updated, don’t panic if you don’t have it with you.

“Don’t miss your appointment because you lost your card,” Ernst says.

Vaccination sites and state health departments are keeping electronic records of coronavirus vaccines that have been administered. As long as you have a form of ID, the site should be able to pull up your name in their records and get you vaccinated.

## What happens if I lose my card?

First, try to go back to your vaccination site and see if they’ll give you a replacement. Bring an ID and try to recall the date you were vaccinated, Schaffner says.

If you received two shots at different places, Knight recommends returning to the site where you got the second dose, which may be able to provide the information needed for a complete card.

“It all depends on the processes in place at their local vaccination sites and put in place by their local health department,” he says.

But there is no need to worry if you can’t get a replacement card, says Kevin Colgan, the vice president and chief pharmacy officer at University of Chicago

Medicine.

“What happens is that we record all of your vaccinations in your electronic medical record that has a link to the state’s vaccination registry,” he says, “so you can always get a backup copy of your vaccine administrations” through your state health department.

The CDC provides contact information for each state’s immunization information system on its website. How to access those immunization records differs by state, Colgan says, but you should be able to use a printout of that information in place of the card.

“The cards could be falsified,” he says, “but those electronic records cannot or would be very difficult to do it.”

## Where will I need to show my card?

The answer to this question is up in the air, and is much debated.

“Right now, those policies are evolving, so we can’t really say where people might require proof of immunization,” Moore says.

New York state is the first to issue a vaccine passport, which people can show to obtain entry to sporting venues, concert halls and participating businesses, while the governor of Florida has banned them. As travel resumes, it’s possible tourists will need vaccine passports, particularly for international trips. A growing list of countries are welcoming fully vaccinated American travelers and the Royal Caribbean cruise line, which has announced plans to resume some operations from non-U.S. ports, is requiring vaccines for passengers and crew who meet age requirements.

If you are traveling, you should bring your vaccination record, or at least a copy of it, just in case, Ernst says. Travel requirements are rapidly changing and it’s better to be safe.

In the future, experts say, it’s possible businesses could require staff to show proof of vaccination before allowing them to come back to work in-person, or that schools could add the coronavirus vaccine to the list of vaccinations required for students.

But for now, you might only need to show your card (or a copy of it) if you’re trying to claim free vaccine-related promotions, such as Krispy Kreme doughnuts or beer.

## What is the difference between a vaccination card and a vaccine passport?

The CDC card is “a simple medical record,” Schaffner says. The term vaccine passport or medical passport, on the other hand, could refer to a similar physical documentation of vaccination, such as the World Health Organization’s Yellow Card (Carte Jaune), as well as mobile apps where you can upload information about vaccinations, test results or health waivers.

“Your card is just a piece of paper with your information,” Knight says. Often-times a vaccine passport is “a document that’s more durable, that’s a little bit more secure” or it will be electronic.

“It’s unlikely that the actual paper that you have will be the passport if that is required in the future,” he says.

## WEEKEND: FAMILY



Jennifer Ropes

The pandemic has given Steven Ropes bonus time with his daughter, Sydney, who is a high school senior.

# The 'gift' of coronavirus

Parents thankful they can spend more time with kids during the pandemic

By ELLEN MCCARTHY  
*The Washington Post*

When his kids were little, Steven Ropes used to watch with bemusement as his neighbors' garage door opened and closed all evening long. The family seemed to be constantly coming and going, shuttling teenagers to untold destinations.

Then Ropes' six kids got older and his own garage door started getting a nightly workout.

"We were in full swing," says Ropes, a 53-year-old engineer in Duxbury, Mass. "Come in, go out, come back. It was nonstop."

But the beehive of activity ground to a halt with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

For much of the past year, there were seven kids living under their roof, including three foster children. Five of the seven are teenagers, suddenly trapped at home with family during that stage of life when they're inclined to seek the company of peers over parents. And the shift — inherently filled with great challenges — was also incredibly sweet, say their parents.

"I feel guilty when I say what a gift it's been for me," says Jennifer Ropes, 50, a teacher. "But as a parent, oh my gosh, it's been amazing."

She loved watching her teenagers bond over basketball and card games and become one another's support systems. And she loved the extra time and access it gave her to the kids, who took turns cooking and were at home to eat dinner together every night. Their daughter Sydney is a senior who will go off to college next year, and Jennifer thinks this period will ease that transition.

"It's going to be emotionally really hard," she says. "But I think I'm probably going to feel the most at peace when Sydney leaves, because we've had this time."

Teen and tween years can be difficult for parents and kids; fissions naturally occur as adolescents become less reliant on their parents and more attached to their peers, says Mitch Prinstein, chief science officer of the American Psychological Association. "Teens are biologically driven to seek independence."

But some parents say a meaningful upside to the lockdowns has been increased closeness with their tweens and teens, both physically and emotionally.

Jacqueline Medina and her son were always racing by each other. Medina, a 41-year-old single mom in Millville, N.J., was racing to her job as a waitress. Her

son Chase, now 12, was racing to school or to spend time with his dad or grandmother.

"We lived a pretty busy lifestyle. Go, go, go — all the time," Medina says. "I never really got to spend that much time with him."

But when schools shut down, Medina and Chase found themselves at home, together, day after day.

"It was intense," says Medina, who now works mostly weekend shifts to be at home on weekdays. "But I got to see him face-to-face more and interact with him more and be kind of like a stay-at-home mom. That's what it felt like to me."

Their days revolved around his online school schedule, which Medina oversaw. But they also started taking walks and making meals together — and talking more, sorting through their feelings together.

"I feel like we're struggling together, going through it together. And that's the whole point — that we're in this together," Medina says. "It made me really be more honest with him about what I feel and what I'm dealing with and how I process things. Before I really wouldn't be that open with him because it'd be so quick: 'Hi.' 'Bye.' 'I love you.'"

And Medina says her candor made her son more willing to share his own thoughts: "He'll be like, 'OK, this is how I feel. This bothers me; this doesn't bother me.' If they see that you're present, they'll be more present."

Angeline Longshore of Maui, Hawaii, grew concerned about her 12- and 13-year-old sons at different points over the past year. One seemed to be struggling with online school. The other, normally an extrovert, became much more introverted.

Longshore says the advantage, if there was one, was that she was there to catch them in their struggles. The media consultant, 55, wanted to really understand what it felt like to be in their shoes. Rather than ask them directly — she felt sure that would be a dead end — she sat next to them while they played video games, waiting until they started to explain what they were doing and then looking for small openings to draw them out further. She also joined all the social media platforms they used and started showing them funny videos she encountered, hoping they'd do the same.

"Then it was a shared experience," she says. And in a way, she says, the whole pandemic has been a shared experience, one that they've survived together. "It's that urgent element. It's so visceral."

## THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



# Getting plenty of dirt on my spouse

"If only money grew on trees," I grumbled, stooping to crawl under our hedges. I knew weeding and mulching the 150-foot row of privets that grows along the border of our property would take all day and render me unable to move without shooting back pains. But someone had to do it.

My husband, Francis, was cutting the grass with a brand new, fire-engine-red lawnmower he'd purchased the day before. I hadn't thought it necessary, but he said the old mower just couldn't cut it. I'd heard enough of his sod stories, and besides, as long as he was doing yard work, he could buy himself a red tuxedo to match, for all I cared.

Yard work had always been a turf war between Francis and me. It all started when we bought our first house in 1998. I soon learned that he had no intention of doing anything except mowing grass and raking leaves. He felt that trimming shrubs, weeding beds, edging sidewalks, aerating, thatching, reseeding, controlling grubs, fertilizing, mulching beds and cleaning gutters were my responsibility. And with him on deployment or work-related travel much of the time, management of the house and yard was left to me anyway.

Thanks to PCS moves and base housing, Francis was saved from yard responsibilities for the next three tours of duty. Those 11 years only served to reinforce his belief that yard work was mulch ado about nothing.

In 2017, Francis retired from the Navy, and we bought another house. It was built in 1891, and was surrounded by an overgrown hedgerow and a neglected yard filled with vines, weeds, rotted dog houses, buried engine parts, broken yard ornaments, swamp maples and stumps. To Francis, every clod has a silver lining, so he envisioned afternoons leisurely mowing the lawn or raking a few leaves. After two, maybe three, hours of satisfying hard work, he'd sit on our porch with a cold beverage admiring his grassroots effort.

Of course, Francis didn't pay any mind to weed pulling, rock lugging, limb cutting, dirt hauling, hedge trimming, drop-spreading, thatching, aerating, fertilizing and mulching. I could have nagged Francis, but I preferred lawn and order to marital hedgemony. We could've paid someone else, but we'd need a hedge fund. There's no such thing as free mulch, so I did the deed myself, dirt cheap.

I crawled under the 150-foot hedgerow, pulling and scraping, throwing weeds, ivy, vines and windblown trash out of the beds. With branches wapping me in the face, I hedged my beds that I could spread the mulch without losing an eye.

Reaching the halfway point, I emerged only to hit the bathroom (I nearly soiled my plants). Summoning the courage to press on, I crawled back under the bushes — but where was Francis? I'd hoped he might help me after he finished mowing. He was nowhere to be found.

Three hours later, I reached the last hedge, when my husband appeared. I stood up, groaning like I'd fought the lawn and the lawn won. "Whoa!" Francis said, "You're looking a bit rough around the hedges."

"Well, at least I don't have a re-seeding hare line," I growled. "Were you napping?" I asked, noticing sheet marks on his cheek. Just then, our neighbor appeared in the street.

"Hey Mel, did you see my new lawn mower?" Francis said. "Did the old one break?" Mel asked.

"Naw. But the new one — she's a beaut. Cutting hedge technology. Done mowing in no time flat!"

I had dirt on my husband, but couldn't bring myself to tell Mel that Francis was napping while his wife worked her grass off. All in all, he was a good husband.

"You do nice work, hon," Francis said, bringing cold beverages out to the porch.

"Mulch appreciated," I said, dropping my weary body into an Adirondack chair. I was bushed.

Read more at [themeatandpotatoesoflife.com](http://themeatandpotatoesoflife.com), and in Lisa's book, *The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com*. Email: [meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com](mailto:meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com)

# WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

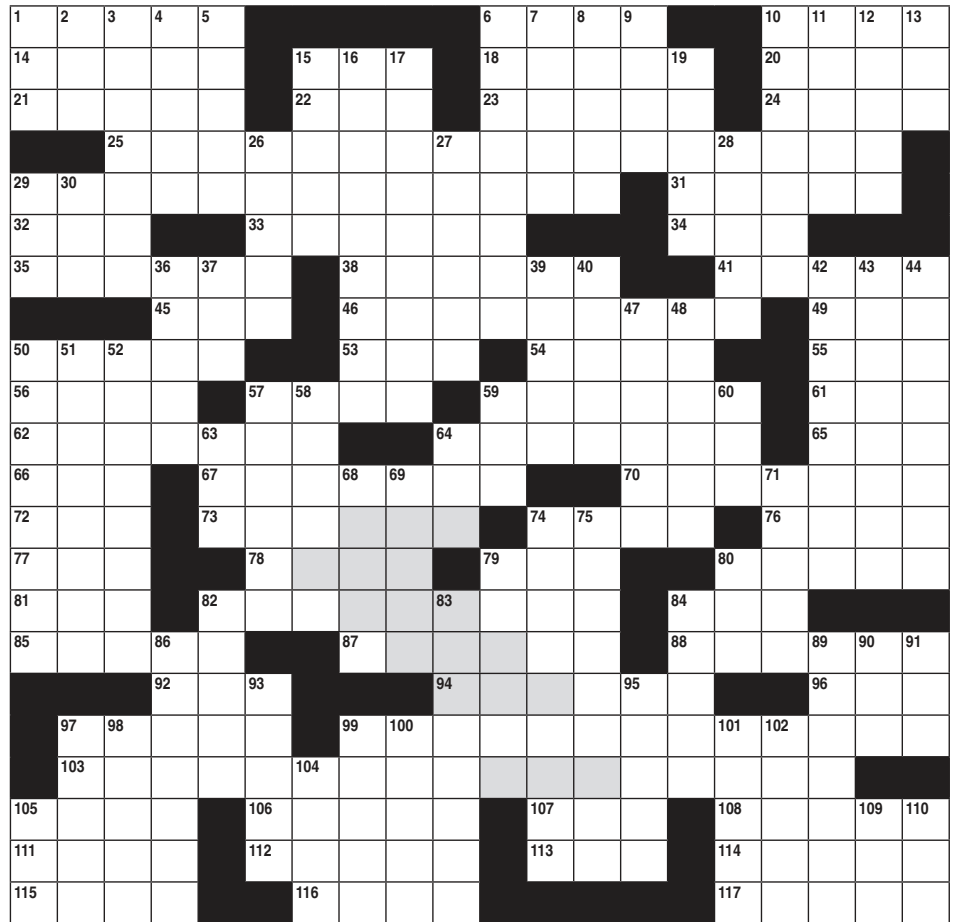
## NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

