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CONTINGENCY EDITION

SATURDAY, JULY 9, 2022

Free to Deployed Areas



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President Joe Biden signs an executive order on abortion access in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on Friday in Washington. From left, Vice President Kamala Harris, Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra and Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco look on.

Biden boosts abortion rights

President signs executive order to protect access to procedure after high court ruling

BY SEUNG MIN KIM,
ZEKE MILLER
AND CHRIS MEGERIAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden delivered impassioned remarks Friday condemning the “extreme” Supreme Court majority that ended a constitutional right to abortion and pleading with Americans upset by the decision to “vote, vote, vote vote” in

November. He signed an executive order to try to protect access to the procedure under mounting pressure from fellow Democrats to be more forceful in response to the ruling.

The actions Biden outlined are intended to mitigate some potential penalties that women seeking abortion may face after the ruling, but his order cannot restore access to abortion in the more than a

dozen states where strict limits or total bans have gone into effect. About a dozen more states are set to impose additional restrictions.

Biden acknowledged the limitations facing his office, saying it would require an act of Congress to restore nationwide access to the way it was before the June 24 decision.

“The fastest way to restore Roe is to pass a national law,” Biden

said. “The challenge is go out and vote. For God’s sake there is an election in November.”

Biden’s action formalized instructions to the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to push back on efforts to limit the ability of women to access federally approved abortion medication or to travel across

SEE BIDEN ON PAGE 7

Abe, former Japanese PM, assassinated during speech

BY MARI YAMAGUCHI,
CHISATO TANAKA
AND FOSTER KLUG
Associated Press

NARA, Japan— Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was assassinated Friday on a street in western Japan by a gunman who opened fire on him from behind as he delivered a campaign speech — an attack that stunned the nation with some of the strictest gun control laws anywhere.

The 67-year-old Abe, who was Japan’s longest-serving leader when he resigned in 2020, collapsed bleeding and was airlifted to a nearby hospital in Nara, although he was not breathing



Abe

and his heart had stopped. He was later pronounced dead after receiving massive blood transfusions, officials said.

Nara Medical University emergency department chief Hidetada Fukushima said Abe suffered major damage to his heart, along with two neck wounds that damaged an artery. He never regained his vital signs, Fukushima said.

Police at the shooting scene in Nara arrested Tetsuya Yamagami, 41, a former member of Japan’s navy, on suspicion of murder. Police said he used a gun that was obviously homemade — about 15 inches long — and they confiscated similar weapons and his personal computer when they raided his nearby one-room apartment.

Police said Yamagami was responding calmly to questions and

SEE ABE ON PAGE 10

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Sysco accuses 4 beef processors of price fixing

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — The nation's largest food distributor has joined the other businesses accusing the four largest meat processors of working together to inflate beef prices.

Sysco recently filed a federal lawsuit in Texas accusing Tyson Foods, JBS, Cargill and National Beef of price fixing. The lawsuit said those companies have conspired to suppress the number of cattle being slaughtered at least since 2015 to help drive up the

price of beef. The allegations are similar to ones in lawsuits filed by grocery stores, ranchers, restaurants and other wholesalers that have been pending in Minnesota federal court since 2020.

The Sysco Corp. lawsuit said the companies' coordinated efforts to limit the number of cattle slaughtered drove down the price meat processors paid ranchers while propping up beef prices, boosting profits for the meat producers, who control more than 80% of the U.S. beef market.

The lawsuit said the companies "exploited their market power in this highly concentrated market by conspiring to limit the supply, and fix the prices, of beef sold." And the lawsuit cited unnamed witnesses who used to work in the meat industry who confirmed there was a conspiracy between the meat companies. Most of the companies didn't immediately respond to questions about the Sysco lawsuit Thursday, but they have defended their actions in the other price-fixing lawsuits.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		Commercial rates	
Euro costs (July 11)	\$0.99	Bahrain(Dinar)	0.3769
Dollar buys (July 11)	0.9598	Britain (Pound)	1.1979
British pound (July 11)	\$1.17	Canada (Dollar)	1.2984
Japanese yen (July 11)	132.00	China (Yuan)	6.7020
South Korean won (July 11)	1265.00	Denmark (Krone)	7.3393
		Egypt (Pound)	18.8613
		Euro	0.9862
		Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8487
		Hungary (Forint)	397.69
		Israel (Shekel)	3.4822
		Japan (Yen)	136.28
		Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3076
		Norway (Krone)	10.1407
		Philippines (Peso)	55.93
		Poland (Zloty)	4.71
		Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7543
		Singapore (Dollar)	1.4009
		South Korea (Won)	1301.24
		Switzerland (Franc)	0.9786
		Thailand (Baht)	35.90
		Turkey (NewLira)	17.3207

(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.)

