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WEEKEND
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Steelers posing
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STARS AND STRIPES®

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Volume 79, No. 140 ©SS 2020

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2020

平成32年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く)
発行所 星島旗新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥100

\$1.00

Club shares paranormal experiences at Yokota

By ERICA EARL
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Strange things started happening the day Alicia Adachi moved into her on-base home, a garden unit on Yokota's west side, in 2012.

She said she would sometimes find the bed in her spare bedroom inexplicably stripped of its sheets and blankets. She heard loud crashes in her kitchen in the middle of the night but found nothing broken or misplaced. Sometimes, Adachi said, she'd wake up to find all her kitchen cabinets wide open when they were shut the night before.

The series of bizarre events led her to seek confirmation among others with shared experiences, and eventually to start up the Yokota Ghost Hunter Club, which has more than 900 members on Facebook. The club encourages sharing written accounts, videos, electronic voice phenomenon and photo evidence of the spiritual realm and the paranormal.

Early this month, for example, Staff Sgt. Breanna Adams of the 374th Civil Engineer Squadron wrote to the group that she and her husband often heard clear, persistent knocking noises within their old eastside tower unit. Security camera footage showed televisions and bedroom lights turning on and off when no one was home, she told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

Adachi said she started the group because she wanted to feel less alone and get confirmation that she wasn't "crazy" because of her experiences.

"At first, I was able to brush it all off, excusing everything away on things on my then-husband," Adachi said in a recent interview with Stars and Stripes via Facebook Messenger from her home in Oregon.

"But when he deployed, I suddenly was left with no one else in the house to blame for what was going on."

SEE PARANORMAL ON PAGE 6



ELAINE THOMPSON/AP

University of Washington research coordinator Rhoishni Prabhu holds up a swab after testing a passenger at a free COVID testing site in Seattle on Oct. 23. Deaths per day from the coronavirus in the U.S. are on the rise again, just as health experts had feared.

Slight rebound looks shaky

US unemployment claims fall to 751,000, but new infections pose threat

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits fell last week to 751,000, the lowest since March, but it's still historically high and indicates the viral pandemic is forcing many employers to cut jobs.

Applications for unemployment aid fell 40,000 from the previous week, the Labor Department said Thursday. They fell in 30 states, including big drops in California, Florida and Texas. Claims rose significantly in Arizona, Illinois, and Michigan.

■ **Merkel tells Germans to expect 'difficult winter' as cases reach new high**
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Rising confirmed virus cases in nearly every state, along with a cutoff in federal aid, are threatening to weaken the economy in the coming months. As temperatures fall, restaurants and bars will likely serve fewer customers outdoors. And many consumers could increasingly stay home to avoid infec-

tion. Those trends could force employers to slash more jobs during the winter.

The seven-day rolling average for confirmed new cases in the U.S. soared over the past two weeks from 51,161 to 71,832, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

The government said Thursday the economy expanded at a record 33% annual rate in the July-September quarter. That's a sharp rebound after an epic collapse in the spring, when the economy shrank at a 31.4% annual rate. Yet the increase recovers only about two-thirds of what was lost to the pandemic.

SEE SHAKY ON PAGE 9

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	Azores	Change in price
Germany	\$2.418	\$2.634	\$3.085	\$2.660	--	-\$3.885
Change in price	-0.7 cents	-0.6 cents	-0.3 cents	-0.3 cents	--	-0.5 cents
Netherlands	--	\$3.265	\$3.489	\$3.185	---	\$2.530
Change in price	--	-6.9 cents	-6.3 cents	+0.7 cents	---	No change
U.K.	--	\$2.733	\$2.984	\$2.559	---	-\$2.870
Change in price	--	-0.6 cents	-0.3 cents	-0.3 cents	---	is page 2 for PeS ready?

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea	Change in price
Japan	--	\$2.879	--	\$2.449	\$2.219	--
Change in price	--	No change	--	No change	-1.0 cents	--
Okinawa	\$2.209	--	--	\$2.449	\$2.219**	\$2.6399
Change in price	-1.0 cents	--	--	No change	-1.0 cents	No change

* Diesel EPD ** Midgrade
For the week of Oct. 30 - Nov. 5

EXCHANGE RATES

	Military rates	Switzerland (Franc)
Euro costs (Oct. 30)	\$1.14	0.9138
Dollar buys (Oct. 30)	€0.8328	฿124
British pound (Oct. 30)	\$1.26	₹82.47
Japanese yen (Oct. 30)	¥102.00	₹82.47
South Korean won (Oct. 30)	₩1,106.00	

Commercial rates

Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.2933
Canada (Dollar)	1.3363
China (Yuan)	6.7094
Denmark (Krone)	6.5886
Egypt (Pound)	15.0999
Euro	\$1.1692/0.8553
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7532
Hungary (Forint)	34.27
Israel (Shekel)	3.4183
Japan (Yen)	104.35
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3059
Norway (Krone)	9.5511
Philippines (Peso)	48.41
Poland (Zloty)	3.95
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7599
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3656
South Korea (Won)	1,133.79

(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
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.10
30-year bond	1.56

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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PACIFIC

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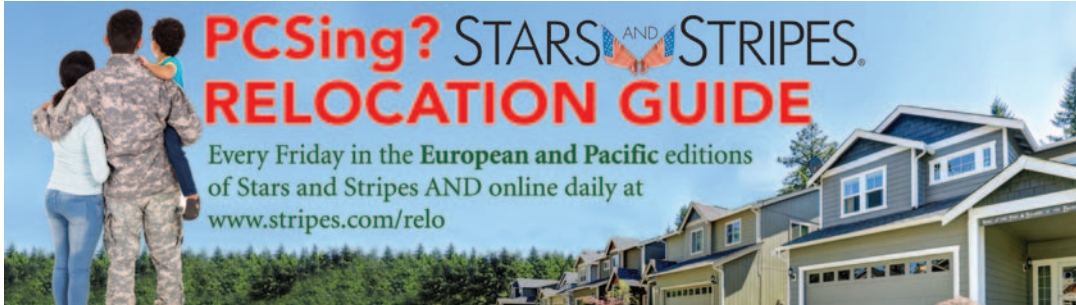
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PCSing? STARS AND STRIPES RELOCATION GUIDE

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PACIFIC

Iwakuni ratchets up exercise experience

By JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — Everyone had a part this year in the annual base-defense drills, including Marines, sailors, Japanese troops and even service members' families living in base housing.

Air station commander Col. Lance Lewis significantly expanded this year's Active Shield exercise to include drills on pandemic response, missile strikes, aeromedical evacuations and daylong overhead patrols by two AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters. The three-day exercise concluded around 1 p.m. Thursday.

At 6 p.m. Wednesday, the station went into a 12-hour lockdown that meant everyone, including family members, had to shelter in place during a simulated attack. Everyone should know what to expect during an emergency, Lewis said.

"Families are going to be here, and this where we are going to operate out of, whether it be here or across mainland Japan," he told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. "This is an overseas military installation that does military operations and that's the primary reason for our existence out here."

In eastern Japan at Yokota Air Base, the headquarters in western Tokyo of U.S. Forces Japan, the 374th Airlift Wing and 730th Air Mobility Squadron conducted a similar readiness exercise.

The base advised everyone to expect loud noises, simulated gunfire, first-responder activity and military personnel in chemical and nuclear warfare protective gear and gas masks. The "giant voice" sounded sirens and simulated-attack warnings throughout the week.

"All of these are standard parts of crisis response exercises," the base advised on a Facebook post Oct. 21, "so although it may look a bit different than a normal Yokota day, these are training events."

At MCAS Iwakuni, Lewis said he wanted to make the exercise as realistic as possible this year. It was shorter in duration than Yokota's but more pervasive.

A realistic response would involve multiple U.S. squadrons and the Japan Ground Self-Defense



A combat engineer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 repairs airfield damage after a simulated missile strike during the Active Shield exercise Thursday at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

Force, he said. Large-scale exercises are the only way to identify sticking points between units, issues with command and control and concerns about resource allocation.

The exercise teamed Marines and sailors at Iwakuni with soldiers of the 13th Brigade of the JGSDF Middle Army, who practiced responding to simulated overnight missile attacks Wednesday and a mass casualty event Thursday.

Japanese troops took part in all aspects of the exercise, from planning to execution, Lewis said.

"At the strategic level, it's about the Japanese-American alliance that's been strong for 60 years," he said. "At the operational and tactical level, this is their country, this is their home, and they will defend it as well."

Throughout the week, power to base buildings was cut, roads were blocked around the installation and support facilities were closed. Explosive ordnance technicians responded to calls and military police set up cordons and defended base entrances against a simulated attack.

Starting at noon Wednesday until nearly 10 p.m., sirens intermittently warned of the simulated



PHOTOS BY JAMES BOLINGER/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Isiah Jakes of Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 takes part in a refueling operation for an AH-1 Cobra during an Active Shield drill at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, on Wednesday.



Sailors from the Branch Health Clinic at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, inoculate active-duty troops with the flu vaccine to simulate a pandemic response during exercise Active Shield on Wednesday.

attacks. Around 3 a.m. Thursday, combat engineers from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 filled a simulated crater in the runway using a concrete pad for practice.

Simulating a pandemic response, sailors at the Branch Health Clinic distributed the seasonal flu vaccine to about 90% of the base service members over

48 hours, Lt. j.g. Maria Moncayo, the environmental health officer who organized the response, told Stars and Stripes on Thursday.

Lewis said he filled a notecard with his observations this year and is making plans for next year's Active Shield.

"As a commander here, this has really met my expectations

for where I want this base to be headed, but Marines are never satisfied," he said. "Next year will be different. Next year we will have ironed out the things we are learning right now. I know we will add new things, because we always need to be improving."

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First phase of \$34M air freight terminal opens at Osan Air Base

By MATTHEW KEELER
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — A new, \$34 million air freight terminal opened this week at Osan, part of a two-phase project to update aged and inadequate base facilities.

The warehouse complex will handle cargo for the Defense Department and other service branches. Its design allows for maximum efficiency and future expansion as well, said 731st Air Mobility

Squadron commander Lt. Col. Ryan Murray during the opening ceremony Monday.

"The terminal has upgraded freight storage space with larger refrigerators, freezers, a security cage, as well as a covered outside storage to accommodate around 80 pallet positions," he said. "With the increased size, the facility can handle approximately 300% more cargo than before, enabling increased theater throughput."

The logistics complex is part of a construction project that consolidated seven outdated buildings into two modernized

facilities, effectively doubling cargo yard space and tripling the warehouse square footage. Planning began in October 2013, Murray said.

Phase two calls for a new equipment maintenance facility to be completed by late 2021.

At the ceremony, Murray recognized key personnel including South Korean contractors, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and many others involved in building the 84,330 square-foot warehouse and administration building.

The project also includes over 98,000 square feet of parking for vehicles, equipment and pallets.

Col. Jason Terry, the 515th Air Mobility Operations Wing commander, spoke at the opening over a live video feed from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

"It should be noted that agile logistics in a contested environment is a fundamental element of joint warfighting, and this new facility enhances that capability," he said.

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MILITARY

Soldier wins Army challenge with range app

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

Winning the XVIII Airborne Corps' first "Dragon Innovation Challenge" with an idea to improve training range management by using mobile apps earned Maj. Evan Adams his choice of any Army school. He opted for something sensible, if less action-packed.

The planning officer with the 101st Airborne Division was one of five finalists who presented problem-solving ideas via video teleconference to a panel of judges in a competition this week at Fort Bragg, N.C. All were focused on addressing headaches with training ranges.

Adams pitched a "RangeFinder" mobile application designed to help streamline the management and booking of weapons ranges, while improving communications and disseminating plans, policies and procedures. He likened it to a Gerber multitool, which would bring several functions into one pocket-sized package.

"We have all these tools, all these capabilities exist," he told Stars and Stripes on Thursday. "It's just, nobody's combined them."

For wowing six panelists with the idea Tuesday, he got a four-day liberty pass and could have also chosen to win a shiny badge for his Army Greens by attending

an elite military freefall parachute course in the Arizona desert or dive school off the coast of Florida.

"No, he wants to go to Capability Developers Course," the corps said Wednesday on Twitter, joking that he might end up at austere survival, evasion, resistance and escape training instead.

It's "kind of nerdy," Adams said, but "nerds run the Army." He said he chose that course because it would help him develop more good ideas at this point in his career.

"It would be pretty cool to have HALO wings, but at the same time, I'm a field-grade officer) ... I'm old," the 13-year Army veteran said, referring to the high-altitude, low-opening jump badge.

Besides, he's already done Airborne and Ranger schools and is likely to do Air Assault and Pathfinder anyway, he said.

In addition to aiding range management, Adams said he was excited about the potential that the Army could develop user-friendly mobile apps to help with medical readiness or to replace the cumbersome Defense Travel System.

His idea beat out four other finalists that got the most votes out of the dozens of online submissions to the Dragon Innovation Challenge. The initiative, backed by the corps' three-star commander Lt. Gen. Erik Kurilla, is aimed at



U.S. Army

During the XVIII Airborne Corps' "Dragon's Lair" innovation challenge on Tuesday, Capt. Michael Stevnik of the 82nd Airborne Division pitches an idea for adding the option to reserve training ranges for smaller blocks of time in the Army's range management system.



SCREENSHOT/Army innovation portal

This proposed "RangeFinder" mobile application for scheduling and managing Army training ranges earned Maj. Evan Adams, of the 101st Airborne Division, a four-day liberty pass and the school of his choice in the XVIII Airborne Corps' first "Dragon's Lair" innovation challenge on Tuesday.

spurring creative solutions from within the 3rd Infantry, 10th Mountain, 82nd Airborne and 101st Airborne divisions, as well as the 20th Engineer Brigade, 16th Military Police Brigade, and 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

"Top-down leadership with bot-

tom-up refinement," said Master Sgt. Roy Smith, one of the panelists. "You don't need a lot of rank on your chest to have a good idea."

Filling out the field of finalists who entered the "Dragon's Lair" to pitch their ideas this week were three soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division — 1st Sgt. Daniel

Murphy, Capt. Michael Stevnik, and 1st Sgt. Richard Greve — and 1st Lt. Nathan Wagner of the 10th Mountain Division.

From tweaks to an existing range management system to development of division-level marksmanship instructor training, all five proposals had some merit, said panelist Capt. Anne Blank. But Adams' represented something "bigger" that encapsulated the spirit of the challenge.

Adams, who sees the idea as "inevitable" rather than revolutionary, highlighted several advantages to using smartphones to replace or enhance operations that mainly rely on landline phones, two-way radios, clunky websites and PowerPoint slides.

On Wednesday, the corps headquarters began working on how to implement Adams' idea, said Col. Joe Buccino, the corps' spokesman.

A second edition of the Dragon's Lair is scheduled for Nov. 17.

"We know there are ideas out there and we want them in the Dragon's Lair," he said.

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Marine rotational force heads into Norway training

Stars and Stripes

U.S. Marines returned to Norway for a two-month training mission, marking the first such deployment since the Corps announced it was ending larger back-to-back rotations.

About 350 Marines and sailors from the 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, will begin Arctic warfare training after they complete a period of quarantine for the coronavirus, Marine Forces Europe and Africa said in a statement.

The "Teufelhunden Battalion" serves as the new Marine Rotational Force-Europe and will conduct numerous drills alongside the Norwegian army, the statement said.

"Norway offers challenging terrain and unique training opportunities to improve our cold-weather and mountain-warfare skills, enabling our force to fight and win in arctic conditions," Lt. Col. Ryan Gordmier, commander of 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, said in the statement.

The unit is expected to make several return trips



ARREY LICONS/U.S. Marine Corps

U.S. Marines take part in a force-on-force field training exercise in Seternmoen, Norway, in September 2020.

to Norway over the course of the year with a larger follow-on rotation scheduled in early 2021, MARFOR-EUR said.

In August, the Marine Corps announced the end of continuous troop rotations to Norway, where hundreds of Marines had been deployed for the past three years. Instead of having up to 700 troops at a time in Norway on six-month rotations, the Marines opted for a periodic training and exercise program.

Fort Hood brigade starts its Europe deployment

Stars and Stripes

Soldiers with a Fort Hood, Texas-based tank brigade are beginning a nine-month rotation in support of the Army's efforts to deter Russian aggression along NATO's eastern flank, U.S. Army Europe said.

Members of the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division will start arriving this week at military and commercial airports in Germany, Poland and Romania, USAREUR said in a statement Wednesday.

The unit's gear will arrive by ship at the port of Antwerp in Belgium, where it will be sent to sites where the troops will operate.

The rotation marks the seventh time an armored brigade has come to Europe in support of the Atlantic Resolve campaign, launched in 2014 after Russia's

military intervention in Ukraine.

"These heel-to-toe deployments ensure U.S. Army forces maintain a consistent, combat-credible presence to deter aggression in the region," USAREUR said in a statement. "The deployment of ready, combat-credible U.S. forces to Europe is evidence of the strong and unremittent U.S. commitment to NATO and Europe."

The troops conducted a restriction of movement and were tested for the coronavirus before deploying, and will quarantine upon arrival in Europe to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus.

The tank brigade out of Fort Hood will replace the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, which also did a nine-month rotation.

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MILITARY

National Guard troops to assist at voting sites in 3 states

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Wisconsin, Kentucky and Tennessee will use National Guard troops to assist at polling locations on Election Day — either serving as poll workers, assisting at polling locations or opening facilities to host voting.

“What’s unique about this mission for the Guard is it allows our guardsmen to serve in the communities that they live in. It’s neighbors helping neighbors,” said Army Brig. Gen. Robyn Blader, assistant adjutant general for the Wisconsin National Guard.

Speaking during a late Wednesday call between officials from four state National Guards and reporters, Blader said Guard support for Tuesday’s elections has not been finalized, but should mirror what happened in three previous elections that troops supported earlier this year. Guard assistance during an April election included the activation of 2,400 troops to serve as poll workers — one of the largest deployments in Wisconsin’s history for community support. Troops also distributed hand sanitizer and personal protective equipment to combat the spread of the coronavirus among voters.

“There was a heightened fear at that time,” Blader said, referring to the coronavirus pandemic that had begun in the United States a month earlier. “That fear isn’t quite as high moving into the November elections.”

With the presidential election just days away and a large voter turnout expected, other states have announced plans to use their National Guard troops to assist with cyber security. In some states, Guard and law enforcement officials are also discussing the potential need for security should protests or civil unrest follow what has been an unusual presidential election.

In Kentucky, where 280 troops will support poll workers at voting locations in 35 counties, officials were clear that the “support will be in a non-law-enforcement capacity,” according to a news release. Instead, they will help with setting up and cleaning polling locations and assisting with polling, parking and crowd control, just as they did in a June election.

After a summer of racial and political unrest across the country, there are concerns about possible violence during and after Tuesday’s election, and the use of the Guard to control crowds has been floated in some states,

according to officials on Wednesday’s call and news reports.

Texas has been reported to be activating up to 1,000 National Guard troops as soon as the weekend to protect state government facilities and landmarks, according to the San Antonio Express-News.

Officials at the Texas Military Department declined to confirm or deny the deployment, but released a statement that troops have not been requested at any polling locations in the state. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott’s office also declined to comment.

Guard officials in Nebraska, Wisconsin, Tennessee and Washington said they are speaking with police departments and state law enforcement officials to determine what might be needed to ensure the safety of people and property following the election.

“It’s not new,” said Air Force Maj. Gen. Daryl L. Bohac, adjutant general for the Nebraska National Guard. “It’s something we do year in and year out for a variety of events.”

To ensure that no one is alarmed about a military presence at polling locations where National Guard members are working, each state said their service members will work in

civilian clothes. Should an issue develop at the polling site, Guard members are advised to call 911 if there is violence or a disturbance at the location where they are working, according to the officials in the three states with troops deployed at voting sites.

Prior to 2020, Wisconsin had never used National Guard troops as poll workers, but Tuesday will mark the fourth time since April for Guard members to conduct such a mission, Blader said.

About 30 Tennessee Guard troops will assist by opening 13 of its facilities in rural areas to serve as polling locations, said Army Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, adjutant general for the state’s Guard. Full-time, uniformed personnel of those facilities will work off-site that day, but about two Guard members will work each site to open and close the facility, he said.

The Tennessee Guard is also offering counties across the state cyber security support, Holmes said. They began this effort last year, but demand has increased because of a “higher situational awareness of vulnerability,” he said.

In Washington state, where voting is completely by mail, the National Guard is providing

cyber security support where requested, said Air Force Brig. Gen. Gent Welsh, the assistant adjutant general for the state Guard. Troops offer vulnerability assessments and serve as “extra eyes and quality control.

“It makes sense to have military-grade helpers out there,” Welsh said. “We teach them how to do these things as well.”

Between the coronavirus pandemic, numerous weather events and the racial unrest that began in late May, officials conceded that they have worked to keep a balance between fulfilling the needs of their state and maintaining readiness for overseas missions.

While the state of Louisiana hasn’t requested poll support, troops from that National Guard are involved in missions for coronavirus relief, recovery from three hurricanes and an overseas deployment of one of the state’s largest brigades, according to the state’s Guard.

“There has definitely been some stress op-tempo wise,” said Holmes of Tennessee. “The group that’s largely affected is medical providers. We’ve leaned heavily on them.”

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PACIFIC

Paranormal: Yokota base's history plays into possible hauntings

FROM FRONT PAGE

The group also feeds its members' curiosity about the paranormal and builds new friendships, Adachi said.

"Sharing ghost stories is actually a great concept for creating a community because it welcomes people from all different backgrounds, skeptics and full-on believers alike," she said.

Yokota lore

Yokota historian Lesleigh Jones, a specialist in architectural history, said connections between places and their lore often relate to the age and appearance of a building, allowing people's imaginations to take rein over logic.

"Some of the association often gets romanticized," she said. "Not that things can't happen in newer buildings, but legends and ghost stories tend to stem from older buildings with personality."

Jones, who arrived at Yokota in September, said she's researching each of the buildings on base and combing through archives left untouched since her predecessor moved on two years ago.

Some structures have histories that suggest hauntings for those who connect fact to legend, she said.

The hangars along the flight line, for example, are some of the oldest buildings on base and date to the World War II era. Underground structures once used for munition storage are also intriguing sites, Jones said.

The most interesting historic detail about Yokota, in Jones' opinion, is that Airlift Avenue follows an old pilgrimage route from Tokyo through farmland

where the base stands today to an ancient shrine dedicated to the samurai. The emperor and his family customarily traveled along this route, Jones said.

Historically, Jones said, passersby who did not pay proper respect or courtesies to routes considered sacred could be killed, and people may have been slain on the road for that reason.

For the Japanese, the concept of haunting is connected to the belief that spirits inhabit inanimate objects, said Steve Matsumoto, a computer technician at the base library.

Matsumoto said he experienced paranormal activity when he worked at the Taiyo Community Center on the base's west side. Bathroom stalls opened and closed on their own and he heard a piano playing while he was alone in the center.

"I am not spiritual, but I do believe in ghosts," he said. "In Japan, the belief is that we are haunted by human entities, rather than monsters or demonic spirits."

Feline mystery

Military sites tend to gather lore and ghost stories, and not only because of deaths in battle, Jones said.

"Military bases have added layers of mystery because most people don't have access to them," she said, "so the knowledge and stories are all secondhand."

Jones said a group like the Yokota Ghost Hunter Club fosters an interest in history.

"Night apparitions have a way of keeping history in our consciousness," she said. "It allows



Photos by U.S. Air Force

Yokota Air Base historian Lesleigh Jones said some structures have histories that suggest hauntings for those who connect fact to legend. The hangars along the flight line, for example, are some of the oldest buildings on base and date to the World War II era.



This aerial view of Yokota Air Base, Japan, shows housing towers and other buildings under construction on the east side in the mid-1970s.

for relaying information, so history is not stuck on a shelf." Adachi, the club founder, said the height of her supernatural experience came one night when she noticed her normally clingy cat was being unusually quiet.

"I got up and started looking for her. I checked everywhere in

the house, except for the spare bedroom that I now kept closed at all times purely because of how much activity happened in there," she said.

"I found her in the closed-off room that she had no way of getting into, in pure terror, shaking under the bed. When she realized

it was me standing there and not someone or something else, she low-crawled to me and was very afraid of leaving my arms. I took one look at her face and we went straight to the vet because she had a chunk missing from her poor face."

The veterinarian was confused by the cat's wound, saying it looked like a large animal had bitten a chunk out of her face, Adachi said. The vet also said the wound appeared to have a burn mark.

Adachi said she neither had any other pets in the house nor a space heater or anything else that could have caused a burn.

At this point, Adachi said, she told her deployed husband what was going on, and he decided he would order a crucifix and a pet collar charm of Saint Francis for protection.

"Years later, now divorced, still not religious," Adachi said, and "my kitty still wears that same charm just in case."

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Twitter: @ThisEarGirl

Ex-Marines charged in conspiracy to illegally make, sell guns

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Two former Marines were arrested for illegally making, transporting and selling firearms, including one who was investigated for white supremacist activities while in the service, the Justice Department announced Tuesday.

Former Marines Liam Montgomery Collins, 21, and Jordan Duncan, 25, were arrested along with Paul James Kryscuk, 35, on federal charges Oct. 20 for "conspiracy to unlawfully manufacture, possess, and distribute various weapons, ammunition, and suppressors," according to a news release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

"The Marine Corps will continue to assist the investigating authorities in any way we can," Capt. Joseph Butterfield, a Marine Corps spokesman, said in a statement Wednesday.

Collins and Kryscuk are co-defendants who "used the conspiracy to enrich themselves and others by manufacturing and

selling hard to obtain firearms and firearm parts in a manner that would hide these purchases from the federal government," the Justice Department said. Duncan was aware of the illegal activity and participated in it, according to the release.

Collins made multiple money transfers to Kryscuk from May 2019 to the present to buy guns, including a 9 mm pistol and suppressor and a short-barrel rifle, according to the Justice Department. Kryscuk then made the firearms and suppressors from parts that he bought from vendors. He also used an alias to mail the firearms and suppressor from Idaho, where he lived, to Jacksonville, N.C. Duncan resides in Boise, Idaho.

Kryscuk also mailed the short-barrel rifle to Collins without registering it with the federal government, which is required, according to the Justice Department.

At the time, Collins was a lance corporal in the Marine Corps assigned to 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, at Camp Lejeune, N.C., according to the Marine Corps.

Collins served in the Marine Corps as a rifleman from August 21, 2017, to Sept. 21, 2020, a shorter enlistment than the typical four-year term, according to his service record.

"Collins' premature discharge is indicative of the fact that the character of his service was incongruent with Marine Corps expectations and standards," Butterfield said in a statement. "Due to the associated administrative processes, further details are not releasable."

A Newsweek story from November 2019 reported Collins was linked to racist and anti-Semitic postings on the neo-Nazi, white supremacist website called Iron March. A Marine Corps statement in the story said the service intended to investigate the allegation.

Butterfield confirmed Wednesday that Collins was investigated at the time following "allegations of white supremacist activities."

"Following the investigation, appropriate actions were taken. Those actions, however, where administrative in nature

and not releasable," he said.

Duncan served in the Marine Corps from Sept. 9, 2013, to Sept. 8, 2018, as a cryptologic language analyst, rising to the rank of corporal. He also was last assigned to Camp Lejeune with the 2nd Radio Battalion, Marine Information Group, II Marine Expeditionary Force, according to his service record.

Collins and Kryscuk are charged with conspiracy to manufacture guns and ship them between states, transporting guns between states without a license, and transporting a gun between states that is not registered as required, according to the release. If convicted, each face a combination of 20 years in prison.

Duncan is charged with conspiracy to manufacture guns and ship them between states, according to the release. He faces a maximum of five years in prison if convicted.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

3 die in stabbing attack inside church in France

Associated Press

PARIS — An attacker armed with a knife killed three people inside a church Thursday in the Mediterranean city of Nice, French authorities said, prompting the country to raise its security alert status to the highest level.

It was the third attack in two months in France that authorities have attributed to Muslim extremists, including the beheading of a teacher. It comes amid a growing furor over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad that were republished by the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo — renewing vociferous debate in France and the Muslim world over the depictions that Muslims consider offensive but are protected by French free speech laws.

Other confrontations and attacks were reported Thursday in the southern French city of Avignon and in the Saudi city of Jiddah, but it was not immediately clear if they were linked to the attack in Nice.

“He cried ‘Allah Akbar!’ over and over,

even after he was injured,” said Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi, who told BFM television that two women and a man had died, two inside the church and a third who fled to a nearby bar but was mortally wounded. “The meaning of his gesture left no doubt.”

The assailant in Nice was wounded by police and hospitalized after the killings at the Notre Dame Basilica, less than a half-mile from the site in 2016 where another attacker plowed a truck into a Bastille Day crowd, killing dozens of people.

Shots punctuated the air and witnesses screamed as police stationed at the fire-damaged doors to the church appeared to fire at the attacker inside, according to videos obtained by The Associated Press. Hours later, AP reporters at the scene saw emergency vehicles and police tape lining the wide Notre Dame Avenue leading toward the plaza in front of the basilica.

France’s anti-terrorism prosecutor’s office opened an investigation into the at-



DANIEL COLE/AP

A French policeman stands guard near the scene of the knife attack at the Notre Dame church in Nice, France, on Thursday.

tack, the third one since a trial opened in September for people linked to the 2015 attacks at Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket by gunmen who claimed allegiance to Islamic State and al-Qaida. The trial is nearing its end, with a verdict planned for Nov. 13, the fifth anniversary of another series of deadly Islamic State attacks in Paris.

Thursday’s attacker was believed to be

acting alone, said two police officials, who were not authorized to be publicly named.

In Avignon on Thursday morning, an armed man was shot to death by police after he refused to drop his weapon and a flash-ball shot failed to stop him, one police official said. And a Saudi state-run news agency said a man stabbed a guard at the French consulate in Jiddah, wounding the guard before he was arrested.

Afghan officials: 8 inmates dead after Herat prison riot

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Rioting at a prison in western Afghanistan has left at least eight inmates dead, provincial officials said Thursday.

The violence erupted Wednesday night at the prison in the city of Herat, the capital of western

Herat province, according to Mohammad Rafiq Shirzai, a spokesman for the provincial health department.

He said 12 others — eight inmates and four prison guards — were wounded in the outbreak at the facility, which holds around 2,000 prisoners. It wasn’t imme-

diately known if there are any Taliban at the penitentiary.

The rioting erupted after guards cleared partitions created by prisoners in the so-called Block 5, said Jelani Farhad, a spokesman for the provincial government. The police tried to collect “un-necessary items in the possession

of the prisoners, which the prisoners resisted,” he said.

One of the eight fatalities had gunshot wounds, Shirzai said, adding that the incident is under investigation.

According to a provincial official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not

authorized to talk to the media, the prisoners torched one prison block. Farhad and Shirzai could not confirm that.

Rundown Afghan prisons have occasionally seen rioting, with inmates seeking better conditions in the overcrowded facilities, many built with poor construction.

Arrest made in kidnapping of journalists in Afghanistan

Associated Press

NEW YORK — An Afghan man has been brought to the United States to face charges in the 2008 gunpoint kidnapping of a journalist for The New York Times, an Afghan journalist and a driver in Afghanistan, federal authorities announced Wednesday.

The charges against Haji Najibullah, 42, were in a six-count indictment unsealed in Manhattan federal court.

He briefly appeared at a hearing conducted electronically because of the coronavirus, where a U.S. magistrate judge ordered him detained after his court-appointed lawyer, Mark Gombiner, declined to seek bail. Gombiner did not respond to a message seeking comment.

A prosecutor said Najibullah was brought from Ukraine to the U.S. on Tuesday to face charges including hostage taking, conspiracy and kidnapping. Authorities did not say where or when he was first arrested, but in a release they thanked Ukrainian authorities for help in his arrest and transfer. If convicted, he could face life in prison.

The kidnapping victims were

not identified by authorities, but the description matched the kidnapping of the journalist, David Rohde, who worked for the Times, and an Afghan journalist, Tahir Ludin, as they were heading to interview a Taliban leader.

Both made a dramatic escape from a Taliban-controlled compound in Pakistan’s tribal areas more than seven months after their Nov. 10, 2008, kidnapping. Their driver, Assadullah Mangal, was the third kidnapping victim and escaped a few weeks after Ludin and Rohde.

Also charged in the indictment was Timor Shah, who was described as the head guard of the hostages, and Akhund Zada, who the indictment said was among six armed guards who forced the hostages to hike from Afghanistan to Pakistan. Neither were in custody.

“Journalists risk their lives bringing us news from conflict zones, and no matter how much time may pass, our resolve to find and hold accountable those who target and harm them and other Americans will never wane,” Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers said.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Merkel warns of 'difficult winter' as cases climb

Associated Press

BERLIN — Chancellor Angela Merkel told Germans to expect a “difficult winter” as the number of newly reported coronavirus cases in the country hit a new high Thursday, neighboring France prepared to resume life under a new lockdown and some experts urged the Spanish government to take more aggressive action to curtail the latest wave of infections.

Speaking to Parliament a day after she and the governors of Germany’s 16 states agreed upon new, far-reaching restrictions to curb the spread of the virus, Merkel said the country faces “a dramatic situation at the beginning of the cold season.”

Germany’s disease control agency said local health authorities reported 16,774 new positive tests for COVID-19 in the past day, pushing the country’s total since the start of the outbreak close to the half-million mark. The Robert Koch Institute also recorded 89 additional deaths, taking the country’s total in the pandemic to 10,272, a number that is one-fourth the death toll in Britain.

“The winter will be difficult, four long, difficult months. But it will end,” Merkel told lawmakers. “We have already seen over the past eight months how we can learn and help each other.”

Under the restrictions going into effect Monday, restaurants, bars, sports and cultural venues will be shut for four weeks, along

with beauty parlors and brothels. Groups of at most 10 people, from a maximum two households, will be allowed to meet in public and all non-essential journeys will be discouraged.

Schools, kindergartens, stores and places of worship will remain open, prompting some to call the measures a “lockdown light” compared to the more severe shutdown Germany saw in March and April.

Merkel said authorities had no choice but to drastically reduce social contacts as three-quarters of infections in Germany now are no longer traceable.

“If we wait until the ICUs are full, then it will be too late,” she said.

The long-time German leader said democratic debate about the virus restrictions was important, but she blasted some critics who have claimed the German government was exaggerating the threat of the virus.

“Lies and disinformation, conspiracies and hatred damage not just the debate but also the battle against the virus,” she said. “It’s not just democratic debate that depends on our relationship to facts and information, human lives depend on it.”

Opposition leader Alexander Gauland of the far-right Alternative for Germany party responded to Merkel’s speech by accusing the government of “wartime propaganda” and likened the pandemic to motorized traffic, arguing that



MICHAEL PROBST/AP

People wearing face masks walk past a carousel and the Old Opera in Frankfurt, Germany, on Wednesday

society accepts a certain number of car deaths too.

Germany’s finance and economy ministers planned to announce details of further funding for businesses affected by the new measures Thursday.

Wealthy Germany has been able to mobilize massive financial aid for people and companies, dampening the economic blow of the pandemic. Still, there has been anger over the new measures, particularly from restaurant owners who had set up heated outdoor seating areas and made other preparations to operate in line with public health regulations, only to be told they aren’t allowed to serve customers for a month.

While France announced a second, full nationwide lockdown Wednesday, many countries have hesitated to take such drastic measures for the second time in a year, wary of the pain that caused

to the economy.

The British government has resisted calls for a national lockdown, despite significantly higher 14-day infection rates than Germany.

Britain’s communities secretary, Robert Jenrick, said Thursday that the virus is “very concentrated in some places,” insisting that it was right to target restrictions on those areas with the worst outbreaks.

In Spain, authorities have been imposing incremental restrictions on free movement, nightlife and social gatherings, but they have refrained from a strict stay-at-home order like the one that curbed the first wave of infections but scarred the economy.

But with officials predicting that current levels of infection will put hospitals under a serious shortage of intensive care beds next month, some experts are already calling for a full lockdown.

Some Spanish regions, namely Catalonia and La Rioja, have already ordered bars and restaurants to close, while most of the rest have imposed curfews limiting nightlife.