### A RARE FIND

BY JOHAN VASS / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Johan Vass is a restaurant worker in Stockholm, Sweden. Though he has never been to the United States, he has been solving American crosswords for many years. He says his personal best times for New York Times puzzles range from 3:21 on a Monday to 10:36 on a Sunday. Somewhere along the way he started constructing crosswords in English — which is quite a challenge for someone coming from another language and culture. Johan says this one took him two months to make. I'm honestly in awe. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Not express, in a way
  - 6 Second person in the Bible
  - 10 One of the Blues Brothers
  - 14 "History of the World, \_\_\_\_" (Mel Brooks film that doesn't actually have a sequel)
  - 15 Grp. with Bills and Chargers
  - 18 Bridal adornment at Indian weddings
  - 20 Buckets
  - 21 Goggle
  - 22 Bird that went the way of the dodo (before the dodo)
  - 23 Mr. \_\_\_\_, scheming socialite in "Emma"
  - 24 See 105-Across
  - 25 Popular action film franchise . . . or what trying to find the item in this puzzle can be described as
  - 29 "There's no use" . . . like trying to find the item in this puzzle?
  - 31 "The \_\_\_\_ Holmes Mysteries," young adult series made into a 2020 film
  - 32 Hosp. procedure
  - 33 Keys
  - 34 Architect Maya
  - 35 Foreign correspondent, maybe
  - 38 1976 greatest hits album with a palindromic title
  - 41 Site of Hercules' first labor
  - 45 What's-\_\_\_\_-name
  - 46 Experimental offshoot of punk
  - 49 Echidna's prey
  - 50 Service with nearly two billion users
  - 53 \_\_\_\_ reaction
  - 54 Deep cut
  - 55 Liquor store requests
  - 56 Frees (of)
  - 57 Quiet summons
  - 59 Greases
  - 61 What's at the center of some court battles?
  - 62 City of Angels
  - 64 Danger for an exterminator
  - 65 Scratch the surface of
  - 66 Certain customizable computer game character
  - 67 Kick starter?
  - 70 America of "Ugly Betty"
  - 72 [Batman punches a bad guy]
  - 73 Onetime name for China
  - 74 They have big mouths
  - 76 Over
  - 77 More than umbrage
  - 78 Two-wheeled carriage
  - 79 "Anchorman" anchorman
  - 80 Simple earrings
  - 81 Duck Hunt console, for short
  - 82 Walking with flair
  - 84 Odd article of clothing to wear with a tank top
  - 85 Reached
  - 87 Man's name that anagrams to HYENAS
  - 88 Did a Don Corleone impression, maybe
  - 92 Consonantless "yes"
  - 94 Actress Atwell of the "Avengers" movies
  - 96 Product whose sizes have letters
  - 97 Clickable images
  - 99 "As you can imagine . . ."
  - 103 Item hidden somewhere in this puzzle (where is it?)
  - 105 With 24-Across, Emmy winner for "Once and Again"
  - 106 Writer Horatio
  - 107 Word before an explanation
  - 108 Boxer Ali
  - 111 Bookmarked things
  - 112 Vowelless "yes"
  - 113 Personal datum: Abbr.
  - 114 Long-gone
  - 115 Site that competes with Amazon Handmade
  - 116 Affliction also known as a hordeolum
  - 117 Mean
- DOWN**
- 1 Collectible records
  - 2 \_\_\_\_ milk
  - 3 Packs tightly
  - 4 Areas in many malls
  - 5 Eldest of the von Trapp children
  - 6 Mnemosyne's daughters
  - 7 Benefits
  - 8 En pointe, in ballet
  - 9 Pizza chain since 1943, familiarly
  - 10 Weapon for Samson against the Philistines
  - 11 Whatsoever
  - 12 "North" or "South" land
  - 13 Undoing
  - 15 Faulty
  - 16 Subway fare
  - 17 Impact equally in the opposite direction
  - 19 Actor Elgort of "The Fault in Our Stars"
  - 26 Taints
  - 27 Sheepish response to "Where did the last cookie go?"
  - 28 How checks are written
  - 29 Hellion
  - 30 "Boy N the Hood" protagonist
  - 36 Run an online scam
  - 37 Feel rotten
  - 39 Bona fide
  - 40 Big brush maker
  - 42 Starting point on a computer
  - 43 Won over
  - 44 See 50-Down
  - 47 Become rigid and inflexible
  - 48 Slides
  - 50 With 44-Down, making futile attempts . . . and an extra hint to this puzzle's theme
  - 51 Small black-and-white treat
  - 52 Batman portrayal on '60s TV
  - 57 Google Photos precursor
  - 58 Workers in forges
  - 59 Murder weapon in "The Talented Mr. Ripley"
  - 60 What "/" may mean
  - 63 Key used to get out, but not in
  - 64 Man's name that means "king"
  - 68 Palindromic leaders
  - 69 Doctor's order
  - 71 They may be fixed
  - 74 Highland beauty
  - 75 The titular bad guy in "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly"
  - 79 Capital of Saudi Arabia
  - 80 Singer with the 2016 platinum album "This Is Acting"
  - 82 In good shape
  - 83 "Know what I'm talkin' about?"
  - 84 Secret rendezvous
  - 86 Like child's play
  - 89 Block where Sesame Street can be found?
  - 90 Notable period
  - 91 It's constantly breaking around the world
  - 93 "The straight path"
  - 95 German steel city
  - 97 Like neon
  - 98 Bar rooms?
  - 99 It never occurs above the Arctic Circle during the summer solstice
  - 100 One may be sworn
  - 101 Claw
  - 102 Seat of Florida's Marion County
  - 104 Eugene O'Neill's "Desire Under the \_\_\_\_"
  - 105 Go after
  - 109 Word before ride or slide
  - 110 Which card to pick from a magician?



## GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

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# The unbearable fall of a film masterpiece

Unearthed review ruins 100% Rotten Tomatoes score for 'Citizen Kane,' knocking it below 'Paddington 2'

By **BRITTANY SHAMMAS**  
*The Washington Post*

The reviews for "Citizen Kane" were universally glowing: the 1941 classic was "a triumph," "a power play of startling brilliance" and "one of the most arresting pictures ever produced," critics raved in write-ups compiled by review-aggregator Rotten Tomatoes.

Enter Mae Tinee (a pseudonym) of the Chicago Tribune: "You've heard a lot about this picture and I see by the ads that some experts think it 'the greatest movie ever made,'" began the critic. "I don't."

The nearly 80-year-old review, recently unearthed by Rotten Tomatoes and added to the "Citizen Kane" tally, ruined the celebrated film's perfect score on the site. In a development met with glee on Twitter, that meant "Paddington 2" — a live-action animated comedy about a marmalade-loving bear — suddenly carried a higher rating.

Memes and jokes were born of the news that the talking bear sequel's score of "100% Fresh" had bested the "99% Fresh" now assigned to the film widely hailed as the greatest ever made.

"Please don't misinterpret the adjusted Rotten Tomatoes rankings to mean that 'Paddington 2 is now the best movie of all time.' Paddington 2 \*already was\* the best movie of all time," quipped David Ehrlich, a senior film critic at Indie Wire. "thank you."

Even the bear weighed in. Tweeting from his verified account, the unfailingly polite Paddington said, "I do hope Mr Kane won't be too upset when he hears I've overtaken him with rotten tomatoes."

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the review that downgraded "Citizen Kane" was discovered as part of Rotten Tomatoes' "Archival Project." The effort digs up years-old critiques and adds them to old-time flicks.

"Citizen Kane" has 116 reviews — all positive, with the exception of the newly resurrected review from the Chicago Tribune. It's not clear when Rotten Tomatoes made



"Citizen Kane," starring Orson Welles and Joseph Cotton, is considered a masterpiece.

the add, but eagle-eyed social media users noticed the change — and subsequent ratings shake-up — Monday.

The review aggregator's list of the Top 100 Movies of All Time, which uses a weighted formula, still ranks "Citizen Kane" at No. 3, outstripping the 59th-place standing of "Paddington 2." Yet observers could not help but notice that while the 2017 family adventure film maintains its 100% score, the Tribune addition knocked the 1941 drama down a notch in its ratio of positive-to-negative reviews.

Uploaded as a scanned clipping from the May 7, 1941, edition of what was then known as the Chicago Daily Tribune, the critique was headlined "'Citizen Kane' Fails to Impress Critic as Greatest Ever Filmed."

The critic offered praise for some of the performances in "Citizen Kane," which would go on to be nominated for nine Acad-



"Paddington 2" is a 2017 movie sequel about a literary stuffed bear character.

emy Awards. Otherwise, the critic was largely unimpressed.

"It's interesting," the review said. "It's different. In fact, it's bizarre enough to become a museum piece. But its sacrifice of simplicity to eccentricity robs it of distinction and general entertainment value."

Elsewhere in the review, Tinee criticized the movie's lauded photography as "shadowy and spooky," adding, "I only know that it gives one the creeps and that I kept wishing they'd let a little sunshine in."

"Citizen Kane," added the critic, was "an almost clinical dissection of a complete egotist" and "a study of magnificent futility."

"Paddington 2" has not one negative review listed on Rotten Tomatoes. Its page is full of praise. One particularly effusive critic described it as "a guiding light in the dark to help place a worldwide blanket of comfort over us all."

## New this week: 'Without Remorse,' 'Mosquito Coast'

Associated Press

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

### Movies

■ It's time for spring action movies, and what better way to start than with Michael B. Jordan playing an elite Navy SEAL avenging his pregnant wife's death in a Tom Clancy adaptation? "Without Remorse," hitting Amazon Prime Video on Friday, finds the "Creed" and "Black Panther" star playing John Clark (from the Jack Ryan universe). Jordan co-stars with Jodie Turner-Smith ("Queen & Slim"), Jamie Bell and Guy Pearce in the globe-trotting action pic.

■ Netflix's animated "The Mitchells vs. the Machines" premieres Friday as well. The Michael Rianda-directed crowd pleaser finds a family whose cross-country road trip gets sidetracked by a robot apocalypse.

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

### Music

■ R&B singer Dawn Richard is set to drop her sixth solo album Friday. The former Danity Kane and Diddy-Dirty Money performer blends a number of genres on "Second Line," including R&B, pop, electro and alternative sounds. The album centers on the New Orleans-born singer's persona King Creole.

■ Jay-Z's latest signee, 21-year-old Maeta, is releasing a new EP on Friday. "Habits," the rising performer's seven-song project for Roc Nation, is a blend of pop and alternative R&B sounds and features collaborations with Grammy winners like Skrillex, Mustard and Kaytranada.

— AP Music Editor Mesfin Fekadu

### Television

■ The new Apple TV+ drama series "The Mosquito Coast" stars Justin Theroux and is based on a 1981 novel by acclaimed writer Paul Theroux, his uncle. In the adaptation, radical idealist Allie Fox (Justin Theroux) abruptly flees California with his wife and children for a perilous journey through Mexico. The U.S. government is after him, with the why to be unveiled. The first two episodes premiere on Friday.

— AP Television Writer Lynn Elber

## McQueen's 'Small Axe' snags more BAFTA TV noms than 'The Crown'

From wire reports

Is there a changing of the guard when it comes to this year's BAFTA Awards?

Steve McQueen's landmark streaming series "Small Axe" garnered more nominations than any other show for the 2021 BAFTA TV and BAFTA TV Craft, including "The Crown."

The BBC/Amazon anthology series landed 15 nominations for the British equivalent to the Emmy Awards. Netflix's Buckingham Palace drama garnered 10.