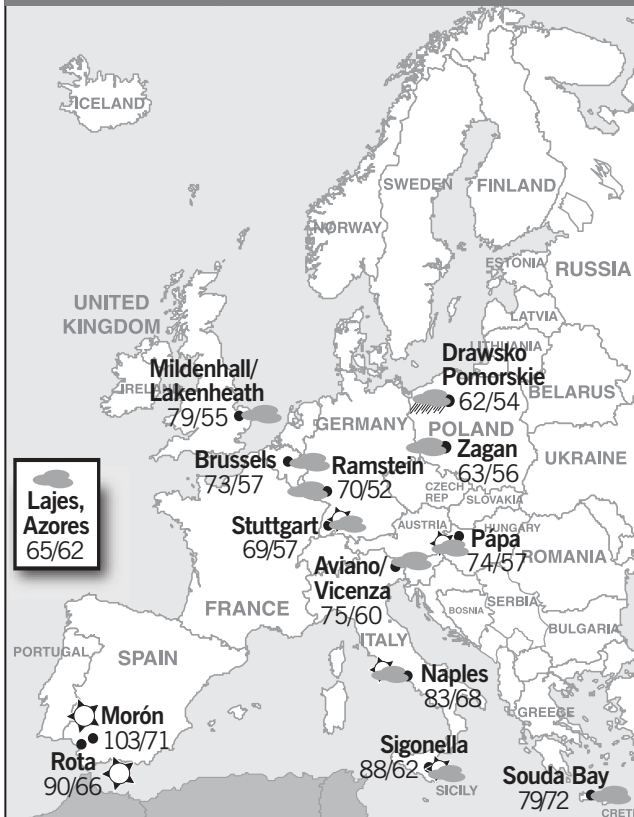
INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	4.75
Interest Rates Discount rate	2.25
Federal funds market rate	0.08
3-month bill	1.89
30-year bond	3.19

WEATHER OUTLOOK

SATURDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



SATURDAY IN EUROPE



SUNDAY 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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MILITARY

China demands end to US-Taiwan 'collusion'

Associated Press

BEIJING—China has demanded the U.S. cease military “collusion” with Taiwan during a virtual meeting between the joint chiefs of staff from the two countries whose relationship has grown increasingly fractious.

Gen. Li Zuocheng told Gen. Mark Milley on Thursday that China had “no room for compromise” on issues affecting its “core interests,” which include self-governing Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

“China demands the U.S. ... cease reversing history, cease U.S.-Taiwan military collusion and avoid impacting China-U.S. ties and stability in the Taiwan Strait,” Li said.

The Chinese military would “resolutely safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity,” he said. “If anyone creates a wanton provocation, they will be met with the firm counterattack from the Chinese people.”

Such language is fairly routine and Li was also quoted in a Defense Ministry news release saying China hoped to “further strengthen dialogue, handle risks, and promote cooperation, rather than deliberately creating confrontation, provoking incidents and becoming mutually exclusive.”

China routinely flies warplanes near Taiwan to advertise its threat to attack, and the island’s Defense Ministry said Chinese air force aircraft crossed the middle line of

the Taiwan Strait dividing the two sides on Friday morning. It said measures were taken in response, including the scrambling of Taiwanese jets.

Such “provocative behavior ... has seriously damaged regional peace and stability,” the ministry said.

Asked about the incident, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said, “This exercise by China is directed at external interference and separatist Taiwan independence forces.”

The meeting between Li and Milley followed fiery comments by Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe at a regional security conference last month that was also attended by U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.

Wei accused the United States of trying to “hijack” the support of countries in the Asia-Pacific region to turn them against Beijing, saying Washington is seeking to advance its own interests “under the guise of multilateralism.”

At the same meeting in Singapore, Austin said China was causing instability with its claim to Taiwan and its increased military activity in the area.

And in May, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called China the “most serious long-term challenge to the international order” for the United States, with its claims to Taiwan and efforts to dominate the strategic South China Sea, prompting an angry response from Beijing.

The U.S. and its allies have re-

sponded with what they term “freedom of navigation” patrols in the South China Sea, prompting angry responses from Beijing.

Despite not having formal diplomatic relations in deference to Beijing, Washington remains Taiwan’s chief ally and supplier of defense weapons. U.S. law requires the government to treat all threats to the island as matters of “grave concern,” although it remains ambiguous on whether the U.S. military would defend Taiwan if it were attacked by China.

The latest round of heated rhetoric comes ahead of a meeting between Blinken and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, on Saturday at a gathering of foreign ministers from the G-20 bloc of industrialized nations in Indonesia.

Texas governor orders Guard troops to return migrants to the border

By ROSE L. THAYER

Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Gov. Greg Abbott on Thursday authorized National Guard troops deployed on state orders at the border with Mexico to arrest migrants who crossed illegally into the U.S., or violated other federal laws, and bring them to a port-of-entry.

The order also extends the authority to state police and stretches the mission known as Operation Lone Star into new territory. Troops already had arrest authority but only to enforce state laws, such as trespassing.