Extra subsidies have not accompanied the restrictions, prompting loud protests in Barcelona this week by hospitality business owners who banged pots, waved cocktail shakers and chanted “We want to work.”

Pablo Casado, who leads Spain’s conservative opposition, praised the leaders of France and Germany on Wednesday for showing leadership “addressing the nation in a brief and concise way to lead the response to the pandemic.”

Spain has officially recorded more than 1.1 million COVID-19 cases, although authorities say the true figure, including missed cases, could be at least three times higher. The death toll is at least 35,000.

USFK reports eight more cases, raising total to 259

Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Eight more troops and civilians affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea tested positive for the coronavirus after flying to South Korea from abroad over the past week, the military said Thursday.

Meanwhile, USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams, who was quarantined

after returning to the South from the United States nearly two weeks ago, tweeted that he had received negative results on a mandatory exit test, allowing him to end the quarantine on Friday.

The latest cases raised to 259 the number of coronavirus patients affiliated with USFK since late February — most traveling to South Korea for new assignments or returning from the United States. Only 26

of the cases, including three soldiers, were locally transmitted.

In a bid to contain the respiratory virus, USFK has implemented a strict arrivals process that includes an initial coronavirus test, a two-week quarantine, then a second coronavirus test required before exit.

Four service members arrived at Osan Air Base on government-chartered flights from the U.S. on Sunday and Tuesday,

while two contractors and two military dependents arrived at Incheon International Airport on commercial flights on Oct. 23 and Tuesday, USFK said in a press release.

All eight received positive results on their initial test and have been transferred to an isolation facility on Camp Humphreys, the main Army base in South Korea.

news@stripes.com



Thompson

Space Force's second in command tests positive

Stars and Stripes

Another high-ranking U.S. military leader has become infected with the coronavirus, according to a statement Wednesday from the U.S. Space Force.

Gen. David Thompson, the service’s vice chief of space operations, tested positive Wednesday

after “learning that a close family member, with whom he had contact,” had contracted the virus, the statement said.

“In accordance with established COVID policies, General Thompson is self-quarantining and working from home,” it added. COVID-19 is the respiratory dis-

ease caused by the coronavirus.

Thompson presided over a swearing-in ceremony for Space Force recruits last week in Baltimore, according to Military.com.

His diagnosis comes less than a month after two other high-ranking military leaders became infected with the coronavirus. The

Marine Corps’ assistant commandant, Gen. Gary Thomas, tested positive on Oct. 7, days after it was announced that the Coast Guard’s vice commandant, Adm. Charles Ray, was infected. The pair had attended a meeting together the previous week.

news@stripes.com

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Pelosi scolds White House on virus talks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi issued a scolding assessment of COVID-19 relief talks on Thursday, blaming Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin for failing to produce answers to her demands for Democratic priorities as part of an almost \$2 trillion aid package.

Pelosi lobbed her latest public relations volley with a letter to Mnuchin that blames Republicans for the failed talks, which ground on for three months only to crater in the final days before the election. Where the talks go after the election is wholly uncertain.

Pelosi says remaining obstacles to agreement include more than half a dozen big-ticket items, including a testing plan, aid to state

and local governments, funding for schools, jobless benefits and a GOP-sought shield against coronavirus-related lawsuits.

Republicans, who say Pelosi has been unyielding in the talks, will control the White House and the Senate until January regardless of the outcome of Tuesday's election, and have pressed for a more targeted aid package that ignores key Pelosi demands. They say items like refundable tax credits for the working poor and families with children aren't directly related to fighting COVID-19 and charge that Pelosi has slow-walked the negotiations to deny President Donald Trump a victory before Election Day.

Pelosi's letter to Mnuchin comes as markets are reeling from a coronavirus surge across

the country and Washington's failure to agree on another virus relief package.

"As the coronavirus surges and the stock market plummets, we are still awaiting the Trump administration's promised responses on multiple items of critical importance," Pelosi wrote. "Your responses are critical for our negotiations to continue."

The California Democrat has played hardball in the talks and has for months demanded a \$2 trillion-plus COVID-19 rescue deal that's larger than the landmark \$1.8 trillion CARES Act that swept through Congress in March. Legislation has twice passed the House, but the GOP-held Senate has been gridlocked.

The White House shot back that Pelosi is uninterested in compro-

promising on major issues.

"I don't think this recovery depends on the assistance package, per se, but I do think unemployment assistance, (Payroll Protection Program) small business assistance, helping the schools — that could have helped a lot and it's not going to happen," said White House economic adviser Larry Ludlow on Fox News. "The Democrats have been completely intransigent."

Recent weeks of secretive talks have been accompanied by optimistic talk from Pelosi and at times from her administration counterparts — but no results. Meanwhile, many Senate Republicans have broken with Trump, who was eager for a deal that would have let him issue another round of \$1,200 direct payments

in his name. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell advised Trump against a deal before the election, warning it would divide Republicans.

Pelosi said Thursday that she is confident that Joe Biden will win the White House and said that wrapping up COVID relief legislation in the lame-duck session would help get a Biden administration off to a quick start, but she brushed aside any suggestion that she would need to display more flexibility to get any measure signed by Trump.

"I want a bill for two reasons. First and foremost, the American people need help. They need real help," Pelosi told reporters. "And second of all, we have plenty of work to do in a Joe Biden administration."

Shaky: US economy still 10.7 million jobs short of its pre-pandemic level

FROM FRONT PAGE

And growth is believed to be slowing sharply in the final three months of the year to a roughly 3% annual rate.

With Congress having failed to agree on any further stimulus this year, millions of unemployed Americans who will lose all their jobless benefits in the coming weeks and months will likely pull back further on spending. Without another round of loans from the government, many small companies will also go out of business.

Thursday's report from the Labor Department said the number of people who are continuing to receive unemployment benefits fell more than 700,000 to 7.76 million. The decline shows that some of the unemployed are being recalled to their old jobs or are finding new ones. But it also indicates that many jobless Americans have used up their state unemployment aid — which typically expires after six months — and have transitioned to a federal extended benefits program that lasts an additional 13 weeks.

The still-elevated number of jobless claims underscores that a full recovery from the pandemic recession remains far off. Job growth has slowed for three straight months, leaving the economy still 10.7 million jobs short of its pre-pandemic level. The unemployment rate remains high at 7.9%.

Layoffs have continued at some large companies. Boeing said Wednesday that it will now cut 30,000 jobs by the end of next year, almost one-fifth of its entire workforce, up from an earlier announcement that it would shed 19,000.

Home and auto sales have emerged as bright spots in

the economy and have helped strengthen U.S. manufacturing. But the pandemic recession, unlike previous downturns, has done much more harm to in-person services and cost the jobs of millions of workers at restaurants, bars, gyms and theaters.

Those businesses have suffered from government shutdown orders, some of which might now be revived as the virus resurges.

In a sign of caution, Americans boosted their savings over the summer, banking a big chunk of the \$1,200 checks that had gone to most individuals and a now-expired \$600-a-week federal jobless benefit. Both were contained in a \$2 trillion stimulus package that Congress approved in the spring.

Some research suggests that by September, unemployed Americans had spent about two-thirds of what they had saved. If so, the jobless will likely cut their spending in the coming months and weaken growth.

Americans are already showing concern about the economy. Consumer confidence slipped in October after having risen sharply in September. The outlook for the economy over the next six months fell particularly hard, according to the Conference Board, a business research group.

With roughly 20 million Americans unemployed, the pandemic recession is still causing hardship for many families. One-quarter of all adults say their family's financial condition worsened in September compared with February, before the pandemic, according to a survey by the Urban Institute. One in seven say that they or a spouse or partner has lost a job during the downturn.

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NATION

Zeta hits La., barrels across Southeast

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Zeta sped across the Southeast on Thursday, leaving a trail of damage and more than 2 million homes and businesses without power in Atlanta and beyond after pounding New Orleans with winds and water that splintered homes and were blamed for at least three deaths.

A Category 2 hurricane when it hit the southeastern Louisiana coast Wednesday, Zeta was still a tropical storm Thursday morning with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph about 50 miles west of Asheville, N.C. — unusual even in a region accustomed to hurricanes and their aftermath.

Hundreds of schools canceled classes or planned to open late across from the Gulf Coast to the Carolinas.

The latest punch from a record hurricane season left people shaken. Will Arute said it sounded like a bomb went off when part of a large oak snapped outside his home in New Orleans, and part of the tree crashed into his car and a corner of his home.

“I did not anticipate this to happen. It was pretty intense along the eye wall when it went through here,” he said.

Mackenzie Umanzor did not prepare much because the last hurricane to threaten her home was in the 1970s in D’Iberville, Mississippi, did little damage.



Atlanta firefighters transport a man they freed who was trapped in his third-floor bedroom after a tree came crashing down on a home in Atlanta on Thursday.

Zeta blew open doors that she had tried to barricade, leaving her with a cut hand, and the top of her shed came loose.

“You could hear the tin roof waving in the wind... It was just rattling. And there was a couple of snaps, lots of cracks of branches and trees falling,” she said. “It was pretty scary.”

Officials said life-threatening conditions would last into the day, with Zeta crossing the mid-Atlantic states as a tropical storm before moving offshore around Delaware and southern New Jersey.

Leslie Richardson, 58, drowned when he was trapped in rising seawater in Biloxi, Miss., after taking video of the raging storm, Harrison County Coroner Brian Switzer said. Richardson and another man exited a floating car and desperately clung to a tree before his strength “just gave

JOHN SPINK, ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION/AP

out,” Switzer said. About 25 miles west in Long Beach, a large boat was washed up on the beachfront highway.

In Louisiana, a 55-year-old man was electrocuted by a downed power line in New Orleans, a coroner said. In Georgia, authorities said a man was killed when high winds caused a tree to fall onto a mobile home in Cherokee County.

Power outages were reported

across Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia, according to the website PowerOutage.us. Georgia had the most outages before dawn with more than 1 million customers in the dark.

Morning rush hour happened anyway in Atlanta, but commuters had to dodge downed trees and navigate their way past signals with no power. Trees blocked lanes on two interstates, the Georgia Department of Transportation said.

Northwest of Atlanta in Marietta, many stoplights were out and police directed traffic at a busy intersection. One residential street was covered by mix of campaign signs, amber and gold leaves, and limbs tossed by the storm. A few streets away, Billy Murdock was out picking up branches in his yard.

“These big old trees, they were swaying. It bothers you,” Murdock said. “It’s the worst storm I’ve been through in Atlanta.”

The storm raged onshore Wednesday afternoon in the small village of Cocodrie, La., as a strong Category 2 and then moved swiftly across the New Orleans area.

Zeta is the 27th named storm of a historically busy Atlantic hurricane season — with more than a month left to go. It set a new record as the 11th named storm to make landfall in the continental U.S. in a single season.

Philadelphia police pledge better response after Black man’s death

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia police pledged to release 911 tapes and police body camera footage “in the near future” in the shooting death of a Black man with a history of mental health problems, a death that prompted protests, widespread vandalism and an overnight curfew days before Election Day.

Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw pledged to release the video evidence with the family of Walter Wallace Jr.

Outlaw, who came to Philadelphia less than a year ago from Portland, Ore., lamented at a news conference Wednesday that her department lacks a mental health unit or consistent way to coordinate police calls with specialists.

“We don’t have a behavioral health unit, which is sorely needed,” said Outlaw, when asked about reports that police had been called to the home twice before that day. “There’s clearly a disconnect on our end in terms of knowing what’s out there” at the scene.

Police say they fatally shot Wallace on Monday after he ignored orders to drop a knife, a death that

intensified already heightened tensions in the presidential battleground state. Wallace’s mother said she warned police Monday afternoon that her son was in the throes of a mental health crisis.

In the days since, more than 90 people have been arrested and about 50 police officers injured in clashes with protesters and vandals, including the 1,000 or so who suddenly swarmed a shopping center Tuesday night, breaking windows and stealing merchandise. That scene erupted on the other side of the city, miles from Wallace’s neighborhood, where protests were underway.

“We had zero information to warn us of this,” Deputy Commissioner Melvin Singleton said. “By that time... the damage was done.”

The clashes come as Pennsylvania emerges as a key focus of the contentious 2020 election, with President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden, a native son, locked in a battle for the state’s 20 electoral votes. Both candidates have made frequent campaign stops in the state.

More than 9 million Pennsylvanians have registered to vote, and many in Philadelphia waited in line for hours this week to request a mail-in ballot by Tuesday’s

deadline, as news of the police shooting spread.

City officials announced Wednesday they would enact a curfew in the city from 9 p.m. until 6 a.m., as business owners cleaned up damage from the melee and boarded up windows.

Mayor Jim Kenney told reporters the Pennsylvania National Guard would also be deployed to help protect property and assist the police.

The first troops were expected Friday and Saturday.

The unrest started Monday evening, shortly after Wallace, 27, was killed, and set off protests elsewhere, including in Washington, D.C., the Brooklyn borough of New York City and Portland, where demonstrators held their hands in the shape of a “W” in his honor.

His family’s lawyer said the family had called for an ambulance to get him help with a mental health crisis.

Wallace’s wife, Dominique, is pregnant and was scheduled to be induced Wednesday, according to the family’s attorney, Shaka Johnson. Johnson said Wallace had nine children, two of whom briefly spoke at a news conference late Tuesday, along with Wallace’s mother and father.

Ex-DHS official says he wrote ‘Anonymous’ critique

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A former Trump administration official who penned a scathing anti-Trump op-ed and book under the pen name “Anonymous” revealed himself Wednesday as a former chief of staff at the Department of Homeland Security.

The official, Miles Taylor, came forward six days before Election Day to criticize President Donald Trump as “a man without character.”

He said he hoped other former administration officials would “find their conscience when they wake up tomorrow” and speak up, too. Taylor has been an outspoken critic of Trump’s in recent months and had repeatedly denied he was the author of the column and subsequent book — even to colleagues at CNN, where he has a contributor contract. He left the Trump administration in June 2019 and endorsed Democrat Joe Biden for president this summer. Trump and White House officials moved quickly to describe

Taylor as someone with little standing and clout.

“This guy is a low-level lowlife that I don’t know. I have no idea who he is, other than I got to see him a little while ago on television,” Trump told a campaign rally crowd in Arizona in the fall. Taylor, a “sleazebag” and called for his prosecution, the crowd broke into cheers of “drain that swamp.”

But as DHS chief of staff, Taylor was in many White House meetings with the president on his border policy and other major Homeland Security issues. During Taylor’s time as chief of staff, Trump threatened to shut down the border and his administration developed the policy to force asylum seekers to wait across the U.S.-Mexico border.

During a CNN appearance with Chris Cuomo Wednesday night, Taylor said he didn’t unmask himself earlier because the story would have disappeared within 48 hours.

“No one would pay attention and they wouldn’t care,” he said.

Taylor’s anonymous essay was published in September 2018 by The New York Times, infuriating the president and setting off a frantic White House leak investigation to try to unmask the author.



Taylor

NATION

Biden shuns 'false promises' of fast virus fix

Associated Press

BULLHEAD CITY, Ariz. — Focused firmly on COVID-19, Joe Biden vowed Wednesday not to campaign in the election home stretch “on the false promises of being able to end this pandemic by flipping a switch.” President Donald Trump, under attack for his handling of the worst health crisis in more than a century, breezily pledged on his final-week swing to “vanquish the virus.”

The Democratic presidential nominee also argued that a Supreme Court conservative majority stretched to 6-3 by newly confirmed Justice Amy Coney Barrett could dismantle the Obama administration’s signature health law and leave millions without insurance coverage during the pandemic. He called Trump’s handling of the coronavirus an “insult” to its victims, especially as cases spike dramatically around the country.

“Even if I win, it’s going to take a lot of hard work to end this pandemic,” Biden said during a speech in Wilmington, Del. “I do promise this: We will start on day one doing the right things.”

His comments reflected an unwavering attempt to keep the political spotlight on the pandemic. That was a departure from the president, who downplayed the threat and spent his day in Arizona, where relaxed rules on social distancing made staging big rallies easier.



ANDREW HARNIK/AP

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, accompanied by his granddaughter Natalie Biden, right, boards his campaign plane in New Castle, Del., on Thursday to travel to Florida for drive-in rallies.

The pandemic’s consequences were escalating, with deaths climbing in 39 states and an average of 805 people dying daily nationwide — up from 714 two weeks ago. Overall, about 227,000 Americans have died. The sharp rise sent shock waves through financial markets, causing the Dow Jones Industrial Average to drop 900-plus points.

Trump, who frequently lauds rising markets, failed to mention the decline. But he promised that

economic growth figures for the summer quarter, due Thursday, would be strong, declaring during a rally in Bullhead City, Ariz., “This election is a choice between a Trump super-recovery and a Biden depression.”

As Trump spoke, an Air Force fighter thundered nearby and released a flare to get the attention of a non-responsive private aircraft that was flying in the restricted airspace. North American Aerospace Defense

Command said the plane was escorted out by the F-16 “without further incident.” Trump was at first caught off guard but later cheered the fighter, proclaiming, “I love that sound” as it roared overhead.

The president also condemned violence that occurred during some protests in response to the police shooting of Walter Wallace Jr., a Black man, in Philadelphia saying Biden stands “with the rioters and the vandals.”

But Biden said in Wilmington, “There is no excuse whatsoever for the looting and the violence.” Bullhead City is just across the border from Nevada, a state Trump is hoping to flip during Election Day next Tuesday. A Trump rally last month in Nevada attracted thousands and led to the airport that hosted it being fined more than \$5,500 for violating pandemic crowd restrictions.

Rather than curb his crowd, Trump moved just across the border and used his rally Wednesday to scoff at Democratic leaders in states like Nevada for trying to enforce social distancing rules.

The weather was far milder than during a Tuesday night Trump rally in Omaha, Neb. After Trump said that one, hundreds of attendees at Eppley Airfield spent hours waiting in the cold for transportation to cars parked far away. Several people were taken to hospitals amid concerns about exposure.

“Because of the sheer size of the crowd, we deployed 40 shuttles — double the normal allotment — but local road closures and resulting congestion caused delays,” Trump spokeswoman Samantha Zager said in a statement.

Trump is trailing Biden in most national polls. Biden also has an advantage, though narrower, in the key swing states that could decide the election.

Biden voted early in Wilmington on Wednesday and received a virtual briefing from health experts. One, Dr. David Kessler, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said, “We are in the midst of the third wave, and I don’t think anyone can tell you how high this is going to get.”

Trump was nonetheless defiant, declaring, “We will vanquish the virus and emerge stronger than ever before.”

Biden heads later in the week to three states Trump won in 2016, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan, where he’ll hold a joint Saturday rally with former President Barack Obama.

Democrats point to a larger number of their party members returning absentee ballots — results that could be decisive since more people are likely to vote by mail during the pandemic. Trump’s campaign argues that enough of its supporters will vote on Election Day to overwhelm any early Biden advantage.

Trump paints apocalyptic portrait of life under Biden

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The suburbs wouldn’t be the suburbs anymore, the economy would sink into its worst depression ever and police departments would cease to exist. Even America’s older adults would be left to figure out how to get by without heat, air conditioning or electricity.

This is the apocalyptic version of American life that President Donald Trump argues would be the dire consequence of turning over the White House to Democrat Joe Biden.

“He’ll bury you in regulations, dismantle your police departments, dissolve our borders, confiscate your guns, terminate religious liberty, destroy your suburbs,” Trump said in one of many over-the-top pronouncements about Biden in the campaign’s final weeks. Trump typically makes his warning about the fate of suburbia as he showcases his own decision to end federal regulations that govern the placement of low-income housing in the suburbs.

Campaign rhetoric can often become heated and hyperbolic as candidates scrap for every last advantage before the votes are counted.

Experts say instilling fear in one’s opponent is usually the

primary motivating factor behind such talk as candidates seek to give voters a reason to put a checkmark next to their name on the ballot.

“It’s pure fear and fear based on a particular kind of ignorance that only works if your hearers have that particular kind of ignorance,” Robin Lakoff, professor emerita of linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, said of Trump’s claims about Biden.

Trump made fear — particularly the fear of immigrants — a major theme of his 2016 campaign. Now, he is giving voters a laundry list of mostly implausible reasons to fear a Biden presidency.

“This election is a choice between a TRUMP RECOVERY or a BIDEN DEPRESSION,” the president tweeted, echoing what he tells supporters at rallies. “It’s a choice between a TRUMP BOOM or a BIDEN LOCKDOWN. It’s a choice between our plan to Kill the virus — or Biden’s plan to kill the American Dream!”

Trump has criticized Biden for saying he’d follow the scientists, and the president claims the Democrat would shut the country down. In fact, Biden hasn’t said whether he’d endorse large-scale shutdowns of the nation’s economy, if things get drastically worse, like much of the country



EVAN VUCCI/AP

Supporters of President Donald Trump listen to him speak during a campaign rally in Goodyear, Ariz., on Wednesday.

did in March.

“If you vote for Biden, it means no kids in school, no graduations, no weddings, no Thanksgiving, no Christmas and no Fourth of July together,” Trump said at a rally Wednesday in Goodyear, Ariz. “Other than that, you have a wonderful life.”

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the Annenberg Public

Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, said Trump’s rhetoric is effective with people who are already disposed to believe such things about Biden. But to a person who is not in the audience, she said, such talk is a “sign of desperation.”

“The problem with the rhetoric is it’s an alienating rhetoric for people who hear it as extreme

and improbable,” Jamieson said. It’s also problematic, she said, “because you expect a president of the United States to calibrate his rhetoric to reality in at least some plausible way.”

Last week in Florida, Trump sought to boost his standing among older Americans angered by his response to the coronavirus by portraying Biden as the one who would do them harm. Trump falsely said Biden’s energy plan “would mean that America’s seniors have no air conditioning during the summer, no heat during the winter and no electricity during peak hours.”

During a summer of unrest that followed the police killings of Black men, Trump sought to portray Biden as beholden to the “radical-left” forces Trump claimed were behind the protests. He also argued that Biden wouldn’t be able to keep such unrest from spreading to the suburbs.

Leading Democrats have deployed their own dire talk.

In July, Biden said Trump was the country’s first racist president, which glossed over the presidents before Trump who had held slaves.

“We’ve had racists, and they’ve existed. They’ve tried to get elected as president,” Biden said. “He’s the first one that has.”

NATION

Migrants quickly removed try to cross repeatedly

By ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Edgar Alexis Lopez looks well-rested in photos he took before crossing the border illegally in mountains east of San Diego, flashing a wide grin in clean jeans.

Six hours later, the 24-year-old Mexican construction worker was out of water, exhausted after climbing over the border wall and convinced he would faint.

A rescue helicopter couldn't land in the steep terrain but authorities dropped water before border agents arrived and whisked him back to Tijuana, Mexico. Lopez quickly recovered and began planning another attempt to reach San Diego, where he hoped to settle to earn a more steady living.

"You enter and leave, enter and leave, enter and leave," Lopez said during a lunch break at his job in a Tijuana supermarket, where he's saving money for a fourth attempt. "You have nothing to lose besides the physical strain."

After a slew of profound changes by the Trump administration to limit asylum, the coronavirus brought it to a halt. With immigration laws largely suspended at the border since March, Mexicans and people from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador who enter the U.S. illegally are immediately expelled to Mexico without even a piece of paper, generally within two hours and with no chance to plead for asylum — a post-Holocaust system to protect people around the world from torture and persecution at home. Facing

no consequences, migrants are more determined to keep trying until they succeed.

The suspension of asylum combined with the introduction of "express deportations," as migrants call them, accelerated a shift in who's crossing the border illegally: more Mexican men coming for economic reasons and far fewer from Central America, Africa and elsewhere seeking asylum.

Dismantling asylum may be the most significant way President Donald Trump has reshaped the immigration system, which he has arguably done more to change than any U.S. president. He's thrilled supporters with an "America first" message and infuriated critics who call his signature domestic issue insular, xenophobic and even racist.

Before the election, The Associated Press is examining some of Trump's immigration policies, including restrictions on international students, a retreat from America's humanitarian role and now a virtual shutdown of asylum.

Under the expulsions that began in March, 37% of those caught had been picked up in the previous year, up from 7% in the 2019 fiscal year. The annual figure hasn't topped 14% since the Border Patrol began keeping track seven years ago.

Recidivism hit 48% among Mexican adults over a recent two-week period in the Border Patrol's San Diego sector, said Chief Rodney Scott.

"They can get a night's rest and TV again," he said in a recent interview.



MARK RIGHTMIRE, THE ORANGE COUNTY (CALIF.) REGISTER/AP

A helicopter drops water onto hot spots of the Silverado Fire behind homes in the Foothill Ranch area near Lake Forest, Calif., on Wednesday.

Evacuation lifted for Calif. fire

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Thousands of Californians were allowed to return to their homes Wednesday as calmer winds helped firefighters beat back two wind-driven wildfires that had spurred widespread evacuations.

Roughly 100,000 people were ordered to evacuate Monday after the wildfires broke out in brushy hills above cities in Southern California's Orange County amid fierce winds and extremely dry weather conditions.

On Wednesday, evacuation orders were lifted for all residents in the city of Irvine about 35 miles south of Los Angeles, which saw more than a quarter of its 280,000 people forced from their homes. Evacuation orders also were lifted for the nearby Blue Ridge Fire, where thousands of people in Yorba Linda and neighboring communities had been under orders to flee.

Firefighters made progress as the winds subsided and the

spread of the flames slowed. The Irvine-area Silverado Fire was 32% contained by Wednesday evening and the Blue Ridge Fire to the north was 23% uncontained after being virtually uncontained a day earlier.

"With favorable weather, fire crews will find opportunities to establish more control lines," the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire, said in a statement.

The Silverado Fire burned 21 square miles. No homes were lost but two firefighters remained hospitalized after suffering second- and third-degree burns over large areas of their bodies, Orange County Fire Authority Chief Brian Fennessy said.

The Blue Ridge Fire, at 22.4 square miles, destroyed one structure and damaged seven.

Scientists have said climate change has made California much drier, meaning trees and other plants are more flammable October and November are tradition-

ally the worst months for fires, but already this year 8,600 wild fires in the state have scorched a record 6,400 square miles and destroyed about 9,200 homes, businesses and other buildings. There have been 32 deaths.

The fierce winds subsided Tuesday night and calmer breezes were expected the rest of the week but continued warm and dry weather that makes for potentially dangerous wildfire conditions were forecast into November, with no rain.

The cause of the Silverado Fire is under investigation, state fire officials said.

The Southern California Edison utility reported to state officials that it was investigating whether its equipment might have sparked the blaze. According to Edison's report to utility regulators, a "lashing wire" that ties a telecommunications line to a supporting cable may have come into contact with a separate 12,000-volt conductor line above it.

Health contractors vetted stars' politics for US virus ad

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Public relations firms hired by the Department of Health and Human Services vetted the political views of hundreds of celebrities for a health education advertising campaign on the coronavirus outbreak, according to documents released Thursday by a House committee.

None of the celebrities agreed to participate — they may not have known they were being vetted — and the campaign has been put on hold as the government reviews its effectiveness.

Director Judd Apatow believes President Donald Trump "does not have the intellectual capacity to run as president," according to a list of more than 200 celebrities compiled by one of the firms. Singer Christina Aguilera "is an Obama-supporting Democrat and a gay-rights supporting liberal," the list says, and actor Jack Black

is "known to be a classic Hollywood liberal." A public service announcement by comedian George Lopez was "not moving forward due to previous concerns regarding his comments regarding the president," according to the documents.

The names were among the spreadsheets, memos, notes and other documents from September and October released by the House Oversight and Reform Committee.

The firms' vetting came as political appointees planned to spend more than \$250 million on a confidence-building campaign surrounding the virus, which has killed more than 227,000 people in the United States and is a core issue in the presidential race between Trump and Democrat Joe Biden. While government public health campaigns are routine, the ad blitz planned by HHS was mired from the start by involvement from department spokesman Michael Caputo, a fierce loyalist and friend of Trump with little experience in

the field. In September, a spokesman for Caputo said he was taking a medical leave from HHS as he battled cancer.

According to one memo compiled by a subcontractor to Atlas Research, one of the firms hired by HHS, Caputo suggested a series of soundbites and taglines for the campaign, including "Helping the President will Help the Country." The notes say that Caputo wanted the campaign to be "remarkable" and to rival the World War II icon Rosie the Riveter, who he said helped galvanize the U.S. against Germany.

"For us, the enemy is the virus," Caputo said, according to the memo.

The documents also show pushback from some of the federal employees leading the work, who removed Caputo from an email chain and thanked one of the contractors for dealing with a "challenging" environment.

The Democrat-led Oversight panel said Caputo was overstepping his bounds, in-

terfering in work that is supposed to be done by contract officers at the department and politicizing what is supposed to be nonpartisan.

"Of course, it is completely inappropriate to frame a taxpayer-funded ad campaign around 'helping' President Trump in the weeks and days before the election," said House Oversight Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., and Reps. James Clyburn of South Carolina and Raja Krishnamoorthi of Illinois, both subcommittee chairmen, in a letter to HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "This theme also ignores the reality that more than 220,000 Americans have died from coronavirus — a fact that should not be whitewashed in a legitimate public health message."

Azar put the entire project on hold earlier this month, telling the Oversight subcommittee led by Clyburn that it was being investigated internally.

NATION



INDONESIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS/AP

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, left, and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi pose for photographers during their meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Thursday.

In Jakarta, Pompeo lauds Indonesia for standing up to China

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo renewed the Trump administration's rhetorical onslaught against China in Indonesia on Thursday as the American presidential election looms.

With China a central theme in President Donald Trump's campaign to win a second term in just five days' time, Pompeo took aim at Chinese aggressiveness in the South China Sea, where it has advanced maritime and territorial claims over the objections of its smaller neighbors.

Speaking in Jakarta, the headquarters of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Pompeo praised Indonesia's leadership in ASEAN for pushing back on what he called China's "unlawful" claims and lauded Jakarta's

protection of its own territory. He also attacked Beijing for its treatment of religious minorities, calling China "the gravest threat to the future of religious freedom."

Delivering a speech on religious freedom in the capital of the world's most populous Muslim nation, Pompeo denounced the Chinese Communist Party for its reported mass abuses of Muslim minorities. Earlier, in an appearance with Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, Pompeo took China to task for threatening its neighbors.

"We respect freedom of the seas, sovereignty and the rule of law," he said, standing beside Marsudi. Marsudi agreed, saying "any claims should be based on universally recognized principle of international law" although she did not specifically mention China.



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NATION

FBI warns ransomware threatens health care system

Associated Press

BOSTON — Federal agencies warned that cybercriminals are unleashing a wave of data-scrambling extortion attempts against the U.S. health care system designed to lock up hospital information systems, which could hurt patient care just as nationwide cases of COVID-19 are spiking.

In a joint alert Wednesday, the FBI and two federal agencies warned that they had “credible information of an increased and imminent cybercrime threat to U.S. hospitals and health care providers.” The alert said mali-

cious groups are targeting the sector with attacks that produce “data theft and disruption of health care services.”

The cyberattacks involve ransomware, which scrambles data into gibberish that can only be unlocked with software keys provided once targets pay up. Independent security experts said it has already hobbled at least five U.S. hospitals this week, and could potentially impact hundreds more.

The offensive by a Russian-speaking criminal gang coincides with the U.S. presidential election, although there is no immediate

indication they were motivated by anything but profit.

“We are experiencing the most significant cyber security threat we’ve ever seen in the United States,” Charles Carmakal, chief technical officer of the cybersecurity firm Mandiant, said in a statement.

Alex Holden, CEO of Hold Security, which has been closely tracking the ransomware in question for more than a year, agreed that the unfolding offensive is unprecedented in magnitude for the U.S. given its timing in the heat of a contentious presidential election and the worst global pan-

demia in a century.

The federal alert was co-authored by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services.

The cybercriminals launching the attacks use a strain of ransomware known as Ryuk, which is seeded through a network of zombie computers called Trickbot that Microsoft began trying to counter earlier in October. U.S. Cyber Command has also reportedly taken action against Trickbot. While Microsoft has had considerable success knocking its command-and-control servers

offline through legal action, analysts say criminals have still been finding ways to spread Ryuk.

Holden said he alerted federal law enforcement Friday after monitoring infection attempts at a number of hospitals, some of which may have beaten back infections. The FBI did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

He said the group was demanding ransoms well above \$10 million per target and that criminals involved on the dark web were discussing plans to try to infect more than 400 hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities.

Trump rule requires health plans to disclose costs up front

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Trying to pull back the veil on health care costs to encourage competition, the Trump administration on Thursday finalized a requirement for insurers to tell consumers up front the actual prices for common tests and procedures.

The late-innings policy play comes just days ahead of Election Day as President Donald Trump has been hammered on health

care by Democratic challenger Joe Biden for the administration’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic and its unrelenting efforts to overturn “Obamacare,” the 2010 law providing coverage to more than 20 million people.

A related Trump administration price disclosure requirement applying to hospitals is facing a federal lawsuit from the industry, alleging coercion and interference with business practices.

The idea behind the new regulations on insurers is to empower patients to become better consumers of health care, thereby helping to drive down costs.

But the requirements would take effect gradually over a four-year period, and patients face a considerable learning curve to make cost-versus-quality decisions about procedures like knee replacements or hernia repairs. Add to that political uncertainty

about the policy’s survival if Trump doesn’t get reelected, and the whole effort is running into skepticism.

Administration officials are adamant the changes will stand, arguing the goal of price transparency transcends political partisanship.

“It will be impossible to walk backwards on this,” Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said. “How do you fight

transparency on prices? How do you actually articulate the argument that you should conceal what something costs from the person trying to purchase it?”

Insurance companies contend that the rules will boomerang economically, driving up costs. Hospitals and doctors now accepting discounted rates will press to get paid more once they see what their upper-end competitors are getting.

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WORLD

Tanzania's opposition candidate rejects election results

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Whatever happened on Wednesday wasn't an election and was like "splitting in the face of democracy," Tanzania's leading opposition candidate said Thursday, rejecting the vote after alleging widespread irregularities. The other main opposition party announced the arrests of several leaders amid concerns about post-election turmoil.

Many across Africa have watched in dismay at what they've described as Tanzania's abandonment of its long reputation of democratic ideals under populist President John Magufuli. He leads in early results as he seeks a second five-year term.

Opposition leader Tundu Lissu of the CHADEMA party also appeared to warn of unrest: "Those in power are telling Tanzanians, 'If you want change, look for it

another way, not through the ballot box,'" he told reporters. "The message they are sending is, 'Use force if you can ... We won't let you win through democracy.'"

He added, however, that unlike the government, "we do not have the instruments of violence," and he called for protests by democratic means. He also urged international condemnation of the election process.

Lissu, who survived an assassination attempt in 2017 and returned from exile this year, said he won't accept the election results, asserting that thousands of observers were turned away from polling stations and those who managed to enter were not given official data.

The other top opposition party, ACT Wazalendo, announced that its presidential candidate in the semi-autonomous region of Zanzibar, Seif Sharif Hamad, was

arrested Thursday for the second time in a week, along with other party leaders.

Police did not immediately comment but confirmed at least 70 arrests in the past two days in election-related incidents. Streets into Zanzibar's main city, Stone Town, were blocked.

"Tanzania in full blown one party dictatorship. We shall resist this," ACT Wazalendo chair Zitto Kabwe tweeted, later alleging that one of the arrested party members was badly beaten. "I ask the international community NOT to recognize this Tanzanian election."

The East African nation's electoral commission has denied allegations of voting irregularities in one of Africa's most populous countries and fastest-growing economies. Election results could be announced Friday.

The commission released re-

sults for 18 out of 264 constituencies, showing Magufuli with the early lead. The ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party, in power since independence in 1961, also has won 51 of the 52 parliament seats for which counting has been completed. The CHADEMA opposition party chair, Freeman Mbowe, lost his seat.

Some Magufuli critics have expressed concerns that if the ruling party wins two-thirds of parliament seats, the president might try to change the constitu-

tion to extend the two-term limit.

The election turnout appeared to be below 50%, according to the early figures. Some 29 million people registered to vote.