Michaela Coel's groundbreaking "I May Destroy You" scored eight nominations, closely followed by "Normal People" with seven and "Sex Education" with six.

Academy Award-nominated Tony Award winner Sophie Okonedo was also nominated in the best supporting actress category for her work in the popular procedural series "Criminal: UK."

"Small Axe," starring "Star Wars" star John Boyega, Malachi Kirby, British theater veteran Shaun Parkes, Micheal Ward and "Black Panther" actress Letitia Wright, is an anthology series about the lives of West Indian immigrants in London from the 1960s to the 1980s.

Helmed by the "12 Years A Slave" director, the series was comprised of five films ("Mangrove," "Lovers Rock," "Red, White and Blue," "Alex Wheatle" and "Education") that rolled out on Amazon last fall to critical acclaim.

The BAFTA TV awards ceremony is set for June 6.

### Audio edition of new Philip Roth bio pulled

The audiobook publisher of a new biography of novelist Philip Roth is pulling the release, following W.W. Norton and Company's announcement that it was withdrawing the print edition amid multiple allegations against author Blake Bailey of sexual harassment and assault.

Norton announced Tuesday that it had stopped publication of "Philip Roth: The Biography" and a Bailey memoir, "The Splendid Things We Planned," it released in 2014. "Philip Roth," which Bailey spent nine years working on, came out April 6 and sold well enough to reach The New York Times' nonfiction bestseller list.

### Other news

■ The English rock band Genesis is returning to the U.S. for their first tour in 14 years. Phil Collins, Tony Banks and Mike Rutherford on Thursday announced a 14-date tour that will kick off in Chicago on Nov. 15.

■ Twenty-time Grammy winner Al Schmitt, whose extraordinary career as a recording engineer and producer included albums by Bob Dylan, Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra and many other of the top performers of the past 60 years, died Monday in Los Angeles at age 91.

# Appreciate HER



## Petals & Blooms

MOTHER'S DAY • SUNDAY, MAY 9





Military spouses are the backbone of our Nation. They serve on the home front, providing strength to their loved ones on the front lines during missions, deployments and more. Military exchanges and commissaries salute this selfless sacrifice and are committed to supporting military spouses wherever they serve.





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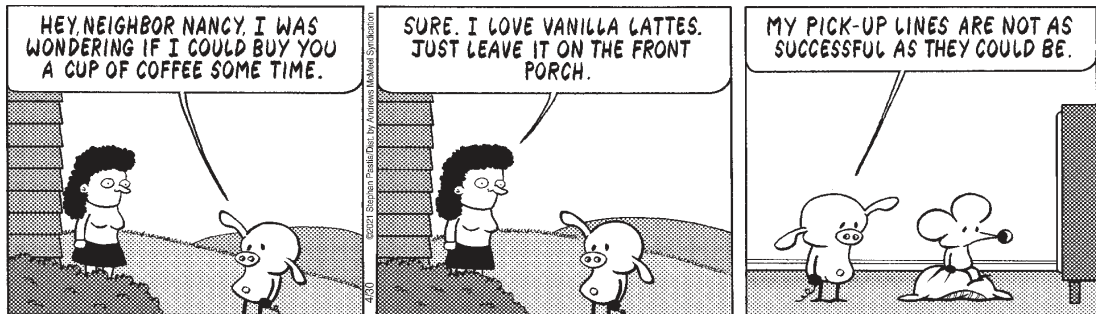
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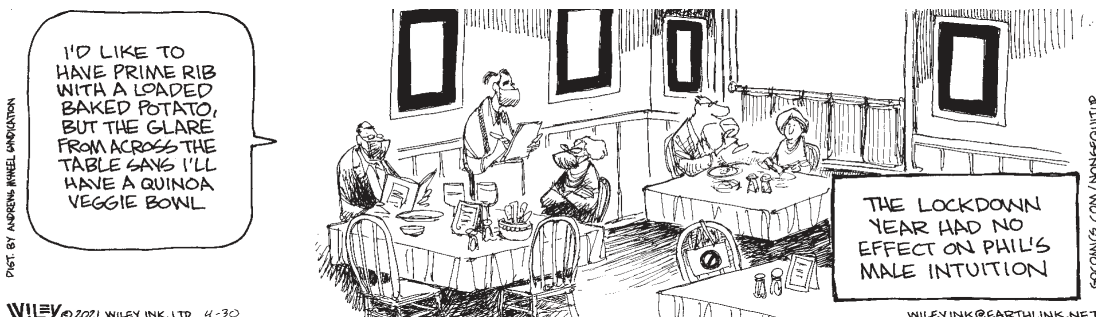
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



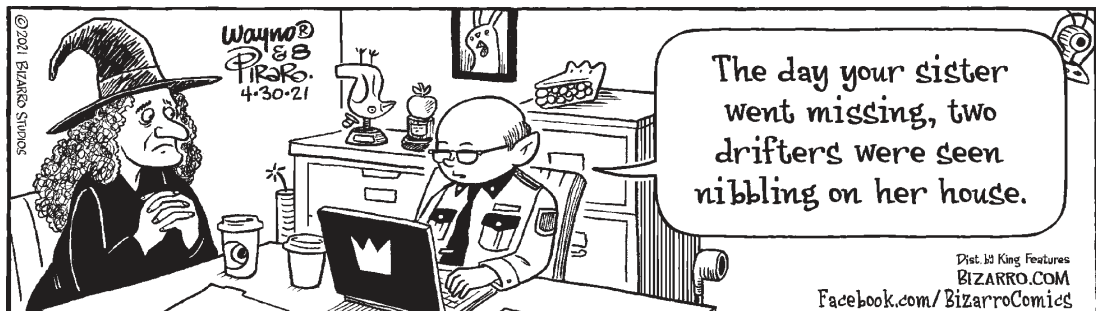
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	
12				13				14					
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31	32	33						34					
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38					39	40				41	42	43	44
					45					46		47	
48	49	50	51									52	
53								54				55	
56								57				58	

ACROSS

- 1 Napkin's place
- 4 Flavor enhancer, for short
- 7 Glazier's sheets
- 12 Nabokov novel
- 13 Hearing thing
- 14 "Tiny Alice" playwright
- 15 Derek and Diddle
- 16 Deficiency
- 18 Scrap
- 19 Dutch capital, with "The"
- 20 Peruse
- 22 Blog feed
- 23 Innocent one
- 27 Chef Garten
- 29 "Catch-22" author Joseph
- 31 Maxim
- 34 Michelangelo work
- 35 Setting
- 37 — Juan
- 38 Tend texts
- 39 FDR follower
- 41 Terrible guy?
- 45 Sum
- 47 "— had it!"
- 48 Fail to meet expectations
- 52 Moment
- 53 Confused
- 54 Started
- 55 Deluge refuge
- 56 Taxi ticker

- 57 Asner and Harris
- 58 Snake's warning

- 25 Wager
- 26 Historic time
- 28 Born abroad?
- 30 Ecol. watchdog
- 31 Soul, to Sartre
- 32 Carried out actress
- 33 "Love Story" MacGraw
- 36 "Oops!"
- 37 Gawked
- 40 Stylish wrap
- 42 Travel papers
- 43 Declares
- 44 Guitar parts
- 45 Despot
- 46 Classic Fords
- 48 Reunion gp.
- 49 Chowd down
- 50 D-Day vessel
- 51 Director Ang

DOWN

- 1 Hard work
- 2 Worship
- 3 Trattoria plateful
- 4 Screen material
- 5 African desert
- 6 Pirates' potables
- 7 Canape spread
- 8 TV alien
- 9 Cagers' gp.
- 10 Sushi fish
- 11 French salt
- 17 Hurry
- 21 Finger or toe
- 23 Russian pancakes
- 24 Hearty quaff

Answer to Previous Puzzle

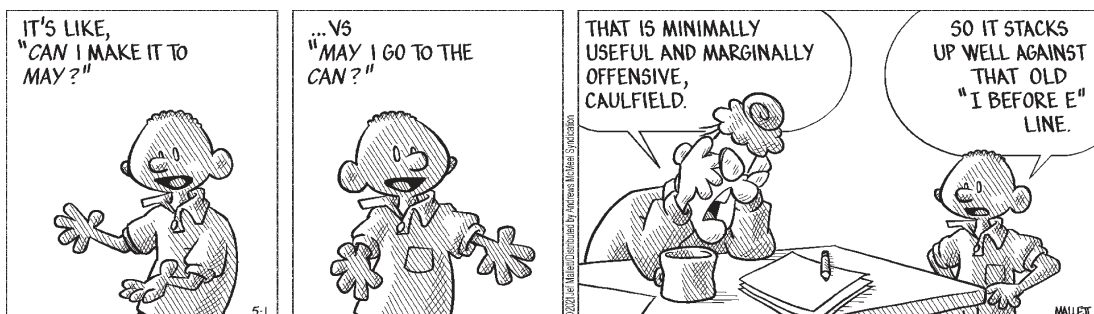
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I	L	L	I	N	O	I	S		N	E	R	D			
				U	F	O		S	U	N	D	A	E	S	
H	A	S	S	L	E			N	E	A					
I	S	O		A	R	M		N	E	L	G	A	R		
T	E	R	M		R	E	A		S	O	B	A			
S	A	Y	A	H		G	Y	M		O	E	R			
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S	C	A	N			B	U	Z	Z	K	I	L	L		
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A	S	K	S			I	D	O	L		L	O	X		

4-30

CRYPTOQUIP

Q L E L W W F P E B V W H I A E F  
 E H F U W Y R F U E Y B I B Q U N H I B B,  
 B W O I A W F K O Q V P S R E A I R Q S  
 "H W S B E L I L W D L W D N."  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: KIND OF CHEESE THAT FLATTENED TROPICAL FISH MIGHT ESPECIALLY ENJOY EATING: MANTA-RAY JACK.  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals K

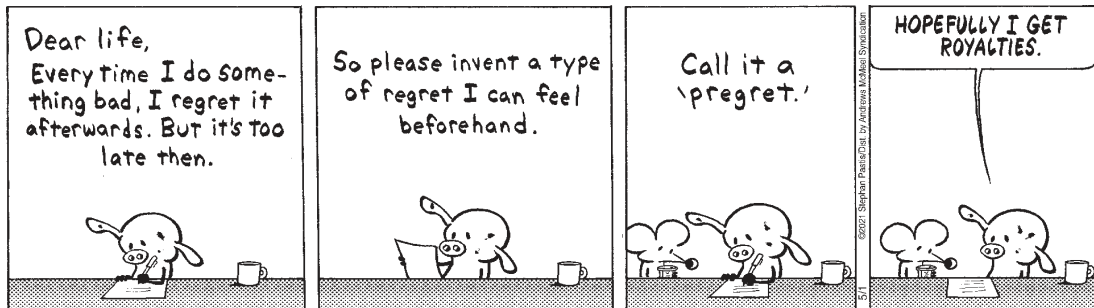
Frazz



Dilbert



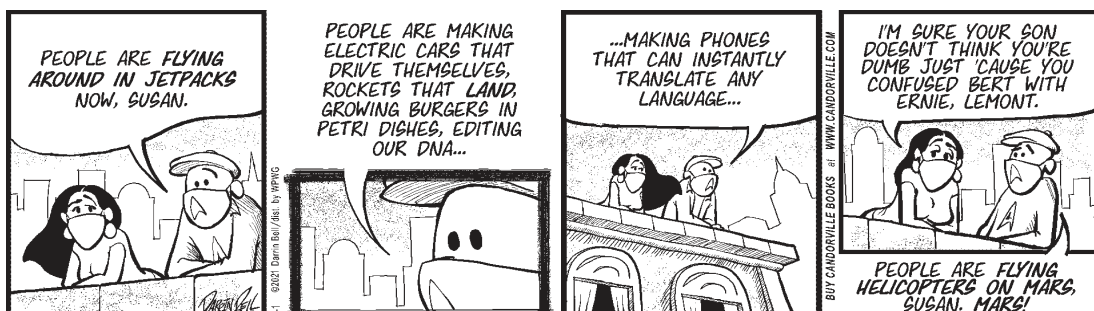
Pearls Before Swine



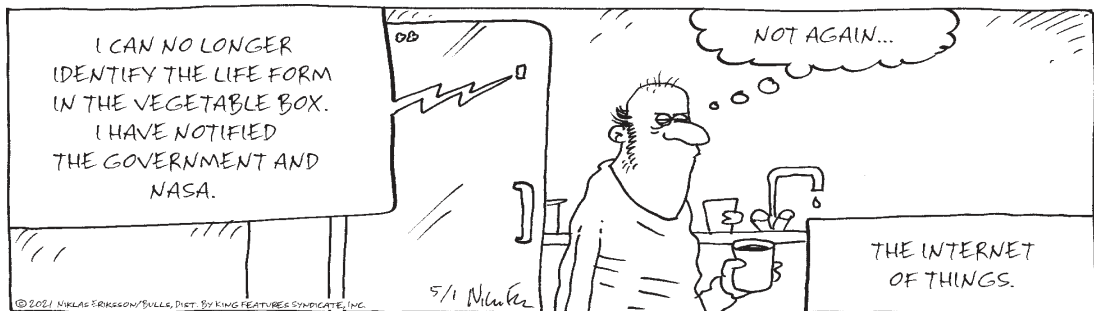
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



### Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
18			19						20			
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			36				37					
38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45						46				47		
48						49				50		
51						52				53		

#### ACROSS

- 1 Binge
- 4 Sleeping
- 8 Not barefoot
- 12 Right angle
- 13 152, in old Rome
- 14 Volcanic flow
- 15 Billy — Williams
- 16 Skater Lipinski
- 17 Asia's — Sea
- 18 1976 Stevie Wonder hit
- 21 Gloomy guy
- 22 Golf's Ernie
- 23 Furnish with gear
- 26 Expert
- 27 Approves
- 30 Nonsense
- 31 Word of denial
- 32 Olympic hurdler Jones
- 33 Sticky stuff
- 34 Lass
- 35 Spacious
- 36 Architect I. M. —
- 37 Extinct New Zealander
- 38 1969 Stevie Wonder hit
- 45 Sleek, in car lingo
- 46 Makes a choice
- 47 "— was saying ..."
- 48 Lay — the line
- 49 Italy's silhouette
- 50 Ump

- 51 Vegas cubes
- 52 Altar vows
- 53 Retired jet

- 20 World Cup cheer
- 23 Omelet need
- 24 Status —
- 25 Roswell sighting
- 26 MSN rival
- 27 Tic-tac-toe win
- 28 Carrier to Amsterdam
- 29 Tofu source
- 31 Capital of Kenya
- 32 Clay-rich soil
- 34 "My word!"
- 35 Sunday entrees
- 36 Give a ring
- 37 "Same here!"
- 38 Hotel worker
- 39 Bigfoot's cousin
- 40 Gator's kin
- 41 Apple product
- 42 Rowboat needs
- 43 Applications
- 44 Falling-out

#### DOWN

- 1 "Star Wars" knight
- 2 Pub orders
- 3 Hidden valley
- 4 Misbehaves
- 5 Doldrums
- 6 The Emerald Isle
- 7 Regional language variation
- 8 Balkan natives
- 9 Tortoise's opponent
- 10 Track shape
- 11 Emmy-winning Tyne
- 19 Pre-weekend cry

#### Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

5-1

#### CRYPTOQUIP

IJGM ONUJM KXP BGK IJRE G  
 QXYRBM XQQNDNGW DGPBRB  
 BXOR XVV RFREMB? YGEURY  
 MJNEUB JGFR JGAARERV.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A FOOD HAS GONE BAD AND COULD CAUSE SICKNESS, SOMEBODY MIGHT LABEL IT "NOT SAFE FOR FORK."  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals M

# SCOREBOARD/KENTUCKY DERBY

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

### Saturday's schedule

#### SOUTHWEST

Alabama A&M (3-0) vs. Ark.-Pine Bluff (4-0) at Jackson, Miss.

#### NCAA FCS Playoffs

##### First Round

##### Saturday, April 24

South Dakota St. 31, Holy Cross 3  
S. Illinois 34, Weber St. 31  
Delaware 19, Sacred Heart 10  
Jacksonville St. 49, Davidson 14  
James Madison 31, VMI 24  
North Dakota 44, Missouri St. 10  
North Dakota St. 42, E. Washington 20  
Sam Houston 21, Monmouth 15

##### Quarterfinals

##### May 1 and 2

South Dakota St. (6-1) vs. S. Illinois (6-3)  
Delaware (6-0) vs. Jacksonville St. (10-2)  
James Madison (6-0) vs. North Dakota (5-1)  
North Dakota St. (7-2) vs. Sam Houston (7-0)

## AUTO RACING

### Busch McBusch Race 400 lineup

#### NASCAR Cup Series

After Saturday qualifying; race Sunday

#### At Kansas Speedway

Kansas City, Kan.

Lap length: 1.50 miles

(Car number in parentheses)

- (2) Brad Keselowski, Ford, .000 mph.
- (24) William Byron, Chevrolet, .000.
- (34) Michael McDowell, Ford, .000.
- (4) Kevin Harvick, Ford, .000.
- (21) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, .000.
- (3) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, .000.
- (12) Ryan Blaney, Ford, .000.
- (20) Christopher Bell, Toyota, .000.
- (18) Kyle Busch, Toyota, .000.
- (41) Cole Custer, Ford, .000.
- (8) Tyler Reddick, Chevrolet, .000.
- (37) Ryan Preece, Chevrolet, .000.
- (23) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, .000.
- (6) Ryan Newman, Ford, .000.
- (19) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, .000.
- (17) Chris Buescher, Ford, .000.
- (9) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, .000.
- (10) Aric Almirola, Ford, .000.
- (14) Chase Briscoe, Ford, .000.
- (11) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, .000.
- (99) Daniel Suarez, Chevrolet, .000.
- (38) Anthony Alfredo, Ford, .000.
- (47) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Chevrolet, .000.
- (42) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, .000.
- (48) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, .000.
- (7) Corey Lajoie, Chevrolet, .000.
- (43) Erik Jones, Chevrolet, .000.
- (1) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, .000.
- (22) Joey Logano, Ford, .000.
- (78) BJ McLeod, Ford, .000.
- (77) Justin Haley, Chevrolet, .000.
- (5) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, .000.
- (51) Cody Ware, Chevrolet, .000.
- (00) Quin Houff, Chevrolet, .000.
- (15) Joey Gase, Chevrolet, .000.
- (53) Garrett Smithley, Chevrolet, .000.
- (52) Josh Billicki, Ford, .000.
- (33) Austin Cindric, Ford, .000.
- (55) Matt Mills, Ford, .000.

### Wise Power 200 lineup

NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series

After Friday qualifying; race Saturday

#### At Kansas Speedway

Kansas City, Kan.

Lap length: 1.50 miles

(Car number in parentheses)

- (4) John H. Nemechek, Toyota, .000 mph.
- (51) Kyle Busch, Toyota, .000.
- (99) Ben Rhodes, Toyota, .000.
- (13) Johnny Sauter, Toyota, .000.
- (18) Chandler Smith, Toyota, .000.
- (38) Todd Gilliland, Ford, .000.
- (16) Austin Hill, Toyota, .000.
- (2) Sheldon Creed, Chevrolet, .000.
- (21) Zane Smith, Chevrolet, .000.
- (52) Stewart Friesen, Toyota, .000.
- (42) Carson Hocevar, Chevrolet, .000.
- (88) Matt Crafton, Toyota, .000.
- (26) Tyler Ankrum, Chevrolet, .000.
- (19) Derek Kraus, Toyota, .000.
- (15) Raphael Lessard, Chevrolet, .000.
- (22) Austin Wayne Self, Chevrolet, .000.
- (98) Christian Eckes, Toyota, .000.
- (15) Tanner Gray, Ford, .000.
- (11) Spencer Davis, Ford, .000.
- (1) Hailie Deegan, Ford, .000.
- (30) Danny Bohn, Toyota, .000.
- (25) Timothy Peters, Chevrolet, .000.
- (23) Chase Purdy, Chevrolet, .000.
- (02) Kris Wright, Chevrolet, .000.
- (56) Timmy Hill, Chevrolet, .000.
- (45) Brett Moffitt, Chevrolet, .000.
- (20) Spencer Boyd, Chevrolet, .000.
- (41) Dawson Cram, Chevrolet, .000.
- (9) Grant Enfinger, Chevrolet, .000.
- (04) Chase Briscoe, Ford, .000.
- (40) Ryan Truex, Chevrolet, .000.
- (32) Bret Holmes, Chevrolet, .000.
- (49) Ryan Reed, Chevrolet, .000.
- (44) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, .000.
- (12) Tate Fogleman, Chevrolet, .000.
- (3) Jordan Anderson, Chevrolet, .000.
- (6) Norm Benning, Chevrolet, .000.
- (33) Jesse Iwuji, Chevrolet, .000.
- (10) Jennifer Jo Cobb, Chevrolet, .000.
- (34) Cj McLaughlin, Toyota, .000.

## GOLF

### LPGA money leaders

Through April 25

	Tm	Money
1. Lydia Ko	6	\$791,944
2. Nelly Korda	7	\$762,723
3. Patty Tavatanakit	5	\$561,696

## PRO SOCCER

### MLS

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Montreal	1	0	1	4	6	4
Atlanta	1	0	1	4	3	1
New England	1	0	1	4	3	2
NYCFC	1	1	0	3	6	2
Inter Miami CF	1	1	0	3	4	4
D.C. United	1	1	0	3	2	2
Nashville	0	0	2	2	4	4
Orlando City	0	0	2	2	1	1
Columbus	0	0	1	1	0	0
Philadelphia	0	1	1	1	1	2
Toronto FC	0	1	1	1	4	6
Chicago	0	1	1	1	3	5
Cincinnati	0	1	1	1	2	7
New York	0	2	0	0	3	5

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LA Galaxy	2	0	0	6	6	4
Seattle	1	0	1	4	5	1
LAFC	1	0	1	4	3	1
Sporting KC	1	0	1	4	3	2
Vancouver	1	0	1	4	3	2
San Jose	1	1	0	3	4	3
Real Salt Lake	1	0	0	3	2	1
Houston	1	1	0	3	3	3
Austin	1	1	0	3	3	3
Portland	1	1	0	3	2	2
FC Dallas	0	1	1	1	1	3
Colorado	0	1	1	1	1	3
Minnesota	0	2	0	0	1	6

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

#### Saturday's games

Chicago at New York  
Sporting Kansas City at Real Salt Lake  
Columbus at Montreal  
Los Angeles FC at Houston  
Atlanta at New England  
Cincinnati at Orlando City  
New York City FC at Philadelphia  
Austin at Minnesota  
Portland at FC Dallas  
D.C. United at San Jose

## DEALS

### Wednesday's transactions

#### BASEBALL

##### Major League Baseball

##### American League

**BALTIMORE ORIOLAS** — Optioned RHP Jay Flaa to alternate training site. Recalled RHP Dean Kremer from alternate training site.

**CLEVELAND INDIANS** — Activated RHP Nick Wittgren from the paternity list. Designated LHP Oliver Perez for assignment.

**HOUSTON ASTROS** — Placed DH Yordan Alvarez on the IL. Recalled INF Taylor Jones from alternate training site.

**LOS ANGELES ANGELS** — Activated C Max Stassi from IL. Optioned C Anthony Bemboom to alternate training site.

**NEW YORK YANKEES** — Optioned RHP Michael King to alternate training site.

**SEATTLE MARINERS** — Claimed C Jacob Nottingham off waivers from Milwaukee. Designated RHP Brandon Brennan for assignment.

**TORONTO BLUE JAYS** — Activated OF George Springer from the 10-day IL. Recalled LHP Travis Bergen from alternate training site. Placed LHP Hyun Jin Ryu on the 10-day IL, retroactive to April 26. Optioned INF Rowdy Tellez to alternate training site.

##### National League

**ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS** — Recalled C Daulton Varsho and RHP Riley Smith from alternate training site. Placed RHP Taylor Widener on the 10-day IL retroactive to April 25.

**LOS ANGELES DODGERS** — Optioned CF DJ Peters to alternate training site. Activated LHP Victor Gonzalez from the 10-day IL.