Abbott first deployed troops on the mission in March 2021, with the number of service members deployed hitting a peak of 10,000 earlier this year. As of last month, the number had dropped by about 500 as the Texas Military Department began to use more patrol boats on the Rio Grande instead of observation posts along the riverbank.

The governor’s order does not state how troops will determine

a person has crossed illegally into the U.S. or whether they must ensure people brought to the port-of-entry do return to Mexico. It’s also unclear if they will be processed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Abbott’s office referred all “operational” questions to the Texas Military Department, which did not immediately respond to questions. U.S. Customs and Border Protection did not immediately respond to questions about whether it is working with Texas on this new effort.

Abbott’s office said in a statement that 5,000 migrants were apprehended during the July 4th holiday weekend, “creating a border crisis that has overrun communities along the border and across Texas.”

Only the federal government is authorized for immigration enforcement, but Abbott wrote his measure is necessary due to President Joe Biden’s “failure to protect our border.”

Guard troops have built coiled barbed wire fencing along the



ROSE L. THAYER/Stars and Stripes

A Texas National Guard soldier watches over four migrants who entered a privately owned pecan orchard in Eagle Pass, Texas, after illegally crossing the Rio Grande from Mexico on May 23. The men were later processed by U.S. Border Patrol agents.

border and report illegal activity that they observe while standing watch at the river to state and federal law enforcement.

ProPublica reported this week that the Department of Justice is

investigating Operation Lone Star for potential civil rights violations, though the department declined to comment.

It is unclear whether the National Guard’s role in the mis-

sion is part of the investigation or if it is focused on state prisons and state police.

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Twitter: @Rose_Lori

Vandenberg rocket test ends in explosion seconds after launch

The (San Luis Obispo) Tribune

A planned test of a missile’s rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base ended in a fiery blast late Wednesday night after it exploded several seconds into the launch.

According to a news release Thursday morning, a Minotaur II and rocket exploded approximately 11 seconds after launch-

ing from the military base’s test pad at 11:01 p.m.

There were no injuries in the explosion and the debris was contained to the immediate vicinity of the launch pad, according to the release.

The failed launch also sparked a fire on the military base. As of 1 a.m. the Vandenberg Fire Department was on

scene for the fire, which was producing smoke “but is no immediate danger to the rest of the base.”

“We always have emergency response teams on standby prior to every launch,” Col. Kris Barcomb, Space Launch Delta 30 vice commander said in the release. “Safety is our priority at all times.”

An investigative review board has been established to determine the cause of the explosion.

The military base was testing the U.S. Air Force’s new missile rocket, which is expected to be used with the future LGM-35A Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile.

Both are being developed by the Air Force’s Nuclear Weap-

ons Center to will replace the aging Minuteman missiles that have previously been tested at the Central Coast base, located near Lompoc.

Initial releases from military officials indicated the launch was expected for Thursday morning; it is unclear why the test was conducted late Wednesday night instead.

EUROPE

Putin to Ukraine: Russia has barely started

Associated Press

MOSCOW — With Russia's military action in Ukraine in its fifth month, Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday warned Kyiv that it should quickly accept Moscow's terms or brace for the worst, adding ominously that Russia has barely started its action.

Speaking at a meeting with leaders of the Kremlin-controlled parliament, Putin accused Western allies of fueling the hostilities, charging that "the West wants to fight us until the last Ukrainian."

"It's a tragedy for the Ukrainian people, but it looks like it's heading in that direction," he added.

"Everybody should know that largely speaking, we haven't even yet started anything in earnest," Putin said in a menacing note.

He declared that Russia remains ready to sit down for talks to end the fighting, adding that "those who refuse to do so should know that the longer it lasts the more difficult it will be for them to make a deal with us."

"We are hearing that they want to defeat us on the battlefield," Putin said. "Let them try."

Earlier in the conflict, the Kremlin demanded that Kyiv acknowledge Russian sovereignty over the Crimean Peninsula, which it annexed in 2014, and recognize the independence of Moscow-backed separatist regions in



ALEXEI NIKOLSKY, SPUTNIK, KREMLIN POOL/AP

Russian President Vladimir Putin gestures as he speaks to members of the State Duma and the Federal Assembly of The Russian Federation in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Thursday.

eastern Ukraine. Moscow also said it expected Ukraine to bow to the existing situation on the ground, a reference to other land gains it has made since Russian troops rolled into Ukraine on Feb. 24.

After failing to capture Kyiv and other big cities in Ukraine's northeast early in the campaign, the Russian military shifted its focus to the eastern industrial heartland of Donbas, where Moscow-backed separatists have fought

Ukrainian troops since 2014.

Earlier this week, the Russian military claimed control of the Luhansk province, one of the two that make up Donbas, and is preparing to press its offensive into the second one, Donetsk.