Magufuli has been widely criticized for repressive measures against dissenting voices, including a ban on opposition political gatherings in 2016 and the targeting of media outlets.

Opposition figures ahead of the vote were arrested, blocked from traveling to rallies or even disqualified.



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Japan plans to release Fukushima water

Associated Press

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said Wednesday that his government is working on the final details of a plan to release massive amounts of radioactive water being stored at the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant, a decision that has been delayed by protests.

More than nine years after the disaster, the government still hasn't made clear what it will do with the water at the plant, though a release into the ocean has been largely speculated on in recent years.

"We cannot put off our decision forever without making a plan," Suga told a parliamentary session Wednesday, saying the plant is running out of storage space. "Based on discussions and expertise we've had, we will further deepen our discussion and responsibly make a decision at an appropriate time."

A government panel in February issued a report recommending releasing the water into the ocean as the most realistic plan. The government and the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., or TEPCO, say all radioactive materials but tritium can be safely removed, and that tritium is largely harmless.

The plant now has more than 1.2 million tons of the water stored in 1,000 huge tanks that occupy a large amount of space at the plant. TEPCO says that it will run out of space in the summer of 2022 and that the tanks hamper the decommissioning process.

Suga did not give a timeline, though a decision is expected in weeks, if not months. An actual release would be about two years away because TEPCO still has to set up a facility for a release and have it authorized by the Nuclear Regulation Authority, officials said. A controlled release of the water will take decades.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Harley-Davidson now in electric bicycle market

WI MILWAUKEE — Iconic motorcycle maker Harley-Davidson is jumping into the hot market for electric bicycles.

The Milwaukee-based company has unveiled a new brand known as Serial 1 Cycle Co., taking the nickname of Harley-Davidson's first motorcycle.

Serial 1 brand director Aaron Frank says the e-bicycle market is going gangbusters right now, largely due to COVID-19.

"With the pandemic, people were looking for a safe way to exercise and get out of the house, and people in cities were looking for a way to safely commute that didn't involve a subway or a bus," Frank said.

The electric bikes have a small motor and a battery that generates power assistance beyond just pedaling.

The Serial 1 bikes are designed and developed in Milwaukee and are manufactured in Taiwan. They are expected to hit the market early next year. Prices have not yet been disclosed.

Police: Man stole car with baby inside

VA RICHMOND — A man accused of stealing a running vehicle with a baby inside has been arrested in Virginia.

Officers found the abandoned vehicle about 10 minutes after it was stolen in Richmond early Monday morning, the city's police department said in a news release. The child was unharmed.

Police arrested Stefan R. Dunkley in connection with the incident after a brief foot chase Monday evening, the release said.

Man with 28 DWIs dies after leaving prison

MN MINNEAPOLIS — A Minnesota man with 28 arrests for drunken driving has died weeks after leaving prison for his latest offense.

An online obituary says Danny Lee Bettcher, 67, of New York Mills, died last week from what his family said were natural causes.

Bettcher was released from the Moose Lake prison on Sept. 28 and placed on supervised release after he was sentenced in 2018 by an Otter Tail County judge for driving drunk, his 28 offense.

Bettcher had a valid driver's license despite spending much of the past 10 years in and out of jails and prison for drinking and driving, the Star Tribune reported.

His obituary said Bettcher's "life was described as 'upward,'" but that he "would help anyone with anything and deep down had a heart of gold."

Bettcher served in the Minnesota National Guard.

Inmate fired officer's gun outside hospital

AZ PHOENIX — Authorities said a Maricopa County inmate took away an officer's gun and fired one round outside a Phoenix hospital a week



MARK LENNIHAN/AP

Best bike balance

A cyclist, who gave his name as Lehboy, balances a basketball on his head while riding in Brooklyn on Tuesday in New York.

ago when she was taken out of jail for a medical appointment.

No one was injured in the Oct. 20 shooting, and officers were able to take back the gun.

Jovana Kelsey McCreary is accused of grabbing the officer's handgun as she was about to be brought back to jail.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, whose officers had taken McCreary to the Maricopa Medical Center, said the inmate had to be taken to a sheriff's van in a wheelchair because she had become uncooperative.

McCreary, who was restrained with handcuffs, shackles and a belly belt, stood up and tried to walk away when officers were leading her into the van. As officers steered her to the back of the van, a struggle ensued in which McCreary took the gun out of the officer's holster and fired one shot.

Felon flees stop, drags police on car windows

FL DAYTONA BEACH — A convicted Florida felon ended up dragging two officers who were hanging onto his car windows when he fled a traffic stop, police said.

Officers saw Kary Jarvis, 39, run a stop sign last Friday and pulled him over. When police asked to search the car, he sped away while both officers hung onto the windows. He dragged one about 30 feet. The other officer fell and hit a tree, according to Daytona Beach Police.

Jarvis crashed into a retention ditch and was taken into cus-

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The approximate value of hockey gear that police say a man stole from a rink in Chandler, Ariz., last year. They said Clayton Wayne Davis, 40, is accused of stealing a 14-foot trailer containing the gear from Ice Den and his pickup truck, police said.

Den Chandler on Aug. 11, 2019. Video surveillance showed the tattooed suspect and his pickup truck, police said. They said the trailer and all the gear that belonged to a youth hockey team were recovered in Phoenix the next day. An anonymous tip led police to arrest Davis last week in Scottsdale.

tody at gunpoint. The officers were treated at the hospital and released. He was charged with aggravated battery on a law enforcement officer and aggravated fleeing and eluding, trafficking in a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was being held in jail without bail.

Museum to study, then restore dinosaur skull

CO DENVER — The Denver Museum of Nature and Science has announced it will study a triceratops skull known as Pops for up to a year before returning it to Weld County for residents to enjoy.

Museum curator Joe Serlich contacted the county in 2018 about studying the fossil and said that in exchange, he would clean and repair it to ensure it stays in good condition. The Greeley Tribune reported this week.

Kenneth Carpenter, a University of Colorado paleontologist and professor, discovered Pops in 1982 near Briggsdale, about 40 miles east of Fort Collins. Roland

Taurean Davis, of Kennesaw, is wanted for aggravated assault with a firearm, kidnapping and false imprisonment on the Wednesday incident. Police are looking for Davis, but advise people not to approach him, as they believe he is armed.

The victim told police that Davis left him naked outside and took his phone, posting video of the incident on the victim's own social media account.

Developer drops plans for large wind farm

WI TOWN OF JEFFERSON — The developer of a controversial wind farm in Green County has scrapped plans for the project.

EDF Renewables had planned to build 24 turbines in the Town of Jefferson near the Illinois border. The wind farm, one of only a handful under development in Wisconsin, would have been the sixth-largest in the state, with a capacity of 65 megawatts.

Participating landowners have received letters notifying them that EDF Renewables was terminating its lease agreements. The developer did not say why.

The project was expected to generate about \$250,000 a year in tax revenue for the town and county in addition to some \$300,000 a year in rent for participating landowners, the State Journal reported. It also generated opposition from some residents who feared it would affect property values and health.

From wire reports

Mapelli, owner of the property where it was found, donated the fossil to the county.

It is the first complete triceratops skull found in the state, according to county officials. Scientists believe it is about 60 million years old.

The Denver museum said the fossil will be on display in the laboratory window as part of the Prehistoric Journey Exhibit, and photos and discoveries are expected to be shared on social media.

Pops is expected to be back on display at the Weld County Administration Building in late 2021.

Police: Student beat man and recorded it

GA ALBANY — Police in southwest Georgia have issued warrants for an Albany State University student who they say took a man into an apartment, stripped him naked and beat him with a handgun, then posted a video recording of the beating online.

Albany police say 19-year-old

WEEKEND



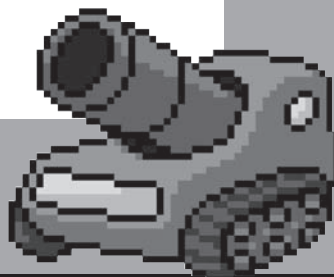
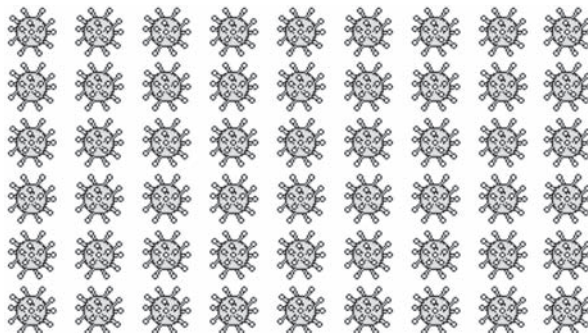
Sean Ono Lennon
remixes dad's music
Page 32-33



TAKING AIM AT COVID MISCONCEPTIONS

Gaming competition results in 51 titles
about virus that entertain, educate

Page 22



WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECH

Keep the friendly skies fever free

Airports testing temperature scanning's effectiveness in slowing COVID-19 spread



LYNDA M. GONZALEZ, DALLAS MORNING NEWS/TNS

Southwest Airlines customer service supervisor Arshad Khan goes through a temperature check at a Wello temperature check kiosk at an employee screening station at Dallas Love Field.

By KYLE ARNOLD
The Dallas Morning News

A camera in the security lines at Dallas Love Field is scanning every passerby for elevated temperatures, in a test by the airport and Southwest Airlines to find out if it can detect sick people before they board flights.

In the back hallways, employees are getting temperature checks at kiosks before they start work each day, trying to keep sick employees out of the airport, too.

As airlines, companies and governments scramble to reopen a battered economy facing the eighth month of a worldwide pandemic, airports are now the frontline for evolving thermal imaging technologies designed to pick out infected travelers before they can spread COVID-19 further.

Temperature scanning device makers such as Dallas-based Wello Inc. and Beaumont's Infrared Cameras Inc. have suddenly been inundated with requests for their technology. Even small restaurants, hotels and schools are asking about it.

"It's not just convention centers and airlines," said Gary Strahan, CEO of Infrared Cameras Inc. "It's impacting so many different places. We have to do something."

Thermal cameras and other technologies that can pick out COVID-19 cases are a Holy Grail for an airline industry that has lost 70 percent of its business and is facing another quarter of multibillion-dollar losses, along with any other business or institution trying to keep people safe.

Airlines are trying hard to find ways to limit the spread of COVID-19 and assure governments that travelers aren't bringing the disease with them.

Fort Worth, Texas-based American Airlines will let passengers bound for Hawaii take rapid COVID-19 tests at DFW International Airport. The airline is also working on a similar program for travelers to Europe and Latin America.

International travel is at a standstill as the European Union and many Caribbean nations also have restrictions that effectively cut off air travel. The peak holiday period at the end of the year, when warm-weather destinations make an outsized proportion of their tourism profits, has some Caribbean islands making plans to recapture part of the region's estimated \$44 billion in losses.

Airlines have gone to great lengths to convince travelers that airplanes are safe for travel, despite being a target early in the pandemic. Planes have air systems that bring in new air every three minutes. Airlines are applying antibacterial coatings

to high-contact areas in their cabins. And some are still underselling flights to leave middle seats open.

Dallas-based Wello was hired by Dallas Love Field to put infrared temperature kiosks at its employee entrances, something that is gaining traction at businesses nationwide, said Wello founder and CEO Rik Heller. The Dallas Morning News uses Wello kiosks at its printing plant in Plano.

"We started with hospitals and moved into the workplace," Heller said. "The workplace is the key to the economy, and now it's moving into big places like airports that have large movements of people."

Wello now has about 3,000 customers using touchless kiosks that scan employee badges and then use the infrared scanners to check temperatures. Those who

pass the test are given a sticker.

"We really wanted to take a proactive approach in making sure we were doing everything we can for our employees and passengers," said Marissa Sanchez, the airport's interim assistant director.

The airport hasn't caught anyone yet with COVID-19, but did send an employee home who ended up having strep throat.

The technology scanning passengers at Love Field is a partnership between Southwest Airlines and the city-owned airport, using cameras from Infrared Cameras and Irving-based NEC Corp. of America, a technology company that develops facial recognition technology.

NEC and Infrared Cameras signed a \$37.5 million deal to put the systems in airports in Hawaii, a state that has been

vigilant about stopping the spread of COVID-19 despite the island chain's heavy reliance on tourism dollars.

Southwest Airlines spent four months testing thermal cameras at Love Field, starting in July. Since it began individual screening on Oct. 1, Southwest said it has tested 40,000 passengers and none had a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

Still, Infrared Cameras' Strahan said thermal imaging technology won't be 100 percent effective. The goal is to identify enough travelers who are sick to help lower the spread.

"You are still going to need face masks and social distancing and testing," Strahan said. "But the airline industry is decimated, so they need a lot of things working together to make people feel better about flying again."

GADGET WATCH

Accessories to protect your new iPhone 12

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

With any iPhone launch comes the fun of getting accessories to dress them up and keep them protected. And with the recent launch of the iPhone 12, there's plenty to choose from.

Smartish is an iPhone accessory company known for clever, innovative products that are useful in so many environments.

Smartish is never short on great names, and the Dancing Queen (\$29.99) is the leader of the pack. It's described as a multitasker, which it certainly is with storage for a night out on the town. This includes the iPhone, ID, cash and credit cards. It's made with an adjustable neck/shoulder strap and removable wristlet for customizing it for different environments.

The Gripzilla (\$19.99) is Smartish's

king of phone cases since it's built to withstand daily abuse. Along with grooved sides and a textured surface, Gripzilla allows wireless charging and has cushioned corners to absorb some of the blow when the accidental drops happen, which they will.

Sticking the new Sidecar (\$14.99) wallet to the outside of most smartphone cases adds storage for credits cards, cash and even a key. It's reusable with its 3M adhesive and leaves no residue behind when removed.

Online: smartish.com

Among the endless iPhone accessories from ZAGG Brands is the InvisibleShield and Gear4 case-friendly screen protectors ready to cover the front of the new iPhone 12, while preserving full touchscreen access.

The Glass Elite VisionGuard (\$49.99) is the strongest protector made, according to ZAGG. Along with the protection, there is Kastus Anti-microbial technology and Blue Light Filter built in. Gear4 cases feature RepelFlex Antimicrobial treat-



SMARTISH/TNS

The Smartish Gripzilla allows for wireless charging.



SMARTISH/TNS

Dancing Queen



ZAGG/TNS

InvisibleShield

ments to protect the cases against the growth of odor-causing bacteria and degradation from microorganisms.

The Wembley folio flip case (\$39.99) is made with recycled plastic from water bottles and provides D30 protection for the new phones for up to 10-foot drops.

According to Gear4, D30 with 5G Signal PlusTM technology is the company's latest material development engineered for optimal 5G connection. D30 with 5G Signal Plus Technology utilizes micro voids to allow a 5G signal to pass through successfully, with no compromise on drop protection.

Online: zag.com

WEEKEND: MOVIES

TREAT YOURSELF

For when the world is scarier than Halloween, stream these 12 films

By SONIA RAO
The Washington Post

Halloween is somehow one of the least scary things going on this month, so we understand if you'd rather not turn on a horror movie right now.

This writer counts herself among the Frankenweenies who would rather mark the holiday this year by watching something campy or cute, with a dash of spookiness. Or maybe cute and spooky, with a dash of camp. Regardless of the campy-cute-spooky ratio, let's just agree that Michael Myers and Co. are most unwelcome.

Here are a dozen such movies to watch now. (Note that this list omits rentals and only includes titles that are available to stream on popular services for no additional cost.)

'The Addams Family' (1991)

Streaming on Amazon, "The Addams Family" is such a classic that it isn't really necessary to describe why it's a perfect watch for Halloween, is it? There's no such thing as too much Anjelica Huston. But if for whatever reason you do feel a need to mix it up, an animated "Addams Family" film is streaming on Hulu.

'Clue' (1985)

Streaming on Amazon, "Clue" might be the pick for those who have filled their quarantine hours dusting off board games with friends and family. Like "The Addams Family," it stars Christopher Lloyd alongside others such as Tim Curry, Eileen Brennan and Madeline Kahn.

'Halloweenown' (1998)

Streaming on Disney Plus, "Halloweenown" is the pre-eminent Disney Channel Original Movie dealing with all things spooky. Sure, the channel also put out "Twitches" and "Phantom of the Megaplex," but for millennials of a certain age, Marnie Piper (as played by Kimberly J. Brown) will always be the chosen one.

'Hocus Pocus' (1993)

Streaming on Disney Plus, "Hocus Pocus" was panned by critics as an "unholy mess" and "about as much fun as celebrating Mardi Gras under the influence of candy corn." And yet it remains a beloved film to this day, perhaps thanks to the very idea of Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy playing a coven.

'Hubie Halloween' (2020)

Streaming on Netflix, "Hubie Halloween" is not the extremely bad movie Adam Sandler promised to make after the Oscars snubbed him for "Uncut Gems." Instead, it is a surprisingly warm movie featuring Sandler as a man named Hubert Dubois — Benoit Blanc is shaking! — who is simply too nice for the mean townspeople. It also stars Ray Liotta in one of his best roles since "Bee Movie" and those Chantix commercials.



"Hocus Pocus"; Disney Pictures



"The Nightmare Before Christmas"; HULTON ARCHIVE, GETTY IMAGES/TNS

'James and the Giant Peach' (1996)

Streaming on Disney Plus, "James and the Giant Peach" is a Roald Dahl adaptation produced by Tim Burton, meaning that it's more off-kilter than one might expect of an animated Disney film. All the better, no? This is, after all, a movie that begins by establishing that the protagonist's parents were eaten by a rhino.

'Kiki's Delivery Service' (1989)

"Kiki's Delivery Service" is one of many Studio Ghibli films available on HBO Max, the WarnerMedia service that launched this year. It focuses on a teenage witch who moves to a beautiful coastal town to hone her powers and features her very adorable talking cat, Jiji.

'Little Shop of Horrors' (1986)

Streaming on HBO Max, "Little Shop of Horrors" is about a nerdy flower shop worker whose Venus flytrap not only speaks but subsists on human blood. It stars Rick Moranis, most recently in the news for being randomly attacked in New York. (Thankfully, he's fine.)

'The Nightmare Before Christmas' (1993)

Streaming on Disney Plus, "The Nightmare Before Christmas" follows Jack Skellington, the king of Halloween Town, who travels through a portal to the Christmas equivalent. We're attaching the Burton disclaimer to this one as well, as it is not "cute" in the traditional sense and actually bears some similarities to "Batman Returns," Burton's bizarre film (streaming on HBO Max) that also takes place during the holidays.

'The Rocky Horror Picture Show' (1975)

Streaming on Hulu, "Rocky Horror" is the kind of fun, outrageous experience we would normally recommend you see at a midnight showing but, alas, we do not live in normal times. Home will have to do!

'Scooby-Doo' (2002)

Streaming on HBO Max, the live-action "Scooby-Doo" summons the gang to a place called Spooky Island, where they have to investigate a bunch of paranormal mysteries. Ruh-Roh. This is just one



"Hubie Halloween"; NETFLIX/AP



"Scooby!"; Warner Bros. Pictures



"What We Do in the Shadows"; TNS

of many Scooby gang movies available on the platform, including the pandemic release "Scooby!"

'What We Do in the Shadows' (2014)

Streaming on Hulu Live TV and Kanopy, "What We Do in the Shadows" is a mockumentary written and directed by Jemaine Clement and Taika Waititi, who play vampires struggling with modern-day life. The cult film was adapted into an FX series last year, so the silliness doesn't have to stop at the 90-minute mark.

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

Win your cognitive dissonance

‘Borat Subsequent Moviefilm’ adds narrative to its formula

BY CHRIS HEWITT
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

It has taken Sacha Baron Cohen 14 years to produce a “Borat” sequel. Having seen it, I’m guessing he spent a bunch of that time figuring out how to make a follow-up as bracing as the original.

“Borat Subsequent Moviefilm” is, in some ways, similar to the original mockumentary: Cohen plays the clueless Kazakhstani reporter who meanders around the U.S., interacting with Americans to reveal their inconsistencies and prejudices. But, unlike the first movie, this one is a satisfying narrative, not a collection of skits. “Subsequent Moviefilm” has a beginning, middle and a brilliant ending that involves one of America’s most beloved people in a way that I wouldn’t dream of spoiling.

Borat’s disguises are familiar, including more time in the dreaded minkini, but he still has the power to challenge our preconceptions. “Subsequent Moviefilm” reaches a kind of outrageous peak in a pair of sequences that force us to keep about five competing ideas in our heads at once.

Borat, who’s a Holocaust denier, wanders into a synagogue, planning to wait for some crazed bigot to shoot it up. While we’re grappling with the horrifying truth of that joke, he encounters elderly Judith Dim Evans, who calmly informs him she’s a Holocaust survivor. Then, she envelops him in a big hug (the movie is dedicated to Evans, who died recently and whose family has taken issue with her appearance).

So we find out that “Subsequent Moviefilm” can bring a tear to our eyes, even though Borat spends the entire movie trying to gift his adolescent daughter Tutar (billed as Irina Nowak, the actor actually seems to be Maria Bakalova) to Vice President Mike Pence. After the synagogue, Borat encounters a stranger outside a bar and, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, asks for a place to stay. Which the kindhearted man gives him. Right before we find out he’s a QAnon adherent. And maybe gay?

The movie is constantly flipping us back and forth. “Subsequent Moviefilm” hints that if we examine our



AMAZON STUDIOS/AP

Sacha Baron Cohen revisits his Kazakhstani reporter persona for more high jinks in “Borat Subsequent Moviefilm.”

own beliefs alongside those of our “opponents,” we’ll find common ground. And it challenges us to recognize that, wherever we stand on the political spectrum (Cohen, who disrupts a Pence speech and stages an interview with a leering Rudy Giuliani, is clearly no fan of the current administration), the views of others are just as complicated as our own. Or as complicated as an unsettling sequence at a debutante ball where Tutar and Borat perform a synchronized number that quickly turns disgusting. Yes, the dads and daughters at the anachronistic ball seem stuffy and weird, but do they deserve to have their big dumb event ruined in the way the film does?

And who, exactly, is privy to the staging of these stunts? When Tutar explains that she’s looking for a sugar daddy, and an “influencer” named “Macey Chanel” advises, “You want someone who has had a heart attack,” is it really possible that Chanel isn’t in on the joke? There’s so much going on in “Subsequent Moviefilm,” a good deal of it offensive, that it’s impossible to stop trying to figure out

what you make of it. Some people won’t enjoy the cognitive dissonance, but I found it exhilarating.

Cohen and director Jason Woliner give our brains some safe spaces to land. Pretty much everyone can agree on the merits of a plastic surgeon who evaluates young Tutar’s nose and breasts before coming on to her, and on a sweet day care manager named Jeanise Jones who listens to Borat’s account of his wild travels and replies with plain-spoken wisdom, “It should make your heart hurt.”

The humor in “Subsequent Moviefilm” may not land quite as hard as in “Borat,” and a couple sequences fall flat. But, as it becomes clear that Borat and Tutar are both on a bizarre consciousness-raising journey in a country that is searching for its own conscience, the sequel achieves something “Borat” didn’t: It makes your heart hurt.

“Borat Subsequent Moviefilm” is R for pervasive strong crude and sexual content, graphic nudity and language. Running time: 94 minutes. Now playing on Amazon Prime.

‘The Witches’ remake is more silly, less scary under Zemeckis

BY LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

No matter how you cut it, “The Witches” is a really disturbing tale. Not that one should expect anything else from Roald Dahl, but for some reason this story about a group of grotesquely disfigured women who hate children always seemed extra sinister even within his generally sinister oeuvre. Perhaps it’s because I happened to be a child when the Nicolas Roeg adaptation came out in 1990 and, well, let’s just say the nightmarish image of Anjelica Huston transforming into a bald, warty witch made a lasting impression. For many children of the era, Roeg’s “The Witches” was a first foray into horror, and a traumatic one at that.

This was clearly not lost on the people who hired Robert Zemeckis to do a new adaptation for another generation of children. There are scores of filmmakers who could have done their own Roeg-adjacent update, but this time they decided to soften the edges and lighten the tone. And even though the story is still fundamentally troubling (not least because there seems to be a not-so-subtle message that childless women are dangerous, child-hating demons), Zemeckis has put a brighter and more family-friendly stamp on the material.

Zemeckis shares credit for the new script with Guillermo del Toro and Kenya Barris. This unexpected but inspired



WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT/AP

Anne Hathaway, center, plays the Grand High Witch in a scene from “The Witches.”

grouping updates the story to focus on a Black family in the 1960s South. Chris Rock provides the voice of the protagonist, Hero Boy, who is recalling his experience first encountering witches as a young orphaned boy played by Jahzir Bruno. After his parents die in a car crash, he moves in with his kind Grandma (Octavia Spencer) who has her own history with witches.

When the boy has a run-in with a witch

in the local store, they flee the town to hide out at a fancy hotel. Unfortunately for them, the Grand High Witch (Anne Hathaway) has decided to hold a convention there at the same time to hatch a plan that would turn the world’s children into mice.

Hathaway goes full vamp as the Grand High Witch with an over-the-top, vaguely Eastern European accent and grand gestures to match. Although less horrific than

Huston was, Zemeckis can’t resist going big with the digital effects and gives her elaborate scars on the sides of her cheeks that open into a Venom-like mouth when she’s not in disguise. It’s more cartoon than body horror, which seems to have become a guiding principle for the whole production.

Oddly, the strongest parts of the film are before the whole witch aspect kicks in when it’s just Grandma and Hero Boy getting used to life together after the horrific loss. Spencer is an unambiguous delight. Part of you might even wish to keep a running joke in about an overweight child (who also turns into a mouse) consistently being sidetracked by his desire for more food, which just feels cruel, outdated and cheap.

Still, Zemeckis has done a fine job with the film on the whole, which was a much-needed win after the dreadful “Welcome to Marwen.” It’s not going to be as iconic as Roeg’s, but it should provide some nice family entertainment at home for Halloween. And, bonus, post-viewing nightmares and trauma should be minimal this time.

“The Witches” is rated PG for scary images/moments, language and themes. Running time: 106 minutes. Now playing on HBO Max.

WEEKEND: MOVIE REVIEWS

Mooncake memories

Chinese-set 'Over the Moon' encourages cherishing of loved ones using Western storytelling formulas

By JUSTIN CHANG
Los Angeles Times

Near the beginning of "Over the Moon," a strenuously bizarre animated riff on a classic Chinese myth, two characters discuss which ingredients to bake into their next batch of mooncakes for the Mid-Autumn Festival.

Fei Fei, who's 12 (voiced by Cathy Ang), insists on following her late mother's recipe and using melon seeds. Her father's new girlfriend, Mrs. Zhong (Sandra Oh), gently asks if they can use dates from her family's garden and is swiftly rebuffed. Fei Fei doesn't much like the woman who might be her future stepmom; if the young girl had it her way, there would be no dates of any kind in her dad's future.

"Over the Moon" begins as a sweet, lovingly detailed portrait of a Chinese family before blasting off to a busy lunar dreamscape awash in psychedelic colors, K-pop-style numbers and angry space chickens. After watching it, you might wonder if a much stronger ingredient found its way into those mooncakes.

Our first glimpse of Lunaria, the neon-drenched moon kingdom ruled by the ancient goddess of the moon, has been designed to trigger memories of Dorothy's first glimpse of Oz: a trippy Technicolor overdose that makes clear we've left Kansas — and China — firmly behind. "The Wizard of Oz" isn't the



Fei Fei (Cathy Ang) and Gobi (Ken Jeong), a dog with a stretchable tongue, star in "Over the Moon."

only family-friendly classic referenced in the Chinese-set, English-language movie that dutifully grafts Western storytelling formulas onto Eastern folklore. The derivations aren't surprising. The director Glen Keane, making his feature debut, is a longtime Disney animator; his co-director, John Kahrs, is a Disney and Pixar veteran.

"Over the Moon" strategically explores grief as both premise and theme. The emphasis on grief has a real-life inspiration. "Over the Moon" is the final screenplay written by Audrey Wells ("The Hate U Give")

who died of cancer in 2018 — a tragedy that ripples poignantly through the opening scenes of young Fei Fei, her father (John Cho) and her mother (Ruthie Ann Miles), who becomes ill and dies not long after we meet her.

Four years later, Fei Fei still cherishes her mom's memory, especially her stories about Chang'e, who famously drank an elixir of immortality and ascended to the moon, where she was forced to spend eternity pining for her mortal lover, the archer Houyi.

That legend, retold and commemorated annually during

the Mid-Autumn Festival, thus carries a particular resonance for Fei Fei, who sees in Chang'e a mythological echo of her mom, a woman who must never be forgotten or replaced.

The early scenes of Fei Fei's home life — full of warmth and color, family and food — are easily the picture's best. Things get rather creakier once Fei Fei, a top student with a particular aptitude for science, decides to build a rocket ship that will take her to the moon, so that she can prove that Chang'e really exists.

After some resourceful do-it-yourself astrophysics, a wink to

Georges Méliès and the benevolent intervention of a couple of winged space lions, Fei Fei finds herself on the lunar surface. And lo, Chang'e does in fact exist, visualized here as a towering, elaborately coiffed pop superdiva, given a full-throated voice by "Hamilton's" Phillipa Soo.

Prono to fits of temper and stardust tears, she dwells in a brightly hued palace that resembles an arcade-game Candyland, from singing-and-dancing gumpdocs to squeaky-voiced sentient mooncakes.

There are other characters too, namely Mrs. Zhong's son, Chin (Robert G. Chiu), a likably rambunctious tagalong whose narrative function is to wear down his sister-to-be's defenses. And I haven't yet mentioned the expressive-eyed rabbits, the portentous crane, the army of giant floating frogs or the fast-talking green dog (Ken Jeong) with the stretchable-faity tongue.

The problem with "Over the Moon" isn't that it doesn't make enough sense; if anything, it makes far too much. Even its most surreal flights of fancy are tethered to a ploddingly diagrammed story whose indisputable lessons — cherish the ones you love, and also make room for more of them — are driven home with dispiriting obviousness. It'll leave you craving a mooncake, and also a movie that feels less beholden to recipes.

"Over the Moon" is rated PG for some thematic elements and mild action. Running time: 99 minutes. "Over the Moon" is now available on Netflix.

'Letter to You' a look at Springsteen's process for latest album

By GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

Frank Sinatra may have had the September of his years, but Bruce Springsteen is burrowing even deeper into the calendar with the reverential documentary "Bruce Springsteen's Letter to You," which looks at the making of his latest album and laments the inevitable losses that come with the passage of time.

Shot in sharp, shadowed black and white, including a few too many drone shots that survey the barren, snow-covered woods near Springsteen's New Jersey recording studio, "Letter to You" mulls over the notions of holding on, letting go and making peace with waning existence.

"Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray to God my soul to keep," Springsteen says, remembering the bedtime petition of his youth. "And if I die before I wake, I pray to God my soul to take." He pauses. "For if I die before I wake..." I never cared for that part."

Springsteen, 71, assembled his longtime group, the E Street Band, for five days of recording last November. They apparently knocked out the album's 12 tracks in just four sessions, making like the Beatles, as Springsteen consigliere Steven Van Zandt put it, finishing a song every three hours. (I have a hard time believing that Spring-

steen, a renowned perfectionist, didn't go back and endlessly tinker with the tracks. But when the legend becomes fact, print the legend.)

There's a fair amount of legend burnishing in "Letter to You."

Directed by Thom Zimny, who has worked with Springsteen on numerous documentaries and music videos for the past 15 years, the movie builds on the well-rehearsed retrospective found in Springsteen's 2017 Broadway show, presenting the Boss in winter, the fleeced collar of his designer denim jacket turned up to protect him from the cold.

The Springsteen who used to scream, "Are you loose?" at his marathon concerts is long gone. He remains vital. But, in some important ways, he's constrained by the image of his own making.

"Letter to You" documents Springsteen teaching the band — including OG members Van Zandt, pianist Roy Bittan, drummer Max Weinberg and bassist Gary Tallent — several of the songs on the titular album, which, like the film, dropped Oct. 23. Some of the songs are indeed about death (Springsteen was shaken by the 2018 passing of George Theiss, leaving him the last surviving member of his first band, the Castiles); others, like the title track, are love letters to his long-standing comrades in arms.

Because it's Springsteen, there's also a song that uses a train as a metaphor,

which also includes a reference to Cain (who, as longtime students will remember, was raised by Adam) and holy water.

There are a couple of fine songs here ("Ghosts," a celebration of life in the midst of loss, is the standout), but the allure of "Letter to You" is the entrance it provides into Springsteen's creative process with the E Street Band at this point in time, a marked contrast to the anguished labor seen in Zimny's first Springsteen doc, which chronicled the recording of the make-or-break 1975 "Born to Run" album.

Throughout the film, Springsteen praises his bandmates ("they can float like a butterfly and sting like a bee") in voiceover segments that feel a bit more showprow than they do when he unleashes them from the stage. But when Zimny lets the images speak for themselves, "Letter to You" achieves a moving power.

Each recording session ends with a toast, the E Streeters honoring their music, their friendship and those who have passed on. Watching them savor these moments is to bear witness to a kind of holy communion.

"We're taking this thing 'til we're all in the box, boys," Springsteen tells the band on the last night. That's a promise that we can all raise a glass to.

"Bruce Springsteen's Letter to You" is rated PG. Running time: 1 hour, 30 minutes. "Letter to You" is streaming on Apple TV+.



APPLE TV+ / INTS

Bruce Springsteen appears in his new documentary, "Letter to You."

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

A human focus

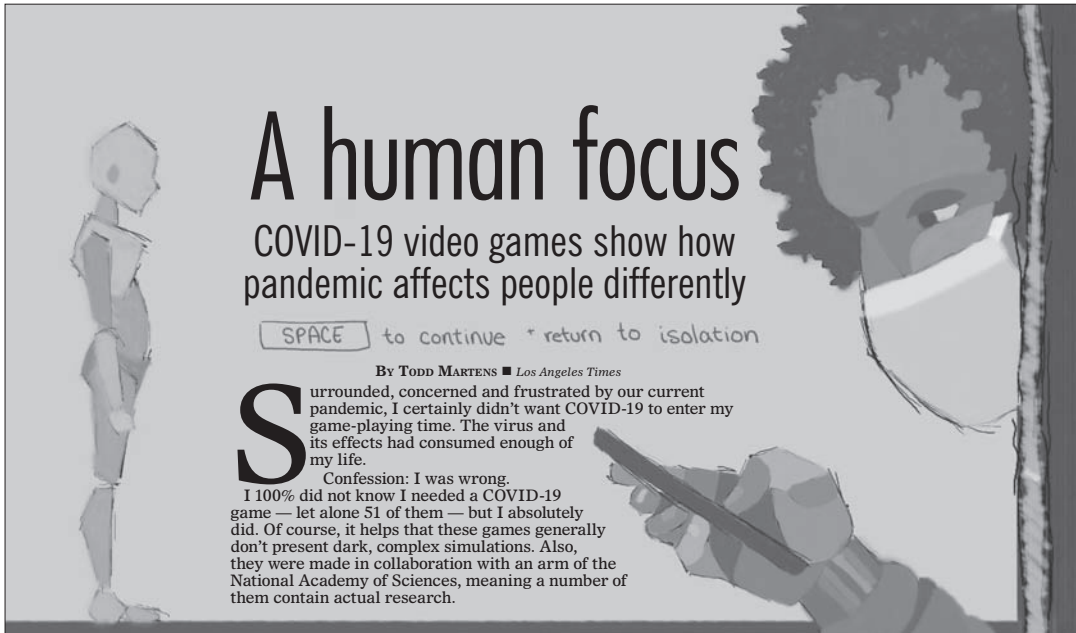
COVID-19 video games show how pandemic affects people differently

SPACE to continue + return to isolation

By TODD MARTENS ■ Los Angeles Times

Surrounded, concerned and frustrated by our current pandemic, I certainly didn't want COVID-19 to enter my game-playing time. The virus and its effects had consumed enough of my life.

Confession: I was wrong. I 100% did not know I needed a COVID-19 game — let alone 51 of them — but I absolutely did. Of course, it helps that these games generally don't present dark, complex simulations. Also, they were made in collaboration with an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, meaning a number of them contain actual research.