**MIAMI MARLINS** — Recalled 2B Isan Diaz from alternate training site. Placed 2B Jazz Chisholm Jr. on the 10-day IL.

**MILWAUKEE BREWERS** — Selected the contract of RHP Zack Godley from alternate training site. Optioned OF Corey Ray to alternate training site. Designated RHP Phil Bickford for assignment.

**NEW YORK METS** — Claimed C Deivy Grullon off waivers from Tampa Bay and optioned him to alternate training site.

**SAN DIEGO PADRES** — Optioned C Luis Campusano to alternate training site. Activated C Austin Nola from 10-day IL.

**SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS** — Activated OF Mike Tauchman. Optioned RHP Gregory Santos to alternate training site. Placed OF Mike Yastrzemski on the 10-day IL. Recalled LHP Sam Selman from alternate training site.

**ST. LOUIS CARDINALS** — Recalled RHP Johan Oviedo from alternate training site. Optioned OF Scott Hurst to alternate training site.

#### BASKETBALL

##### National Basketball Association

**NBA** — Fined Houston G Kevin Porter Jr. \$50,000 for violating health and safety protocols. Suspended Boston G Marcus Smart one game without pay for directing threatening language toward a game official after a game on April 27 against Oklahoma City in Boston.

**CLEVELAND CAVALIERS** — Signed G Jeremiah Martin to a two-way contract.

## TENNIS

### BMW Open

Wednesday

At MTTC Iphitos

Munich

Purse: Euro 419,470

Surface: Red clay

Men's Singles

Round of 16

John Millman (8), Australia, def. Guido Pella, Argentina, 4-6, 2-0, ret.

Alexander Zverev (1), Germany, def. Ricardas Berankis, Lithuania, 6-2, 6-4.  
Ilya Ivashka, Belarus, def. Mackenzie McDonald, United States, 6-7 (7), 6-1, 6-2.

Casper Ruud (2), Norway, def. Pablo Cuevas, Uruguay, 6-3, 6-2.

Men's Doubles

Round of 16

Sander Gille, Belgium, and Joran Vliegen (3), Belgium, def. Federico Coria, Argentina, and Guido Pella, Argentina, ret.

Yannick Hanfman, Germany, and Dominik Koepfer, Germany, def. Marcus Daniell, New Zealand, and Philipp Oswald (4), Austria, 7-6 (1), 6-4.

### Estoril Open

Wednesday

At Clube de Tennis do Estoril

Estoril, Portugal

Purse: Euro 419,470

Surface: Red clay

Men's Singles

Round of 16

Kevin Anderson, South Africa, def. Roberto Carballes Baena, Spain, 6-3, 7-6 (4).  
Marin Cilic (6), Croatia, def. Nuno Borges, Portugal, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-4.

Alejandro Davidovich Fokina (8), Spain, def. Jeremy Chardy, France, 6-1, 6-2.  
Ugo Humbert (3), France, def. Marco Cecchinato, Italy, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

Men's Doubles

Round of 16

Raven Klaasen, South Africa, and Ben McLachlan (2), Japan, def. Simone Bolelli, Italy, and Maximo Gonzalez, Argentina, 6-2, 6-3.

Gonzalo Escobar, Ecuador, and Ariel Behar, Uruguay, def. Frederik Nielsen, Denmark, and Andres Molteni, Argentina, 6-1, 6-4.

#### Quarterfinals

Dominic Inglot and Luke Bambridge, Britain, def. Oliver Marach, Austria, and Austin Krajicek (3), United States, 7-6 (2), 6-4.

Hugo Nys, Monaco, and Tim Puetz, Germany, def. Santiago Gonzalez, Mexico, and Marcelo Demoliner, Brazil, 7-6 (3), 6-1.



GARRY JONES/AP

Trainer John Sadler, upper right, watches as jockey Rafael Bejarano mounts a horse on April 27, 2010 in Louisville, Ky. California-based Sadler is not necessarily supportive of horse racing's move toward the elimination of race-day medication.

# New rule bans Lasix for horses

By BETH HARRIS

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The Kentucky Derby is steeped in tradition: a blanket of red roses to the winner, fancy hats worn by mint julep-sipping spectators and its first-Saturday-in-May date on the calendar.

There's a major change coming to the 147th Derby.

It will be run for the first time this weekend without horses using the anti-bleeding drug Lasix as part of the sport's plodding attempt to move toward the elimination of race-day medication.

The drug is already widely banned on race days in the rest of the world.

Lasix has long been the third-rail in North American racing, with people on both sides of the issue disagreeing about its use.

Formally known as furosemide, it's given as a \$20 injection about four hours before a race to prevent or reduce the severity of exercise-induced bleeding in the lungs. It also works as a diuretic that causes horses to urinate and lose 20 to 30 pounds of fluid, thus increasing their ability to run faster. Humans use Lasix to control blood pressure.

"I've never had a fan come up to me and say, 'Geez, Lasix is bad,'" said California-based trainer John Sadler, who saddles Rock Your World in the Derby. "People want to go to the races and have fun and watch good horses run."

Kieran McLaughlin trained for 10 years in Dubai and achieved major success for Godolphin Racing without race-day medication. However, he was initially concerned about not

having it.

"Once you get there and realize they are fine without medication and they can run without being treated, you learn quick it's somewhat overrated with medications," he said.

Tracks from New York to California and Maryland to Florida have recently eliminated Lasix on race days after decades of use. This year, the ban extends for the first time to lucrative and prestigious stakes races, including the Derby, Preakness and Belmont.

The goal is a complete elimination of Lasix by July 1, 2022, when the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act is set to take effect. It will enact national rules on medication and doping that would replace the patchwork that exists in 38 racing jurisdictions around the country.

Beginning last year, Kentucky banned the use of race-day Lasix for 2-year-olds. Those horses are now 3 and eligible for the Triple Crown series.

The last horse to win the Derby without Lasix was Grindstone in 1996.

Churchill Downs declined to award qualifying points in this year's Kentucky Derby prep races to any horse running on race-day Lasix. The Breeders' Cup is following suit, with a Lasix ban for its qualifying races and no points awarded to horses using it.

Use of Lasix is apparent to the wagering public in racing programs, where the capital letter L is noted next to a horse's name.

Count two-time Derby winner Doug O'Neill as another trainer initially apprehensive about the ban.

"The longer we've done it, the more I've been able to adjust," he said. "The horses have kept their form without it."



McLaughlin

## SOCCER



LYNNE SLADKY/AP

LA Galaxy forward Javier Hernandez has scored five goals in his first two games this season.

## Chicharito thrilled with hot start, youth initiative

LA Galaxy striker starts season with consecutive MLS Player of the Week Awards

By GREG BEACHAM  
Associated Press

With five goals in only two games, Javier Hernández, known more commonly by his nickname, Chicharito, is off to a spectacular start to his second year with the LA Galaxy.

Chicharito's rebound from a rough MLS debut season is going splendidly, and now the Mexican superstar is sharing his good fortune by joining an initiative to fund soccer development in underserved U.S. communities, including two respected youth organizations in Los Angeles.

The cause is dear to the heart of Hernández, even though he grew up in Mexico as the scion of two generations of soccer greats. Chicharito knows what the sport did for him in his relatively privileged position.

"Man, I'm living the dream," Hernández told The Associated Press. "I'm so grateful to be here, and I don't want to forget that I'm only human. There's no fame, no money that can make me more valuable than any other human, but I'm grateful to enjoy being here, to live and to become the best version of myself. I just want to live and to grow, and I want to help other people."

Hernández is taking a prominent role with "Team of Champions," a charitable initiative backed by PepsiCo to invest in soccer in Latino and Black com-

munities across the nation. The initiative will provide everything from equipment and playing opportunities to coaching and mentoring.

It's one part of a commitment of more than \$570 million over the next five years by PepsiCo to benefit Black and Hispanic businesses, but it's also a personal passion for Hernández, who intends to be more than a spokesman.

"I am conscious about the position I'm in, and I've achieved things I couldn't even dream about sometimes," Hernández said. "I've been very lucky, very fortunate, and I'm very grateful. I want to share it with others and let them have the same opportunities that I already probably had. I also want to share the fact that if I did it, anyone can do it."

Only one player in MLS history had ever done what was accomplished in the first two games of the new season by Chicharito.

Hernández won his second consecutive MLS Player of the Week award on Monday after following up his two-goal performance at Inter Miami in the season opener with a hat trick at home last weekend against the New York Red Bulls. Only Houston's Brian Ching (2006) had ever scored five goals in two games to start an MLS season.

Chicharito is in position to score many more goals under new coach Greg Vanney and in a new offensive attack that looks much better suited to getting the most out of its

star up front.

It's an abrupt, enormous change from last season, when Hernández scored only two goals in 12 matches during an injury-plagued season he called the most difficult year of his life when compounded with the coronavirus pandemic.

Hernández's honesty and frankness about his struggles last season were remarkable, but with an offseason of adjustment and a new coach staff, things are looking up.

"It was quite difficult in my life in my first year here in the U.S., but now I'm really enjoying it," Chicharito said with a laugh. "Really, I love it. Sometimes I speak more Spanish than English when I'm going around. I feel like a better version of myself."

That's why Chicharito is particularly grateful for the local connections within Team of Champions. The initiative is helping two Los Angeles-area organizations: Spartan Wolves, which gives less-privileged kids access to elite athletic training and academic preparation; and Tudela FC LA, an all-girls club pursuing full gender equity in youth soccer.

"You can feel the love of soccer in this city, in the Latino community here," Hernández said. "The culture here in soccer has always been amazing. Even my dad told me when they came here and played the USA, everybody loved them. ... To me, this is a city of opportunities. Whatever you want to do, if you're passionate about it, this city will help you."

## American defender Cook earning her stripes at PSG

By KEN MAGUIRE  
Associated Press

Alana Cook joined an exclusive club when she headed in a goal for Paris Saint-Germain against Barcelona last weekend.

Megan Rapinoe, Christen Press and Carli Lloyd are the only other United States internationals to have scored in the semifinals or final of the Women's Champions League.

To boot, it was the 24-year-old defender's first goal since turning professional just over two years ago.

"There have been some games where I've had some chances I probably should have put away but not too bad to do it in a semifinal of the Champions League," Cook, who joined PSG from Stanford University, told The Associated Press in an interview.

Preventing goals — not scoring them — will be Cook's main focus when PSG travels to Barcelona for the second leg on Sunday, after a 1-1 draw in Paris. In the other semifinal, Bayern Munich visits Chelsea with a 2-1 advantage.

The natural center back is not a lock to start, but she'll be ready. They've studied video of how Barcelona forward Jenni Hermoso scored in the first leg by finding space in the defense to head in a cross. The Spaniard leads the competition with six goals.

"We had a few defensive breakdowns along the way — with most goals it's not any one person," Cook said. "We'll just have to correct a few things. It will come back down to our defensive shape, probably some communication issues. If we just shore up a bit of that, the shape work, be more connected to each other, we can prevent stuff like

that."

Cook played right back Sunday when defender Ashley Lawrence moved up front to replace an injured forward.

Cook doesn't mind battling for her spot — she's doing that with the U.S. national team, as well. She's played in friendlies — leaving her still eligible for England, where her father was born — but hopes to be in the American squad for the Tokyo Olympics.

"Everyone in the U.S. pool right now, that's what we're all striving for," she said.

United States coach Vlatko Anđonovski called in the New Jersey native this month for a friendly against Sweden. It's a team loaded with World Cup-winning talent, but Cook is optimistic.

"Every spot is up for grabs if you were to ask Vlatko about it," she said. "Right now, it's just about competing as hard as I can for that."

The long-term goal is to become a regular and then a starter. The dream, she added, is to be "a captain or a leader in the team, but now it's just about competing for a place in the group."

Cook debuted for the United States in November 2019, the call-up coming a month after she had trained with the Lionesses at the invitation of then-England national team coach Phil Neville.

"At this point, I am committed to playing for the U.S. — it's where I see my future," said Cook, who rose through the United States youth system.

Her sister represented Britain in softball, but Cook said there's no pressure from their English father.

"He was proud and excited either way," she said.



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Alana Cook joined an exclusive club when she scored for Paris Saint-Germain against Barcelona last Sunday. Megan Rapinoe, Christen Press and Carli Lloyd are the only other American internationals to have scored in the semifinals or finals of the Women's Champions League.