In the early stages of the conflict, Russia won control of the southern Kherson region and part of neighboring Zaporizhzhia. Moscow is expected eventually to try to cut Ukraine off from its Black Sea coast all the way to the Romanian border. If successful, it would deal a crushing blow to the Ukrainian economy and also create a corridor to Moldova's separatist region of Transnistria, where Russia maintains a military base.

Putin reaffirmed his long-held claim that the West is using the conflict in Ukraine to try to isolate and weaken Russia.

"They simply don't need such a country as Russia," Putin said. "This is why they have used terrorism, separatism and internal destructive forces in our country."

He charged that Western sanctions against Russia have failed to achieve their goal of "sowing division and strife in our society and demoralizing our people."

"The course of history is unstoppable, and attempts by the collective West to enforce its version of the global order are doomed to fail," Putin said.

Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to the Ukrainian president, responded on Twitter: "There is no plan by the 'collective West'" and only a Russian army entered Ukraine.

Ukrainian official warns of 'catastrophe' in captured city

Associated Press

POKROVSK, Ukraine — A Ukrainian regional official warned Friday of deteriorating living conditions in a city captured by Russian forces two weeks ago, saying Sievierodonetsk is without water, power or a working sewage system while the bodies of the dead decompose in hot apartment buildings.

Gov. Serhiy Haidai said the Russians were unleashing indiscriminate artillery barrages as they try to secure their gains in eastern Ukraine's Luhansk province. Moscow this week claimed full control of Luhansk, but the governor and other Ukrainian officials said their troops retained a small part of the province.

"Luhansk hasn't been fully captured even though the Russians have engaged all their arsenal to achieve that goal," Haidai told The Associated Press. "Fierce battles are going on in several villages on the region's border. The Russians are relying on tanks and artillery to advance, leaving scorched earth."

Russia's forces "strike every building that they think could be a fortified position," he said. "They aren't stopped by the fact that civilians are left there and they die



EVGENIY MALOLETKA/AP

A man looks out of a balcony of his home which was damaged in Russian bombardment in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Thursday.

in their homes and courtyards. They keep firing."

Occupied Sievierodonetsk, meanwhile, "is on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe," the governor wrote on social media. "The Russians have completely destroyed all the critical infrastructure, and they are unable to repair anything."

Haidai reported last week that about 8,000 residents remained in

the city, which had a prewar population of around 100,000. Some Ukrainian officials and soldiers said Russian forces leveled Sievierodonetsk, Luhansk province's administrative center, before Ukraine's troops were ordered out of the city late last month to avoid their encirclement and capture.

Luhansk is one of two provinces that make up the Donbas, a region of mines and factories where pro-

Moscow separatists have fought Ukraine's army for eight years and declared independent republics that Russian President Vladimir Putin recognized before he sent troops into Ukraine.

After asserting full control of Luhansk, Putin said Russian forces would have a chance to rest and recoup, but other parts of eastern Ukraine have come under sustained bombardment. The Russian leader warned Kyiv it should quickly accept Moscow's terms or brace for the worst.

"Everybody should know that largely speaking, we haven't even yet started anything in earnest," Putin said while speaking with leaders of the Kremlin-controlled parliament Thursday.

Ukraine's presidential office said Friday that at least 12 civilians were killed and another 30 wounded by Russian shelling over the last 24 hours. Two cities in Donetsk — the other Donbas province — experienced the heaviest barrage, with six people killed and 21 wounded.

In northeast Ukraine, another four people were killed and nine were wounded in Kharkiv, the country's second-largest city, where Russian shelling hit residential areas.

Commenting on Putin's ominous statement, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the Russian leader was reacting to statements by Ukraine's government and its Western allies about defeating Russia on the battlefield.

"Russia's potential is so big that just a small part of it has been used in the special military operation," Peskov told reporters. "And so Western statements are utterly absurd and just add to the grief of the Ukrainian people."

In other developments, Germany's parliament overwhelmingly approved Sweden and Finland's requests to join NATO.

German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht said the two countries' accession would greatly strengthen NATO's northern and eastern flanks, noting their strong naval forces in the Baltic Sea and their land forces that know the region bordering Russia well.

She suggested that Putin's efforts to divide and destroy NATO had failed.

"He bet on our weakness," she said. "Now he gets the opposite."

All 30 member countries must agree before the Western military alliance can admit Finland and Sweden.

EUROPE

Loss common around Ukraine

By CARA ANNA
AND MSTYSLAV CHERNOV
Associated Press

KHARKIV, Ukraine — She had gone out to feed the cats when the shelling began.

It was afternoon, a residential neighborhood, a time to get errands done. But there is nothing routine about life near the front line in Ukraine.

Kharkiv, the country's second-largest city and a short drive from the Russian border, lives with the low thunder of distant artillery and the sickening booms of shells exploding much closer to home.

Natalia Kolesnik, like other residents, learned to live with the risks. Then, in a grassy courtyard on a hot and sweaty Thursday, the shelling caught her.

She was one of three bodies on the littered ground.