BAKIARA/TNS

Virginia Commonwealth University Adjunct Professor Chelsea Brits created *Together* as a way to manage her frustrations over those who do not take the pandemic seriously.

The collection of mostly short vignettes came out of Jamming the Curve, a competition spearheaded by the team behind IndieCade, the yearly celebration of play that would be happening this month in Santa Monica, Calif., if the events of the world had not intervened. Participants were challenged to build a game from scratch, known in game development circles as a game jam, that somehow reflected our pandemic and the data and science that seek to understand it.

To ensure that these short experiments in game-making were fact-based, the game makers not only had access to epidemiological models developed by Georgia Tech, but also could consult with a team of medical and health experts organized with input from the National Academy of Sciences' cultural education-focused LabX department.

The best of the 51 games felt as if they were opening a dialogue, allowing me to communicate digitally about topics I wasn't always vocal about, or even desired to be vocal about, in my daily life. Play in this instance became a much-needed exhale, whether I was entering the headspace of someone stubbornly wearing a mask below their nose, trying to stop the spread of disease on an alien planet, witnessing the life of a nurse, or seeing how attempts to control an outbreak among a species is akin to herding cats.

Cat Colony Crisis, for instance, is cutesy chaos. Don't assume anything, I told myself, as Ms. Cat, a calico, sneezed. Maybe

Ms. Cat just has a preexisting condition? But why isn't Ms. Cat wearing a mask? And, gosh dang it, why is Ms. Cat starting fights and cuddling with other cats? A pandemic, after all, is no time to behave like cats. Being a cat is no excuse, Ms. Cat!

When it comes to educating people about COVID-19, says Rick Thomas of LabX, a big challenge is the invisibility of the virus and the struggle to recognize when we're making a difference, when we're being overly panicked and when we're simply being selfish.

Games, specifically their ability to visualize abstract subjects as well as their need to ask players to lean in and take an active role, can close that gap, says Thomas.

"Games are good to help combat COVID because games do a good job of translating data into stories and helping show people how individual decisions can impact larger issues," says Thomas. "That feedback is missing in normal day-to-day interactions with COVID. You don't actually know if you got someone sick by not wearing your mask because there's a several-day disconnect. You're not being told whether what you're doing is harmful, but in a game you can make the connection clearly. That's why we got involved."

The submitted games — most can be played free via a browser, though some require a download for a PC or Mac — largely avoid the tendency of more mainstream games to put the empha-

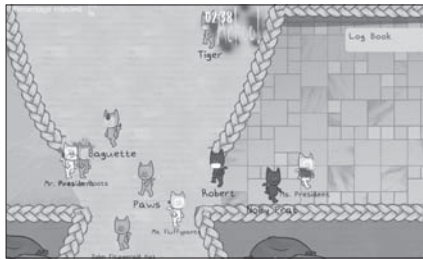
sis on a global pandemic spread and how to manage assets. Here, the games generally have a human focus.

The Covid Express feels like my daily life — that is, having to navigate among the unmasked in public spaces or on mass transit. *PandeManager* is more complex, asking you to survive one year as mayor amid shifting policy decisions. *Smash the Curve* is influenced by the classic game *Breakout*, where COVID-19 graphs replace the standard bricks, and powerups come in the form of masks and contact tracing.

For those new to the game jam space, be prepared for an amateur, do-it-yourself feel. The games are made quickly, and the goal is to express an idea through play rather than create a slick, finished product. Yet the most polished of the games, such as *Outbreak in Space*, allow players to go deep in experiments with variables.

Against a sci-fi backdrop, *Outbreak in Space* shows us what happens when a certain percentage of the population doesn't wear masks, isn't isolated, or continues to engage in activities without social distancing, all of it underwritten by Georgia Tech's real-life-inspired simulation equations. But even a simpler title such as *Everyday Hero*, which boasts an old-fashioned arcade feel in which we must keep descending figures distanced and masked, can put a fanciful spin on science.

"People are just walking down



Devil's Cider Games

Cat Colony Crisis uses felines and data to reflect the COVID-19 crisis.

the screen and you're trying to keep them far apart. Then it adds the variable of masks. Then it adds the variable of sick people. Then you have to prioritize," says IndieCade's Celia Pearce, a game designer and professor at Northeastern University. Pearce helped organize Jamming the Curve as well as a slate of online IndieCade talks and demos.

"It's a little bit of a plate-spinning game, but it uses real data," Pearce says of *Everyday Hero*. "At the end, you get a number: 'This is how many people got infected because you didn't move them far apart.' That drives home the same game we all play when we go to the market, where I'll be walking around trying to stay six feet away from everybody. It's a game that makes you think about your personal space."

Scrolling the Jamming the Curve Discord channel reveals conversations between game makers and medical experts that feel more like a public health FAQ than a game development event; developers asked questions on a range of topics, including mask efficiency, viral load and persistent immunologic responses.

Some games deal with those weighty topics. *Lab Hero* is a colorful simulation of a medical professional's challenges and focuses on keeping people distanced, treating patients and researching a vaccine. Others were a more personal route. *Nonessential*, for instance, is an intimate-conversation game about the ways in which we deflect our worries and avoid topics of mental health.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

FROM PAGE 22

One of the most stressful aspects of COVID-19 prevention, says LabX's Thomas, is the fact that the most helpful thing to do is often nothing — to stay home and avoid others. Nonessential unfolds as a phone call with someone going that route.

"What's isolation like, and how does that affect people's underlying mental health problems?" says Seattle-based indie developer Brad Kraeling of his game. "All of this can amplify and stir things up, and bring out a lot of anger in people. I wanted to make a game about someone's mental health, but in a really casual, talking-to-a-friend way."

For epidemiologist Sarah Matthews, who spent more than a decade working for the Florida Department of Health and is currently finishing a PhD at the University of Central Florida, she's already had to work through multiple outbreaks, including the latest. She wasn't so sure she had much space for games in her adult life, but after serving as a mentor on Jamming the Curve she's a firm believer, both in how games can reach the public and how they can help health professionals better communicate complex, difficult subjects.

"This is powerful stuff," she says. "Not being a gamer, and looking at it from an outside lens, gave me a new respect for it. This technology can revolutionize how we do things. If you remember when you were a kid, you learned through play. That resonated with me. I recognized that again. You can learn through play. It's more motivational and more engaging than I first thought."

She jokes that some of the games, especially those that simulate the public not following health guidelines, can be therapeutic for medical professionals who are seeing their advice go unheeded. The game Together dealt with such a topic, showing how the lives of two people with opposite views of the pandemic — one very nervous and another fed up with distancing, masks and closures — will intersect whether they like it or not.

Together, says designer Chelsea Britis, an adjunct professor with the Virginia Commonwealth University's communication arts department, was a way for her to manage her own frustrations with those she saw not taking the pandemic seriously. It comes, however, from a place of compassion, to help others see a different point of view. The work mirrored some of my own concerns, and I found it comforting to explore them in a game.

"Games give you a kind of safe space," says Britis. "I try to approach it so you don't know it's a serious game. So I play with a playful attitude. And games open up the opportunity to have a conversation with yourself when these serious issues are brought in it. The game starts the conversation."

To play or download any of the 51 games, or to the Jamming the Curve submissions page online at <http://ich.jam/jamming-the-curve/entries>.



In *Crash Bandicoot 4: It's About Time*, players can assume the role of Crash, right, his sister, Coco, left, or a few other characters.

Modern take on a classic

Crash Bandicoot sequel sticks to its polished but flawed platforming

By GIBSON CACHO
The Mercury News

When it comes to video game mascots, Mario will always be king while Sonic runs a close second. Master Chief is part of that constellation and, somewhere down the line, fans end up with Crash Bandicoot.

The one-time face of PlayStation has never reached that rarefied mascot strata, but his résumé is surprisingly expansive. He's appeared on kart racers, party games and spinoffs. No longer a console-exclusive mascot, he has a following loyal enough that when Vicarious Visions remastered his first three titles as the Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy, it was a hit. Name recognition and nostalgia are powerful things.

It was successful enough that Activision published the first new Crash Bandicoot platformer in more than a decade. Crash Bandicoot 4: It's About Time follows the events of the original trilogy, where major villains Uka Uka, Doctor Neo Cortex and N. Tropy are imprisoned. The most powerful of them, Uka Uka, tries to break free and in the process cracks the dimensional barrier.

It creates a rift in space-time that allows Cortex and N. Tropy to escape. They discover the multiverse and set out to conquer it. Aku Aku, Crash's mentor, senses the disruption and that brings Crash, his sister, Coco, and others on a romp through alternate timelines. They'll discover familiar faces from other worlds and come across locales new and old.

The premise allows the developer, Toys for Bob, to play around with the lore. Tawna, Crash's girlfriend, gets a better backstory and more prominent role as the hero in an alternate universe where the bandicoots are dead. Elsewhere, Cortex temporarily teams up with Crash and Dingodile, a foe turned

friend, joins the fray as he's caught up in the dimensional fighting.

Most of the time, players will control Crash or Coco through 43 main levels. The platforming has the strengths and the drawbacks of its predecessors. It's not exactly free-form exploration like Super Mario 64,

but instead, it's more linear as players traverse levels through 10 worlds. Players have wiggle room to move around, but the game's design can be frustrating as they learn the quirk of the jump mechanics.

Players will be jumping into the foreground or background, and those leaps are difficult to judge. Crash Bandicoot ups the ante in later stages layering in new obstacles such as a rail or new types of boxes. The biggest changes come from the Quantum Masks, masks that appear at certain intervals and grant you specific powers for a limited time. For example, one can bend gravity and another can slow down time. I especially loved the latter because it requires forethought and precision: During a snowy level, to find my way across a chasm I had to slow down time and climb atop falling ice slabs to get to the other side.

Crash Bandicoot 4 progresses in a way that lets players learn each power, but that mastery is tested further in the campaign as they must use each Quantum Mask consecutively. The difficulty, especially in Cortex Castle, is ridiculous at times. It feels impossible, but this sequel is built in such a way that players learn from their failures and allows them to succeed as long as they can execute. Playing Crash Bandicoot on the Modern

setting, in which players have infinite lives and generous checkpoints, is a must. For veterans and those who want a challenge, Retro brings back the old, brutal rules, in which players have limited lives and must restart from the beginning.

On Modern, I was able to explore more and experiment with how to solve the more challenging obstacles. I experimented with solutions for the complicated puzzles room that required precise timing or pinpoint platforming. Other times, I stumbled upon hidden paths and found collectible gems that unlock new skins for all the characters, giving them a different look.

Some of the best stages are the Flashback levels, which let players control Tawna, Cortex and Dingodile. The first half of these stages are original and put these secondary characters in the spotlight. They highlight their unique move sets and abilities, creating a nice change of pace from the normal bandicoot gameplay.

The Flashbacks show an alternate perspective of a level players have already played.

As one probably can tell, players shouldn't go into Crash Bandicoot 4 expecting great storytelling. The story is secondary to the polished but flawed platforming. Measuring and executing jumps in the series has always been frustrating, and some parts of the levels are built on execution after trial and error. For nostalgia's sake, Toys for Bob sticks with tried-and-true gameplay instead of going with something more experimental.

Despite that, Crash Bandicoot 4 has a way of sinking its claws into players, and the collectibles are the carrot that will push players to test their skills to destroy every crate or grab the Wumpa fruit. It's a safe formula for a franchise that's regaining its footing.

Platforms: PlayStation 4, Xbox One
Online: crashbandicoot.com/crash4

Activision



WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Venice's beauty might be too much for some

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

For some, the beauty of Venice can be too much. The 19th-century French novelist and art critic Stendhal became physically ill in Italy, overcome by trying to absorb it all. He gave his name to a syndrome all travelers risk.

Arlene had a classic case of Stendhal Syndrome. Many years ago, she was on one of our tours a day ahead of the tour I was leading. Throughout the trip, from Amsterdam to the Rhine to the castles of Bavaria, she left me notes and messages describing her enjoyment, which approached ecstasy. In the Tirol, she left me a postcard — which I still keep on my office wall — of hang gliders soaring through the Alps past King Ludwig's fairy-tale castle of Neuschwanstein. She circled a distant glider and marked it, "This is me!"

Arlene's tour arrived in Venice, followed by my group the next day. As usual, we got off the vaporetto at the Rialto Bridge stop, and I marched quickly ahead of the group to the hotel I arranged room assignments, so the Neuschwanstein gang could immediately go to their rooms and relax. As I approached the hotel, a chill filled the

alley. The boys at the corner gelato stand looked at me in horror, as if I were about to be gunned down.

Then, from the dark end of the alley, I saw her. Sprinting at me was an American, hair flying like a Botticelli maiden, barefoot, shirt half off, greeting me as if she were a drunk bride waiting for her groom. It was Arlene.

I climbed with her up the long stairway to the hotel lobby, humoring her as she babbled about how she loved Venice and she loved me and life was so wonderful. My friend Sergio, who ran the hotel, said simply, "Okay, Rick, now she's yours."

Arlene had flipped out the day before. Her tour guide opted to leave her in Venice and let me handle the problem. Sergio had to watch her all day long. Talking me to her room, an exhausted Sergio explained, "She threw her passport and room key from the breakfast room into the Grand Canal. Look at this room." She had been given the small room normally reserved for bus drivers. Strewn with dainties and cute knickknacks, it looked like a wind chime sound.

Sergio said if she continued to run half-naked through the streets, she'd be arrested. A doctor on the tour sedated her



DOMINIC ARIZONA BONUCCELLI/Rick Steves' Europe

It's hard to beat Venice for romance, especially at sunset. Pictured: the Rialto Bridge.

the best he could. A sensitive and creative person, Arlene had thrown away her regulatory drugs and overdosed on Venice.

Arlene's husband flew over and checked her out of the hospital. With the help of her medication, she recovered and went on to continue her love affair with Italy.

When I returned to my office after the tour, Arlene had flowers waiting for me

with a thank you and an apology. I understood. It was Venice.

This article was adapted from Rick's new book, "For the Love of Europe."

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

Make these engineering marvels your next travel goal

Do soaring bridges, deep tunnels, improbable outlooks and other amazing builds float your boat? From transportation solutions to tourist attractions, you don't have to be in the United States Army Corps of Engineers to appreciate some of Europe's superlative construction projects.

Gotthard Base Tunnel

Location: Between Erstfeld and Bodio, Switzerland
Year of completion: 2016

Technical specifications: This 35-mile twin bore rail tunnel is not only the world's longest, but at a depth of 8,040 feet, it's the world's deepest, too.

What it does: This high-speed rail link under the Swiss Alps was built to revolutionize European freight transportation between northern and southern Europe. Goods formerly carried by hundreds of thousands of trucks a year can now travel by train instead, saving on fuel and cutting CO2 emissions. Fifty to passenger trains make the 20-minute journey through the tunnel each day.

How to experience: The Gotthard Tunnel Experience in Erstfeld is a two-hour guided tour offering insight on the construction process. A window into the tunnel allows visitors to observe trains rushing by. Tours have been halted by COVID-19, but were previously offered in the German language Tuesdays through Saturdays at a cost of 26 Swiss Francs (\$28.30) per adult and 10 CHF for children up to the age of 14. In English, the tour was available upon request.

An alternative way to experience the tunnel is by hiking along the Gotthard Tunnel Trail, which stretches more than 60 miles and rises to 6,560 feet above sea level. Online: tunnel-erlebnis.ch/en

Millau Viaduct

Location: Near Millau, France
Year of completion: 2004

Technical specifications: At 1,104 feet, this is the tallest bridge in the world. Its 1.5-mile length is supported by seven massive pylons.

What it does: This multi-span cable-stayed bridge, part of the A75 motor route from Paris to Beziers, crosses the Tarn Gorge. The route is popular with vacationers traveling between northern and southern France and Spain.

How to experience: What's ranked as one of the greatest engineering achievements of modern times is a toll bridge. Expect to pay 10.40 euros or so to drive over it in one direction. For a closer look, visit the Viaduct Exhibition at the Millau Viaduct Rest Area, which offers an immersive show, an augmented reality model and pictures of the bridge's construction. The belvedere overlooking the viaduct offers panoramic views. The display is free and open year round. Online: levitaduct-millau.com/en/viaduct-exhibition



Karen Bradbury



iStock photos

Above: France's Millau Viaduct; Below: the 500-foot-tall Hammetschwand Lift in Obbuergen, Switzerland.

Hammetschwand Lift

Location: Obbuergen, Switzerland

Year of completion: 1905
Technical specifications: At 500 feet, this is the highest exterior elevator in Europe.

What it does: Visitors are whisked up to the lookout point atop the Buergenstock plateau, where they can experience sublime views over Lake Lucerne and the surrounding Swiss Alps.

How to experience: A maximum of 12 passengers at a time can ride this iconic steel and glass elevator to the top of the mountain peak, a panoramic journey that's over in less than a minute. After taking in the views, visitors can enjoy a meal at the Restaurant & Pension Taverner 1879 or check out the area's swanky resorts. There's also the option to hike back down. The attraction is open only when weather conditions permit and closed from November through March. Adult riders pay 18 Swiss Francs (\$19.90) for a ride up and back; ages 6-16 pay

9 CHF. To add adventure to your arrival, take the ship across the lake from Lucerne and get off at the Kehrsiten-Buergenstock boat landing. Online: buergenstock.ch/en/explore#experiences

Step into the Void — Aiguille du Midi Skywalk

Location: Near Chamonix, France

Year of completion: 2013
Technical specifications: A 6.5 x 6.5-foot glass viewing box perched 12,605 feet up the exposed face of a mountain in the Mont Blanc massif. Its specially-treated glass can withstand extreme cold and wind speeds of up to 125 mph.

What it does: The box allows visitors to see 3,280 feet of emptiness below their feet.

How to experience: From the center of Chamonix, board the Aiguille du Midi lift, the world's highest vertical-ascent cable car. After transferring cable cars and reaching the summit, uninterrupted views of Mont Blanc and the French, Swiss and Italian



Alps open up. You might have to wait in line a while for your chance to put on slippers and briefly step into the box. Access to Step into the Void is included in the price of the Chamonix - Aiguille du Midi cable car ride. A round-trip ride costs 65 euros for adults and 55.50 euros for children, and those ages 3 and 4 ride for free. Children under 3 are not allowed. Online: tinyurl.com/y4lS9y63

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY NORMAN LLAMAS/Stars and Stripes

Eating the pumpkin ravioli, one of the first course offerings at Bar Trattoria Cavour in Sacile, Italy, was like biting into a little cloud of happiness, my wife said.

'Little clouds of happiness'

Bar Trattoria Cavour near Aviano is perfect for date night

By NORMAN LLAMAS
Stars and Stripes



**AFTER
HOURS
ITALY**

Bar Trattoria Cavour in the town of Sacile, about nine miles southwest of Aviano Air Base, has been serving delicious classic Italian and traditional Friulian dishes since 1963.

With its refined atmosphere, it's the perfect place for couples who want to enjoy a romantic dinner without the kids. The menu prices might also make you want to leave the kids at home this time.

Inside, the restaurant has a cozy, welcoming dining room. Outside, a beautiful terrace extends into the garden overlooking the Livenza river, where diners can enjoy their meals during the summer.

Although the menu changes regularly, you will always find a good range of meal choices. When we went, the appetizers included Foccolo di Sauris, a lean and mild-tasting ham that is lightly smoked and refined with aromatic herbs. It comes from the mountain village of Sauris in the middle of the Dolomites.

Other appetizers included a pumpkin flan with crispy, cured Italian bacon, frico, which is a dish made with cheese, potatoes

and onions, served with polenta; and crostini with creamed cod.

Next, Bar Trattoria Cavour had four pasta dishes available. It's typical of Italian restaurants to offer a variety of pasta dishes after the appetizer course.

One of the pasta dishes stood out to us: the pumpkin ravioli. It was fresh, served with a honey sauce and sprinkled with a regional smoked, aged cheese. The combination of flavors and freshness made us loudly exclaim upon trying it. As my wife put it, it was like eating little clouds of happiness.

After the pasta course, Italians serve meats, and at the Bar Trattoria Cavour we had a choice of baked lamb chops with grilled potatoes, baked monkfish with potatoes and olives, a seabass fillet with prosecco wine and

BAR TRATTORIA CAVOUR

Address: Via Cavour 31, 33077 Sacile

Hours: Monday to Friday, 12 to 2 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 7 to 9 p.m. Closed on Sundays.

Food: Classic Italian cuisine, traditional Friulian cuisine, salads, desserts. Kids are allowed in the restaurant, but there's no kids menu available.

Drinks: A full bar with an

extensive wine selection as well as sodas, juice, water and coffee are available.

Prices: About 21 to 38 euros (\$24 to \$42) for most meals

Menu: Italian only. All the servers speak English, are friendly and very helpful.

Information: Phone: +39 0434 71489. Email: info@trattoriacavour.com

— Norman Llamas



Bar Trattoria Cavour has a romantic atmosphere, a full bar, a large selection of wines and a menu of classic Italian and Friulian entrees.

vegetables, and a baked pork cheek served over polenta.

We chose the baked pork cheek and we didn't regret it. The presentation was clean and mouth-watering. The taste was even better.

We topped off our meal with tiramisu and a slice of chocolate torte for dessert. Both went well with a cup of coffee or dessert wine.

Bar Trattoria Cavour offers a full bar and traditional non-alcoholic drinks such as water, sodas and coffee.

In addition to being ideal for a date night, the restaurant is also available for business lunches or company dinners.

Make a reservation, though. Others will have the same idea.

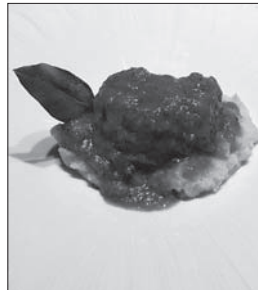
llamas.norman@stripes.com
@normanllamas



Foccolo di Sauris is a lean and mild-tasting ham that is lightly smoked and refined with aromatic herbs.



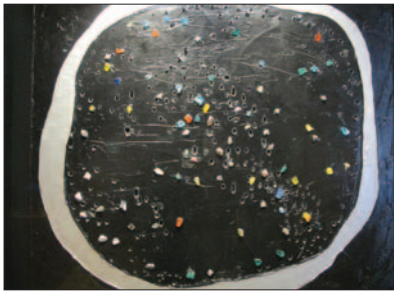
The chocolate torte at Bar Trattoria Cavour was the perfect way to end a superb meal.



Baked pork cheek served over polenta is one of the second, meat course offerings at Bar Trattoria Cavour.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: Gallerie D'Italia, Vicenza, Italy

TIMES

10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays to Sundays; closed Mondays.

COSTS

5 euros for adults, free for those under 18.

FOOD

Plenty of restaurants within a block or two around Vicenza's main piazza. A cafe is a few feet away.

INFORMATION

Phone: (+39) 800-578875; email: info@palazzomontanari.com

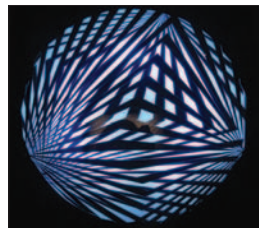
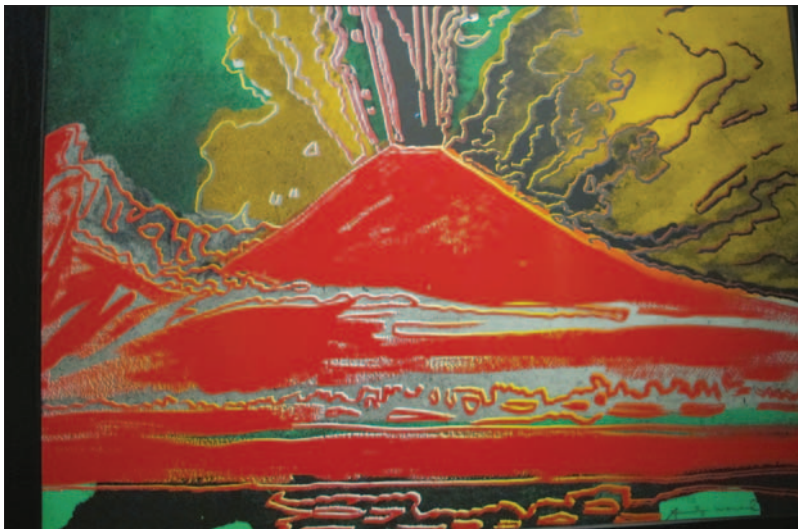
— Nancy Montgomery

Upper left: "Concetto spaziale: La Luna a Venezia," or "Spatial Concept: the Moon in Venice," was made by Lucio Fontana of acrylic and glass in 1968.

Upper right: American installation artist Sandy Sioglung sculpted life-size cats using chicken wire and plaster and painted them bright green for "Radioactive Cats," in 1980.

Left: Andy Warhol's "Vesuvius (red)" serigraph made in 1985 is one of three Warhol works in Gallerie d'Italia's exhibition in Vicenza, Italy, exploring the idea of the future from the 1960s to the present.

PHOTOS BY NANCY MONTGOMERY/Stars and Stripes



Grazia Varisco made this luminous blue orb with changing patterns, titled "Variable bright patterns," in 1963.



Canvases by British pop artist Peter Phillips, like "Motorspycho/Ace," created in 1962, are said to comment on mass society and its myths.

Art questions the future

Exhibit in Vicenza asks what comes after the pandemic

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

One of Vicenza's art museums has reopened after months of coronavirus lockdown with a new exhibit that looks at the future as envisioned by the past, and asks: What now?

"FUTURE | Art and society from the sixties to tomorrow" opened this month and runs until February 7 at the Gallerie d'Italia, a baroque palace in the old town with a permanent collection of Renaissance art.

The exhibit starts with a timeline of events from the 1960s to 2020 that's an education in itself. The Kennedy assassination is listed during the '60s, as are Mary Quant's invention of the miniskirt and Sean Connery's appearance as James Bond. The 1970s includes the founding of Doctors Without Borders, the fall of Saigon, the death of Spanish dictator Francisco Franco and the founding of Microsoft.

John Lennon's murder, Ronald Reagan's election to the presidency, Poland's Solidarity movement and the first artificial heart transplant are listed for the '80s.

The '90s and the 2000s also get their due, and for the last year, 2020, there's just one thing listed: "The spread of the Coronavirus causes hundreds of thousands of deaths around the world," it says.

"Each time has its own idea of the future, and what we live today is much more uncertain than what happened 60 years ago," according to the exhibit curator. "By an interesting and unpredictable coincidence, we found ourselves living in the turn of a century and a millennium. We looked forward to the first day of 2000 with great expectations and some fear. Twenty years later, what has really changed? And art, even in the light of what is happening on the planet today, is it still able to intercept the changes and tell them?"

About 100 works by international art-

ists, including Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and Robert Rauschenberg, feature in the exhibit. And, boy, do they pop.

Moving through the exhibit rooms and the decades, contemporary works from spacey to mesmerizing to political to puzzling are on view, complemented by quotes on the wall from everybody from the Rolling Stones to Marshall McLuhan to the Brothers Grimm.

At least two of the works change form while you look: a luminous blue orb by Italian artist Grazia Varisco and a video of the face of Donald Trump morphing into Vladimir Putin, by American artist Nancy Burson.

Near the end of the exhibit, works concerned with the environment are featured. A collection of serigraphs made in 1971 by famous American artists, including Georgia O'Keeffe, close it out. "Save Our Planet," they say.

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Looking for a bite to eat?

CHECK OUT THESE LOCAL EATERIES!

KAISERSLAUTERN	WIESBADEN	STUTTGART	BAVARIA
<p>QUACK Gasthaus & Biergarten</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open Outdoor Seats Takeout Available Platz Specialties <p>Entersweilerstr. 74, 67657 Kaiserslautern 0631 4 2828 www.quack-kl.de</p>	<p>Chillers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dine In Take Out American Bar & Grill <p>Bahnhofplatz. 1, 65189 Wiesbaden 0611-9441911 Chillers-wiesbaden.com</p>	<p>EHRBAR BEST BURGER IN TOWN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Burger in Town Eat In Take Away Outdoor Seats <p>Tue-Sat, 17:00-21:00 Lauchplatz 1, 71032 Böblingen 07031 9896961</p>	<p>Irish pub GRAFENWOHR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open Take Out / Eat In Taking Reservations Feel the Irish! <p>09641 9160622 Marktplatz 33, 92655 Grafenwöhr facebook.com/Irish-Pub-Grafenwöhr</p>
<p>Zimblüte</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open Air-Conditioned Homemade Iced Teas Sushi, Pho, & General Tso's <p>0631 58047 Welierbacher Str. 110, 67661 Einsiedelhof www.facebook.com/Zimblüte KMC</p>	<p>BURGER KING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dine in Take Out Delivery <p>Wiesbaden Shopping Center</p>	<p>HOTEL RESTAURANT zum Reussenstein</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swabian Food Renowned TV chef Hotel & Restaurant <p>Kalkofenstraße 20, 71032 Böblingen Sa: 12:00-15:00, M-Su, 18:00-22:00 07031 66000 www.reussenstein.com</p>	<p>RESTAURANT OLYMPIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open Outdoor Seats 10% Off Pick-Up Reservations <p>0961 62519 Frauenrichter Str. 173, 92637 Weiden i.d.OPf. www.olympia-weiden.de</p>
<p>Legends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burgers/Wings/Ribs Delivery/Take-out Private Parties Sunday Brunch <p>0176 877 20 326 Am Lanzenbusch 40; 66877 Ramstein facebook.com/LegendsRamstein</p>	<p>da NINOS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steinofenpizza, Selbstgemachte Pasta Fleisch, Fisch und vieles mehr... Frisch und Gesund das ist unsere Küche <p>www.ristorante-daninos.de Borsigstrasse 32, 65205 Wiesbaden 06122 534 0370</p>	<p>STADT CAFE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast Lunch Specials Terrace Seating <p>M-F 8:30-18:00, Sa 9:00-18:00 Turmstrasse 6, 71083 Holzgerlingen 07031 414777 www.dasstadtcafe.de</p>	<p>Crazy Nates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open We Deliver Taco Tuesdays Authentic Mexican Food <p>0911 384 382 66 Untere Zwinger Str 9 & Kirchenweg 38, Nuernberg www.crazynates.de</p>
<p>burgerme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open We Deliver Gourmet Burgers Many Options <p>0631 89 000 111 Plaffplatz 10; 67655 Kaiserslautern www.burgerme.de</p>	<p>Oishii sushi & grill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dine In Take Out Order via the iPad <p>Taunusstraße 22, 65183 Wiesbaden 0611 23835808 (reservations recommended)</p>	<p>Hausbrauerei Mönchwasen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brewery Beer Garden Restaurant Takeaway <p>Im Mönchgraben 30, 75397 Simmozheim M-F 17:00-23:00, Sa 16:00-Midnight, Su 11:00-22:00 07033 809030 www.moenchwasen.com</p>	<p>Anastasia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open Visa/MC Reservations Delicious Greek Specialties <p>09641 929955 Im Markwinkel 1, 92655 Grafenwöhr www.anastasia-grafenwoehr.de</p>
<p>Shawingz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wings, beer & more Home-made Sauces Proudly serving the KMC since 2013 <p>Shawingz meets Baumholder Shawingz meets Volgelweh Shawingz meets Landstuhl</p>	<p>China Restaurant Mayflower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're Open USD Accepted Takeout Available <p>Open Daily 11:30-15:00 & 17:30-23:30 Uthmann Strasse 8, Mainz-Kostheim 06134 258928</p>	<p>GRÜNER TURM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best of Germany Winner Greek Cuisine Historic Building <p>Tu-Su, 11:30-15:00 & 17:30-24:00 Turmstraße, 71032 Böblingen 07031 228212 www.gruener-turm.de</p>	<p>MAX & MUIH BURGER WITH RESPECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burger with Respect Region Ingredients KRAFTCLUB Beer Garden <p>0961 2063 0300 Bürgermeister-Prechtl-Str 22, 92637 Weiden www.maxundmuh.de</p>
<p>Debelgianbistro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M-Sa 16:00-23:00 Beer Garden New Location Burger Eaters Paradise <p>06374 944 0144 Jahnstrasse 30; 67686 Mackenbach facebook.com/debelgianbistro</p>	<p>3 MOHREN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dine In Take Out Micro-Brewery Tours Available <p>Otto-Suhr-Ring 27, 55252 Wiesbaden 06134 24999</p>	<p>3 MOHREN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turkish Food Eat In / Takeaway Daily Lunch Specials Sunday Brunch <p>M-F 11:30-15:00, 17:30-24:00 • Sa 17:30-24:00 • Su 09:30-24:00 Lange Straße 25, 71063 Sindelfingen 07031 677275 www.3mohren.com</p>	<p>LA CORONA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wine Tastings Regional Cuisine Opens Sept 24 Reservations Required <p>20 Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Platz, 91522 Ansbach Th-Sa, 18:00-10:00, or by appointment 0981 9090130 www.lacorona.de</p>

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific



PHOTOS BY THERON GODBOLD/Stars and Stripes

Clockwise from upper left: Nippara cave was used by monks from the Shugendo sect of Buddhism, and a few small shrines remain; Colorful lights illuminate a vast chamber called Shidenoyama; visitors check out a worship site formerly used by the monks.

Eerie underground world

Nippara the largest limestone cave in the western Tokyo region

By **THERON GODBOLD**
Stars and Stripes

A 1½-hour drive west of Yokota Air Base, home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo, is Nippara, the largest limestone cave in the region.

Located in Chichibu-Tama-Kai National Park near Okutama, Nippara Limestone Cave makes for an interesting destination with an average year-round temperature of 53 degrees inside.

The cave reopened in July after roads there were damaged during the 2019 typhoon season.

When driving to the cave, don't miss any of the scenery on the narrow and winding roads leading to a small parking area overlooking the Nippara River and the cave entrance.

Limited free parking is available with an overflow lot a mile away.

Entrance fees vary from \$8 for adults, \$7 for middle-schoolers and \$6 for elementary school children. The staff speaks minimal English and pamphlets are in Japanese.

After paying my entrance fee, I crossed a small walking bridge over the Nippara River that leads to the cave entrance. Here I was greeted with a blast of chilled air. After putting on a light jacket, I stepped through the doorway leading to more than 2,500 feet of cave systems.

As I walked through the eerie world under a mountain, I had to stoop at places as the walls and ceilings dripped chilled water that had seeped through the earth.

Lights guided the path through corridors of stone, winding its way through the cave system. The main chamber and halls are lined with small stalactites and stalagmites.

The cave has been a sacred place for practitioners of Shugendo, a Japanese religious

tradition that combines elements of folk beliefs, Shinto and Buddhism. They live in the mountains undergoing ascetic training, a lifestyle characterized by abstinence from sensual pleasures, and remnants of their practices can be seen inside.

The main chamber is lit with colorful lights that give an otherworldly glow to the space. Two paths lead to small shrines.

Climbing your way from the main chamber and up a steel stairway, the cave grows smaller at points as the path leads you to a section where stalactites and stalagmites line the surfaces and small alcoves. These calcium bicarbonate deposits, thousands of years old, are generally smaller at Nippara but are worth the trek.

The entire path from entrance to the exit took about 45 minutes at a leisurely pace.

godbold.theron@stripes.com

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: 1052 Nippara, Okutama, Nishitama District, Tokyo, 198-0211; Google plus code is V22R+X8 Okutama, Tokyo

TIMES

8 a.m.-5 p.m. April 1-Nov. 30; 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Dec. 1-March 31; the caves are closed Dec. 30-Jan. 3

COSTS

Adults \$8, children vary between \$6 and \$7

FOOD

Small food tents set up near the parking lot offer Japanese snacks and drinks

INFORMATION

Online: nippara.com

— Theron Godbold

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WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Pacific

Maine-style seafood that satisfies

Lobster rolls from Luke's Lobster bring the taste of New England to Okinawa

By **MATTHEW M. BURKE**
Stars and Stripes

A lot of American-style restaurants in Japan promise a taste of home, but nowhere is that promise better fulfilled than Luke's Lobster in southern Okinawa.