# NHL

## Scoreboard

East Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Washington	49	32	13	4	68	171	144
Pittsburgh	50	32	15	3	67	170	138
N.Y. Islanders	49	29	15	5	63	136	114
Boston	48	28	14	6	62	139	119
N.Y. Rangers	50	26	18	6	58	167	132
Philadelphia	49	22	20	7	51	140	177
New Jersey	49	15	27	7	37	127	174
Buffalo	50	13	30	7	33	122	174

Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
x-Carolina	49	32	10	7	71	161	119
x-Florida	51	32	14	5	69	166	141
x-Tampa Bay	49	33	14	2	68	167	129
Nashville	51	27	22	2	56	141	146
Dallas	49	21	16	12	54	140	129
Chicago	49	22	22	5	49	139	158
Detroit	51	17	25	9	43	115	159
Columbus	51	16	25	10	42	122	170

West Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
x-Vegas	48	35	11	2	72	165	105
x-Colorado	47	31	12	4	66	164	117
x-Minnesota	48	31	14	3	65	154	127
St. Louis	47	22	19	6	50	139	146
Arizona	50	21	24	5	47	134	160
San Jose	49	20	24	5	45	135	169
Los Angeles	47	18	23	6	42	126	140
Anaheim	50	15	28	7	37	109	162

North Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
x-Toronto	49	31	13	5	67	163	131
Edmonton	47	29	16	2	60	153	127
Winnipeg	49	27	19	3	57	150	138
Montreal	48	21	18	9	51	137	140
Calgary	48	21	24	3	45	128	139
Ottawa	50	19	27	4	42	139	174
Vancouver	43	19	21	3	41	117	138

The top four teams in each division will qualify for playoffs under this season's temporary realignment.  
x-clinched playoff spot

### Tuesday's games

N.Y. Rangers 3, Buffalo 1  
Boston 3, Pittsburgh 1  
Columbus 1, Detroit 0, SO  
Carolina 5, Dallas 1  
Washington 1, N.Y. Islanders 0  
New Jersey 6, Philadelphia 4  
Tampa Bay 7, Chicago 4  
Florida 7, Nashville 4

### Wednesday's games

Ottawa 6, Vancouver 3  
St. Louis 4, Minnesota 3  
Toronto 4, Montreal 1  
Edmonton 3, Winnipeg 1  
Vegas 5, Colorado 2  
Anaheim 3, Los Angeles 2  
San Jose 4, Arizona 2

### Thursday's games

Buffalo at Boston  
Dallas at Tampa Bay  
Detroit at Carolina  
N.Y. Islanders at N.Y. Rangers  
Philadelphia at New Jersey  
Pittsburgh at Washington  
Vancouver at Toronto  
Florida at Chicago  
St. Louis at Minnesota  
Calgary at Edmonton

### Friday's games

Winnipeg at Montreal  
San Jose at Colorado  
Los Angeles at Anaheim  
Vegas at Arizona

### Saturday's games

Buffalo at Boston  
Tampa Bay at Detroit  
Columbus at Carolina  
N.Y. Rangers at N.Y. Islanders  
New Jersey at Philadelphia  
Ottawa at Montreal  
Pittsburgh at Washington  
Vancouver at Toronto  
Dallas at Nashville  
Florida at Chicago  
San Jose at Colorado  
St. Louis at Minnesota  
Calgary at Edmonton  
Los Angeles at Anaheim  
Vegas at Arizona

### Sunday's game

Tampa Bay at Detroit

### Monday's games

Dallas at Florida  
N.Y. Islanders at Buffalo  
Boston at New Jersey  
Washington at N.Y. Rangers  
Pittsburgh at Philadelphia  
Chicago at Carolina  
Nashville at Columbus  
Toronto at Montreal  
Winnipeg at Ottawa  
Anaheim at St. Louis  
Vegas at Minnesota  
Edmonton at Vancouver  
Los Angeles at Arizona  
Colorado at San Jose

# Knights top Avs for 10th straight

By W.G. RAMIREZ  
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — If there's been one knock on the Vegas Golden Knights this season, it's been they've only dominated the lower half of the West Division.

They knocked that notion and their top contender back to Denver in convincing fashion Wednesday night.

Max Pacioretty scored twice to lead the Golden Knights to a 5-2 win over the Colorado Avalanche in a matchup of the division's top teams.

Vegas, which has won a franchise-best 10 in a row, now leads Colorado by six points, with the Avalanche having a game in hand. The Golden Knights have outscored teams 45-17 during their win streak.

"Huge result for the standings," said Peter DeBoer, who registered his 50th win as coach of the Golden Knights. "Gives us a real chance. We've still got a lot of business to take care of over the next two weeks. It sets us up where our destiny is in our own hands."

It marked the 18th time Vegas has scored at least five goals — tops in the NHL.

Vegas, Colorado and Minnesota, which is one point back of the Avalanche, have all clinched postseason berths. The Golden Knights are 6-6-1 against the Avalanche and Minnesota, while

they're a dominant 29-5-1 against the rest of the division.

"We're not concerned with who they're beating and how they're beating them," Colorado defenseman Ryan Graves said. "We know that they're a good team and we respect them. We're also confident in ourselves that we are a good team and we believe that in a seven-game series I think we're confident in how we would fare."

The Golden Knights have two more games at Minnesota, where they've won just one time since entering the league in 2017. They play Colorado once more in Las Vegas, on May 10.

"I think you got two teams if you look at the list of players they're missing, could change the depth of their lineup," DeBoer said about the Avalanche, who were without Joonas Donskoi, Philipp Grubauer, and Mikko Rantanen — all of whom recently exited the league's COVID protocol.

William Karlsson, Mark Stone, and Jonathan Marchessault also scored for Vegas. Marc-Andre Fleury, who has won five in a row, made 35 saves while improving to 15-8-2 lifetime against Colorado.

Graves and Devon Toews scored for Colorado, which is 11-4-0 after a loss this season and has now lost three straight. Devan Dubnyk made 21 saves and is now 2-2 since being acquired from San Jose on April 10.



JOHN LOCHER / AP

Golden Knights right wing Mark Stone celebrates after assisting on a goal against the Colorado Avalanche during the third period on Wednesday in Las Vegas. Vegas won its 10th in a row.

# Florida thinking bigger after playoff berth

By TIM REYNOLDS  
Associated Press

MIAMI — It's almost been a rite of spring for Jonathan Huberdeau. Another season for the Florida Panthers ends without a playoff berth, and the talk immediately turns to how next year will be different.

Next year, finally, might be here.

For just the seventh time in their 27-season history, the Panthers are going to the Stanley Cup playoffs. A 7-4 win in Nashville on Tuesday night was the official clincher, though the standings have made it evident for weeks that the postseason was going to be in Florida's future.

"We've been through a lot," Huberdeau said after just the second instance of Florida clinching a playoff berth with a victory; every other trip has been formally wrapped up based on the outcome of some other contest. "I've been here nine years and this is just a fun year. When you win, it makes it more fun. Every guy in the room, we know when to have fun and we know when to get serious."

Huberdeau called this his second trip to the playoffs. Technically, it'll be his third time in the postseason — Florida lost 3-1 in the qualifying round against the New York Islan-



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Florida Panthers center Frank Vatrano, left, celebrates with MacKenzie Weegar after Vatrano scored a goal against the Predators on Tuesday in Nashville, Tenn. The Panthers won 7-4 and clinched playoff berth for just the seventh time in 27 years.

ders last summer when the NHL resumed play during the pandemic.

But his point sort of rings true, as well. And if the playoff format — which remains largely unclear — is what the Panthers expect it to be, there will be postseason hockey at the team's rink in South Florida for only the second time in Huberdeau's career and just the third time in the

last 20 years.

"We have a lot of fans that have been loyal to us, and they didn't have much to cheer for," Huberdeau said. "Now, this year, it's going to be more fun."

It could be, anyway.

Florida's postseason history goes like this: a trip to the Stanley Cup Final in 1996, literally nothing but first-

round exits since, and not even that many of those. The Panthers have won a league-low seven playoff games since 1997; half of the rest of the NHL has won at least 10 times that many in that span. Detroit (135), Pittsburgh (122), San Jose (108) and Colorado (102) have all topped 100 since 1997, while Philadelphia and Dallas each have 99.

But this year just seems different to the Panthers, and has since the outset. With just one win in their final five games, the Panthers will be assured of posting the best regular-season winning percentage in franchise history. Aleksander Barkov should be in the Hart Trophy conversation. Joel Quenneville — a three-time Stanley Cup winner as a coach — should merit major consideration for best-coach honors as well.

"Making the playoffs was our goal," Quenneville said. "At the beginning of the year, it's our goal. We want to be a playoff team and we want to finish as high as we can, and then we'll sort it out when you get to the next season. But it's been a fun year for us as far as making some progress and being consistent in a lot of ways. And once you get into that next season, it's a whole different animal."

MLB



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

After signing a \$341 million contract with the Mets, start shortstop Francisco Lindor is batting just .212 with three RBIs through 18 games.

# Mets' Lindor drawing boos

## Star shortstop's early batting woes has New York fans losing patience

By MIKE FITZPATRICK  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Francisco Lindor's contract negotiations with the Mets seemed pretty smooth. His swing certainly has not.

The \$341 million star shortstop is batting .203 with three RBIs through 19 games with his new team and has started drawing boos at Citi Field.

Honeymoon's over. Welcome to New York. "It's interesting and it's funny, and it sucks," Lindor said Wednesday afternoon. "It doesn't feel right, for sure. Interesting because it's the first time that it happened in my career. And funny because I'm getting booed and people think I'm going to go home and just think, oh, why am I getting booed? I get it. They're booing because there's no results. That's it."

"They expect results, I expect results and I get it, you know? It's part of the job," he added. "I just hope they cheer and jump on the field when I start hitting home runs and start helping the team on a daily basis a lot more than I'm doing right now."

The four-time All-Star and two-time Gold Glove winner was acquired in a blockbuster trade with Cleveland in January, giving the Mets one of baseball's brightest stars. New York also received pitcher Carlos Carrasco, who is sidelined with an injury, in exchange for young infielders Andrés Giménez and Amed Rosario, plus two minor league prospects.

3

Number of RBIs New York Mets shortstop Francisco Lindor has through 19 games. Lindor batted .258 with a .750 OPS during last year's 60-game season. He's batting .203 this season.

SOURCE: Associated Press

The deal generated excitement among Mets fans eager to see the team return to the playoffs for the first time since 2016. Lindor could have become a free agent after this season, but new owner Steve Cohen shelled out \$341 million to sign the switch-hitter to a 10-year contract that begins in 2022.

Lindor, already guaranteed \$22.3 million for this season, agreed to the long-term deal on the eve of opening day, but needless to say he's not off to the start he envisioned in New York. He has one home run, two extra-base hits and a measly .578 OPS in 83 plate appearances for the Mets, who are 9-10.

Not at all what was expected from a dynamic 27-year-old player who entered Wednesday with a .284 career batting average, 139 homers, 99 stolen bases and an .828 OPS in seven major league seasons.

"We all go through adversity at some point in the year, and I've got to embrace it," said Lindor, who batted .258 with a .750 OPS during a 2020 season shortened to 60 games. "It's plain



JASON DE CROW/AP

Lindor reacts as he's heckled by fans while walking to the dugout in New York.

and simple: I've got to be better."

Lindor walked his first time up Wednesday against Boston but struck out in his next two trips and was booed for the second consecutive night, this time by a sellout crowd of 8,051 with capacity limited because of the coronavirus pandemic.

He ripped a line drive in the eighth inning but got robbed of a hit on a leaping grab by second baseman Marwin González, and finished 0-for-3 in New York's 1-0 loss.

"I honestly feel good," Lindor said before the game. "Yeah, there's times where I feel like I should have got a hit that at-bat with that pitch and I just missed it. It's part of the game. I'm trying. I'm trying as hard as I can to be successful and help the team win."