One body appeared unrecognizable. A second, with a torn yellow dress and a blue slipper blown off, lay beside a splintered wooden bench. Next to it, there was a box of half-eaten fruit, cherries and apples, speckled with blood.

Inside a purse left on the bench, a mobile phone rang.

Kolesnik was nearby.

Her husband, Viktor, arrived in shock. He didn't want to let her go. He stroked her head.

"Dad, that's it," his son Olexander said, watching as first responders waited to close the body bag. "She is dead. Get up."

"Don't you understand?" his father asked.

"What don't I understand?" the son said. "This is my mother. Dad, please. Dad, please."

Kneeling, Viktor embraced what was left of his wife, one arm cradling her shoulder, his stubbled chin pressed against the grit on her face.

He picked up her left hand and placed it again, covering it with his own.

The pleading continued. Viktor again shoved his son's hand away.

"Dad, go."

"I can't go."

"Look, you are covered with blood. People need to carry her away."

Viktor began to close the body



EVGENIY MALOLETKA/AP

Viktor Kolesnik cries on a body of his wife Natalia Kolesnik, who was killed during a Russian bombardment at a residential neighborhood in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Thursday.

bag himself, then the first responders took over.

As neighbors watched from the edge of a field, and as authorities began their now-routine hunt for shrapnel, Viktor was left alone on a bench to cry.

"People suffered, for what?" neighbor Sergey Pershin said as he watched medics tend to several

people wounded. "It's horrible. I'm so sick of it. Every night you wake up 10 times, you wait for it to end, wait until they start shooting. What are the bastards doing? There are residential buildings here."

It was just one day in Kharkiv, where hundreds have died in 19 weeks of war. As Russia reassem-

bles its troops to try to capture more territory in eastern Ukraine, it is safe to say more dead are to come.

As of Sunday, the United Nations human rights office had verified at least 4,889 civilians killed across Ukraine since Russia's invasion, a number it said likely represented a vast undercount.

Ukrainians cling to life at front line in destroyed homes

By CARA ANNA
AND VASILISA STEPANENKO
Associated Press

KHARKIV, Ukraine — Viktor Lazar shares his war-side balcony with a pair of opera glasses and a tiny orange snake, his only companion in an apartment that seems to sit at the edge of the world.

The opera glasses, more of a joke, are hardly needed — the front line is visible without them. The rumbling of Russian and Ukrainian shelling is audible even now, although Lazar claims not to notice. Below his balcony is a crater, one of many. On the nearby street, a Grad rocket launcher rolls by.

Lazar estimates the Russians are just 6 miles away.

As the war grinds into its fifth month along deadly fault lines in Ukraine's east and south, Lazar and his few neighbors in Kharkiv's vast and shattered neighborhood of Saltivka represent a life without resolution in which many are trapped. New communities are being told to flee. Not all do.

While towns and villages around the capital of Kyiv have begun to rebuild after the Russians withdrew months ago and world powers discuss long-term recovery, others in eastern Ukraine still cannot sleep soundly.

The Soviet-era apartment



EVGENIY MALOLETKA/AP

Viktor Lazar, right, cleans the street in front of his apartment in Saltivka district after Russian attacks in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Tuesday.

blocks in Saltivka once housed a half-million people, one of the largest neighborhoods in Europe. Now perhaps only dozens remain. Some of the buildings are blackened, while others are crumbling slab by slab.

"This is my home," says the 37-year-old Lazar, who is shirtless in the soaring summer heat, revealing a machine gun tattoo on his right arm. He proclaims he's ready to fight the Russians, but his only weapons are kitchen knives.

A broken guitar hangs on the wall of his apartment. Lazar, a mu-

sician, dreams of holding a defiant concert in Saltivka's echoing, cat-roamed streets. In better days, he played for crowds in the plazas of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, which is showing signs of rebounding from the war — even though it's only a short distance from the border with Russia.

Saltivka, by comparison, is almost dead. Past a final subway station dedicated to heroes, all activity sputters out. Shops are closed and apartment blocks gape with broken windows. In one, a table-sized chunk of concrete twists

slowly on a shred of rebar, waiting to fall.

Tall grass overtakes abandoned playgrounds scattered with fallen and ripened cherries. Soldiers' trenches are bare. In a few apartments now ripped open, laundry still hangs on the line.

From time to time, a car crunches along the debris. It might bring movers trying to salvage some furniture or volunteers bringing assistance.

Outside Lazar's building, people have assembled a modest kitchen with a mounted bell to ring when the day's food arrives. Near the teapot on a wood stove, ammunition boxes now hold bread slowly going stale.

Some electricity has returned but running water has not. Lazar ducks into a basement where water still gurgles for bathing. Two middle-aged women emerge from the darkness, looking fresh, and walk away.

But life is less an adventure for those with no options. Pavel Govoryhov, 84, sits in the entrance of a building now as fragile as himself. He has two canes at hand. For four months, he lived in the basement before moving back into his apartment. He tenses at sudden noises. Just speaking about his struggles brings him to tears.