Luke's, a New York City-based chain, is one of only a few that have not only crossed the pond but also set up shop outside major metropolitan areas like Tokyo. You'll find it on the second floor of the new Iias Okinawa Toyosaki mall, four miles south of Naha Airport, next to Toyosaki Seaside Park.

The restaurant opened with little fanfare in June amid the coronavirus pandemic. It offers Maine-style lobster, shrimp and crab rolls with the seafood slightly chilled to preserve its natural sweetness and tenderness, according to a pamphlet picked up at the Toyosaki location.

The new restaurant offers outside seating so American service members under coronavirus liberty restrictions can safely and responsibly enjoy a lobster roll.

Luke's was founded in Manhattan in 2009, the pamphlet said. The brand's philosophy has always been to offer authentic lobster rolls without having to visit a fancy restaurant. In fact, the Luke's location at the Toyosaki mall is small and inviting, with photographs of lobsters and Maine license plates deco-



rating the walls.

Luke's has made a concerted effort to push into the Japanese market with four Tokyo locations and seven in the country, the pamphlet said. It also has a food truck that can be followed online.

Its most popular item is the 4-ounce lobster roll, which sells for 1,380 yen plus tax, or about \$15, the pamphlet said. It features fresh lobster, seasoned with lemon butter and secret proprietary ingredients, in a toasted bun.

There's also a smaller 2-ounce version for 980 yen.

"All lobster rolls are made to order," the pamphlet said. "This is to make sure only the freshest lobster rolls will be handed to the customers."

Luke's also offers crab rolls for 1,380 yen, shrimp rolls for 950 yen, half lobster and half shrimp for 1,380 yen, half lobster and half crab for 1,580, crab and shrimp for 1,280 yen, and Luke's trio, which is three half rolls each of lobster, crab and shrimp, for 1,980 yen.

If you're looking for warm seafood, Luke's has a lobster grilled cheese sandwich for 1,380 yen,



PHOTOS BY MATT BURKE/Stars and Stripes

The lobster grilled cheese sandwich from Luke's Lobster in the new Iias Okinawa Toyosaki mall.

a crab grilled cheese for 1,080 yen and a shrimp grilled cheese

for 980 yen. In late September, the restaurant offered a special shrimp and avocado sandwich for 800 yen.

Combo meals come with various sides like French fries, crab cakes, coleslaw, shrimp salad, clam chowder or bisque and drinks for an added 400-500 yen.

Only on Okinawa, Luke's offers a surf and turf plate featuring a lobster roll, French fries and sliced roast beef for 1,580 yen.

Luke's offers party boxes with rolls and sides and roll kits so you can put your own rolls together at home. It also does catering.

The lobster at Luke's was light and fluffy, with good flavor, and it came in copious amounts, just like being back home. The shrimp burst from its casings with each mouthwatering bite.

The lobster grilled cheese was delicious, with the inside a

steaming, oozing mix of lobster and cheese. The bread was thick and appeared buttered and grilled to perfection.

However, the bread was slightly chewy, indicating it had been heated in the microwave, which was a shame. Same was true for the shrimp and avocado sandwich. The contents came topped with a delightful cream sauce, but again, the bread was just a bit chewy.

The clam chowder didn't have a lot of clams but would pass muster in lower-tier New England eateries.

All in all, my party craved a taste of home, a taste of New England, and we got it at Luke's. It wasn't the best lobster roll in the world, but it was enough to keep the homesickness of living abroad at bay and conjure a little nostalgia.

burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke1



Luke's Lobster offers occasional specials, such as this shrimp and avocado sandwich, sold in September.

LUKE'S LOBSTER

Location: 2F Iias Okinawa Toyosaki, 3-35 Toyosaki, Tomigusuku-shi, Okinawa 901-0225

Hours: Open daily, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Prices: Entrees range from 950 yen to 1,980 yen (\$18.81); coffee, soft drinks and beer range from 200 yen to 600 yen.

Dress: Casual

Directions: GPS 26.160531, 127.649338

Information: 098-851-9660

— Matthew M. Burke

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WEEKEND: BOOKS

The enduring appeal of Agatha Christie

100 years after publication of her first novel, murder mystery writer still gaining fans

By CHRIS HEWITT

Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

I've had the good fortune to fall in love with Agatha Christie's murder mysteries twice.

I was in grade school when my grandmother introduced me to the writer whose more than 2 billion books sold makes her the bestselling novelist of all time. I'd never been to England, couldn't relate to its class struggles and was four decades younger than Christie's detectives, but I was hooked immediately.

It happened again more than 40 years later when I reread her mysteries in order and blogged about them. Even when I remembered whodunit, it was like discovering the books all over again.

This month is the 100th anniversary of Christie's first novel, "The Mysterious Affair at Styles." Somewhere in the world, someone is probably reading it for the first time right now.

What gives?

Though it's not one of her best, "Styles" introduces the Belgian ex-cop who will become one of the most popular characters in all of detective fiction, Hercule Poirot, who is persnickety, droll and fully formed right off the bat. The post-World War I setting launches what will amount to a history of 20th-century England over the course of about 80 books.

Christie died in 1976 but remains a publishing powerhouse. Airport shops almost always have a couple of titles and new — or "new" — ones keep coming. "Midwinter Murder," a repackaging of 12 stories, hit shelves this month. Last month brought two genuinely new works: Sophie Hannah's "The Killings at Kingfisher Hill," part of a series of Poirot mysteries commissioned by the Christie estate, and Andrew Wilson's "I Saw Him Die," from a series where a fictitious Christie solves crimes.

Reading her books, you notice patterns. Cooks are constantly being dismissed for "a heavy hand with pastry," whatever that means. Good always defeats evil.

Familiarity is part of her appeal; her books are called "cozies" because they skip blood and grief in favor of the puzzle aspect of a murder.

While Christie wrote an unrevealing autobiography, her life really emerges in her mysteries. She wasn't religious. She loved the theater, but not actors. She wasn't nuts about children. She liked men better than women. She loved literature, with Shakespeare frequently figuring in her work.

Christie was a naif who weathered being publicly dumped by her first husband, losing both parents suddenly, seeing the horrors of World War I as a nurse and enduring a mental illness that led to an extended disappearance. Who could blame her for taking refuge in problems that, within 200 pages, always got solved?

There's something to be said for each book, but if you don't have the time to plow through all 80, here's what you need to know about why we still love her.

Her work holds up

If you want the best of Christie, dive into "The A.B.C. Murders," "Murder on the Orient Express" and "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd," all with Poirot. The best of wily, small-town Miss Marple includes "A Murder Is Announced," "Murder at the Vicarage" and "The Moving Finger." And don't miss Christie's droll self-portrait, Ariadne Oliver, a writer who helps Poirot solve murders in "Mrs. McGinty's Dead." When in doubt, grab a book from the 1930s, a time when she could do little wrong, but skip the '60s, when she attempted to be groovy.

She's a mystery

Maybe it's no surprise that the writer of the world's longest-running play, "The Mousetrap," knew from drama. In 1926, after her first husband left her for his secretary, the celebrity author vanished for 11 days. Eventually, it was discovered she had checked into a spa under the secretary's name, but Christie remained mum about the details. A speculative movie was made after her death, starring Vanessa Redgrave as the writer and Dustin Hoffman as a fictitious detective. There's also at least one play about the vanishing; Susan Soon He Stanton's "Seek" sent the novelist to Hawaii for a steamy affair on a pineapple plantation.

From page to screen

In movies and TV, Christie is the gift that keeps on murdering. "Death on the Nile," from director/actor Kenneth Branagh, was set to open this month but shifted to December. A witty earlier version of it featured Peter

Ustinov as Poirot, a role he also played in "Evil Under the Sun." The splashiest Christie movie is "Murder on the Orient Express," which won Ingrid Bergman an Oscar and is superior in every detail to Branagh's 2017 remake. "Witness for the Prosecution," a clever 1957 thriller starring Charles Laughton and Marlene Dietrich, is scheduled for a Ben Affleck remake. PBS really loves Christie, with TV movies such as a recent "And Then Were None" and the "Masterpiece Mystery" series that featured both Poirot and Miss Marple.

Race, class and sexuality

Because her main detectives barely age over the course of 50 years, Christie's novels seem timeless, but besides twisty plots and vivid characters, they also reflect the society she lived in. Early novels reveal the racism of a woman who grew up sheltered in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but Christie traveled extensively, which helped her escape that provincialism. While she remained rooted in England's class structure, her views on race broadened considerably. As early as 1950, when homosexuality was still criminalized in the United Kingdom, her "A Murder Is Announced" includes a sympathetic female couple. (As for confirmed bachelor Poirot and his assistant, Captain Hastings, who describes young men as "exquisite" and deserts his wife to move in with Poirot for an entire year: Please discuss.)

Sense of an ending

Christie was way ahead of M. Night Shyamalan in her ability to spring surprises. Without spoiling specific titles, her innovations include one where a child did it, one where everybody colluded, one where the cop did it and one where the narrator confessed but turned out to be wrong. Her controversial "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" came early in her career but has both her best twist and best final line.

Ripped from the headlines

Christie often borrows from history. Most famously, "Orient Express" takes place in the aftermath of a daring kidnapping based on the murder of the baby of Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh. An actual tragedy in the life of "Laura" actor Gene Tierney inspired "The Mirror Crack'd." The social experiments of Stanley Milgram, which investigated our willingness to inflict pain on strangers, inform her 1950s books.

She's funny

Christie scowls in virtually every photo, which might explain why she isn't known for her humor, but she's often hilarious. Her mystery writer Oliver not only eats apples in the bathtub (so did Christie), but she's an amusing idiot savant who never stops complaining about the foreign detective she wishes she had never created. Both Poirot and Marple are funny in different ways, and Christie characters often toss off observations such as this, from "The Man in the Brown Suit": "Everyone on a ship is always getting engaged. There's nothing else to do."

Fear the manor

Last year's hit "Knives Out" saluted Christie's trademark: assembling a cast of suspicious types in a grand house and bumping them off, one by one. Meanwhile, like "Downton Abbey," Christie's books chart the period in which those owners were falling into ruin because their homes couldn't afford the taxes or the servants required to keep them up. Eventually, many became hotels or schools — which also became the setting for Christie murders.



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became

WEEKEND: MUSIC

JUST LIKE STARTING OVER

Sean Ono Lennon on remixing his father's music for these times and a new generation: It was therapy



Sean Ono Lennon poses for a portrait Oct. 8 in New York City to promote a new collection of his father's songs (above). "GIMME SOME TRUTH. THE ULTIMATE MIXES" was released Oct. 9, which would have been John Lennon's 80th birthday. The set includes 36 tracks selected by Yoko Ono and Sean Ono Lennon, who serve as executive producer and producer.

MATT LICARI, INVISION/AP

BY MESFIN FEKADU
Associated Press

Sean Ono Lennon's first experience re-working his father's catalog was terrifying and intimidating, but he had two main goals in mind to keep him on track: Preserve his father's message in the songs and help the late icon's music reach a younger audience.

On Oct. 9, which would have been John Lennon's 80th birthday, "GIMME SOME TRUTH. THE ULTIMATE MIXES" was released. It includes 36 tracks hand-picked by Yoko Ono and Sean Ono Lennon, who serve as executive producer and producer on the project. The duo worked closely with engineer and mixer Paul Hicks to maintain the essence of the songs, which were completely remixed.

Ono Lennon, who shares the same birthday as his father and turned 45 on Oct. 9, came out stronger at the end of the at-times heavy process.

"I knew that it was going to be kind of introspective for me, obviously. I was scared going into it, to be honest. I had a fear of messing everything up or not being helpful or it being too emotionally difficult to just listen to my dad's voice over and over again," Ono Lennon said. "Especially 'Double Fantasy'; it triggers a whole period of my childhood that was tough because that's when he died. I had a lot of resistance working on that record, actually."

"Ultimately it was very healing. It was like therapy. It was very therapeutic in the end. I'm very glad that I got to do it. I would not have revisited those songs on 'Double Fantasy' without having this project. It turned out to be kind of a cathartic thing."

"GIMME SOME TRUTH. THE ULTIMATE MIXES" includes Lennon's post-Beatles songs, from "Imagine" to "Woman" to "Whatever Gets You Thru the Night," released digitally, on CD and on vinyl.

"For me, the real motivation is this music can't be forgotten. Especially 'Gimme Some Truth,' for example, which is the track we chose to lead with. I've never felt like my dad's music was more needed in terms of message than literally this week, like right now," Ono Lennon said of the protest song.

"I think a lot of people who are cynical assume that, 'Oh everyone knows those songs.' No, they don't.

There are a lot of kids who don't know the difference between Ringo (Starr) and Paul (McCartney). There's a lot of kids who don't know the difference between Mick Jagger and my dad."

In an interview with The Associated Press, Ono Lennon talked about the relevance of "Gimme Some Truth," working on his dad's music and finding his voice in the process.

AP: What was it like to work on this project?

Ono Lennon: It was really deep and heavy and beautiful. I'd never listened to the original, multi-track tapes before. Just getting to hear my dad's voice or even mute the vocals, just hearing what the instruments are doing was amazing for me. It was really fun. It was a little daunting, I guess. I'm still nervous because when you're messing with music that's so loved and so classic and immortal, there's kind of a pressure there.

It's almost scary how "Gimme Some Truth" resonates today. Is that why the collection is named "Gimme Some Truth"?

There was no choice for us in this moment. I think "Gimme Some Truth" means something now. We wanted to lead with that. I think it's a message everyone can connect with. Every good person from whatever town you're in. If you're a good person, what you want now more than anything is a little reality. It just seems like we're living in an alternate dimension of bulls---. I think everyone feels that way. I think it's a very important message.

What was it like working with your mother on this project?

I was in the studio when I was young, so I learned things like how compression works, how delay works, how reverb works, how to EQ vocals — all from her. I actually know very much what her philosophy is. Her main priority with all mixing is to make sure that the voice is clear.

CONTINUED
ON PAGE 33



WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS



Sammy Tweedy

Wilco frontman gives pandemic some 'Love'

"Here I am," Jeff Tweedy sings at the onset of the title track, and also first song, of "Love Is the King," a record made in April while the Wilco frontman was quarantining with his wife and sons at home in Chicago.

The song sets the mood and tone for the record, which refuses to give up on love and optimism, while death, disaster and dread are never far away.

"There it is," Tweedy continues. "At the edge / Of as bad as it gets."

Tweedy's reaction to being quarantined was to work. In addition to the new record, made with his musician-sons Spencer and Sammy, he has a new book out called "How to Write One Song." "Love Is the King" is filled with beautiful melodies, while also embracing fear and uncertainty.



Jeff Tweedy
Love Is the King
(dBPM Records)

"I'm just having a ball / Being alive," he sings on "A Robin or a Wren." "And I don't want to die / I don't wanna die."

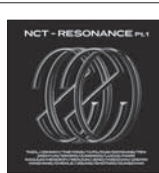
More than any other track, the stark "Bad Day Lately" sums up quarantining as the pandemic drags on.

"It's been a bad day lately / A lonely place / I can't endure," Tweedy sings.

For a record that can at times be so dark, it's not depressing. If anything, in Tweedy's embracing the darkness that surrounds him, and us, he emerges more hopeful than before. Perhaps, as Tweedy emphasizes with the record title, love indeed is the king.

"When you need me," he sings with assurance on "Half-Asleep," the final track, "I'll be there."

—Scott Bauer
Associated Press



NCT

NCT — The 2nd Album RESONANCE Pt. 1
(SM Entertainment/Capitol/Caroline)

Mega K-pop group NCT are not playing around.

Two years after releasing their debut album, the group featuring 21 members of NCT 127, NCT DREAM and WayV — as well as newcomers SHOTARO and SUNGCHAN — are launching into a sophomore effort with a third project expected later this year. "NCT — The 2nd Album RESONANCE Pt. 1" skillfully combines a '90s R&B vibe with a more modern, electronic sound, leaning into the romantic boy band-ness of it all, with piano ballads showcasing the various members' beautiful voices.

Lead single "Make A Wish (Birthday Song)" reels in the unsuspecting fans with its catchy whistle beat, but the rest of the album pulls the rug and revels in its retro-ness with a slew of only slightly modernized raps and R&B bangers; "Volcano," "Lightbulb," "From Home" and "Faded In My Last Song" lead in this category.

"Misfit" is a classic, energetic rock tune that echoes its title in sound; "Déjà Vu" has a futuristic dance beat; and "Nectar" introduces a compelling if strange, wounded-animal trombone-like sound.

Overall, the hook of "Make A Wish (Birthday Song)" sums up my feelings about the album: "I can do this all day." But so does the song's naughtier English version: "I can do this all night."

—Cristina Jaleru
Associated Press

FROM PAGE 32

She said my dad famously didn't love his vocals. He would turn it down a lot. When she was producing "Imagine," the album, he would go to the bathroom and she would turn it back up and he would come back and turn it down. ... She really believes that burying the vocal is the worst thing you can do. She really wants people to hear the lyrics and she thinks that the music has to serve the vocal.

When it comes to mixing my dad's stuff, that's her priority. I think she's right.

This is your first time working on your dad's music — what made you want to take this on?

I'm just trying to help. That's all it is. My mom's the boss and if I can help in any way, I'm here.

All moms are the boss.

She may trust me a little more now having made several albums together, and we've toured the world together. I was her music director for years. I think it may have taken some time, but I think she feels comfortable with me in that way now.

Your dad wrote "Beautiful Boy (Darling Boy)" about you — what was it like re-working that song?

Honestly, it was my least favorite experience. It's just kind

of awkward. That song makes me feel like I'm infantilized or something. People always play that song and look at me with a smile like, "Isn't that sweet?" I'm like, "Oh God, I'm an old man. I'm not some smiling baby in a baby food commercial." To be honest, that song is touching to me, but as a musician and a songwriter and a producer, it's my least favorite song musically, because it's so saccharine. It's great. I love it. Maybe it's impossible for me to be objective about it.

"Beautiful Boy" is a very sort of family-friendly sound. It's not my aesthetic. Having said that, it was a privilege to help work on a mix of a song that was about me and is very touching. And yes, I was very touched by hearing my dad say my name. He's like "goodnight Sean" at the end. That always reminded me of him putting me to bed. He had a sort of ritual, the way he put me to bed. He would flick the lights sort of in rhythm with his voice, so it felt like his voice was controlling the lights. Then they'd go out. I have memories, so it was nice.

Has working on your dad's songs inspired your own music?

It's interesting because, first of all, the earliest songs to cover for me are my dad's, vocally espe-

cially. Whenever I try to sing one of his songs, I feel like I can sing them great. I do share a lot of the same chords. My voice isn't as tough as his, but it's easier to sing his songs than anyone else's. It does teach me something about how to sing great.

I think I've had a lifelong struggle with finding my own voice. I've had a lifelong struggle with finding my own voice because every time I would try to sing great, I would sound more and more like my dad. Actually, I hate my first few records because I was always trying to not sing like my dad, and it actually took a lot of effort. I wound up singing in this very kind of whispery, whiny way that I don't like. That was actually kind of unnatural to me.

Listening to this record ... all of his records, the compilation we put together, has helped me realize that I just need to stop trying to avoid singing in a way that I just sound better. I think it's going to help me with the vocals for the album that I'm working on now. To just not hold back. To just sort of sing. I have this fear that when I push my voice, I sound too much like him, but what's the point of singing if I'm not going to sound good?



Musician John Lennon and his wife, Yoko Ono, hold a bed-in for peace in room 902, the presidential suite at the Hilton Hotel in Amsterdam, on March 25, 1969.

AP

WEEKEND: ENTERTAINMENT

Starting point for dialogue

'Captain America' star Chris Evans says online political platform is 'landscape of competing ideas'

By GEOFF EDGERS

The Washington Post

So you're Tim Scott, the Republican senator from South Carolina who opposes Roe v. Wade and wants to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and you get a call from Chris Evans, a Hollywood star and lifelong Democrat who has been blasting President Donald Trump for years. He wants to meet. And film it. And share it on his online platform.

"I was very skeptical," Scott admits. "You can think of the worst-case scenario."

But then Scott heard from other senators. They vouched for Evans, most famous for playing Captain America in a series of films that have grossed more than \$1 billion worldwide. The actor also got on the phone with Scott's staff to make a personal appeal.

It worked. Sometime in 2018, Scott met on camera with Evans in the nation's capital, and their discussion, which ranged from prison reform to student loans, is one of more than 200 interviews with elected officials published on "A Starting Point," an online platform the actor helped launch in July. Not long after, Evans appeared on Scott's Instagram Live. They have plans to do more together.

"While he is a liberal, he was looking to have a real dialogue on important issues," Scott says. "For me, it's about wanting to have a conversation with an audience that may not be accustomed to hearing from conservatives and Republicans."

Evans, actor-director Mark Kassen and entrepreneur Joe

sides of the aisle. Many potential voters simply turn off the news, never mind talking about actual policy.

"A Starting Point" is meant to offer a digital home for people to hear from elected officials without having the conversation framed by Tucker Carlson or Rachel Maddow.

"If the downstream impact or the byproduct of this site is some sort of unity between the parties, great. But if nobody's still voting, it doesn't work. We need people involved."

Chris Evans

Actor, co-founder of "A Starting Point"

Kiani launched "A Starting Point" as a response to what they see as a deeply polarized political climate. They wanted to offer a place for information about issues without a partisan spin. To do that, they knew they needed both parties to participate.

Evans, 39, sat on the patio outside his Boston-area home on a recent afternoon talking about the platform.

Nearly 100 million people didn't vote in the 2016 general election, Evans says. That's more than 40% of those who were eligible.

He believes the root of this disinterest is the nastiness on both

"The idea is ... Listen, you're in office. I can't deny the impact you have," Evans says. "You can vote on things that affect my life." Let this be a landscape of competing ideas, and I'll sit down with you and I'll talk with you."

Or, as Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, who has appeared on the site, puts it, "Sometimes, boring is OK. You're being presented two sides. Everything doesn't have to be sensational. Sometimes it can just be good facts."

Evans wasn't always active in politics. At Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, he focused on theater, not student government. His uncle, Michael Capua-

no, served as a congressman in Massachusetts for 20 years, but other than volunteering on some of his campaigns, Evans wasn't particularly political.

In recent years, he's read political philosopher Hannah Arendt and feminist Rebecca Solnit's "The Mother of All Questions" — ex-girlfriend Jenny Slate gave him the latter — and been increasingly upset by Trump's policies and behavior. He's come to believe that he can state his own views without creating a conflict with "A Starting Point."

"I don't want to all of a sudden become a blank slate," Evans says. "But my biggest issue right now is just getting people to vote. If I start saying, 'vote Biden; f--- Trump,' my base will like that. But they were already voting for Biden."

Evans began to contemplate the idea that became "A Starting Point" in 2017. He heard something reported on the news — he can't remember what — and decided to search out information on the internet. Instead of finding concrete answers, Evans fell down the rabbit hole of opinions and conflicting claims. He began talking about this with Kassen, a friend since he directed Evans in 2011's "Puncture." What if they got the information directly from elected officials and presented it without a spin? Kassen, in turn,

introduced Evans to Kiani, who had made his fortune through a medical technology company he founded and, of the three, was the most politically involved.

Kiani has donated to dozens of Democratic candidates across the country and earlier this year contributed \$750,000 to Unite the Country, a super PAC meant to support Joe Biden. But he appreciated the idea of focusing on something larger than a single race or party initiative. He, Kassen and Evans would fund "A Starting Point," which has about 18 people on staff.

"There's no longer ABC, NBC and CBS," Kiani says. "There's Fox News and MSNBC. What that means is that we are no longer being censored. We're self-censoring ourselves. And people go to the Republican chamber and they don't get any wiser. If you allow both parties to speak, for the same amount of time, without goading them to go on into hyperbole, when people look at both sides' point of view and both sides' perspective at the time they'll come to a reasonable conclusion."

"What people do too often is they get in their silos and they only watch and listen and read what they agree with," says John Kasich, the former Ohio governor and one-time Republican presidential candidate. "If you go to Chris' website, you can't bury yourself in your silo. You get to see the other point of view."

As much as some like to blame Trump for all the conflicts in Washington, Sen. Christopher Coons, D-Del., says he's watched the tone shifting for decades. He appreciated sitting down with Evans and making regular submissions to "Daily Points," a place on the platform for commentary no longer than two minutes. During the Supreme Court confirmation hearings, Coons recorded a comment on Judge Amy Coney Barrett and the Affordable Care Act.

"A Starting Point" needs to be a sustained resource," Coons says. "Chris often talks about it being 'Schoolhouse Rock' for adults."

It's not by chance that Evans has personally conducted all of the 200-plus interviews on "A Starting Point" during trips to D.C. Celebrities often try to mobilize the public, whether it's Eva Longoria, Tracee Ellis Ross and Julia Louis-Dreyfus hosting the Democratic National Convention or Jon Voight recording video clips to praise Trump.

But in this case, Evans is using his status in a different way, to entice even the most hesitant Republican to sit down for an even-toned chat. And he's willing to pose with anyone, even if it means explaining himself on "The Daily Show" after Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas posted a selfie with Evans.

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ROSA PINEDA/U.S. SENATE

On one of his trips to Washington, D.C., to conduct interviews for "A Starting Point," actor Chris Evans, left, spoke with Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski. Evans launched the online platform with fellow actor-director Mark Kassen and entrepreneur Joe Kiani.

WEEKEND: TELEVISION

FROM PAGE 34

Murkowski remembers when Evans came to Capitol Hill for the first time in 2018. She admits she didn't actually know who he was — she had only seen any Marvel movies. She was in the minority.

"We meet interesting and important people but, man, when Captain America was in the Senate, it was all the buzz," she says. "And people were like, 'Did you get your picture taken?' I said, 'Yeah, I sat down and did the interview.' 'You did an interview? How did you get an interview with him?'"

What impressed Murkowski wasn't his star power. It was the way Evans conducted the interview.

"It was relaxing," she says. "You didn't feel like you were in front of a reporter who was just waiting for you to say something you would get caught on later. It was a dialogue ... and we need more dialogue and less gotcha."

"Starting Points" offers two-minute answers by elected officials in eight topic areas, including education, the environment and the economy. This is where the interviews Evans conducted can be found.

"Daily Points" has featured a steady flow of Republicans and Democrats. A third area, "Counterpoints," hosts short debates between officials on particular subjects. For example, Rep. Eric Swalwell, a Democrat from California, debated mail-in voting with Dusty Johnson, the Republican congressman from South Dakota.

"Most Americans can't name more than five members of the United States House," Johnson says. "A Starting Point" allows thoughtful members to talk to a broader audience than we would normally have."

The platform's social media team pushes out potentially newsworthy clips, whether it's Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, discussing his meeting with Barrett just before he tested positive for the coronavirus, or Angus King, the independent senator from Maine, criticizing Trump for his comments on a potential peaceful transfer of power after November's election.

Kassen notes that the King clip was viewed more than 175,000 times on "A Starting Point's" Twitter account compared with the 10,000 who caught it on CNN's social media platform.

"Because it's short-form media, we're engineered to be social," Kassen says. "As a result, when something catches hold, it's passed around our audience pretty quickly."

The key is to use modern tools to push out content that's tonally different from what you might find on modern cable news. Or on social media. Which is what Evans hopes leads to more engagement. He's particularly proud of more than 10,000 people who have registered to vote through "A Starting Point" since it went online.

"If the downstream impact or the byproduct of this site is some sort of unity between the parties, great," Evans says. "But if the only thing that doesn't work. We need people involved."



In the second episode of season three of "The Conners," Mary (Jayden Rey), right, is devastated that Halloween has been canceled by the city, so Darlene and Becky enlist the rest of the family to create an unforgettable night for her and Mark, left (Ames McNamara).

'Couldn't be more relevant'

The Conner family tackles COVID-19 in season 3 of the ABC show

By GREG BRAXTON
Los Angeles Times

Two years after the death of Roseanne Conner, the surviving Conners are still in turmoil. They're now dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the troubles just keep piling on.

But that hasn't stopped "The Conners," ABC's comedy about a struggling working-class family, from finding laughter and light in the darkness.

A spinoff of the short-lived "Roseanne" revival starring Roseanne Barr, which was canceled in 2018 after its namesake made racist comments on Twitter, "The Conners," entering its third season, continues to tackle topical issues facing the country. The hardships on families wrestling with the impact of COVID-19 are center stage as the Conners confront a dire financial situation and internal family tension.

The impact of the coronavirus also has been felt behind the scenes — the series was the first ABC comedy to go back into production, and strict guidelines requiring masks and social distancing were instituted before the cast and crew returned to the set.

"I was honest — it seemed too early to come back because no one else was doing it," said Laurie Metcalf, who plays Jackie Harris. "When I heard all the safety measures being taken, we all felt more comfortable to take that first step. And we've all been very strict about it."

Meanwhile, there's been a halt to the live auditions that would attend Friday night tapings.

Lecy Goranson, who plays Becky Conner, misses their instant reactions: "They were so excited. Many of them have been watching the show since the '80s. They know our characters."

When last we saw "The Conners," which has established a solid foothold in the ABC lineup, Dan Conner (John Goodman) learned that the bank was about to foreclose on the family home and wouldn't extend his

overdue mortgage. Jackie and Becky have sunk their inheritance money into reopening the Lunch Box diner.

As the season opens, the Lunch Box is closed except for takeout and delivery because of the pandemic, and it's struggling to stay afloat. Unable to hire a delivery person, Jackie delivers orders on a bike, and Becky is forced to take a second job at Wellman Plastics.

In an interview via videoconference last week, Metcalf and Goranson discussed working during a pandemic and their feelings about the continuing plight of the Conners.

Los Angeles Times: When did you know what would be happening to the Conners this season, and what's it been like returning under very different circumstances?

Laurie Metcalf: I knew it would become part of the show because "The Conners" has always been dealing with what's going on in everyone's life. The iffy part was knowing how it would be dealt with in terms of the cast and the crew. We came in minimal contact when we actually shoot our scenes together. We drop our masks and sometimes we're closer than six feet. But it's for a very short period of time, and then the masks go on again and we will scatter.

We're doing a lot of testing and sanitizing, but the environment has been a comfortable one and one where everyone is dedicated to looking out for each other. We have to stay on top of it without becoming complacent.

Lecy Goranson: The Conners are always going through crisis, so the family is somewhat prepared for something like this. They're constantly in a state of fighting some greater force, and they band together as they do that. This is no exception. As in real life, the Conners are handling the COVID situation differently. The younger generation has their stance — my TV nephew Mark (played by Ames McNamara) is really adamant about things.

It's interesting — everyone needs new content and are looking to shows coming

back. We all need to laugh. But it's still really melancholy. There is so much going on the world, and there's huge financial risks. It's pretty frightening for the majority of Americans, and that is really reflected in the show in how the Conners are picking up the pieces now.

The show has always found humor in dire situations. But what's happening with the Lunch Box is happening with restaurants all over the country. It's a wrenching situation.

Metcalf: It couldn't be more relevant than when we last left the Conners. Becky and Jackie sunk their inheritance money into this restaurant, and now the two of them are in a predicament like so many people.

Goranson: There were so many stakes in Becky's and Jackie's journey to open the Lunch Box. They had to fight hard and have their business plan. They risked some of their familial relationships to get it going. Things got really tense.

Metcalf: It put a wedge in the family. This is the most intense situation that Jackie has had to deal with. She's gone through relationships and other stuff, but the stakes on this are pretty high. They used their safety net to open. It's do or die for this place.

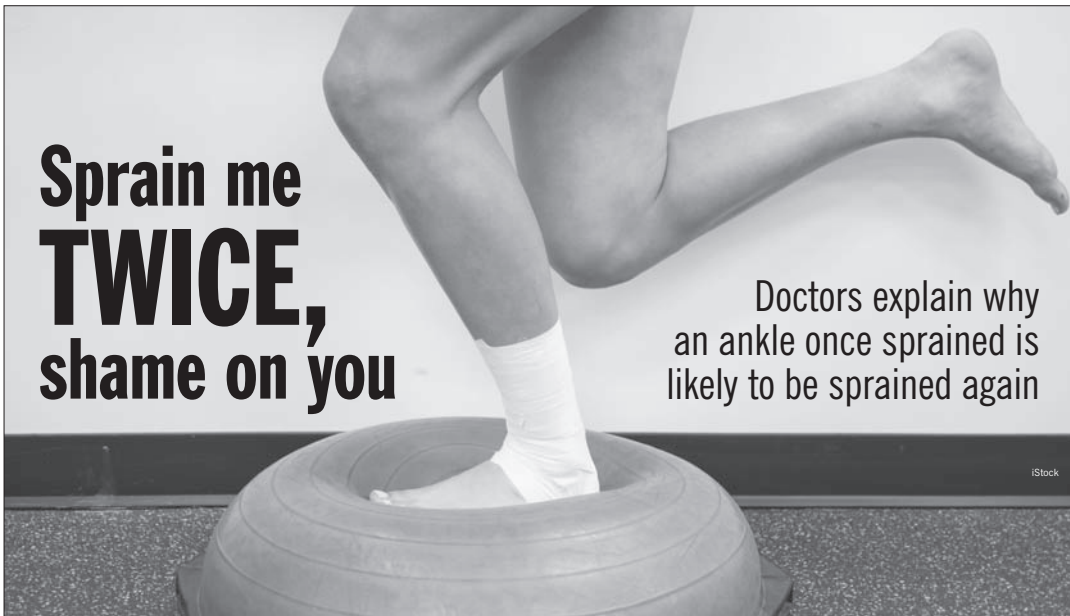
Is it harder this season to strike that delicate tone between seriousness and humor?

Metcalf: It comes from the writers. They do the heavy lifting for us, walking that fine line. I don't know how they do it, but the tone is right on the page as a blueprint of how to play the scene. But it's very different without that live audience. We don't get that adrenaline boost we would get on Friday night. We've got a great crew that still finds us semi-funny in rehearsal, and they will chuckle so we sort of know what's working. But it's been a learning curve to do (it) without an audience after all these years. And now we're doing it out of sequence. When we have the audience, we do it like a play. Now we jump around. But we're finding a new momentum. And all of us are so grateful to be back, that's for sure.

WEEKEND: HEALTH AND FITNESS

Sprain me TWICE, shame on you

Doctors explain why an ankle once sprained is likely to be sprained again



iStock

MARLENE CIMONS

Special to The Washington Post

When it comes to sports injuries, ankle sprains head the list. About 25,000 occur every day in the United States. But you don't need to be running or kicking a ball to sprain an ankle. All it takes is a misstep off a curb, down a flight of stairs — or even just walking across an uneven surface.

What's worse, once you've had one, you are inclined to sprain the same ankle repeatedly unless you do exercises to strengthen it. The biggest risk of suffering an ankle sprain is having had one in that ankle already.

The reason for this is the weakening of what's known as proprioception. It's a phenomenon that affects all of our joints, directing the body's intuitive ability to know where it is in time and space — such as being able to touch your finger to your nose with your eyes closed, or walk in a straight line without looking down.

Proprioceptors are sensory neurons found in muscles, tendons and joints that instantly shift the body in an unconscious, instant course correction that keeps it centered. It develops over time, which is why toddlers learning to walk still often look at their feet, and ebb as you age, one reason the elderly are susceptible to falls.

"It's your body's internal GPS system," says Nicholas DiNubile, a Havertown, Pa., orthopedic surgeon and doctor for the Pennsylvania Ballet. "Every joint has proprioceptors, which are networks of neurons. These are position sensors. If you start to tilt, they help you self-correct when you veer off."

Proprioception has an especially important role in weight-bearing joints, such as the ankle. When you sprain an ankle, proprioceptors become damaged. This impairs the body's ability to right itself, and makes it more likely you will sprain that same ankle again. What physicians often call a "floppy" or loose ankle — which results from the initial sprain

— actually is a slowdown in the feedback loop between the nerves and the brain. The brain cannot react quickly enough to keep that ankle from turning again.

If it's a moderate or severe sprain, "the ligament is loose for life," unless you do exercises to retrain these key nerves, DiNubile says.

Before you start doing them, however, you need to first treat the sprain.