## Scoreboard

### American League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	16	9	.640	—
Tampa Bay	13	12	.520	3
Toronto	11	12	.478	4
New York	11	13	.458	4½
Baltimore	10	14	.417	5½

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Kansas City	15	8	.652	—
Chicago	12	10	.545	2½
Cleveland	11	12	.478	4
Minnesota	8	15	.348	7
Detroit	8	16	.333	7½

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Oakland	15	10	.600	—
Houston	13	11	.542	1½
Los Angeles	12	11	.522	2
Seattle	13	12	.520	2
Texas	10	15	.400	5

### National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	12	12	.500	—
Philadelphia	12	12	.500	—
New York	9	10	.474	½
Miami	11	13	.458	1
Washington	9	12	.429	1½

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	14	10	.583	—
Pittsburgh	12	12	.500	2
St. Louis	12	12	.500	2
Cincinnati	11	13	.458	3
Chicago	10	14	.417	4

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	16	9	.640	—
San Francisco	16	9	.640	—
San Diego	14	12	.538	2½
Arizona	12	12	.500	3½
Colorado	9	15	.375	6½

### Thursday's games

N.Y. Yankees at Baltimore  
Oakland at Tampa Bay  
Seattle at Houston  
Detroit at Chicago White Sox (2)  
Boston at Texas  
Philadelphia at St. Louis  
Chicago Cubs at Atlanta  
L.A. Dodgers at Milwaukee  
Colorado at Arizona

### Friday's games

Detroit (Skubal 0-3) at N.Y. Yankees (Cole 3-1)  
Houston (McCullers Jr. 1-1) at Tampa Bay (Fleming 1-2)  
Boston (Eovaldi 3-2) at Texas (Arihara 2-2)  
Cleveland (Bieber 2-2) at Chicago White Sox (Keuchel 1-0)  
Kansas City (Singer 1-2) at Minnesota (Pineda 1-1)  
Baltimore (Means 2-0) at Oakland (Luzardo 1-2)  
L.A. Angels (Heaney 1-1) at Seattle (Flexen 2-1)  
St. Louis (Gant 1-2) at Pittsburgh (Bryant 2-1)  
Miami (López 0-2) at Washington (Ross 2-1)  
N.Y. Mets (Stroman 3-1) at Philadelphia (Anderson 0-3)  
Atlanta (Wilson 1-1) at Toronto (Ray 0-1)  
Chicago Cubs (Arrieta 3-2) at Cincinnati (Miley 2-2)  
L.A. Dodgers (TBD) at Milwaukee (Peralta 2-0)  
Colorado (Gray 3-1) at Arizona (Bumgarner 2-2)  
San Francisco (Webb 1-1) at San Diego (Darvish 2-1)

### Saturday's games

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

### Calendar

July 11-13 — Amateur draft, Denver.  
July 13 — All-Star Game, Denver.  
July 25 — Hall of Fame induction, Cooperstown, N.Y.  
Aug. 12 — New York Yankees vs. Chicago White Sox at Dyersville, Iowa.  
Aug. 22 — Los Angeles Angels vs. Cleveland at Williamsport, Pa.

## NFL

# Seattle: Everything OK with QB Wilson

By **TIM BOOTH**  
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll and general manager John Schneider spent Wednesday talking about their relationship with their starting quarterback after months of silence on the subject.

From the standpoint of the Seahawks' leadership, everything is just fine with Russell Wilson despite speculation earlier in the offseason about his future in Seattle.

"When all of the conversation went about trades and all that, I knew what the truth is, and we weren't trading Russell," Carroll said. "So we plan on him being here for a good while. I don't know how many years it is now, but we're in great shape and a long future ahead of us is shared."

Seattle's newsy offseason had gone on without any comment from Carroll or Schneider until the eve of the draft, where the Seahawks are expected to be abnormally quiet. The Seahawks' three draft picks are the fewest in franchise history.

Wilson's situation became a topic of conversation after he made comments following the Super Bowl that raised questions about whether the Seahawks were doing enough to put a winning product around him. He specifically mentioned his offensive line and being tired of constantly getting hit.

The conjecture reached a boil when Wilson's agent, Mark Rodgers, commented to ESPN that Wilson had not requested a trade but listed the four teams for which he would be willing to waive his no-trade clause.

"There was a number of teams that called after that media blitz that happened. But no, I never actively negotiated with anybody and with any team," Schneider said. "Now, did people call? Absolutely. But, yeah, I'm not going to get into specific teams."

Carroll said he was disappointed by the comment from Rodgers because it rekindled the story.

"I had made a clear statement to Russ, 'Let's just shut down and be quiet on this stuff, we don't need to say anything, we know the truth of what's going on,'" Carroll said. "When that came out that kind of got over the top and it opened up some other conversations that didn't need to happen."

Through all the speculation, Seattle's front office remained quiet. It would have been difficult — although not unfathomable — to trade Wilson this offseason due to his \$32 million cap hit, but the silence led to increased attention on the situation.

Other topics touched on by the coach and GM:

■ Carroll and Schneider declined to elaborate on the recent arrest of defensive end Aldon Smith in Louisiana. Smith was arrested on a second-degree battery charge stemming from an incident on April 17, just two days after he signed a one-year deal with Seattle. Smith is scheduled to be arraigned in July.

■ Schneider declined to give any significant update about negotiations on a long-term contract for safety Jamal Adams, who could become a free agent after next season. "We want him to be here long term for sure," Schneider said. "He's a great player. Really glad we made the trade to get him."

■ Carroll said he recently met with free agent linebacker K.J. Wright, who has spent his entire 10-year career with the Seahawks. Wright will be 32 before the start of the regular season, but has started every game the past two years.

■ Schneider signed a contract extension in January that will keep him with the Seahawks through the 2027 draft. Carroll's current deal runs through the 2025 season.



REED HOFFMANN/AP

Carolina Panthers quarterback Teddy Bridgewater looks to throw against the Kansas City Chiefs on Nov. 8. The Panthers traded Bridgewater to the Denver Broncos on Wednesday.

# Denver gets Bridgewater in trade with Panthers

By **ARNIE STAPLETON**  
Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Drew Lock didn't have to wait around for the NFL Draft to get the serious competition for his starting job that new general manager George Paton has been promising for months.

Paton traded a sixth-round pick in this weekend's draft to the Carolina Panthers in exchange for veteran QB Teddy Bridgewater on Wednesday.

"Acquiring Teddy Bridgewater adds competition, experience and a strong veteran presence to our quarterback room," Paton said. "He's a talented player and leader who's had success in this league in a number of different situations. Being familiar with Teddy from Minnesota, he's going to compete and do everything he can to help us win."

Paton might not be done, either. The Broncos own the ninth overall selection Thursday night and have had their eyes on several of the quarterback prospects rated a notch or two below Clemson's Trevor Lawrence and BYU's Zach Wilson, who are expected to go 1-2 to the Jaguars and Jets, respectively.

"We're really high on Drew," Paton said at his pre-draft news conference last week. "I like seeing Drew here every morning when I come in. He's working hard and trending in the right direction. As you know, he has a lot of talent. I think he's becoming a better pro, but we're still going to look at the quarterback position."



JACK DEMPSEY/AP

Broncos quarterback Drew Lock fumbles as he's sacked during a Dec. 19 game against the Buffalo Bills in Denver. Bridgewater is expected to provide some competition for Lock at quarterback.

I've said since I've gotten here that we want to bring in competition. That's the goal, and we plan on doing that."

Bridgewater became available when the Panthers traded for former Jets QB Sam Darnold three weeks ago.

Bridgewater went 4-11 as the Panthers' starter last year and struggled to win close games down the stretch. He completed 69.1% of his passes, throwing 15 touchdown passes and 11 interceptions.

Those numbers are better than Lock's.

The third-year pro from Missouri tied for the league lead with 15 interceptions in 13 starts and his passer rating ranked 32nd in the NFL last season. He was 4-9 overall with 16 touchdown throws

and is 8-10 in two years as Denver's starter.

After missing most of his rookie season with a thumb injury on his throwing hand, Lock missed 2½ games with a rotator cuff injury to his throwing shoulder and another for COVID-19 tracing in 2020.

Bridgewater has a 26-23 career record as a starter over his six seasons in Minnesota, New Orleans and Carolina.

The Broncos have struggled for years to find a suitable replacement for Peyton Manning, who retired a month after Denver's 24-10 win over Carolina in Super Bowl 50 and is headed to the Pro Football Hall of Fame this summer.

Manning's induction in Canton, Ohio, further highlights the franchise's serpentine search for a competent successor.



ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll and general manager John Schneider said Wednesday there were never any serious considerations to trade quarterback Russell Wilson, above.

NBA

# When Spoelstra, Popovich face off, respect is clear

BY TIM REYNOLDS  
Associated Press

MIAMI — The postgame routine between San Antonio's Gregg Popovich and Miami's Erik Spoelstra is almost always the same. A handshake or embrace near mid-court at the final buzzer. They exchange a few words. They laugh. And then the coaches head off in opposite directions.

"Respect," Popovich said.

"Class," Spoelstra said.

It has been this way for a while now, and was again Wednesday when they went head-to-head for the 37th time. The postgame meeting tradition goes back to at least the 2013 NBA Finals, a seven-game series that the Spurs felt they let get away — Ray Allen's game-tying three-pointer with 5.2 seconds left in regulation of Game 6 had a little to do with that.

But even in that moment, as Miami's on-court championship

celebration was just starting, Popovich gave Spoelstra a hug and said a few words of congratulations into his ear. Later that summer, Popovich sent Spoelstra a note with more words of praise and wisdom.

And the mutual admiration has grown ever since between the two coaches who have been in their jobs longer than any other current coaches in the NBA; Popovich took over in San Antonio in 1996, Spoelstra was promoted by the Heat in April 2008, a few days before Dallas hired Rick Carlisle.

"I really admire what he's done, coming up through the ranks and how he's matriculated through the different levels in the league and ended up in a position he's in," Popovich said of Spoelstra, who famously started in the Heat video room under Pat Riley and has been in Miami ever since. "He's worked so hard, done such a great job, and

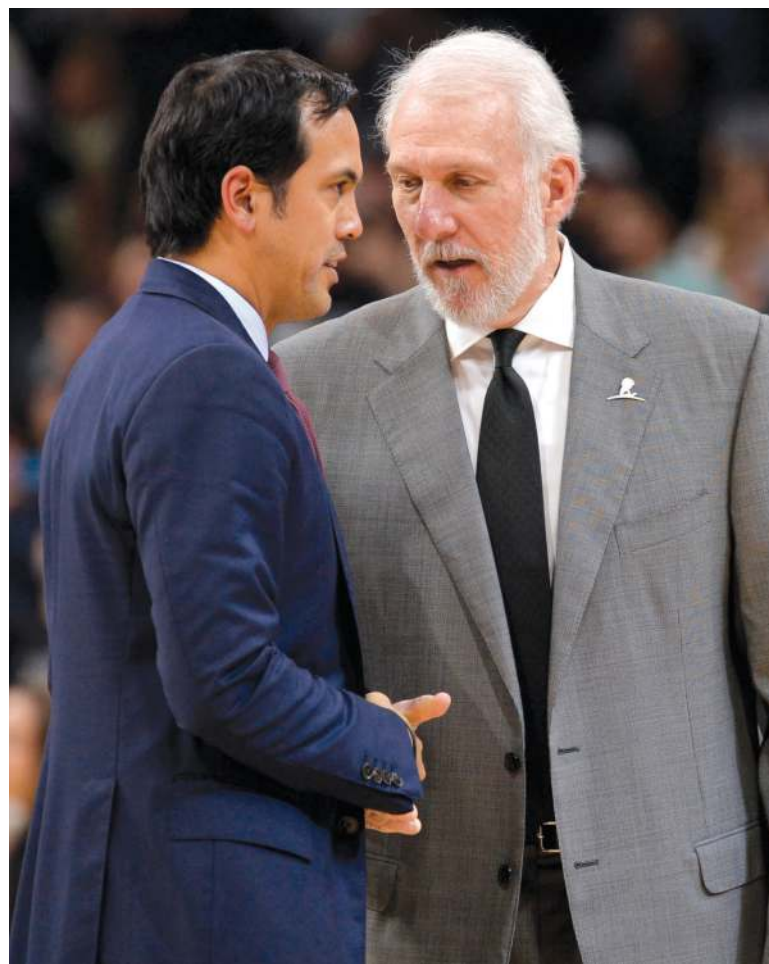
it's just kind of thrilling to see somebody achieve that."