"My children don't help me," he

says. "Why do I need such a life?"

In time, he knows, winter will return to the unheated apartment blocks without mercy.

The Russians could do the same. More than 600 civilians have been killed in the Kharkiv region north of Donetsk since the invasion, some in Saltivka. Ukrainian authorities have alleged that the Russians used banned cluster bombs.

Communities around the edges of Kharkiv are still in uncertain hands, reportedly part of Moscow's strategy to keep Ukrainian troops so distracted that they cannot be sent to places like Donetsk where the Russians are chewing away at entire cities.

"You don't wish this on anyone," says Bogdan Netsov, 14, who lives with his family in an apartment with curtains drawn.

In another Saltivka building, a scrawled sign in the stairway warns potential occupiers that "if you come in, you'll get killed."

This is where Viktor Shevchenko still calls home, even as he needs the light of his cellphone to see through its gloom in the daylight hours.

"This is me speaking for the whole world," he says, unshaven and fortified by tea. "We will push Russia away. Because we are patriots, and we live on our land."

NATION

Biden to discuss Iran aerial arms on Mideast trip

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

Thwarting Iranian missiles and drones will be a key part of the conversations between President Joe Biden and regional heads of state on his upcoming trip to the Middle East, officials and analysts said.

Biden will discuss greater collaboration in the Middle East on air defense, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters Thursday.

The trip, which begins next week with stops in Israel, the West Bank, and Saudi Arabia, will include talks on how the U.S. can help integrate the air defenses of Middle Eastern countries concerned about Iran's growing aerial arsenal, Kirby said.

These efforts would require Israel, Saudi Arabia and Persian Gulf nations to work together after decades of mistrust, experts said.

But Middle Eastern countries are starting to find common ground because of their worries about Iran, said Tom Karako, director of the Missile Defense Project at the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"They're always going to be a little suspicious, but they do seem to be moving in the right direction toward greater cooperation," Karako told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

Tehran's robust drone and missile systems have forced Saudi Arabia and others to bolster their air defense systems, Karako said.

Iran's drone capabilities have developed to the point where the U.S. is "operating without com-

plete air superiority" for the first time since the Korean War, former U.S. Central Command chief Gen. Kenneth McKenzie told Congress this spring.

Iran and the militant groups that it backs in the region have seasoned missile system and drone operators due to their extensive use in Yemen's civil war, Karako said.

That conflict, which began in 2014, pitted Houthi rebels backed by Iran against Yemen's government, which was backed by Saudi Arabia. The war is now in the fourth month of a cease-fire, but hundreds of thousands have died from airstrikes or starvation.

Houthi actions against Saudi Arabia have included a missile strike on the capital Riyadh hours before former U.S. President Donald Trump visited in 2017 and an attack on a key oil facility earlier this year.

Another attack claimed by the Houthis, on the United Arab Emirates in early 2022, targeted sites including Al Dhafra Air Base, which hosts the U.S. Air Force's 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.

For decades, the U.S. has wanted its allies in the Middle East to cooperate more on air defense, said Michael Eisenstadt, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. But regional rivals have been hesitant to share such information, he said.

This lack of coordination could lead to confusion should a missile come streaking across the Persian Gulf, Eisenstadt said.

Gen. Michael Kurilla, current commander of CENTCOM, told Congress in February that Israel



MATTHEW PLEW/U.S. Air Force

U.S. Army soldiers set up a Patriot missile battery at an Israeli exercise site in 2018. President Joe Biden's trip to the Middle East next week will include talks on how the U.S. can help integrate the air defenses of countries concerned about Iran's aerial arsenal.

and others in the region are cooperating on integrated air and missile defense.

His predecessor, McKenzie, attended a secret meeting with Israeli and Arab military officials about possible air defense coordination in March, The Wall Street Journal reported in June.

Some Arab leaders want access to Israel's advanced military technology and experience with anti-air systems such as Iron Dome, the newspaper reported.

A partnership between Israel and the Arab countries would have been unlikely in years past, when the nations were adversarial over the issue of Palestinian statehood.

But an agreement signed under the Trump administration has opened the door for greater cooperation, experts said. That deal, the Abraham Accords, called for the normalization of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates.

Similar agreements were signed afterward involving Israel, Bahrain, Oman and Sudan. Following the deal, the U.S. moved Israel to Central Command's area of responsibility.

Israeli forces also have joined military exercises with the United States and the other Abraham Accords signatories as well as other CENTCOM partners, such as Saudi Arabia, Oman, Jordan, Egypt and Pakistan.

"Israel has a lot of expertise that it can share," Eisenstadt said.

Besides air defense, Biden will have other important security issues to discuss on his Middle East trip, experts said.

Gulf states and Israel will want to discuss maritime security in the Middle East, home to some of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

Iran has been accused of transporting weapons, narcotics and oil to fund and support the armed groups it backs in the region.