"I have always believed that ankle sprains are the most undertreated injury seen in the emergency room," says Sheldon Laps, a Washington, D.C. podiatrist. "X-rays are usually taken, and if they are negative, patients are usually sent home with crutches and advised to ice the area and stay off it until they are able to walk on the foot."

He and other experts still recommend the old sports acronym RICE: rest, ice, compression and elevation. They advise that you put ice on it — the sooner the better — to reduce swelling (I once sprained an ankle while out running during the winter, and stuck my foot in a nearby snow bank for a few minutes before hobbling home. I'm convinced it shortened my recovery time.) Ice it for 15 to 30 minutes, then take a 15- to 30-minute break, and ice it again. Do this as often as you can the first day. Don't use heat, which worsens the swelling.

Some experts in recent years have disparaged the RICE formula, ice in particular, saying research suggests it delays healing and may make things worse. But many still believe it can be a big help immediately after an injury occurs.

"Swelling after acute injury, such as an ankle sprain, is the body's response to

protect the injured area and limit more damage by preventing movement or motion," Laps says. "Ice causes vasoconstriction, which narrows the blood vessels and reduces further swelling. I recommend ice for acute injuries [and] for swelling with chronic injuries. I don't believe that ice hampers or reduces the inflammatory process or delays healing when used immediately post injury. My feeling is based on treating athletes for over 35 years."

DiNubile agrees that ice is valuable in the hours immediately following an injury to reduce swelling and pain. But he suggests skipping ice after several days in favor of the remainder of the formula — elevation, compression, rest and/or gentle movement.

"We don't necessarily believe anymore that extended use of ice is necessary, except after the initial injury, and could be counterproductive," he says.

Wrap your foot with an elastic bandage and elevate it — keep it higher than your head, if possible, but definitely above your heart. This keeps blood from pooling in the ankle, which also will increase swelling. (If it is still swollen and painful after a couple of days, consider having an X-ray to rule out a fracture.)

Laps tells his patients to avoid exercise until they can walk briskly and pain-free on the ankle. He also suggests wrapping the ankle before exercising, and stretching before and after. After exercise, ice the ankle for five minutes if it still tends to swell after a workout. Runners especially should keep their mileage and intensity low when they start back, and run alternate days on a flat surface, such as an outdoor track, before resuming hard training

or serious competition, he says.

"I see quite a few injuries in runners from repetitive stress of running or working out every day," Laps says.

Once healed, it's time to work on that proprioception. Some of the most effective exercises include sitting with your legs crossed with a resistance band around the injured foot. Bend your foot up and outward, that is, in the direction away from the big toe. Do three sets of 15 repetitions — as it gets easier, increase the strength of the band and the number of repetitions.

Also, try balancing on the leg with the injured ankle. Stand on the bad leg only, and try to balance on it for a minute. If that's easy, do it with your eyes closed. If that's also easy, stand on a pillow, which is a mushier surface that makes it more challenging. If that's easy, too, try it with your eyes closed.

DiNubile also recommends the yoga "tree" pose. "With your eyes closed, stand up with your arms straight out to the side and put the heel of one foot to the inner side of the knee so it looks like a letter 'E,'" he explains. "On the good leg, they might be able to do it, hold it and have no problem. On the bad side, they'll be wobbling all over the place, ready to go over. If they can't do it with their eyes open, I have them look in a mirror. Then, I have them do it without a mirror, then with their eyes closed."

Finally, experts suggest performing agility drills. These involve such maneuvers as side-to-side shuffling, backward walking or running, figure-eight running, and cone drills that involve running in a "box" shape or around cones. Start with wide loops and progress to tighter loops as the ankle gets stronger.

If you are diligent about strengthening that ankle after the first sprain, you reduce your chances of having another, DiNubile says.

"An injury like an ankle sprain can really compromise your proprioception," DiNubile says. "But the good thing is that it can come back."

Proprioception has an especially important role in weight-bearing joints, such as the ankle. When you sprain an ankle, proprioceptors become damaged. This impairs the body's ability to right itself, and makes it more likely you will sprain that same ankle again.

WEEKEND: FAMILY

Can-didgeridoo attitude

Music teacher uses instrument to engage students via Zoom

By Joy Resmovits
The Seattle Times

Beth Anderson, a mother of two, suddenly found herself back in middle school music class this fall.

When school started, her sixth grade daughter Catelyn sat by her side while they learned and worked at the kitchen table. For the most part, Beth, an administrator at Seattle Colleges in Washington state, tuned middle school out.

But she couldn't tune out Cuahtemoc Escobedo, a 30-year Seattle Public Schools (SPS) veteran who teaches music and band at Eckstein Middle School. Through his virtual classroom, the tone of his voice, one that Beth said makes you sit down and listen, caught her ear. And "now I'm paying attention to middle school band class. I felt a little bit like I was his student."

Since schools shut down, districts have struggled to get students back into classrooms. But teachers of the most interactive subjects — such as physical education, art and music — have to go an extra mile to figure things out. Some kids live for these subjects — it's a time when they can be a little freer, move around their classrooms or homes, and be creative.

Music presents added barriers, with stories about how COVID-19 worked its way through choir practices adding an element of danger. And while technology allows for lectures and conversation, it's almost impossible to make live music using a video conference. "I don't always come through in real time. So teachers like Escobedo are turning into techies and DJs just to do their jobs.

Escobedo grew up in Mexico, where his parents were missionaries, and quickly took to music after learning the trombone. He'll try anything to engage and entertain his students, from keeping his class a purely positive zone — kids have enough stress right now, he says — to using technology in creative ways.

Live classes with Escobedo are for discussion, videos or demonstrations. In general, class online has gotten a lot quieter than the cacophonous din a colleague described the in-person version to be. For practice, he has 250 students submit files of their music, and he gives them feedback, one by one. Recently, he told his students he was considering offering a "thumbs up" (a bow) or a "thumbs down" (a shake) on his head if they answer tough questions correctly.

Then there was the day Anderson heard the strains of a didgeridoo piping through her home. It was Escobedo, playing songs on the wind instrument developed by the Aboriginal people of northern Australia. It sounded to Catelyn's ears like "vooom voooom, very wavy and really fun."

Fifteen years ago, Escobedo began teaching a unit on the didgeridoo. He would build about 100 of them himself each year, using a variety of wood adaptors. He taught students the special



BETTINA HANSEN, THE SEATTLE TIMES/TNS

Eckstein Middle School band teacher Cuahtemoc Escobedo, also known as Mr. E, plays the didgeridoo Oct. 16 in Seattle. Mr. E is continuing to teach his music classes remotely via Zoom during distance learning.

technique of circular breathing to play the didgeridoo, a method that's transferable to other wind instruments. To do the same this year would be harder — he'd have to disinfect everything and spend hours driving them from house to house. But he's contemplating asking parents for help with those tasks so he can bring back the didg.

Catelyn, 11, who plays the clarinet, loves the class so much that one day, she arrived so early that she became the host of the digital meeting, admitting students in one at a time.

The problem with music instruction over the internet: "You can go and show off your house and do a whole bunch of other things, but like show off pets and such, but can't really sign in it or make music on it," she said.

And in many cases, schools and families are at the mercy of music teachers and their resources. Deborah Ramba Sinn, a music teacher at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., who is also district vice president for the Washington State Music Teachers Association, said she's helped teachers figure out their setups — but some who felt left behind by the tech, she said, are "taking a break."

Beyond the software and tech know-how, disparities in access to instruments — let alone student connectivity — threaten to widen inequities.

Escobedo, who teaches a lauded music program at a largely white and wealthy school in Northeast Seattle, has deep ties to Eckstein — his father-in-law taught there, his wife and kids studied there. He's keenly aware of the disparities, and he has popped into meetings of music educators to ask if his peers needed musical gear for their students.

He knows what it's like to not have the right equipment: When he was growing up in Mexico, a music school wanted them to start on French horn, but his family couldn't afford one. At church, someone of-

fered up a trombone instead.

Teachers across the school district have made themselves available for instrument pickup or even driven them to students' homes, said Pam Izevic, the district's instructional services music coach.

Even once the equipment is available, students are now expected to learn the recorder or the trombone fret away from where their parents are now working. (Escobedo suggests investing in a practice mute.)

The beginning of the pandemic, Escobedo said, was horrifying. "There was no saying goodbyes. It's almost very traumatic," he said. "To cut it off like that got worse and worse."

Before the pandemic, he said, most music and art teachers didn't employ much tech for their teaching.

"We had a huge learning curve," he said. "We're trying to catch up now, but it's still difficult." There were so many problems to solve: converting sheet music to PDFs he could share; getting the copyright to music he would have ordinarily just played out loud, finding a way to send those files without crashing computers.

One software solution Escobedo has found: asking students to upload their pieces to digital audio workstations, electronic devices or software that enable the recording and mixing of different musical tracks. Escobedo then listens or pieces them together with the submissions of other students.

"There's quite a few that are free," he said. "You have to make it so that not one school has an advantage."

Escobedo said he can tell that kids are engaged when they choose to show their faces, which they often didn't — until he did a lesson on the didgeridoo.

"He has that magical combination of being able to command respect and get his students excited about what he's doing," Anderson says. "I don't know how you do that online."

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Boo Bags and other American excesses

Last year at this time, I was most likely grumbling under my breath about America's culture of excess. I'll admit it — I'm one of those annoying people who waxes poetic about simpler times. I often stress about society's insatiable desire for more, More, MORE.

Nowhere is America's unquenchable gluttony more evident than during Halloween, when kids' baseline expectations have come to include corn mazes, pet parades, school parties, hay rides, pumpkin carving contests requiring a fine arts degree, yard decorating contests requiring expensive special effects and 23 hired extras, weeklong horror movie marathons, venti no-whip pumpkin spice lattes, brand-name-only candy in vacuum-proof packaging, costumes costing at least \$49.95, little kid non-scary haunted houses, regular kid kindergartner haunted houses, and big kid Horrifically Haunting Mega Mansions of Blood Terror (post-traumatic stress therapy not included).

Back in the seventies, when I was a kid — brace yourself for an "uphill to school both ways" rant — our parents were too busy singing vowel gamlets and tapping their Salems into pedestal ashtrays while watching "Laugh In" to spend countless hours and dollars to provide my brother and me with a better-than-ever Halloween.

But we weren't complaining. We were excited to carve one pumpkin, using dangerous tools because kid-safe pumpkin carving kits hadn't been invented yet. We were ecstatic about dressing in \$4.99 Woolworth's highly flammable nylon Casper the Friendly Ghost costumes with brittle plastic masks secured with hair-tangling elastic bands. We were beside ourselves that ABC was airing "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" for one night on our fuzzy console television. We were on the moon about going door to door with our pillow cases, gladly accepting whatever we were given because it was free — popcorn balls, apples, coins, Necco Wafers and Mallo Cups.

For the most part, we appreciated what we got, and didn't expect our parents to do the ante every year.

As a military spouse parent, I got sucked into the vortex. When the kids were little, I ran our neighborhood's annual Halloween parade and spent hours turning felt and sweatshirts into elaborate costumes for our three kids. When they got older, I burned out, adopting a less taxing approach involving store-bought costumes for the kids and wine for me on Halloween night.

A few years ago, one of my base neighbors suggested that the military families on our street give each other something called "Boo Bags" — one of my workweeks rained, the whole thing seemed like a huge hassle, but the concept was actually quite simple: Neighbors create Halloween-themed bags full of thoughtfully assembled items and secretly drop them on other neighbors' doorsteps with notes instructing them to do the same for someone else.

At the time, I thought, "Terrific. Now I have to add Boo Bags to the list of things I have to do on my workweeks." When my wallet and energy have been sucked out like pumpkin guts, I have to spend time and money on creating a cutesy bag-o-crap just because someone decided Halloween isn't just "good enough?"

Reluctantly, I participated in the neighborhood's secret Boo Bag swap, praying that the trend was temporary. But then, COVID-19 happened. In online news reports, I read of event cancellations: Hayrides, parades, festivals, haunted houses, and for some, trick-or-treating. Instead, military and municipal leaders recommended safer alternatives, such as — you guessed it — Boo Bags.

It's amazing how doing without can change one's perspective. After months of quarantines, shutdowns and social distancing, I find myself clamoring for excess: Halloween costumes, dry-ice candles, pumpkin ravioli, eerie green lights, elaborate costumes, synthetic spider webs, and Boo Bags stuffed to the gills.

Quite suddenly, I want more, More, MORE of everything that connects us as human beings.

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

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

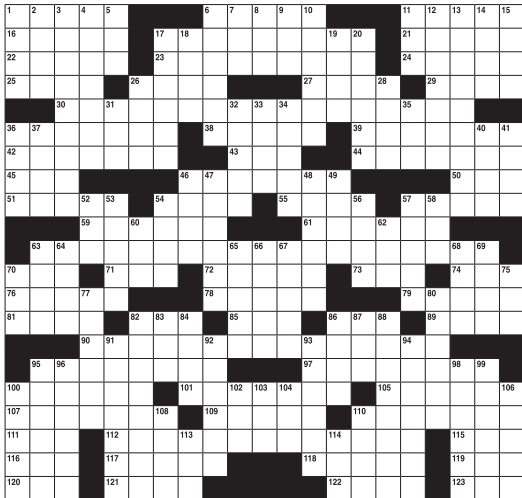
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

TITLE BASIN'

BY MIRIAM ESTRIN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Miriam Estrin is a native of St. Louis, now living in London. She works for Google as a policy manager dealing with international laws and regulations on access to information. After graduating from Yale Law School, she spent four years at the U.S. State Department. Miriam started constructing crosswords a year ago after reading The Times's online series "How to Make a Crossword Puzzle." This is her second puzzle for the paper and her first Sunday. — W.S.

- CROSS
1 Dinosaur in the Mario games
6 Titular film character opposite Harold
11 Something offered in tribute
16 ___ Martin DB5 ("Bondmobile")
17 Knock-down-drag-out fights
21 Nudge
22 Barack, Michelle, Hillary and Bill took them, for short
23 Yann Martel's baking memoir?
24 Have heat eyes for
25 Member of Britain's upper house
26 Tone-___
27 Shunned, with "out"
29 "Don't get ___!"
30 F. Scott Fitzgerald's chivalric tale?
38 Zaps, as leftovers
39 Brainstorms
40 Messes (with)
43 Follower of "Je m'appelle"
44 What a figure skater has that a hockey skate lacks
45 "___ you seeing this?"
46 Voltaire's sweet novel?
50 Scan that excites hydrogen atoms, for short
51 Can't keep one's mouth shut?
54 Alternative to de Gaulle
55 Debussy's "___ d'Elodie"
57 Prepare to go next
59 "You're making me blush!"
61 Lived (with)
63 Marcel Proust's kitchen mystery?
70 Trouble
71 1
72 "That's ___" (director's cry)
73 Halloween vis-a-vis Nov. 1
74 "Yeesh!"
76 One of six parked on the moon
78 Nasty, in a way
79 Author Ferrante
81 Neutral paint color
82 Break
85 Societal problem
86 "When They See Us" director Da'Emay
89 Big e-commerce site
90 Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's pet story?
95 Guarantees
97 [Doh!]
100 Semibiographical source for "Citizen Kane"
101 Small trunks
105 Certain red wine
107 Trap
109 Had a friendly relationship (with)
110 "___ is a wonderful thing if one does not have to earn one's living at it"; Einstein
111 "Revenge ___ dish ..."
112 William Shakespeare's historical romance?
115 Gives one's seal of approval
116 Woman's name that's a piece of furniture backward
117 Classical singing venue
118 Beat
119 Call to reserve?
120 The final installment of "The Godfather"
121 Bit of coffee
122 Sierra Nevadas, e.g.
123 Word that can precede or follow "run"
DOWN
1 "___ ready for this?" (opening of a pump-up jam)
2 Part of an Italian veal dish name
4 Neutral paint color
5 Helpful connections
6 Breakfast order
7 Long period
8 What a weather balloon might be mistaken for
9 Letters on the "3" button
10 Catches a glimpse of
11 What Mrs. Potts and Chip serve in "Beauty and the Beast"
13 Brit's term of affection
13 "Finally!"
14 Resolve, with "out"
15 Precious, to a Brit
17 Goes undercover?
18 Heated accusation
19 Sound effect during a bomb defusing, perhaps
20 "I watched that episode already"
26 Critical time
28 Queen who made Carthage prosper
31 Pittsburgh-to-Buffalo dir.
32 Fair forecast
33 Beat in a boxing match, in a way
34 Corral
35 Command for a right turn, in mashing
36 "It's possible"
37 "You've Got Mail" director Ephron
40 Neutral paint color
41 Sound like a broken record
46 Shoe with holes
47 Top dogs
48 Subject of Rick Steves's travel guides
49 God, in Guadaluajara
52 Bullfight alternatives: Abbr.
53 Utter
54 Como ningun___ (unique, in Spanish)
56 Pledge-drive gift
57 Giggle
58 Dreyer's ice-cream partner
60 ___ Harbor, first official port of entry to the United States
62 Channel that aired "Daria" and "The Hills"
63 Fan-mail recipient
64 Exploding star
65 Take pride in something
66 Raffle
67 What can take a punch?
68 ___ & Chandon (Champagne)
69 Long periods
70 Little howwow
75 Wray of "King Kong"
77 Nonresident doctor
80 Lead role on "Parks and Recreation"
82 Writer Stein
83 Green and others
84 Sets (against)
86 The Amazons were the daughter of this god, in myth
87 By way of
88 Director's cry
91 Is employed
92 Movie with the line "I feel the need... the need for speed!"
93 Dials
94 Some concert tour merchandise
95 Martial arts master
98 Sushi's condiment
99 Traitor in the Revolutionary War
100 "S.N.L." cast member Gardner
102 Lover of Orion, in myth
103 8-Dow pilots, in brief
104 Forest grazer
106 Full of spice
108 Where Zeno taught
110 Children's poet Silverstein
113 ___ beam
114 Place for a shivtz

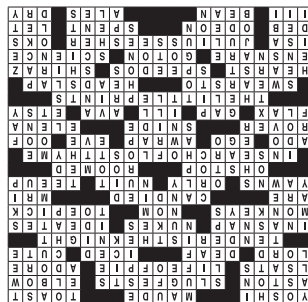


GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zavitski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and visit gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



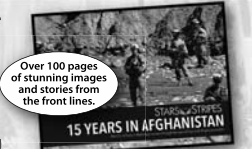
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FACES

Downsized role, room

Kristin Chenoweth discusses voicing a mouse from her closet for 'The Witches', making Zemeckis laugh, why it's OK to scare kids

BY ELLEN GRAY
The Philadelphia Inquirer

When the Kimmel Center shut down this spring, on March 12, Kristin Chenoweth had been about to bring her For the Girls concert tour to the Philadelphia venue. It was scheduled for March 13.

"I was devastated. Philly is one of my favorite places to play," said the Tony- and Emmy-winning singer and actress. Chenoweth can be heard now in Robert Zemeckis' adaptation of Roald Dahl's "The Witches," which premiered Oct. 22 on HBO Max.

The actress who originated the role of Glinda in Broadway's "Wicked" is the voice of Daisy, a mouse who plays a pivotal role in the live-action film, which stars Anne Hathaway as the Grand High Witch and Octavia Spencer as the woman who's determined to stop witches from turning all the world's children into mice.

Speaking by Zoom from Vancouver, where she's filming an as-yet-untitled musical comedy series for Apple TV+ with "Saturday Night Live's" Cecily Strong, Chenoweth talked about working from closets on two coasts, why it's OK for children to be a little scared, and what she did to make Zemeckis laugh during filming.

This interview has been edited and condensed.

Philadelphia Inquirer: Any regrets about not getting the opportunity to play a wicked witch in "The Witches"? Or did you already regret that particular itch playing Maleficent in "The Descendants"?

Chenoweth: "The Descendants" scratched that itch. And one thing about Glinda (in "Wicked") that I don't know that people really remember is that she wasn't so nice. So "wicked" could really apply to her, too. And this was getting to play a mouse. Living in New York, I had a few in some apartments. And let's just say we weren't friends.

How did you record your part?

My boyfriend and I deadened my closet for sound with towels and blankets. And the studio sent us a mic and a computer and another iPad so they could have another view and so the animators and CGI artists could watch and maybe be inspired by me and some things I do, and so Zemeckis can direct and we can talk. And we did it. I did my whole role in my closet in New York City.

What was it like to be directed by the man who directed "Forrest Gump" while you're playing a mouse from your closet?

I was nervous. I'm being really honest. And there was an ad-lib I did and I know it made him laugh. There's a scene where we're running. (And I shouted) "Run, Forrest, run!" Just because I had to do it once.

Laughter is an easy way to get people to relax, especially me. I've had to work with many, many people that I admire, from Carol Burnett to Julie Andrews, to Dolly (Parton) and Reba (McEntire). It can be intimidating, but laughter breaks it.

You've done voice work before, but for animation. Was this any different?

Well, every role is different, but I've never recorded anything in my closet. Usually I'm inspired by my shoes. I don't go in my closet to work, but I guess we're getting used to things, aren't we? I just did it with a single with the country music star Ty Herndon called "Orphans of God." And I sang it in my closet in L.A.

What's it like working in Vancouver?

Canada has got it down. It's very safe. We have COVID tests every other day whether we work or not. And we are masked up when we go to set, with hair and makeup ready.

And it's a period piece for me. So let's just say I can't have anything messing up my hair. I wear, like, a wig. The first day I wore it, I said, "I feel like I've been sprayed!"

Where do you stand on stories for children, like Roald Dahl's "The Witches," that even some adults find frightening?

The idea of temptation, and courage, is all over this film. And then of course, love and safety. But I don't think it's fair for us not to prepare our kids for our generation, for what life has to bring now. This is a great opportunity for parents to say, "See, you can be lured in by a key piece of candy and later as an adult, I can be lured in by bad business partners, or this and that." It's life. We will just soften ourselves to death where no one can handle anything if we don't (tell scary stories). But I think we do it very carefully and very wisely here.

Kristin Chenoweth

IMAGE GROUP LA, FREEFORM/TNS

You and Chris Rock, who narrates the film, both have distinctive, easily recognized voices. Is that a way of being seen even if you're not on camera?

Before I was ever seen, I was heard. As a child, no one took me seriously. Having a voice that was mature, that didn't match my look, I realized that, excuse me, there was power in that ...

The things that make you different and odd and unique, like (being) this little girl, that's the thing that's helped me. Now, has it also hurt me at times? You bet. But there's one of me. And there's one Chris Rock.



'The Masked Singer' gets spin-off show

Associated Press

Fox's hit series "The Masked Singer" is getting company with "The Masked Dancer," a chance for celebrity contestants to show off their moves in disguise.

Actor and comedian Craig Robinson ("The Office," "Hot Tub Time Machine") will host the series, with Ken Jeong, Paula Abdul, Brian Austin Green and Ashley Tisdale as panelists.

Contestants won't be performing solo: Masked partners and back-up dancers will be joining them for a range of music and dance styles, including hip-hop, salsa, jazz and tap, the network said Wednesday.

Filming has begun on the series, which will debut in December, Fox said. A date and guest judges are yet to be announced.

Fox Entertainment executive Rob Wade described host Robinson as "hilarious as always" and lauded the panelists as the right blend to "lead our awesomely weird world of masks into a whole new genre."

Clint Eastwood to direct 'Cry Macho'

Warner Bros. has announced that production of a new Clint Eastwood film is set to take place in New Mexico.

The 90-year-old Oscar winner will direct and star in the film "Cry Macho," the Albuquerque Journal reported. No other cast member has been announced.

Production is scheduled from Nov. 4 through Dec. 16 in the Albuquerque area, according to the casting agency. The film is based on the book of the same name by Richard Nash.

Eastwood will play a one-time rodeo star and horse breeder in 1978 who takes a job from a former boss to bring the man's young son home. The film follows their journey from rural Mexico to Texas.

Khloe Kardashian positive for coronavirus

Khloe Kardashian says she had tested positive for the coronavirus.

The reality star confirmed she was diagnosed Wednesday in a sneak-peek clip of "Keeping Up with the Kardashians." The bed-ridden Kardashian spoke in the video with a hoarse voice.

Kardashian said her symptoms included coughing, shaking, vomiting and headaches along with cold and hot flashes. She said she had a burning sensation while coughing.

Other news

■ Outlaw country singer songwriter Billy Joe Shaver, who wrote songs like "Honky Tonk Heroes," "I Been to Georgia on a Fast Train" and "Old Five and Diners Like Me," has died. He was 81.

Performers for CMA Awards announced

Associated Press

Eric Church, Miranda Lambert, Maren Morris, Luke Combs and more are set to take the stage at the CMA Awards in November.

The country music awards show promised that the genre's biggest stars will be together in one room again for the first time since the COVID-19 outbreak started. The show will air on ABC on Nov. 11 from the Music City Center.

"Although the show will feel a bit more intimate this year, we

look forward to hosting our nominated artists and their guests as we celebrate the best of country music in a fully safe and physically distant environment," said Country Music Association CEO Sarah Trahern in a statement.

Lambert, the leading nominee with seven nods including entertainer of the year, will perform "Settling Down" from her album of the year-nominated record "Wildcard." Fellow entertainer of the year nominee Luke Combs will perform "Cold As You" and Morris will sing her hit nomi-

nated song "The Bones."

Cohosts Reba McEntire and Darius Rucker will perform a tribute collaboration together, while Rucker will also perform his new single "Beers & Sunshine" with Lady A.

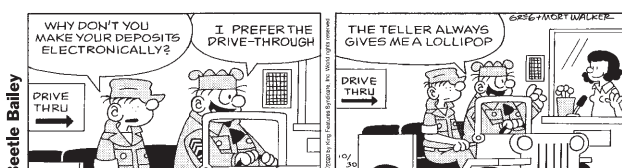
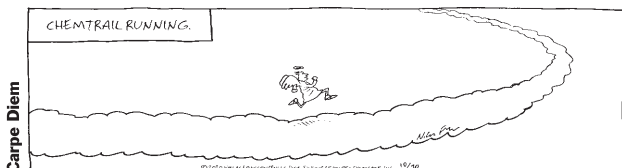
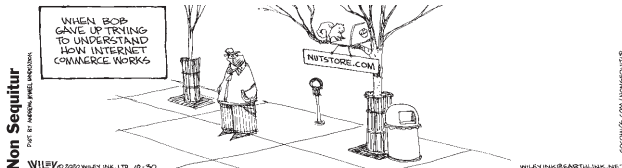
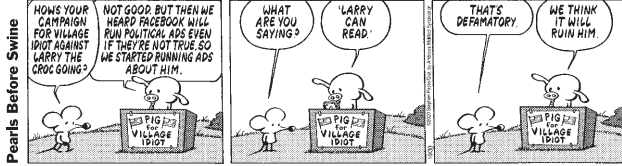
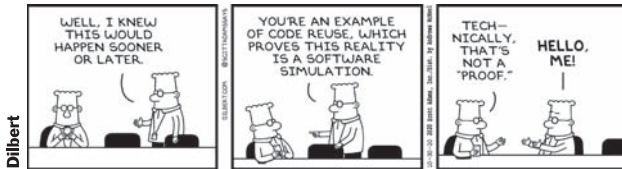
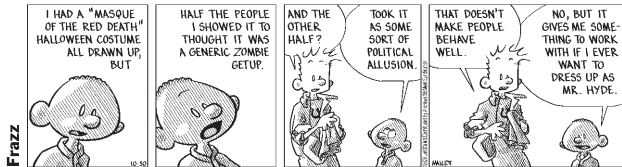
Gabby Barrett will be joined by pop singer Charlie Puth for a duet on her nominated song "I Hope." Thomas Rhett will perform "Be a Light," with McEntire, Hillary Scott of Lady A and Christian artist Chris Tomlin.

Other performers announced are Ashley McBryde, Rascal Flatts and Florida Georgia Line.



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Luke Combs performs "Beer Never Broke My Heart" in 2019 at the CMT Music Awards in Nashville.



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
12				13					14				
15				16					17				
18							19	20					
21							22				23	24	25
26	27	28					29				30		
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37							38				39		
40							41				42	43	44
45	46	47					48	49					
50							51				52		
53							54				55		

ACROSS

- 1 Astern
- 4 Latin 101 word
- 8 Wagers
- 12 401(k) alternative
- 13 Maja painter
- 14 Twistable cookie
- 15 Sign painter, at times
- 17 Persia, today
- 18 Wood applications
- 19 Heavy weight
- 21 JFK's predecessor
- 22 Snorkeling site
- 26 Seoul setting
- 29 Drench
- 30 Chemical suffix
- 31 Currier's partner
- 32 Parcel of land
- 33 Mater lead-in
- 34 Pint-sized
- 35 "Goshi!"
- 36 Stopwatch button
- 37 Use a tab key
- 39 Some fridges
- 40 Wet dirt
- 41 Geological periods
- 45 Gambling mecca
- 48 One of eight
- 50 Coup d' —
- 51 "Huh?"
- 52 Acapulco gold

DOWN

- 1 Feels unwell
- 2 Worry
- 3 "Toodle-oo!"
- 4 Order of antelope business
- 5 Code name?
- 6 Sailor's "yes"
- 7 Small pastry
- 8 Pogo stick sound
- 9 Goof up
- 10 Earl Grey, for one
- 11 Junior
- 16 Ocean motions
- 20 Granola morsel
- 23 Monet's supply
- 24 "My treat"
- 25 Spruced up
- 26 Fuzzy fruit
- 27 It takes the cake
- 28 Oboe insert
- 29 Misery
- 32 Disappoint
- 33 Fable writer
- 35 Bearded antelope
- 36 Esteem
- 38 Overact
- 39 Reach
- 42 Drain blockage
- 43 Olympian queen
- 44 Halt
- 45 Flushed
- 46 JFK info
- 47 Rebel Turner
- 49 When doubled, it's a dance

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

10-30

CRYPTOQUIP

LBLGZ SRAL Q FENGFE JLYNSZ

WPLX SP SEL WZA, XEPNUJ

YLPYUL LCYLFS ERA SP

LC LGFRXL BRFGQ-PNXUZ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: OLD WEST PIONEERS' CONESTOGAS THAT WERE OUTFITTED WITH LOTS OF CABINETS: CUPBOARD WAGONS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals Y

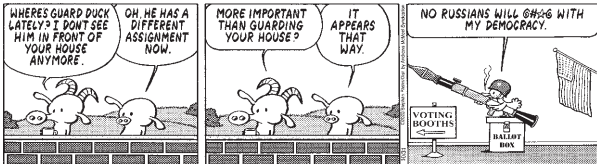
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



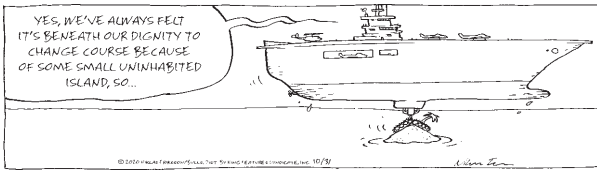
Non Sequitur



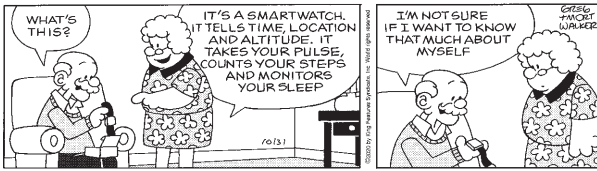
Candorville



Carpe Diem



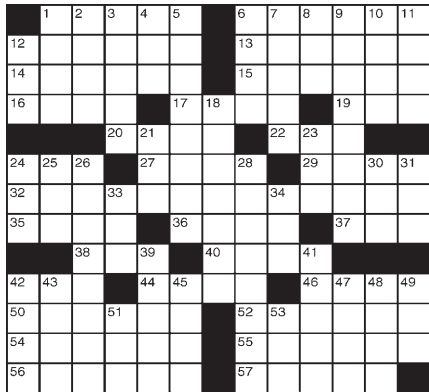
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Carthaginian
- 6 Shoe marks
- 12 Peace Nobelist
- 13 Oahu verandas
- 14 Make use of
- 15 Consecrate
- 16 With oil
- 17 Innocent one
- 19 Hwys.
- 20 Warning sign
- 22 Stitch
- 24 Chest-beating
- 27 Golden
- 29 Fraction
- 32 Buffy's job in a TV drama
- 35 Goya's duchess
- 36 Too
- 37 Tfu source
- 38 Rm. coolers
- 40 Unctuous
- 42 Rockies hrs.
- 44 Nine, in Nice
- 46 Expel
- 50 Win the hot dog contest
- 52 Accustoms
- 54 Hip place?
- 55 Tangle up

- 56 Hard and cold
- 57 Valleys

- 23 Clean air org.
- 24 "Selma" director

DOWN

- 1 Rid of rind
- 2 — Bator
- 3 Not familiar with
- 4 Equal (Pref.)
- 5 Australian capital
- 6 Thick chunk
- 7 Walking sticks
- 8 First numero
- 9 Golf course areas
- 10 Locate
- 11 Beyond jets
- 12 OED entries
- 18 "Still I Rise" poet Maya
- 21 — tai (cocktail)
- 25 Crony
- 26 Fortify
- 28 Turned to bone
- 30 Old Olds
- 31 Attempt
- 33 Lobbying's gp.
- 34 Texter's chuckle
- 37 Slow mover
- 41 "— be sorry!"
- 42 Floor cleaners
- 43 Fat
- 45 Online crafts site
- 47 Russian river
- 48 Brief moments
- 49 Mao — -tung
- 51 Wife of Adam
- 53 Away from PSW

Answer to Previous Puzzle



10-31

CRYPTOQUIP

ZA UIWAOYS URWLYL, TUIO SR
NRW DIKK LYOL RE LOYGL
KYISZAM WG OR UZMUYB

EKRRBL? LDIBY-TINL.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: EVERY TIME A CHURCH DEPUTY GOES TO THE GYM, SHOULD PEOPLE EXPECT HIM TO EXERCISE VICAR-OUSLY?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals H

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published weekdays (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for 60 cents on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, P.O. Box 96301-5002, Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002.

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OPINION

Germany ready to offer US a new deal

By ANDREAS KLUTH
Bloomberg Opinion

It's not every day that the defense minister of a major NATO ally proposes a new deal in trans-Atlantic relations by repeatedly and emotionally avowing her "gratitude" toward the U.S. But that's what Germany's Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer did last week.

Even in the final throes of a presidential election, the cognoscenti in Washington on both sides of the aisle would be fools not to read between Kramp-Karrenbauer's lines and consider her offer. It is no secret that Berlin's policymakers are praying for Joe Biden to defeat Donald Trump. But Kramp-Karrenbauer explicitly makes her pitch to any future resident of the White House: Democrat or Republican.

At the heart of her message is this conundrum: How can Germany help defend "the West" when that very concept, in the age of Trumpist nationalism, may not even exist any longer? How, should Germany even consider itself part of a notional West at all, or rather "equidistant" between East and West — between China and the U.S., for example — in a strategic quest for independence?

Kramp-Karrenbauer's answer is an unequivocal yes to the West. She teases a German tradition of "West-binding," or "Western bond." Beginning with Konrad Adenauer, West Germany's first chancellor, it meant ending the long and disastrous German history of floating, both geopolitically and culturally, between West and East in the misguided belief that Germany was "exceptional."

many's security under its military and nuclear aegis. Simultaneously, it "taught us our democracy," as Kramp-Karrenbauer acknowledged gratefully in her speech. America thus became a "father figure" for the fledgling Federal Republic. This made the open disdain shown more recently by Trump, a German American, so poignant.

An alternative, German tradition is called "Ostpolitik," or "Eastern policy." It began with Willy Brandt, the first Social Democratic chancellor, and has always been emphasized by the SPD (the junior partner in Merkel's government). Ostpolitik originally sought detente with the countries of the Warsaw Pact. But since the end of the Cold War, it has largely stood for tighter relations with Russia. One example is a controversial and nearly finished gas pipeline connecting Russia to Germany through the Baltic Sea.

Kramp-Karrenbauer's point is that a united West, anchored by the U.S. on one side of the Atlantic and Germany on the other, is more important than ever. It is rising with an authoritarian countermodel to Western values. Russia and Turkey are dangerous. The climate is changing, and prosperity, democracy and peace are all at risk. Who else will stand up for Western values if the U.S., Germany and their friends won't?