Included in those 37 meetings are two NBA Finals matchups in 2013 and 2014 — the Heat won the first one, the Spurs took the rematch. Popovich is 21-16 in the series, but Wednesday was a milestone for Spoelstra, who got his 600th regular-season victory.

He and Popovich are two of only six coaches to win 600 regular-season games with one franchise.

As always, the respect was clear.

"We've had some great battles," Popovich said. "Our teams have competed against each other enough, and at high levels, where we both appreciate what that's like to go through that — sometimes on top, sometimes not. So, I think a respect develops out of that and an understanding of how tough these jobs are and how fortunate we are to be able to compete at this level. I think that's a big part of it."



DARREN ABATE/AP

San Antonio Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, right, and the Miami Heat's Erik Spoelstra went head-to-head for the 37th time Wednesday.

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# NBA

## Scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Brooklyn	42	20	.677	—
x-Philadelphia	41	21	.661	1
New York	35	28	.556	7½
Boston	33	30	.524	9½
Toronto	26	36	.419	16
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	34	29	.540	—
Miami	33	30	.524	1
Charlotte	30	32	.484	3½
Washington	28	34	.452	5½
Orlando	19	43	.306	14½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	38	23	.623	—
Indiana	29	32	.475	9
Chicago	26	36	.419	12½
Cleveland	21	41	.339	17½
Detroit	19	43	.306	19½
Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Dallas	34	27	.557	—
Memphis	31	30	.508	3
San Antonio	31	30	.508	3
New Orleans	27	35	.435	7½
Houston	15	47	.242	19½
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Utah	45	17	.726	—
Denver	41	21	.661	4
Portland	34	28	.548	11
Oklahoma City	21	41	.339	24
Minnesota	19	44	.302	26½
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Phoenix	44	18	.710	—
L.A. Clippers	43	21	.672	2
L.A. Lakers	36	26	.581	8
Golden State	31	31	.500	13
Sacramento	25	37	.403	19

**Wednesday's games**  
 Orlando 109, Cleveland 104  
 Philadelphia 127, Atlanta 83  
 New York 113, Chicago 94  
 Boston 120, Charlotte 111  
 Washington 116, L.A. Lakers 107  
 Miami 116, San Antonio 111  
 Denver 114, New Orleans 112  
 Portland 130, Memphis 109  
 Phoenix 109, L.A. Clippers 101  
 Utah 154, Sacramento 105

**Thursday's games**  
 Brooklyn at Indiana  
 Dallas at Detroit  
 Golden State at Minnesota  
 Milwaukee at Houston  
 New Orleans at Oklahoma City  
 Toronto at Denver

**Friday's games**  
 Atlanta at Philadelphia  
 San Antonio at Boston  
 Washington at Cleveland  
 Orlando at Memphis  
 Portland at Brooklyn  
 Milwaukee at Chicago  
 Utah at Phoenix  
 Sacramento at L.A. Lakers

**Saturday's games**  
 Detroit at Charlotte  
 Golden State at Houston  
 Chicago at Atlanta  
 Indiana at Oklahoma City  
 Memphis at Orlando  
 Miami at Cleveland  
 New Orleans at Minnesota  
 Washington at Dallas  
 Denver at L.A. Clippers  
 Toronto at Utah

**Sunday's games**  
 Brooklyn at Milwaukee  
 Portland at Boston  
 Miami at Charlotte  
 New York at Houston  
 Philadelphia at San Antonio  
 Phoenix at Oklahoma City  
 Sacramento at Dallas  
 Toronto at L.A. Lakers

Leaders					
Scoring					
	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Beal, WAS	53	590	362	1659	31.3
Curry, GS	54	552	302	1684	31.2
Rebounds					
	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Capela, ATL	55	267	534	801	14.6
Gobert, UTA	61	204	615	819	13.4
Assists					
	G	AST	AVG		
Westbrook, WAS	55	607	11.0		
Young, ATL	54	516	9.6		

# Beal, Westbrook lead Wiz past Lakers

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**  
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — When the Washington Wizards started 0-5, or when they were in the midst of a COVID-19 outbreak, or when they lost two starters to season-ending injuries, who would have thought they'd find themselves beating the reigning NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers on national TV in late April to sweep the two-game season series?

And who would have thought the Wizards would own a two-game lead for the Eastern Conference's 10th spot and the inside track for a play-in berth with 10 games left in the regular season?

Bradley Beal and Russell Westbrook certainly did not give up on the season, and their performances Wednesday night — Beal's 27 points and Westbrook's league-record 13th triple-double of the month — lifted the Wizards past the no-LeBron Lakers 116-107, handing Los Angeles its fourth loss in five games.

"We had a bad season," said Alex Len, who had 18 points and nine rebounds as part of Washington's three-man center rotation, "but if we finish strong and make the playoffs, people are going to remember the end of the season."

LeBron James has been sidelined for more than a month with a sprained right ankle, a 20-game absence during which the Lakers are 8-12 and have dropped to fifth in the Western Conference standings. He sat near LA's subs, a mask covering his nose and mouth.

The good news for the visitors: Anthony Davis scored 26 — 14 in the fourth quarter — his highest output in four games back since sitting for 30 with a strained right calf. The bad news: By the time Davis got going, the deficit was too big to overcome.

"He's obviously in this phase of trying to get his legs back under him," Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. "Trying to get his rhythm and timing."

Washington, meanwhile, has won nine of 10



Nick Wass/AP

Wizards guard Bradley Beal goes to the basket against Los Angeles Lakers center Montrezl Harrell, left, during the first half of Wednesday's game in Washington.

games to improve to 28-34.

Beal entered the day leading the NBA in scoring average at 31.4 points, just ahead of Golden State's Stephen Curry, while Westbrook is tops in assists at 11 per game. They were, as usual, a big part of why Washington won, including Westbrook's 18 points, 18 rebounds and 14 assists.

"He's a monster," Lakers guard Dennis Schröder said.

**No LBJ update:** Vogel declined to give an update on the status of James, skirting questions about his use when he comes back and whether that could be before the regular season ends.

The four-time NBA MVP's averages lead Los Angeles in scoring (25.4), assists (7.9) and minutes (33.9) this season.

"He's still out indefinitely," Vogel said. "That's all I've got for you."

# Potential: Paul has helped Suns take leap

FROM PAGE 48

"Our players have worked their tails off, they've done everything I've asked them to do," Williams said. "I'm just happy for them."

The Suns finally figured out a way to beat the Clippers, who won the first two games of the season series. Phoenix didn't trail the entire game but needed a fourth-quarter push to turn back a Los Angeles rally.

The Suns took an 86-80 lead into the final quarter. The Clippers pulled within 93-92 midway through the fourth but Paul scored three consecutive tough baskets to give Phoenix some space.

The 35-year-old Paul continued to play excellent basketball in his 16th NBA season, shooting 10-for-15 from the field, dishing 10 assists and generally looking like a player a decade younger. The 11-time All-Star was serenaded with "MVP! MVP!" chants from the crowd by the end of the fourth.

Clippers coach Tyrone Lue said Paul "picked his spots" and was



MATT YORK/AP

The Suns' Chris Paul, right, celebrates with Mikal Bridges during Wednesday's 109-101 win over the Los Angeles Clippers in Phoenix.

extremely hard to defend.

"He controls the whole game," Lue said. "He plays at his own pace, he gets guys involved, he knows where everybody is at. That is what a true point guard does and he did it tonight."

The addition of Paul — who came to the Suns in an offseason trade with the Thunder — has been a huge boost for the franchise, giving the Suns a Hall of Fame-caliber point guard who has 109 games of playoff experience.

He said he wasn't surprised the Suns are in this position.

"I know who I am," Paul said. "I knew coming to this situation, I knew who Book was, he told me about some of the guys on the team. I knew playing for Monty, how detail-oriented he is."

The Suns improved to 44-18 while the Clippers fell to 43-21. The teams are currently ranked No. 2 and 3, respectively, in the Western Conference standings.

Paul George led the Clippers with 25 points and 10 rebounds, while Marcus Morris Sr. added 16 points.

The Suns jumped out to a 39-31 lead after one quarter, making 7 of 9 shots from three-point range. Phoenix pushed the lead to 14 points by midway through the second before settling for a 63-53 halftime advantage.

Frank Kaminsky led the Suns with 13 points before the break while Booker had 12. George scored 16 for the Clippers. The Phoenix bench outscored LA's reserves 28-8 in the first half.

## SPORTS



## Can't knock the Knights

Vegas beats rival Colorado, extends franchise-best streak to 10 » Page 43

NBA



## Suns not settling

Playoff-bound Phoenix could just be scratching surface of team's potential

BY DAVID BRANDT  
Associated Press

**D**evin Booker was in middle school and starting center Deandre Ayton was 11 years old when the Phoenix Suns were last in the playoffs.

As for point guard Chris Paul? He was an NBA star in those days, just like he was on Wednesday night.

Paul scored 28 points, Booker added 21 and the Suns beat the Los Angeles Clippers 109-101 to secure a spot in the

postseason for the first time since 2010.

"We are not satisfied, we're not settling," second-year Suns coach Monty Williams said. "We feel like we're just scratching the surface."

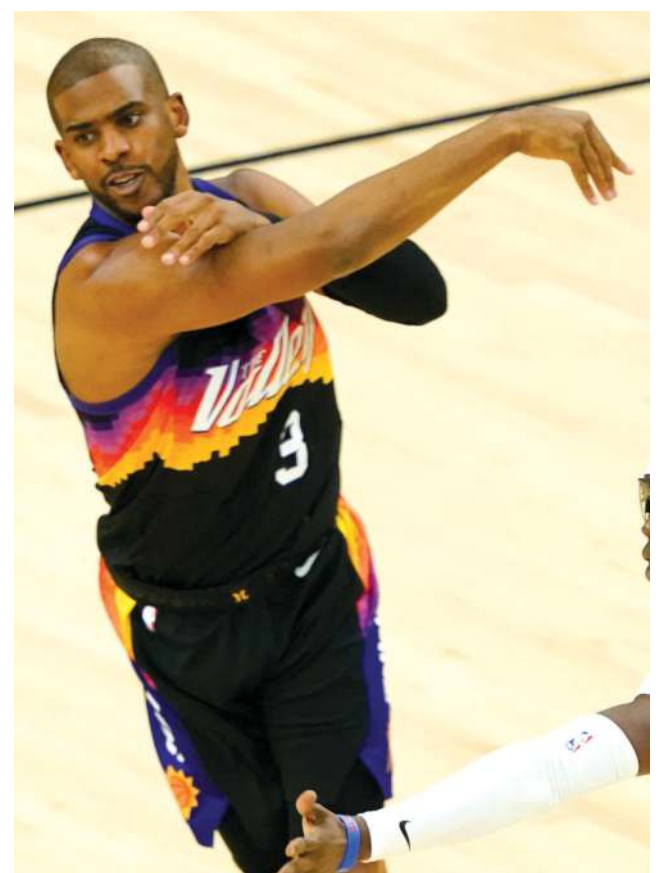
Williams has been the architect of a remarkable turnaround in Arizona. The Suns had a 19-63 record just two seasons ago and had languished near the bottom of the West for years. Now they're a trendy pick to push deep into the summer's playoffs.

SEE POTENTIAL ON PAGE 47

## AGING STAR STILL SHINES

Chris Paul, 35, continues to play excellent basketball in his 16th NBA season, drawing "MVP!" chants from the crowd Wednesday while shooting 10-for-15 from the field and dishing 10 assists. The 11-time All-Star, who came to the Suns in an offseason trade with the Thunder, has been a boon for the franchise, giving Phoenix a Hall of Fame-caliber point guard with 109 games of playoff experience.

SOURCE: Associated Press



**Top:** Phoenix center Deandre Ayton rebounds over Los Angeles center Ivica Zubac (40) during the first half of Wednesday's 109-101 victory over the Clippers in Phoenix. **Right:** Suns guard Chris Paul had 28 points and 10 assists in Phoenix's playoff-clinching win. The Suns improved to 44-18 while the Clippers fell to 43-21. The teams are currently ranked No. 2 and 3, respectively, in the Western Conference standings.

PHOTOS BY MATT YORK/AP

Broncos trade for Panthers QB Bridgewater » Page 45