British officials announced

Thursday that in late February they had seized smuggled Iranian surface-to-air missiles and other advanced weapon components potentially intended for the Yemen rebels. And the U.S. seized nearly 9,000 illicit weapons in 2021, according to the Navy.

Biden also may discuss concerns over Iran's possible nuclear weapons ambitions and Saudi Arabia's oil production, experts said.

The president must strike a delicate balance on his trip, said Barbara Slavin, the director of the Future of Iran Initiative at the Washington-based Atlantic Council.

There's a risk that discussions on coordinating defenses against Iran will further antagonize Tehran if not handled correctly, Slavin said.

"I don't envy the speechwriters," she said.

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US employers add solid 372K jobs in sign of resilience

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — America's employers shrugged off high inflation and weakening growth to add 372,000 jobs in June, a surprisingly strong gain that will likely spur the Federal Reserve to keep sharply raising interest rates to cool the economy and slow price increases.

The unemployment rate in June remained at 3.6% for a fourth straight month, the Labor Department said Friday, matching a near-50-year low that was reached before the pandemic struck in early 2020.

The past year's streak of robust hiring has been good for job seekers and has led to higher pay for many employees. But it has also helped fuel the highest inflation in four decades and heightened pressure on the Fed to further slow borrowing and spending.

Many employers are still struggling to fill jobs, especially in the economy's vast service sector, with Americans now traveling, eating out and attending public events with much greater frequency. The Fed may regard the June job gain as evidence that the rapid pace of hiring is feeding inflation as companies raise pay to

attract workers and then increase prices to cover their higher labor costs.

The Fed has already embarked on its fastest series of rate hikes since the 1980s, and further large increases would make borrowing much costlier for consumers and businesses and increase the risk of a recession.

The persistent desire of many businesses to hire and grow is providing a bulwark against the likelihood that the economy will tip into recession over the next year. Even if a downturn does occur, the healthy job and pay growth of the past year could help keep it rela-

tively brief and mild.

For now, there are roughly two posted job openings for every unemployed worker. And the number of people seeking unemployment benefits — a proxy for layoffs and an early indicator of a downturn — remains far below historic averages, although it has ticked up recently.

At the same time, economic growth has been negative for two straight quarters, consumers are slowing their spending with inflation at a four-decade high and home sales have fallen as the Fed has jacked up borrowing costs.

And hiring could weaken in the

coming months. The Fed wants job growth to slow, at least modestly, as part of its strenuous efforts to cool the economy and curb high inflation. The Biden administration, too, has sought to portray any pullback in hiring as part of a welcome transition to a more sustainable economy that will help keep inflation down.

But the transition to a more sustainable pace of growth and hiring is likely to be a bumpy one. If, for example, the Fed's rate cuts end up slowing growth too much, as many analysts fear, the economy could slide into a recession by next year.

NATION

Ex-Army doctor: Free abortions for enlisted

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

SANTA TERESA, N.M. — Women in the military have always been patients at Dr. Franz Theard's abortion clinic in New Mexico, a roughly 30-minute drive from Fort Bliss, Texas.

"Even before all these laws [restricting abortions], we had Army people," the 73-year-old former Army doctor said.

When Texas enacted a law in September that halted all abortions after six weeks, Theard said he began seeing more service women traveling to his clinic from Fort Hood and Joint Base San Antonio — both nearly 600 miles away. Then came reports that the Supreme Court could overturn its 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which guaranteed women access to a safe, legal abortion.

He said he read a news story in which Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., discussed the impact the decision could have on military readiness and wanted to do something to help.

So Thread decided to begin offering abortions to enlisted service women free of charge, though they would still have to make their own travel arrangements.

In the last two months, he said he has given a full refund to nine military women who've come to his clinic.

The Supreme Court ruling in

June to overturn *Roe v. Wade* has allowed states to ban abortions, though it hasn't changed the Defense Department's policy on the procedure. Federal law only allows abortions at military facilities in cases of rape, incest or where the mother's life is at risk. However, the ruling could mean women in the military seeking an abortion while stationed in one of the 26 states that either have banned or are expected to ban abortions will need to take medical leave and travel.

"There's already a very negative stigma around women's health care in the military broadly," said Kyleanne Hunter, a Marine Corps veteran and a senior political scientist at the RAND Corp. "How are commanders going to work to prevent backlash against women who seek abortions and who require aftercare?"

Hunter recently wrote for *Lawfare*, a blog published in cooperation with the Brookings Institution, a left-leaning think tank in Washington, D.C., that overturning *Roe v. Wade* could "have an outsized effect on women in the military."

Women in the service are nearly twice as likely as civilian women to have an unintended pregnancy, according to research from Ibis Reproductive Health, a global nonprofit organization with a mission to improve women's repro-

ductive autonomy, choices and health worldwide. There are about 13,860 unintended pregnancies in the military each year, according to the group's research.