So here's her deal: Once the silly season ends in the U.S., over, let's push the button. Instead of threatening each other with tariffs, let's talk again about a free-trade area for the whole West. In return, Kramp-Karrenbauer promises that Germany will invest in its military and, when diplomacy fails, use it to maintain order in its neighborhood — from the Baltic to the Balkans,

from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. This she calls "a new German realism." In effect, she says Germany can relieve the U.S. of the burdens of being regional cop, so America can better allocate its power and effort globally.

Such a proposal, coming from a German, is remarkable. It represents a clear rejection of the vision peddled by the likes of French President Emmanuel Macron, who see Europe as agnostic about the major world powers and striving only to become geopolitically "autonomous" and "sovereign." Ostpolitik, she also spurs the remnants of Ostpolitik and what she calls its "romantic fixation on Russia," which is often combined with a large helping of anti-Americanism.

In a sign that the debate in Berlin has moved, even Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, a Social Democrat, this week seemed to second Kramp-Karrenbauer. While still intoning that the goal is "European sovereignty," he accepted that there is no alternative to the U.S. partnership, and proposes aligning the countries' foreign policies, from international sanctions to the climate.

Veterans of the trans-Atlantic relationship would be forgiven for rolling their eyes. At the Munich Security Conference in 2014, several German leaders promised that they would cooperate with their allies "earlier, more decisively, and more substantially." Nothing much came of those words, in part because popular opinion remains wary of Germany throwing its weight around.

But the world has changed. Whoever wins next week — and the polls favor Biden — should remember America's long and tortuous friendship with Germany. Rejuvenating it on new terms would be good for both countries, and the world.

Andreas Kluth is a columnist for Bloomberg. The views expressed here do not reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Option of gun-free events needed for peaceful assembly

By IAN AYRES AND FREDRICK VARS
Special to The Washington Post

The recent confrontation between pro-choice and antiabortion protesters outside of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Walnut Creek, Calif., quickly escalated to violence when several of the pro-choice protesters were pepper sprayed by armed guards hired by the antiabortion protesters.

The presence of counterprotesters openly carrying firearms has become commonplace this past summer. At least 45 states have laws on the books that, under certain circumstances, and if people aren't shy about using that right to terrify others. In the shadow of such laws, police often are forced to stand idly by when armed protesters arrive on the scene.

The Second Amendment right to bear arms cannot coexist with the First Amendment right of assembly, or "peaceful assembly." The presence of counterprotesters carrying deadly weapons has had a chilling effect on the rights of others to engage in expressive association. When men wearing body armor and carrying AR-15s chose to attend a campaign event at Kent State University in September 2019, former Texas congresswoman Beto O'Rourke tried to call out their action as an effort "to intimidate."

While not every armed counterprotester may intend to stifle free speech, carrying an AR-15 to a rally supporting a ban on AR-15s sends its own message. But firearms are a different form of communication. The marketplace of ideas can be

distorted when one side of the debate has the ability to kill without warning.

A simple legal change can go a long way toward accommodating both constitutional interests. States and cities should give their citizens the right to choose to assemble without firearms. Such a change would require nothing more than adding a check box for gun-free events to city or town application forms that organizers fill out to obtain permits for public marches, rallies and other demonstrations. We are aware of no major U.S. cities that have a gun-free option on their special event permit forms.

Properly licensed gun owners in many states can already exercise their right to assemble at their own events with firearms. But counterprotesters should not be allowed to openly carry firearms to events that organizers designate to be gun-free.

Armed counterprotesters stand on different footing from armed protests because the presence of armed detractors can impede the ability of the organizing group to engage in "expressive association." The presence of armed counterprotesters can also escalate to violence.

The rights of those who want to express their opposition to a planned event and carry weapons can be accommodated by establishing a "gun-free" zone. In those zones, counterprotesters can gather without endangering public safety or the rights of others.

What's more, giving event organizers a gun-free option would be attractive to many police departments that have found it difficult to maintain "no carry" or "no carry situations with armed antagonists." This is

why the Cleveland police union asked the Ohio governor to suspend open carry in the entire city for the duration of the 2016 Republican National Convention. (Then-Gov. John Kasich, a Republican, declined.)

Several states have gone further and prohibited open carry at all demonstrations. This comes in part because the gun-free state of Alabama has a statute making it "unlawful for any person, other than a law enforcement officer, to have in his or her possession ... any firearm while participating in or attending any demonstration being held at a public place."

The U.S. Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment right "peaceably to assemble" requires states to offer its citizens the right to organize gun-free meetings. Even without deciding whether the local permitting process constitutes sufficient "state action" to trigger constitutional protection, state and local officials of all political persuasions should be willing to embrace, without judicial intervention, giving organizers the option of assembling in gun-free public spaces.

We are used to thinking that gun control necessarily means restricting a constitutional right. But check-the-box option for gun-free meetings would enhance public safety and our constitutional right to assemble. Assembly, and the right to vote free of intimidation, are particularly in need of protection with Election Day nearly upon us.

Ian Ayres and Fredrick Vars are law professors at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, respectively, and co-authors of the book "Weapon of Choice: Fighting Gun Violence While Respecting Gun Rights."

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editors are credited to the Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Stop real (and claimed) foreign interference in the election

The Washington Post

Less than a year after the 2020 presidential election, the United States finds itself in almost the opposite predicament from four years ago: Far from ignoring foreign interference, we're in danger of imagining more of it than exists — and that in itself could cause big problems.

Adversities in Russia, China to Iran are indeed assailing our democracy, a reality that should come as no surprise to anyone paying attention — but the good news is that this time, our government is paying attention. Influence operations on social media sites are getting caught before they can get started. And while the hack-and-leak experts have dreamed so far hasn't happened; even if investigators do find a link between the Kremlin and the dubious Hunter Biden laptop story published by the New York Post, the tale hasn't caught on because cautious mainstream media organizations have vetted, and many American voters have grown wary.

President Donald Trump has refused even to acknowledge what happened last time around, yet that hasn't stopped top security agencies from taking action. The Treasury Department has sanctioned multiple individuals who are working to meddle, including Ukrainian lawmakers Andriy Derkach for acting as a Russian agent to launder disinformation through U.S. sources discrediting former Vice President Joe Biden; this step, in turn, empowered platforms like Google and Facebook to kick the criminals off their sites.

The Department has revoked the visas of similar actors. U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security Agency are preemptively keeping malicious botnets off the Web to prevent ransomware attacks and other nefariousness on Nov. 3.

The Department of Homeland Security is coordinating with officials in all 50 states and D.C. to secure their infrastructure and spot intruders — which may have helped authorities spot the same sort of probes by Moscow into local computer networks they missed in 2016. Last week, DHS said a group sometimes known as Dragonfly or Herkules was targeting these systems again. That's concerning, not because the hackers have changed or could change any vote tallies or registration information: The attackers' intention, officials worry, may be to sow discord in the days after the election ends, perhaps by claiming they've secured more votes than they actually did.

The spoofed emails purporting from the far-right group the Proud Boys threatening voters, which according to the administration came courtesy of Iran, worked to this same end. The authors claimed they were "in possession of all your information" — but really, they were in possession only of what was already public or commercially available.

The United States, in short, faces two threats next week. One is genuine foreign interference. The other is the specter of foreign interference tricking us into distrusting our democracy at every turn. So the solution is to make sure that irregularities occur every election. They are bound to occur this election, too. Already, the president and his allies are alleging the untrustworthiness of mail-in ballots. We must guard against meddlers creating even more chaos, but we also must guard against being manipulated into creating it ourselves.



MICHAEL PEREZ/AP

A protester points while facing police Tuesday in Philadelphia. Hundreds marched to protest the death of Walter Wallace Jr., who was killed by Philadelphia police Monday.

Preparing for the upcoming 'COVID-19 Winter'

The Wall Street Journal

Perhaps you've heard winter is coming. Or as Joe Biden warned last week about a third virus wave, "We're about to go into a dark winter, a dark winter." He's playing up the worst case as the election nears, so some context is in order.

Virus cases are increasing, but this is inevitable as cooler weather arrives and Americans go indoors. Cases have also been climbing across Europe, in some countries more than in the U.S. But the good news is that America is better prepared to handle another virus surge, and progress toward a vaccine continues.

The seven-day U.S. rolling case average has nearly doubled from the recent low in mid-September. Cases are more geographically dispersed than in the spring and summer, rising even in states with strict restrictions and mask mandates. This includes New York and its neighbors whose governors were hailed for supposedly controlling the virus. The increase has been most acute in upper Midwest states that weren't hit as hard earlier. Some of the increase is due to more testing, which is detecting more asymptomatic cases.

Most concerning are hospitalizations, which are up by about 40% since mid-September though are still 30% or so below spring and summer peaks. Most hospitals have ample capacity to treat virus patients while continuing elective procedures, which were stopped during the spring.

Some hospitals report being swamped, but resources can be deployed to areas that need the extra beds. In El Paso, where COVID patients make up 40% of hospital beds (about twice the summer peak), Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has announced an alternate care site and the feds are sending critical-care personnel. Rio Grande this summer but has responded more swiftly in El Paso.

Wisconsin has set up a field hospital in the Milwaukee suburbs to treat patients who aren't severely ill but may still need medical support. As of Monday that hospital was treating four patients. Hospitalizing patients with moderate illness can prevent complications that cause long-term damage and can turn deadly.

Governors seem to have learned from mistakes during earlier waves, including New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's failure to use field hospitals set up by the feds in New York City. Abbott was slow to deploy resources to the lower Rio Grande this summer but has responded more swiftly in El Paso.

Death rates have also fallen tremendously as treatments have improved. This includes therapeutics like Gilead's antiviral remdesivir and Regeneron's antibody cocktail, but also medical protocols such as prone positioning, low-flow oxygenation

in lieu of invasive ventilation, and anticoagulants to treat blood clots.

A new study by the NYU Langone hospital system reports its mortality rate declined by 70% from March to August after accounting for age, health risks, admission vital signs and other factors. The Houston Methodist hospital system reported its mortality during the early summer surge was about 3.5% versus 12.1% in the spring.

Deaths have also trended lower because the public is doing a better job of shielding the elderly and those at high-risk. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported last week the share of deaths in nursing homes declined by 45% between May and August. Individuals over age 85 are 630 times more likely to die than those between 18 and 29, says the CDC.

This is why the epidemiologists who wrote the Great Barrington Declaration, which has been signed by tens of thousands of doctors and scientists, advise a focus on protecting the elderly. They also warn that government lockdowns lead to worsening heart-disease outcomes, fewer cancer screenings and more mental illness.

COVID has accounted for less than 10% of deaths among those over 65 this year, and a much smaller share among younger people.

Treating non-COVID health ailments can reduce virus deaths. Masks can also help at the margins, and wearing them to protect others indoors and in crowds is public-spirited and important until a vaccine is widely available, which may be as early as this spring.

Meanwhile, vaccines continue to progress, and four in the U.S. have entered Phase 3 trials, meaning they have already shown evidence of generating antibodies in vaccinated patients.

If Biden is elected, he'll benefit from vaccines developed thanks to drug-company innovation and the Trump administration effort to streamline the bureaucracy. Expect his winter to become less dark soon after Jan. 20.

Police shooting of Black man likely a policy failure too

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Again a Black man is killed by police — this time 27-year-old Walter Wallace Jr. from West Philadelphia.

On Monday afternoon, Philadelphia police officers arrived at the 6100 block of Locust Street, where they encountered Wallace with a knife. Wallace "advanced toward the officers," according to a police spokesperson.

A video taken by a bystander shows Wallace walking toward police officers who are pointing their guns at him. Wallace's mother and another man try to hold him back in an effort to defuse the situation.

As Wallace continues to walk toward the two officers, they both suddenly open fire, striking him 10 times, according to his father.

Wallace's mother wails, and cradles his body. According to Walter Wallace Sr., his son was a father with a known history of mental health issues.

Having someone walk toward you with a knife is frightening. But as the agents of the state with the monopoly on the use of deadly force, police officers are supposed to be trained in de-escalation and to have tools to utilize before they discharge their weapon multiple times.

Again, protests erupted after the shooting. Philadelphia residents used the concrete corridor of 52nd Street that is still recovering from unrest and police brutality in response from late May again saw smoke from dumpster fires and a burning police cruiser outside their windows — and police responding with batons.

Again, officials are undered with somber statements. Mayor Jim Kenney said: "I have watched the video of this tragic incident and it presents difficult questions that must be answered." Commissioner Danielle Outlaw added that she will be "leaning on what the investigation gleans to answer under the law."

Again, the Fraternal Order of Police immediately defended the officers.

If the police officers who shot Walter Wallace Jr. 10 times indeed did nothing wrong according to PPD use-of-force protocol — which has been revised in recent years — and which has been revised even more so since the state of Pennsylvania passed the state of policing in Philadelphia is even more dire than we thought. It also makes it more urgent to explore non-policing responses to behavior and mental health crises, as other evolved nations and cities do.

Dodgers, Lakers brought LA fans joy amid the pandemic

Los Angeles Times

For the second time in this strange and awful year, Los Angeles has found a reason to cheer.

The World Series championship win by the Dodgers on Tuesday night, its first in 32 years, a drought made all the more frustrating by the near-misses in recent seasons. Twice in the previous three years, the Dodgers made it to the World Series only to lose — and in 2017, to a Houston Astros team that cheated its way to victory.

The Dodgers were not alone. All the more so considering how heavily the team's owners — Guggenheim Baseball Management, which bought the team after Frank McCourt put it into bankruptcy — have spent over the years. Just before the season started, they opened the cash spigot again for the newly arrived outfielder Mookie Betts, a game changer at the plate and in the field. Betts, who starred for the Boston Red Sox when they beat the Dodgers in the 2018 Series, scored what proved to be the winning run Tuesday.

The expensive, star-infused lineup is one thing the Dodgers had in common with the Los Angeles Lakers, who won the NBA championship a little more than two weeks ago after missing the playoffs for seven agonizing years. Another thing the teams share is the giant local fan bases they have built up, each of which cuts across ages, races, ethnicities, incomes and political views.

With all the challenges thrown on our way this year — the pandemic, the recession, the monstrous wildfires, the reckoning with systemic racism, the exceptionally divisive election season — we need as many sources of joy and unity as we can find. So it's time to imagine a better one than these wins.

Yes, the Dodgers are a big-market team with all the advantages that conveys. But as the Dodgers have demonstrated so painfully in recent years, money doesn't translate into championships. Talent and determination, so often linked with good luck and good health. Let's all be thankful for that.

AUTO RACING/NBA



PHOTOS BY RICHARD W. RODRIGUEZ/AP

Above: Kyle Busch does doughnuts after winning the NASCAR Cup race at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, Texas, on Wednesday. Below: It was the reigning Cup winner's first victory of 2020.

Several days late, Kyle Busch gets his first win of the year

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS
Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Out of contention to defend his NASCAR Cup title, Kyle Busch at least extended his season winning streak to 16 with his first victory of 2020.

He also denied a needed victory for Martin Truex Jr., his penalized Joe Gibbs Racing teammate who still has a chance to be one of the four drivers to be the new champion.

"I feel like crap," Busch said. "But I got a win."

Busch won the NASCAR finished Wednesday, three days after it started. He was 0.468 seconds ahead of Truex, and had just enough fuel left to do a celebratory burnout on the frontstretch before needing a push from a tow truck to get the No. 18 Toyota to Victory Lane.

"If it was one more lap, the 18 was probably going to run out of gas," said Truex, who led 53 laps. "So, I mean, it just was one of those things ... how close can you get without winning?"

It was 12th top-three finish this season for Truex, whose only win came at Martinsville — NASCAR's oldest and shortest track where the next race is Sunday. He also won there last fall.

Truex had to go to the back of the field when the Texas race started Sunday because of an illegal spoiler and lost crew chief James Small for the extended time in Texas. The 2017 champion and runner-up the last two seasons was also docked 20 points, a crucial penalty since he was already below the cutoff line for the top four before that.

A win would have taken care of that.

"Coming here we had a lot of



confidence and we had a strong run," Truex said. "This time of year, second is great, it's just not good enough."

There are spots for three other drivers to join Joey Logano for a run at the championship in the season finale Nov. 8 at Phoenix.

Kevin Harvick, Denny Hamlin, Brad Keselowski are above the cutline going to Martinsville. Alex Bowman and Chase Elliott are both 42 points behind the cut-off, while Truex is 53 back and Kurt Busch 98.

The 57th career victory for Kyle Busch gives him at least one win in every year since 2005. The two-time Cup champion got his fourth Cup win at Texas, and his first Cup win since his championship-crowning win at Homestead last November.

"We got it and I was so nervous," Busch said. "The last three laps, that's like winning a championship, that's how nervous I was."

Busch led five times and was in front for 90 of the 334 laps at the 1½-mile Texas track that was finally dried out after more than

three days of misty conditions and drizzle combined with cool temperatures.

Temperatures were in the mid-40s when the race finally resumed Wednesday after being on hold for 72 hours, 28 minutes, 34 seconds.

The race was red-flagged Sunday after 52 laps because of the precipitation that lingered until Wednesday morning.

Bowman finished fifth at Texas, just ahead of Keselowski and Kurt Busch. Hamlin was ninth, Logano 10th and Harvick, who had won the previous three fall races in Texas, was 16th after resuming Wednesday a lap back because of damage to his right side when he brushed the wall while leading on Sunday. Elliott finished 20th.

"I don't know about the craziest (race), but certainly the longest. I'm glad it's over, and I'm glad we had a great run," Keselowski said. "I'm very much looking forward to Martinsville."

Logano secured his spot in the final four with his win 10 days earlier at Kansas to open the three-race round of eight.

NBA briefs

Sources: Silas will be Rockets' next head coach

Associated Press

The Houston Rockets and Stephen Silas have an agreement for the Dallas assistant to replace Mike D'Antoni as coach, multiple people with knowledge of the deal said Wednesday.

The hiring of the son of former NBA player and coach Paul Silas completes a significant change in the leadership of the team with the league's longest active playoff streak after Daryl Morey decided not to return as general manager following D'Antoni's departure.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because no announcement has been made.

The new combination of coach and general manager comes after eight straight trips to the playoffs for the Rockets, all since acquiring James Harden in an offseason trade with Oklahoma City in 2012.

Morey was the architect of those rosters, and D'Antoni led the Rockets to a franchise-record 65 wins in 2017-18 before a Game 7 loss to Golden State in the Western Conference finals. The Warriors swept Cleveland to win the title.

Houston recorded 50-win seasons in each of D'Antoni's first three years and had a shot at another when the pandemic shut down the regular season last March.

The Rockets beat Oklahoma City in the first round of the play-off bubble in Florida this year before losing to the champion Los Angeles Lakers in five games, the third second-round exit in D'Antoni's four seasons. The former Phoenix coach decided not to return when his contract expired.

The 46-year-old Silas is the first significant hire for Rafael Stone, who was promoted to GM from vice president of basketball operations when Morey stepped down.

Raptors' Davis charged with assault

NEW YORK — Toronto Raptors rookie Terence Davis was arrested in New York on charges including assault after police say he hit his girlfriend in the face.

The incident occurred Tuesday night at a luxury high-rise in midtown Manhattan, where a 20-year-old woman told police she went to visit her boyfriend and the two got into a verbal dispute, a police spokeswoman said.

Davis then hit the woman in



CHUCK BURTON/AP

The Houston Rockets and Stephen Silas, above, have an agreement for the Dallas assistant to replace Mike D'Antoni as coach, multiple people with knowledge of the deal said Wednesday.

the face, hurting her eye, and grabbed her phone and broke its screen, Detective Sophia Mason said in a statement.

According to a criminal complaint, the woman's son was standing next to her when Davis hit her, causing the son to fall.

Davis was arraigned Wednesday on misdemeanor charges of assault, attempted assault, endangering the welfare of a child, criminal mischief, aggravated harassment and harassment.

In other NBA news:

■ The majority interest of the Utah Jazz is being sold to technology entrepreneur Ryan Smith, a move that when formally approved by the NBA, will end the Miller family's 35-year run as owners of the franchise.

■ The Jazz said Wednesday that "definitive agreements" have been struck with Smith on the sale of the team, Vivint Arena, the team's G League affiliate and management of a Triple-A baseball club. Part of those agreements call for the team to remain in Utah.

Smith is a co-founder of the Utah-based firm Quatrics.

■ The Philadelphia 76ers are in advanced negotiations with Morey to become president of basketball operations as part of their front-office overhaul that began after an underachieving season, multiple people with direct knowledge of the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The deal is expected to be finalized as early as this weekend, according to the people who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity Wednesday because it has not been made official.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL/MIB

Top pick Villanova, rest of Big East warily watch virus

By DOUG FEINBERG
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jay Wright and his fellow Big East coaches know it will take a huge effort from everyone to make the college basketball season work this year and actually stage an NCAA Tournament.

Only a few weeks into the start of practice, there already have been some bumps due to the coronavirus. Many more are expected.

Big East coaches got on Zoom calls Wednesday for their annual media day and — while still talking about basketball and the return of UConn — outlined a stark reality facing all of college basketball this season: Coronavirus testing, COVID-19 protocols and the lack of confirmed schedules are dominant features of preparing to play.

“This year, as we’ve all learned, anything can happen,” said Wright, whose Villanova team was the coaches’ pick to win the league. “We’ve been shut down and we all learn is, it’s not 14 days. It’s guys get shut down in different increments. Then (they) have to get heart tests and it could affect your team for 21,23 days. That’s just part of it. How do you handle all the challenges? There are more than any season in the history of college basketball.”

Dozens of preseason tournament games have already been canceled and a few teams have had to push the pause button because of positive COVID-19 tests.

Marquette has already had a setback, having to quarantine for two weeks because of a positive test and can’t get back on the court until Nov. 4. Creighton coach Greg McDermott said while it is normally a coaching cliché to say teams are taking it day by day, it is more fitting this season than any other.

“As we practice is over, we talk about the things that allowed us to practice today, wearing masks, practice social distancing, make sure you’re not in a group setting, protect yourself and teammates,” he said. “The message has been: assume the person you’re talking to has COVID. What steps are you taking to protect yourself?”

Commissioner Val Ackerman said the league will follow NCAA guidelines and teams will be testing three times a week leading up to play.

“We will do our best where disruptions are kept to a minimum and a number of Big East schools are able to compete for a national championship next spring,” Ackerman said.

Wright’s team is the preseason pick to win the conference for the sixth time in seven years, receiving nine of the 11 first-place votes from league coaches.

Honoring big John

The Big East will establish an award named for former Georgetown coach John Thompson that will recognize his efforts to fight prejudice, discrimination and advance positive social change. The award will be given to an individual, team or athletic department. Thompson died in August.

“It’s great. He was an important part of my life when he first started recruiting me to the day he died,” Georgetown coach Patrick Ewing said. “He was always a person I could pick up the phone and talk to. Give any advice I might need and shaping my coaching career. It’s a great honor for the Big East to have the award in his name, the things he fought for over the course of his life.”

Minority representation

Five of the 11 Big East coaches are Black, which is one of the highest percentages across college basketball. That fact is not lost on them.

“The Big East is at the forefront of having minority coaches at the helm,” Ewing said. “They took a chance on a high school coach (Thompson) and he proved he was up to the task. Even when we won the championship he was given an opportunity that a lot of people who looked like him weren’t given the opportunity, great to be sitting here as a head coach at Georgetown.”

Partial schedule

The Big East announced its conference schedule through the month of December with play beginning Dec. 11 with three games. Ackerman hopes to have the rest of the schedule out within a month.

“We broke our schedule into two pieces to take more time to see what makes sense for us in January or February,” Ackerman said. “There are models on the table that best suit our needs and provide the safest environment.”

Bluejays star

Marcus Zegarowski of Creighton was picked as the conference’s preseason player of the year.

Zegarowski’s season ended before the start of the Big East Tournament last March as he was sidelined with a torn meniscus in his right knee.

Rest of the rankings

Creighton received the other two first-place votes from league coaches. It’s the highest preseason position for the Bluejays since they joined the conference for the 2013-14 season. Providence was picked third.



JEFF ROBERSON/AP

St. Louis second baseman Kolten Wong handles a sharp grounder in a game in September. The Cardinals have declined Wong’s \$12.5 million option, making the Gold Glove winner a free agent.

A dozen players see options declined, will be free agents

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — What figures to be a down and perhaps brutal market for baseball free agents in the offseason following the pandemic began Wednesday when a dozen players were told their contract options had been declined, among them St. Louis Cardinals Gold Glove second baseman Kolten Wong.

The 30-year-old Wong will receive a \$1 million buyout. Wong, a first-round pick in the 2011 draft, made his big league debut in 2013 and spent his first eight seasons with St. Louis. Wong hit .265 with a homer and 16 RBIs in 53 games during the pandemic-shortened season, helping the Cardinals make the playoffs for the second straight year. They were eliminated by San Diego in the first round.

“STL will always have a special place in my heart and I will never forget all the amazing people who impacted me along the way! Much love,” Wong said Wednesday in an Instagram post.

Many teams are cutting costs following a shortened regular season played with no fans in attendance due to the novel coronavirus. Many teams already have eliminated front-office staff and many scouts to cut expenses, uncertain what attendance and revenue can be expected in 2021.

Baseball’s labor contract expires after the 2021 season, putting 2022 at risk of a work stoppage.

Wong won his first Gold Glove last year. He is a finalist again this season, with the winner announced on Tuesday.

John Mozeliak, the president of baseball operations for the Cardinals, said he spoke with Wong on Wednesday.

“I told him that with some of the uncertainties, we’re just not in a position to do that,” Mozeliak said. “We both agreed to keep the door open, and so as we progress in this, it’s something that we’re not ruling out for a future return.”

Wong is only one year removed from perhaps his best season in St. Louis, batting .285 with 11 homers, 59 RBIs and a career-high 24 steals in 2019. He is a .261 hitter with 53 homers, 281 RBIs and 88 steals in 852 career games.

While leaving open the possibility of Wong’s return, Mozeliak mentioned giving Tommy Edman a shot at second base.

“Not speaking in absolutes, not saying anything’s for sure, but, as we approach this offseason, it’s

‘Not speaking in absolutes, not saying anything’s for sure, but, as we approach this offseason, it’s definitely going to require some creativity, some patience and good timing.’”

John Mozeliak

Cardinals president of baseball operations

definitely going to require some creativity, some patience and good timing,” Mozeliak said.

Others cut free included:

■ Arizona pitchers Mike Leake (\$5 million instead of \$18 million) and Hector Rondón (\$500,000 instead of \$4 million).

■ Washington right-hander Anibal Sanchez (\$2 million buyout instead of \$12 million salary), outfielder Adam Eaton (\$1.5 million instead of \$10.5 million), and infielders Howie Kendrick (\$2.25 million instead of \$6.5 million) and Eric Thames (\$1 million instead of \$4 million).

■ Colorado first baseman Daniel Murphy (\$6 million instead of \$1 million).

■ Seattle second baseman Dee Strange-Gordon (\$14 million instead of \$1 million).

■ New York Mets catchers Wilson Ramos (\$1.5 million instead of \$10 million) and Robinson Chirinos (\$1 million instead of \$6.5 million) and infielder Todd Frazier (\$1.5 million instead of \$5.75 million).

About 50 more players would be eligible for free agency if their options are declined by Sunday, among them Chicago White Sox designated hitter Edwin Encarnación and left-hander Gio Gonzalez; Cleveland first baseman Carlos Santana, catcher Roberto Perez and left-hander Brad Hand; Yankees left-handers JA Happ and outfielder Brett Gardner; Texas right-hander Corey Kluber; Chicago Cubs first baseman Anthony Rizzo; and Pittsburgh right-hander Chris Archer.

Players already free agents include: catcher JT Realmuto; infielder DJ LeMahieu; pitchers Marcus Stroman and Masahiro Tanaka; and outfielders George Springer and Marcell Ozuna, shortstop Didi Gregorius; and designated hitter Nelson Cruz.

MLB



PHOTOS BY ERIC GAY/AP

Los Angeles Dodgers manager Dave Roberts, left, sits next to third baseman Justin Turner as they pose for a team photo after the Dodgers beat the Tampa Bay Rays 3-1 in Game 6 to win the World Series.

League: Turner violated protocols at celebration

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Justin Turner violated coronavirus protocols when he celebrated with his Los Angeles Dodgers teammates and he refused instructions from security to leave the field, behavior that Major League Baseball said risked the safety of others.

The commissioner's office said Wednesday it is starting a full investigation of the 35-year-old third baseman.

The Dodgers won their first World Series championship since 1988 with a 3-1 victory over Tampa Bay in Game 6 on Tuesday night at Globe Life Field.

Turner was pulled from the game following the seventh inning after MLB was notified that he had tested positive for COVID-19. He was quarantined in a doctor's office off to the side, Dodgers president of baseball operations Andrew Friedman said.

Turner later returned to the field with a mask to celebrate the Dodgers' title. He then took down his mask and posed for a team photo on the field.

"Immediately upon receiving notice from the laboratory of a positive test, protocols were triggered, leading to the removal of Justin Turner from last night's game," MLB said in a statement Wednesday. "Turner was placed into isolation for the safety of those around him. However, following the Dodgers' victory, it is clear that Turner chose to disregard the agreed-upon joint protocols and the instructions he was given regarding the safety and protection of others.

"While a desire to celebrate is understandable, Turner's decision to leave isolation and enter the field was wrong and put everyone he came in contact with at risk. When MLB Security raised the matter of being on the field with Turner, he emphatically refused to comply."

Turner became a free agent when his \$64 million, four-year contract expired following the victory.

Turner's agent, Greg Genske, did not immediately respond to a text from The Associated Press seeking comment.

"Last night, nasal swabs were conducted on the Dodgers' traveling party," MLB said. "Both the Rays and Dodgers were tested again today and their travel back to their home cities will be determined after



Turner celebrates with his wife and the World Series trophy after Tuesday's game in Arlington, Texas.

being approved by the appropriate authorities."

Both teams traveled home from the Dallas area on Wednesday in coordination with their local health authorities, a person familiar with the arrangements said, speaking on condition of anonymity because no announcement was made.

No additional players received positive results from rapid PCR tests early Wednesday, the person said, but the wife of one Rays player tested positive, the person said. The wife and the player did not travel with the team and were to travel on their own, the person said.

A private plane was being arranged for Turner's travel, the person said.

One of the Rays' two charter planes had a lengthy mechanical delay in Dallas that caused one of the aircraft to be switched, and the team said shortly after midnight that both planes had arrived back home.

The commissioner's office said it will consult with the players' association as part of its investigation. The union was in the process of gathering facts on the events.

Commentary

Selfishness mars Dodgers' triumph

By TIM DAHLBERG
Associated Press

Well, at least the contact tracing should be easy.

The Dodgers' postseason roster would be a good place to start. So would the team picture on the field after winning the World Series.

You know, the one with Justin Turner sitting front and center among all his teammates, unmasked in his full red-bearded glory.

Turner's quarantine after testing positive for COVID-19 during the clinching win over Tampa Bay ended up lasting just two innings. The repercussions from his ill-advised decision to celebrate the World Series with his teammates figure to last a whole lot longer.

No, it's not Turner's fault he contracted the virus like millions of others. But it is his fault that his appearance on the field afterward overshadowed the feel-good story of the last three decades in Los Angeles.

This should have been about a team that persevered through a season like no other to win for the first time since Ronald Reagan was president. The players on the Dodgers deserved that, manager Dave Roberts deserved that, and the long-suffering fans surely deserved that.

Instead, it became a cautionary tale about what not to do to others when you're infected with the coronavirus.

Turner paraded around on national television with the World Series trophy in his hand. The star third baseman hugged his teammates, and he kissed his wife.

Then, in an incredibly tone-deaf — and incredibly selfish — grand finale, he took off his mask and plopped himself in the middle of all his happy teammates for an official team victory photo.

Congratulations, Dodgers, you're the World Series champions. Now everyone please go into quarantine and don't forget to keep checking your temperature.

A privileged player thought it was his privilege to decide whether he could celebrate or not. By doing so, Turner not only put a lot of people at risk but suggested to everyone watching that the virus that has killed nearly a quarter million people around the nation isn't such a big deal after all.

It's not just that Turner went on the field. It's that he decided his right to celebrate outweighed the rights of everyone else on the field to remain safe.

"When MLB security raised the issue of being on the field with Turner he emphatically refused to comply," Major League Baseball said in a scathing statement Wednesday that called Turner's actions wrong and said he put everyone in danger.

What could Turner possibly be thinking? How could he possibly be so selfish that he would risk infecting an entire organization just so he could parade on the field afterward?

Luckily, we live in an age where we can turn to Twitter and find out.

"Thanks to everyone reaching out!" Turner tweeted after the game. "I feel great, no symptoms at all. Just experienced every emotion you can possibly imagine. Can't believe I couldn't be out there to celebrate with my guys! So proud of this team & unbelievably happy for the City of LA #WorldSeriesChamps."

The fact Turner felt great isn't, of course, the point. It's well-known by now that asymptomatic people can pass the virus on.

Yes, Turner was probably already a superspreader before he even took the field postgame. Just being in the dugout with teammates when the Dodgers came to bat for the first seven innings before he was pulled from the game gave the virus plenty of time to do its thing.

But why would he insist on taking it a step further? Why would he bring on the terrible optics on national television of being nonchalant about a virus that can kill even healthy ballplayers?

Why, indeed?

Instead of talking about Mookie Betts, Corey Seager, and the satisfaction of finally getting their first World Series title since 1988, fans were talking about the virus. Instead of simply packing up and heading home on Wednesday, the Dodgers and Rays had to figure out who was healthy, who was not, and whether it was safe to travel.

Before Turner ignored MLB security to take the field his reputation was pristine. He's the heart and soul of the Dodgers team, and it wasn't October until you saw Turner with his unkempt beard and flowing locks hacking away at home plate.

Let's hope everyone does test negative. Let's hope Turner's positive test — the only one on the Dodgers all season — remains the only one.

In the meantime let's not forget he didn't need to endanger his teammates and everyone else on the field, too.

It's not just that Turner went on the field. It's that he decided his right to celebrate outweighed the rights of everyone else on the field to remain safe.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Passing attack showing signs of life at Notre Dame

By JOHN FINERAN
Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Five games in and a little over a week away from its showdown with top-ranked Clemson, No. 4 Notre Dame's passing attack is beginning to show life again heading into Saturday's game at Georgia Tech.

Few expected the Fighting Irish to struggle there, particularly with grad student Ian Book back at the helm after throwing for 3,034 yards and 34 touchdowns in 2019.

While a veteran offensive line has cleared the way for sophomore running back Kyren Williams and the defense has been sound, Book finally looked like his old self last week in a 45-3 victory at Pittsburgh, throwing for 312 yards and three touchdowns.

"We're ascending at the right time," Book said. "I feel like my game is starting to ascend and I need to keep doing the same things."

Wide receiver Ben Skowronek, a first-year graduate transfer from Northwestern who calls Book his best friend, had touchdown receptions of 34 and 73 yards in the first half at Pitt. The 6-foot-3, 224-pound Skowronek, who totaled 110 receptions for 1,417 yards and eight touchdowns at Northwestern, could sense Book's frustration following an 11-for-19, 106-yard, no-touchdown performance in a 12-7 victory over Louisville the week before.

"He came in locked in every single day, doing the extra things, watching film, communicating more," said Skowronek, who flew to California to work out with Book after the COVID-19 shutdown in March. "Obviously, it paid off for him. I can't wait to play with him moving forward."



KETH SRNAKOC/AP

Notre Dame quarterback Ian Book threw for 312 yards and three touchdowns in a 45-3 win at Pitt on Saturday, one week after he went 11-for-19 with 106 yards and no touchdowns in a 12-7 defeat of Louisville.

Even before the pandemic shut down spring and summer plans, coach Brian Kelly and former Irish quarterback Tom Rees, now Notre Dame's first-year offensive coordinator, probably knew the passing attack would be a work in progress.

Gene, an NFL second-round draft picks Chase Claypool and Cole Kmet, who combined for 109 catches for 1,552 yards and 19 touchdowns in 2019.

The Fighting Irish (5-0, 4-0 ACC) are without Kevin Austin Jr. and perhaps Braden Lenzy.

Austin, who missed his sophomore year because of disciplinary reasons, had surgery in August for a broken foot, returned briefly against Florida State and Louisville, and then rebroke the foot two days before the Pittsburgh game. Lenzy, who missed the opener against Duke with a sore hamstring, had six receptions over the next three games before rejoining the hamstring against Pitt and is doubtful for the Yellow Jackets (2-4, 2-3).

Skowronek himself missed part of the Duke game and all of the South Florida game with a hamstring issue. He now has four receptions for 135 yards.

"We're gaining some continuity, and I said it many times, I believe in this group," Kelly said. "I thought when we got continuity with the offensive structure, in particular the passing game, it would look better and it would get better and Ian would feel a lot more confident in getting the ball out on time. We're getting there." Notre Dame again is deep at tight end and freshman Michael Mayer leading the team with 12 catches for 153 yards and two touchdowns, junior Tommy Tremble (11 for 115 yards), senior Brock Wright and junior George Takacs.



KRUSONG GOMEZ/AP

Southern California quarterback Kedon Slovis threw for 3,502 yards with 30 touchdowns and nine interceptions and was named Pac-12 Freshman of the Year. He's the top returning QB in the league.

With many new faces, the Q in QB stands for question mark in Pac-12

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

The so-called Conference of Quarterbacks has had some considerable turnover at the position heading into the season.

Gene are some of the Pac-12's big names: Oregon's Justin Herbert, Washington State's Anthony Gordon, Arizona's Khalil Tate and Utah's Tyler Huntley. Just five quarterbacks who started regularly for conference teams last season are back.

Arguably the top returnee is USC's Kedon Slovis, who took over last season when starter J.T. Daniels was injured in the opener. Slovis threw for 3,502 yards with 30 touchdowns and nine interceptions. He was named Pac-12 Freshman of the Year.

"I felt as Kedon progressed through that second half of the season and we progressed as a team, we started playing our best ball towards the end of the season last year," Trojans coach Clay Helton said. "Now, to be able to watch Kedon work with those skill players and see the timing the ball is coming out (with), the accuracy the ball is coming out with, the chemistry of those skill players with him, it's evident that being in the second year of the system and his comfort level with the kids he's been working with is clear on the field. It makes you excited as a coach."

Slovis is considered one of the top QBs in the conference, if not the nation, heading into the pandemic-abbreviated season. The Trojans, who finished 8-5 overall and 7-2 in the Pac-12 last year, are ranked No. 21 in the AP Top 25 despite the fact they haven't played yet.

"From my perspective, or from the offense's, we're really throwing in a lot of stuff, more nuances from what we did last year and more variations from what we did last year. We can run so many different things from so



BEN MARGOT/AP

California quarterback Chase Garbers threw for 1,772 yards and 14 touchdowns with three interceptions in nine games.

many different looks," Slovis said about USC's progression heading into his second season.

Other returning starters at QB include Arizona State's Jayden Daniels, who threw for 2,943 yards with 17 touchdowns and two interceptions as a freshman. He had five 300-yard games. Cal's Chase Garbers threw for 1,772 yards and 14 touchdowns with three interceptions in nine games last year. And UCLA junior Dorian Thompson-Robinson threw for 2,701 yards and 21 TDs with 12 interceptions.

At Stanford, quarterback K.J. Costello went to Mississippi State under Mike Leach, who left Washington State in the offseason. But the Cardinal still have junior Davis Mills, who started in six games last season when Costello was injured.

At Arizona, Grant Gunnell will take the reins at QB after starting in three games last season when Tate struggled with injury.

Oregon's backup last season, Tyler Shough, is the presumed starter for the Ducks, while Tristan Gebbia is expected to top the depth chart at Oregon State. To the north in Washington, Jacob Sirmon appeared to be the front-runner to replace Jacob

Eason, and Washington State had a three-way competition in camp between Jayden de Laura, Gunner Cruz and Cammon Cooper.

Utah also had three players vying for the starting nod, Jake Bentley, Drew Lisk and Cameron Rising, while Colorado's battle was primarily between Tyler Lytle and Sam Noyer.

Coronavirus concerns

As COVID-19 cases surge nationwide and more games get canceled, the Pac-12 is proceeding with caution. Oregon reported that five players had positive tests and called off a scrimmage last Saturday. The players were asymptomatic and isolated pending more accurate tests. Turned out, the initial tests were false positives and the players returned to practice Tuesday.

Among the league's coaches, Arizona's Kevin Sumlin and UCLA's Chip Kelly both had the coronavirus.

Projected finish

Media members who cover the Pac-12 selected Oregon to finish atop the North Division and USC to top the South, and the Ducks to win the league title for the second straight year. Last year the Ducks won their division, the championship and the Rose Bowl to finish 12-2 overall and ranked No. 5.

New coaches

There are three new head coaches in the Pac-12, but one, Colorado's Karl Dorrell, isn't exactly new. He was head coach at UCLA from 2003-07. He replaces Mel Tucker, who left for Michigan State. The other two newbies are in Washington: Jimmy Lake is coach of the Huskies and Nick Rolovich has taken over the Cougars. Lake was promoted after Chris Petersen retired. Rolovich, who spent the last four seasons as coach at Hawaii, replaces Leach.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Injuries, opt outs take toll on SEC rosters

Some top matchups won't happen

BY BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

There was a time when college football fans could have reasonably hoped to see two of the best receivers in the nation — Alabama's Jaylen Waddle and LSU's Ja'Marr Chase — star in the same game next month, when the Crimson Tide visit the Tigers.

But from fall camp through the first half of this pandemic-altered season, a combination of injuries, opt outs and other factors unique to 2020 have prematurely ended the season for a number of prominent players across the Southeastern Conference.

Waddle's ankle injury last weekend, which required surgery that probably has ended his college career — was just the latest high-profile example.

It bothered LSU coach Ed Orgeron, who tried to recruit Waddle.

"It made me sick," Orgeron said, adding he wouldn't be surprised if it made Chase feel somewhat relieved that he opted out a few weeks into fall camp.

"I didn't think of it that way, but I'm sure that Ja'Marr Chase and his family thought of it that way," Orgeron said.

Like Chase, Waddle could have opted out of his junior season. Now he has an injury that might affect his stock in the 2021 NFL Draft, in which he and Chase are expected to be top prospects.

Orgeron noted that since Chase left, junior receiver Terrace Marshall Jr. has taken full advantage of the go-to target for QB Nyles Brennan, and more recently, Brennan's injury replacement, freshman TJ Finley.

Marshall has 27 catches for 512 yards and nine TDs in just four games, and LSU's offense has continued to put up prolific numbers this season without Chase.

Before his injury, Waddle had 25 catches for 557 yards and four touchdowns and also has been one of the nation's most electric return men.

Alabama sophomore Slade Bolden is first in line to attempt to take over those roles. Bolden had two catches in his first 18 college games but had six against Tennessee.



LSU (2-2) at Auburn (3-2)
AFN-Atlantic
8:30 p.m. Saturday CET
4:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

Quarterback Mac Jones can relate to replacing a star player after taking over for Tua Tagovailoa late last season.

"That's not an easy thing to do, to come in not knowing that you're really going to play a lot," Jones said. "Slade hadn't been playing as much as he probably would want to, and he came in and I told him, 'It's a game, and you're ready to roll, so just do your job,' and he did exactly that and some."

A mass exodus — or perhaps



CAITIE MCKEMIN, KNOXVILLE NEWS SENTINEL, ABOVE, AND GERALD HERBERT, BELOW/AP

Alabama wide receiver Jaylen Waddle, above right, suffered a season-ending ankle injury last weekend while LSU wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase, below left, opted out before this season began.



a purge — appears to be taking place at Mississippi State, where Mike Leach is in his first season as coach.

While Leach stopped short of declaring top running back Kylin Hill off the team, he noted, "What I heard is he was opting out, preparing for the NFL. ... We wish him the best."

Hill was productive as a receiver off the backfield in Leach's "Air Raid" offense. He was tied for the team lead with 23 catches and second with 237 yards receiving. However, he'd rushed just 15 times for 58 yards.

NCAA rules put in place during the coronavirus pandemic not only allowed players to opt out, but also allowed them to attempt to play this season without losing a year of eligibility. That meant there would be little consequence if players suited up for a good chunk of the season before deciding to opt out or transfer.

Leach said Wednesday that receiver Tyrrell Shavers and defensive ends Tre Lawson and Jamari Stewart have formally left his program.

At Vanderbilt, coach Derek Mason said earlier this month that about 10 players have opted out.

That group includes kicker Oren Milstein, a Columbia graduate transfer, and starting linebacker Feleti Afemui, whose decision was announced days before the season opener.

The Commodores had only 56 players available in a 41-7 loss to South Carolina on Oct. 10 due to what Mason called a combination of injuries and COVID-19/tracing issues. Two days later, the SEC postponed Vanderbilt's game at Missouri from Oct. 17 to December because the Commodores couldn't meet the 53 players required to play a game.

Auburn has been without its star linebacker and team leader K.J. Britt, who had thumb surgery and is out indefinitely. He had 23 tackles through two games.

Georgia entered fall camp anticipating that Wake Forest transfer Jamie Newman would start at QB, only to see him opt out a few weeks before the season.

Meanwhile, Texas A&M can only wonder how much better its offense might be if Jhamon Ausbon, the Aggies' top receiver in 2019, hadn't opted out.

AP Sports writers John Zeno, Teresa Walker, Paul Newberry, Gary B. Graves and Kristie Rieken contributed.

Also on AFN



Michigan State (0-1)
at No. 13 Michigan (1-0)
AFN-Sports2
5 p.m. Saturday CET
1 a.m. Sunday JKT



No. 4 Notre Dame (5-0)
at Georgia Tech (2-4)
AFN-Sports
8:30 p.m. Saturday CET
4:30 a.m. Sunday JKT



Texas (3-2)
at No. 6 Oklahoma State (4-0)
AFN-Sports2
9 p.m. Saturday CET
5 a.m. Sunday JKT



Navy (3-3)
at No. 22 SMU (5-1)
AFN-Sports2
12:30 a.m. Sunday CET
8:30 a.m. Sunday JKT



No. 3 Ohio State (1-0)
at No. 18 Penn State (0-1)
AFN-Sports
12:30 a.m. Sunday CET
8:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

QB option: Clemson's Lawrence says he may not go pro early

By PETE LACOBELLI
Associated Press

Clemson quarterback Trevor Lawrence stopped short of calling an audible on his plans to head to the NFL next year, though the likely No. 1 pick in next year's draft did not rule out returning to school.

"My mind's been that I'm going to move on," said the 6-foot-6 QB with the flowing hair. "But who knows? There's a lot of things that could happen."

Lawrence had publicly laid out his plans before Clemson's opener at Wake Forest last month: play this college season, graduate in December with his bachelor's degree in marketing and get ready for the NFL.

That's led to reports about which NFL teams might win the Lawrence sweepstakes — and the frontrunner right now is the offensively challenged New York Jets. At 0-7, the Jets are the NFL's only winless team.

Former NFL receiver Roddy White created a social media stir last week when he suggested that if the Jets held the top pick and he were Lawrence, "I'd just go back" to school.

White said he is related to Clemson offensive coordinator Tony Elliott and suggested he might call Elliott and suggest the coach tell Lawrence "if the Jets get the first pick, don't go. Just stay one more year in college and just enjoy your time because it would be awful for you to get drafted by the New York Jets."

White's not the only voice that's anti-Lawrence to the Big Apple.

Former NFL receiver Keyshawn Johnson, the No. 1 overall pick with the Jets in 1996 turned ESPN broadcaster, said his former team has a done poor job surrounding current quarterback Sam Darnold with players to improve the offense.

"You drafted a guy three years ago with the third pick in the draft because he was your Trevor Lawrence. He has nothing around him. Nothing," Johnson said last week on his ESPN morning show.



**Boston College (4-2)
at No. 1 Clemson (6-0)**
AFN-Sports
5 p.m. Saturday CET
1 a.m. Sunday JKT

Whenever Lawrence leaves for the NFL, he's expected to change a Franchise's fortunes.

He's thrown for 1,833 yards and 17 touchdowns (tied for second nationally in FBS) this season as Clemson has started 6-0. Lawrence is 31-1 as a starter in college and has the Tigers pointed toward a sixth straight Atlantic Coast Conference title and trip to the College Football Playoff.

Lawrence and the Tigers face Boston College (4-2, 3-2) on Saturday.

Eagles coach Jeff Haflay was Ohio State's co-defensive coordinator when the Tigers defeated the Buckeyes 29-23 in the CFP semifinals last December and sees a player who put in the work to get even better this season.

Haflay said Lawrence is better in the pocket and with his decisions.

"Definitely coming back and improving, it says a lot about him," Haflay said.

While the Jets have the inside track, there are plenty of other NFL teams that could benefit from having Lawrence on the roster.

That includes the 1-6 Atlanta Falcons, who are less than an hour's drive from Lawrence's hometown of Cartersville, Ga.

Lawrence said he wasn't a huge NFL fan growing up, although he did pull for the Falcons. He largely laughs off the Twitter posts pushing teams to lose simply to get him in their locker room.

"I try to ignore it as much as possible," Lawrence said earlier this month.



KEN RUINARD/AP

Clemson quarterback Trevor Lawrence waves to fans after Saturday's game against Syracuse in Clemson, S.C. Lawrence said he's retaining the option to stay at Clemson next season.



MORRY GASH/AP

Wisconsin quarterback Graham Mertz reportedly tested positive twice for COVID-19, meaning he would have to sit out 21 days under Big Ten protocols.

Nightmare in the QB room

Wisconsin's situation provides Big Ten a worst-case scenario

By STEVE MEGARGEY
Associated Press

Wisconsin may be facing the type of nightmare scenario that coaches feared as soon as the coronavirus pandemic arrived.

What happens if an outbreak hits a team's quarterback room?

The No. 9 Badgers canceled their game Saturday at Nebraska and paused team activities for at least a week after a dozen people in the program — including coach Paul Chryst — tested positive for COVID-19.

The announcement followed reports that quarterback Graham Mertz had tested positive twice — which would require him to sit out at least 21 days under Big Ten protocols — and that backup quarterback Chase Wolf had tested positive at least once.

Last year's starting quarterback, Jack Coan, is already out indefinitely following foot surgery. The Badgers' only other scholarship quarterback is junior Danny Vanden Boom.

"Obviously this year there's some things that will be unique," Chryst said Monday without specifically discussing his players' test results. "I've appreciated what that whole room of quarterbacks has done, kind of how they've approached everything."

Wisconsin's next scheduled game is Nov. 7 at home against Purdue, but that matchup also could be in jeopardy.

"We'll see where we are as far as testing, and we'll make that decision as we move closer to the game," athletic director Barry Alvarez said.

It's the type of dilemma schools were hoping to avoid when college football decided to play amid the pandemic.

Ohio State coach Ryan Day this week detailed how the third-ranked Buckeyes try to ensure the virus doesn't spread among Justin Fields and the other

'(If you) meet with all your quarterbacks at the same time and they all get sick, you don't have a healthy quarterback.'

James Franklin
Penn State coach

quarterbacks.

"When they're in the quarterback meeting room with (quarterbacks coach) Corey (Dennis), they obviously are all masked up and distanced, and they do a great job of that," Day said. "I'll grab Justin and take him on my own sometimes for a lot of reasons, but that's one of them, to kind of keep him away from some of the other guys. What a tricky situation."

Back in the spring, Penn State coach James Franklin noted the difficulties in holding team meetings while also keeping players away from one another as much as possible out of fear an entire position group could be infected.

"But the other challenge is, are you going to meet with all your quarterbacks at the same time and they all get sick, you don't have a healthy quarterback," Franklin said then.

Minnesota's Tanner Morgan said Tuesday that coaches have often reminded him and the other quarterbacks that "it's a crazy year, and crazy things could happen."

"So when we're meeting as quarterbacks, we're all spread out, 6 feet apart," Morgan said. "We all have our masks on. Coach has his mask on. Unless you take a drink of water and put it right back up. We're taking it seriously, because 21 days is a long time."

After announcing Aug. 11 that it would postpone all fall sports until the spring due to the pandemic, the Big Ten reversed itself and opened the season in mid-October. Because it started

later than most other Power Five leagues, the Big Ten put together a nine-game, conference-only schedule without any off weeks.

So while Notre Dame could postpone a scheduled game with Wake Forest after experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak last month, Big Ten programs don't have that luxury. The Big Ten's 21-day delay for players to return is also more stringent than other conferences — a decision the league knew could put its teams at a competitive disadvantage.

"I think there certainly were those questions after the decision was made," Ohio State team physician Jim Bowers said last week. "And the answer is because that's what it took to get us to a point where our presidents and chancellors felt comfortable in minimizing risk."

Big Ten protocols say that athletes who test positive through point-of-contact daily testing must take a polymerase chain reaction test to confirm the first result. All COVID-19 positive athletes must self-isolate for 10 days and undergo cardiac testing.

Doug Aukerman, the team physician for Pac-12 school Oregon State, said he considers the Big Ten policy reasonable.

"But at the same time, I prefer an approach where everybody isolates for 10 days and you do your cardiac testing and you return back based on their individual situation," Aukerman said. "And pay attention to their individual symptoms as you progress them through those stages."

NFL

Channeling Favre

For better or worse, Eagles QB Wentz is playing more like the Ol' Gunslinger

By ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Carson Wentz is playing more like his favorite player this season.

Wentz, who grew up rooting for Brett Favre, has turned into a younger version of the Ol' Gunslinger in his fifth year with the Philadelphia Eagles.

Just like Favre was in his two decades with the Packers, Jets and Vikings, Wentz is supremely confident in his ability to make any throw from anywhere on the field. That can be risky but the reward can be even greater.

Wentz made an exceptional 18-yard TD pass to Boston Scott with 40 seconds left in the game to lift the Eagles to a 22-21 win over the Giants last Thursday. It was the fifth time Wentz has engineered a comeback win in the fourth quarter in the past 11 games.

Earlier in that game, however, Wentz threw his 10th interception of the season into double coverage in the end zone from the New York 20. That was one he needed to throw away.

He also made a crossbody, cross-field pass to Travis Fulgham that every coach tells his quarterback never to make. A defender was there, but the ball hit Fulgham's hands and he dropped it.

Wentz has 10 touchdown passes to go with those picks and he's also run for a career-high five TDs.

The Eagles led the weak NFC East at 2-4-1.

"That was always the thing with Brett, the reward was definitely greater, but you knew there was going to be some risk involved," said Eagles coach Doug Pederson, who played several seasons with Favre in Green Bay.

"Carson obviously has the ability to do that. He's got the arm strength, the mobility to extend plays with his legs. I would think the one thing that we're seeing with Carson now, the same thing I saw with Brett, is that physical

By the numbers

5

Number of fourth-quarter comebacks engineered by Eagles QB Carson Wentz over the past 11 games.

10

Interceptions this season for Wentz, the most since his 2016 rookie campaign.

SOURCE: Associated Press, NFL.com

toughness, being able to stand in the pocket, take some hits, bounce up, and do it again. To me, that's kind of some of the similarities there."

Favre was a three-time NFL MVP and won a Super Bowl on his way into the Hall of Fame. He also threw more interceptions than any player in league history.

Wentz hasn't always been reckless with the ball. He threw only seven picks in each of the past three seasons. He finished third in NFL MVP voting in his second year when the Eagles won the Super Bowl with backup Nick Foles after Wentz was injured.

Wentz became the first quarterback in NFL history to throw for 4,000 yards without a wide receiver having 500 yards receiving last year. He also is the only quarterback to throw 20 or more touchdowns and seven or fewer interceptions in three straight seasons. Tom Brady, Drew Brees, Aaron Rodgers and Russell Wilson have done it twice.



KELVIN Kuo/AP

Los Angeles Rams safety Taylor Rapp, center, celebrates with coaches and teammates after intercepting a pass in the end zone during the team's win over the Chicago Bears Monday in Inglewood, Calif. The Rams are 5-2 and hope to join the Lakers and Dodgers as champions.

Rams looking to join Dodgers, Lakers in bringing title to LA

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — Jared Goff texted congratulations to Cody Bellinger and Joe Pederson right after the Los Angeles Dodgers won the World Series on Tuesday night.

"Cody actually texted me back and said, 'It's your turn now,'" the Los Angeles Rams quarterback recalled Wednesday. "And I said, 'Absolutely!'"

Los Angeles has become a city of champions again in an incredible October, and the Rams (5-2) want to extend this winning feeling into February. They've been discussing it on group chats and in the locker room ever since the Lakers raised their trophy two weeks ago, and the anticipation only increased when the Dodgers claimed their own championship.

"It'd be good to make that a little three-peat with us involved there," Goff said. "It's definitely something that we're conscious of, absolutely."

The Rams were watching and cheering from home while the Lakers won the NBA Finals in Florida just 16 days before the Dodgers raised the World Series trophy in Texas, capping an unprecedented quick back-to-back coronation for their metropolitan area's two most beloved teams.

Although the Rams are the city's most popular franchise in the nation's most popular sport, they realize they aren't nestled in LA's heart as snugly as the Dodgers or the Lakers — particularly not after their former owners moved them to Anaheim and St. Louis for 36 years before Stan Kroenke brought them home in 2016.

But the Rams fully intend to be a cornerstone of the sports establishment in the nation's second-largest metro area for decades to come. Kroenke's sparking new \$5 billion SoFi Stadium in Inglewood is a major step toward that goal — and bringing a third championship in four months to Los Angeles just might clinch it.

Can the Rams do it? They've had three straight winning seasons, and they made it to the Super Bowl two years ago. Although they play in the NFL's toughest division, they're off to another strong start this fall as they hit the midway point of the regular season Sunday at Miami (3-3).

"We've got all the pieces," Goff said. "We're win-

ning games. We are playing well on offense, defense, special teams. We always believe in ourselves, and we've been there once with a lot of the same people. We know how to get there. We've just got to finish it off, and hopefully this is the year."

And now there's the City of Champions factor: If there is such a thing as civic momentum, the Rams are riding a big wave of it alongside the Lakers and the Dodgers.

"You've got to be great to be relevant here in this city, and I think that's awesome," said coach Sean McVay, a boyhood Atlanta Braves fan who now roots for the Dodgers and manager Dave Roberts, whom he describes as a role model.

"Really amongst the team it's, 'Hey, let's continue to produce and do our part to hold up our end of the bargain for the city,'" McVay added. "That pressure is a good thing. I think all 32 teams want to be able to do what the Dodgers just did, so we're no different. But we've got to get to (win) No. 6 first."

The Rams actually arrived in Los Angeles before either the Lakers or the Dodgers, becoming the West Coast's first major pro sports franchise way back in 1946.

But their subsequent moves took them out of many LA sports fans' hearts until they returned to a city that famously hadn't had an NFL franchise since 1994, when Georgia Frontiere and Al Davis simultaneously left a wildly lucrative market and its millions of hungry sports fans.

Although rings are irreplaceable, the Rams are steadily building their case to deserve LA's love. They've been winners since McVay took over in 2017, and the league machinations that subsequently landed the Chargers in LA instead of the Raiders — the childhood favorite team of most Generation X and many millennial Angelenos, thanks to their thrilling 13-year run in the Coliseum from 1982-94 — undoubtedly benefited the Rams' quest.

Just ask Kai Forbath, the Rams' new kicker. The 33-year-old UCLA product is a Los Angeles native who lives in West Hollywood in the offseason. He grew up with season tickets at Dodger Stadium, and Kobe Bryant is his childhood hero.

"Just being an LA native, it's crazy, because (the Rams) are the team here now," said Forbath, who signed with the Rams last week. "All my friends and family here are Rams fans now, so it's very exciting to be a part of it."



DERIK HAMILTON/AP

Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz has as many interceptions (10) as touchdowns this season.

NFL

Seahawks extremely thin at RB

By **TIM BOOTH**
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — The Seattle Seahawks started this week with only one healthy running back and little certainty that any of their three injured options will be able to play Sunday against San Francisco.



Carson



Hyde



Homer

Chris Carson, Carlos Hyde and Travis Homer are all dealing with injuries coming out of last Sunday's 37-34 overtime loss to Arizona. Carson has a sprained foot, while Hyde (hamstring) and Homer (bruised knee) have more minor ailments.

Still, that leaves only rookie DeeJay Dallas as the lone running back not limited by injury ahead of Sunday's matchup with the 49ers. Dallas was a full participant in practice but was also listed with an arm injury.

"They're all in their own situation and they're different entirely," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said on Wednesday. "We'll have to wait and see all through the week."

Carroll said the team wouldn't know more on Carson until later in the week. He said Homer was moving better Wednesday than the day before, and that Hyde's hamstring wasn't considered a major injury but would need to be watched.

All three did not participate in practice on Wednesday.

Seattle's other major injury question is at cornerback, where starter Shaquill Griffin is in the concussion protocol after being injured against Arizona. Tre Flowers stepped in after Griffin was injured and would likely get the start if Griffin is not cleared.

The Seahawks thought they were getting some good news with the return of Jamal Adams after he missed the past three games with a groin injury. When he met with the media ahead of practice, Carroll expected Adams to participate on a limited basis. But when the practice report was released later in the day, Adams was listed as a non-participant due to his groin injury and illness.

Adams hasn't practiced or played since getting hurt late in Week 3 against Dallas. There was hope he would return last week after Seattle's bye, but was held out an additional week.

"We're going one day at a time, and we're mixing him in the preparation with the thoughts there's a chance, but we're going to just have to wait and see how he does," Carroll said.

Also returning to practice was defensive end Rashawn Green, who has been sidelined since Week 1 with a neck stinger.



BRAD PENNER/AP

Buffalo Bills defensive end Jerry Hughes, right, celebrates an interception against the New York Jets on Sunday.

Bills not writing off rival Patriots

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Jerry Hughes knows better than to dismiss the New England Patriots.

As much as the Buffalo Bills defensive end would enjoy acknowledging a changing of the guard taking place in the AFC East seven weeks into this season, Hughes wasn't prepared to go that far on Wednesday.

"At least, not yet. "I feel you've got to take that title away before we can make that statement," Hughes said as Buffalo prepares to host the Patriots on Sunday.

"So I'm going to hold my tongue because I know I don't like to put anything out there in the universe and then have to come back and eat crow," he added. "I will say that we're going to be ready for this game."

Hughes' cautious approach is well-founded even as the roles in this long-sold rivalry have been reversed.

At 5-2, Buffalo finds itself leading the division, with the Patriots (2-4) uncharacteristically sitting third, while coming off three consecutive losses — their worst skid since 2000, Bill Belichick's first season as coach in Foxborough.

The standings and the spread — the Bills opened as three-point favorites — don't mean much to the team's longest active-tenured player.

Entering his eighth season in Buffalo, Hughes has been on the wrong end of the scoreboard far too many times in going 2-12 against New England, and 0-12 in games Tom Brady started and finished.

The Bills might no longer have to confront Brady, who is now in Tampa Bay,



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick, right, gives instructions to linebacker Ja'Whaun Bentley on Sunday against the San Francisco 49ers in Foxborough, Mass.

and went 32-3 against Buffalo in setting the NFL record for most wins against one opponent. And yet, Belichick is still the coach in New England, where he's gone 35-5 against Buffalo over a 20-year stretch in which the Patriots have won 17 division titles and six Super Bowls.

"It's still Belichick," running back Devin Singletary said. "It's still respect even though they haven't been playing as well as they want to be."

The Bills have much to prove for a team that last won the division in 1995. Buffalo

also hasn't won at least six of its first eight games since getting off to a 7-1 run in 1993, the last of the Bills' four-year start of Super Bowl appearances.

Hughes understands what a win over the Patriots would mean in the context of the division race.

"That's what we talked about is taking care of our division, and then getting to the playoffs," Hughes said. "It's huge for us because (New England) is the next opponent. And they're in our way of hanging the AFC East banner."

NFL

Versatile LB Warner steadies banged-up 49ers 'D'

By Josh Dubow
Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — San Francisco's secondary has been decimated by injuries. Top edge rushers Nick Bosa and Dee Ford haven't been on the field for weeks.

Yet the 49ers defense has still managed to perform at a high level almost every week thanks in large part to the play of middle linebacker Fred Warner.

Warner has been the main reason why his unit hasn't faltered despite starting 22 players on defense while dealing with injuries to the entire starting secondary, as well as several front seven players.

"I've always almost held myself to the highest standard," Warner said Wednesday. "I'm the one in the middle, the one that everybody is looking at every single day, every play. So as long as I'm on point, I know that we can continue to get better and better. I got a great group of guys around me and they make it easy on me for sure."

But it's Warner who makes it easier on everyone else with his versatility to excel in coverage, against the run and as a blitzer.

He also has an outstanding ability to diagnose plays and get the Niners into the proper defense no matter the situation.

"He's special. He's special in the sense that he recognizes things that are happening on the football field," defensive coordinator Robert Saleh said. "He recognizes things on tape. You can put a lot on his plate in terms of getting people lined up and making checks and getting us into the right defense. That gives you flexibility as a play-caller and as a coaching staff to know that you can create a defense that's



WINSLOW TOWNSON/AP

San Francisco 49ers linebacker Fred Warner returns an interception for a touchdown against the New England Patriots Sunday, in Foxborough, Mass. Warner on 'D' while dealing with injuries to the entire starting secondary, as well as several front seven players.

designed to be with different layers of checks, that will help us be in the right defense based on what the offense shows."

The Niners have always believed in Warner ever since he arrived as a third-round pick out of BYU in 2018. He has started

every game since entering the league and his teammates believed he was overlooked when it came time for awards last season when he helped San Francisco reach the Super Bowl.

Some have bestowed him the nickname

"All-Pro Fred" and his play has gotten others on board with CBS analyst Tony Romo calling him the "best linebacker" during last week's broadcast and saying he was unable to find any flaws.

"He's the quarterback out there," coach Kyle Shanahan said. "The calls he makes, all the confusing things that people do offensively with the motions and change of strengths and how he gets us lined up. When you play zone defense a lot, you better have some good guys inside who look at the quarterback and I think Fred is as good as anyone."

Warner excels at almost every aspect of the position. After playing mostly a nickel back role in college, Warner is one of the best coverage linebackers in the league with the 55.9 rating he's allowed on throws in his direction ranking second best among all linebackers, according to Pro Football Focus. He already has two interceptions, including one last week against New England's Cam Newton.

He's been used as a blitzer during his career and had three sacks last season and generated an impressive nine pressures on his 26 pass rushes this season, according to SportsInfo Solutions.

Seattle coach Pete Carroll sees similarities to his do-everything linebacker Bobby Wagner. He already has been a big part of the Seahawks' success this past decade.

"He's just kind of taken over from the start," Carroll said on a conference call. "He's been such an active player run and pass and so available to make plays because he's such a hard worker and a great reader and an instinctive guy. You can't watch the defense and not see him. He just jumps out at you. It's been cool to see him really ascend so quickly."



WADE PAYNE/AP

Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker Vince Williams celebrates with nose tackle Tyson Alualu, right, after sacking Tennessee Titans quarterback Ryan Tannehill, Sunday, in Nashville, Tenn.

Streak: Steelers sacked Ravens' QB Jackson five times in last encounter

FROM BACK PAGE

his legs as he is with his right arm. Asked about the key to keeping Jackson "in check," Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin is still looking for it. So are 30 other teams.

"I wish I had the answer to that," Tomlin said. "I wish the National Football League had the answer to that. 'In check' is a strong term, one that I choose not to use. We're just going to play to the best of our abilities, we are going to play within our personality, and we need to be on the details. We need to play fast and play collectively together and hopefully that is enough."

It nearly was enough last season, when the Steelers sacked Jackson five times — still the most he's taken in 28 career starts — and picked off three passes before falling in overtime. While defensive end Cam Heyward took no solace in his group's effectiveness because Pittsburgh lost, Jackson is wary while playing behind an offensive line that has struggled to protect him. The Ravens have allowed 16 sacks through five games, already closing in on the total (23) it allowed in all of 2019 when Jackson was behind center.

"Their defensive line is great," Jackson said. "Their front four, they like to get off the ball and get

to the quarterback. Lot of strip sacks. (Linebacker) T.J. Watt does a great job getting to the quarterback, harassing the running game. I feel our offensive line is going to be ready."

Few have been over the last four years, a stretch in which the Steelers have reclaimed their status as the NFL's best pass-rushing team. The makeover began when Hall of Fame defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau was let go in January 2015 and longtime outside linebackers coach Keith Butler was promoted. Pittsburgh jumped from 26th in sacks in 2014 to fourth in 2015 and has finished at the top in each of the last three seasons.

It helps to load up on edge rushers, as the Steelers did by taking outside linebacker Bud Dupree in the first round in 2015 and Watt in the same round two years later. That kind of talent can make it easy to create chaos in the backfield. Maybe the most impressive thing about Pittsburgh's streak is how frequently its rushers are getting home. The Steelers have only finished with one sack in a game nine times during their run while collecting at least five sacks in a game 16 times.

"I think it's just our level of discipline, understanding rush lanes," Heyward said. "Guys are

watching film on their own and then we're collectively talking about how we want to rush a guy, what we want to do in certain situations. But you've got to have that cohesiveness and a group of guys willing to do that. It can't just be one guy, one cowboy just trying to do his own show."

Twenty-six different players have combined for 206 sacks during the streak, from former Defensive Player of the Year such as Harrison to Pro Bowlers like Watt to journeyman like former defensive end Ricardo Mathews, who had the fifth and final sack of his three-team, seven-year career when he drilled Eli Manning in a 24-14 win over the New York Giants in December 2016.

"It requires a lot of guys not only sacrificing to do what's good for the team but also just understanding that we have to have our rush lanes and we have to have the ability to cover up those big lanes," Heyward said. "Because you don't get torched if you do."

No player in the league can set defensive game plans afire quite as quickly as Jackson. And the Steelers know it, streak or not.

"Guys got to make tackles," Heyward said. "Because if you don't, that dude is going to hit you for a big one."

SPORTS



Father's footsteps
 Source: Longtime coach Paul Silas' son hired to lead Rockets » **NBA, Page 47**



Above: Browns QB Baker Mayfield is sacked by Steelers DE Stephon Tuitt, right, and LB Bud Dupree.
 Don Wright/AP



Steelers linebackers Bud Dupree, front, and T.J. Watt celebrate a sack.
 GENE J. PUSKAR/AP

WRECKING CREW

Steelers taking third-longest sack streak in NFL history to Baltimore for showdown with Ravens

By WILL GRAVES
 Associated Press

DID YOU KNOW?

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers hold the NFL's record for consecutive games with a sack, going 69 straight between 1999-2003, an era highlighted by swaggering Hall of Fame defensive lineman Warren Sapp and cerebral Hall of Fame linebacker Derrick Brooks.

SOURCE: Associated Press

The play that launched one of the most impressive streaks in NFL history began innocently — or maybe menacingly is the better word — with James Harrison in full flight, his No. 92 a blur as he chased down Joe Flacco for a 12-yard loss on a sunny afternoon in Baltimore.

The meeting between the longtime Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker and the former Baltimore Ravens quarterback midway through the third quarter on Nov. 6, 2016, ultimately had little impact on the outcome.

Flacco and the Ravens stood a late rally to hold off the Steelers for a 21-14 victory best remembered for Pittsburgh kicker Chris Boswell's botched onside attempt in the final moments.

Still, four years later, not a game has passed in which the Steelers have failed to take down a quarterback.

Pittsburgh extended its streak to 63 and counting after toppling Tennessee's Ryan Tannehill twice in a 27-24 victory last weekend that pushed the Steelers to 6-0 for the first time in 42 years.

Pittsburgh can move closer to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' all-time mark of 69 when it visits the Ravens (5-1) on Sunday with first place in the AFC North on the line. All the Steelers have to do is slow down Baltimore quarterback Lamar Jackson. The reigning NFL MVP is one of the league's most dynamic players, equally as dangerous with

SEE STREAK ON PAGE 55

Inside: LB Warner steadying force for ailing 49ers, Page 55