However, data on how many women in the military seek abortions is "scarce" because they must do it on their own, Hunter wrote.



Theard

Deployments and overseas assignments contribute to service women's increased chance of unintended pregnancy because it can often cause disruptions in prescribed contraceptives, said Lory Manning, a retired Navy captain and director of government relations for the advocacy group Service Women's Action Network. Training events, rotational shift work and just a lack of knowledge on what's available to them can also have an effect, she said.

"Contraception may be new to them, or they don't know who to ask to find out what's available. Maybe they're embarrassed about asking about it. We need to do a better job of educating them. I mean, the military basically supplies just about [any contraception] you want for free," Manning said.

When Manning was a com-

mander in Panama in the early 1980s, she said she had enlisted women working for her who found themselves pregnant and couldn't afford to fly back to the U.S. to have an abortion, but the officers could.

"That's where I first began to notice that the officers can afford this, but the junior enlisted women just have the baby," Manning said. "It impacts the command, too. The women who I dealt with at least were first-time mothers. They had no family in Panama to help."

At Theard's clinic in New Mexico, where Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed an executive order June 27 to protect abortion access in the state, the physician typically charges \$700 to see women and provide medication for them to take once they leave that will terminate their pregnancy.

"[It's] a fairly hefty figure," Theard said of the cost. "I'm offering a solution."

He said he is focusing his offer for free services to enlisted women traveling from surrounding states where abortion is banned or is expected to be soon, including Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arizona. Service women in other states likely have a closer option.

"The Army was good to me, and I'm trying to be good to them," Theard said. "What I would like to do is have all the clinics follow my lead."

Drafted just after the end of the Vietnam War, Theard spent seven years as an Army surgeon. He arrived in Germany in 1976, commissioned directly to major, and spent three years with the 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt.

As Congress debates the defense budget and policy legislation for fiscal 2023, Hunter said the recent Supreme Court decision has already sparked new proposals about what the military can offer women.

"Access to abortion is once again a hot-button issue," she said. "What is the role of [Defense Department] doctors and/or [military health insurance] in any follow-up care?"

As those issues are sorted out in Washington, Theard said he is looking at ways to make certain that he can continue to offer free services to enlisted women and has begun to set up a fund for donations.

For those women in the military who can pay something — no matter how much less than the \$700 fee — he asks they contribute to the fund to help him pay for the pills for the next enlisted woman who might want an abortion.

"I would like to keep the fund going, so this doesn't die out," Theard said.

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Biden: President says 'the only way' to restore abortion rights is to vote

FROM PAGE 1

state lines to access clinical abortion services. He was joined by Vice President Kamala Harris, HHS secretary Xavier Becerra and Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco in the Roosevelt Room as he signed the order.

His executive order also directs agencies to work to educate medical providers and insurers about how and when they are required to share privileged patient information with authorities — an effort to protect women who seek or utilize abortion services. He is also asking the Federal Trade Commission to take steps to protect the privacy of those seeking information about reproductive care online and establish an interagency task force to coordinate federal efforts to safeguard access to abortion.

Biden is also directing his staff to convene volunteer lawyers to provide women and providers with pro bono legal assistance to help them navigate new state restrictions after the Supreme Court ruling.

The order, after the high court's June 24 ruling that ended the nationwide right to abortion and left it to states to determine whether or how to allow the procedure, comes as Biden has faced criticism from some in his own party for not acting with more urgency to protect women's access to abortion. The decision in the case known as *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturned the court's landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling.

Since the decision, Biden has stressed that his ability to protect abortion rights by executive action is limited without congressional action, and stressed that Democrats do not have the votes in the current Congress to do so.

"We need two additional pro-choice senators and a pro-choice house to codify *Roe*," he said. "Your vote can make that a reality."

Biden for the first time last week announced his support for changing Senate rules to allow a measure to restore nationwide access to abortion to pass by simple

majority, rather than the usual 60-vote threshold required to end a filibuster. However, at least two Democratic lawmakers have made clear they won't support changing Senate rules.

He predicted that women would turn out in "record numbers" in frustration over the court's decision, and said he expected "millions and millions of men will be taking up the fight beside them."

On Friday, he repeated his sharp criticism of the Supreme Court's reasoning in striking down what had been a half-century constitutional right to abortion.

"Let's be clear about something from the very start, this was not a decision driven by the Constitution," Biden said, accusing the court's majority of "playing fast and loose with the facts."

He spoke emotionally of a 10-year-old Ohio girl who was forced to travel out of state to terminate a pregnancy after being raped, noting that some states have instituted bans that don't have exceptions for cases of rape or incest.

"A 10-year-old should be forced



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President Joe Biden speaks about abortion access during an event in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, on Friday.

to give birth to a rapist's child!" Biden nearly shouted. "I can't think of anything more extreme."

Biden added ahead of the November midterm elections that "The choice we face as a nation is between the mainstream or the extreme."

The tasking to the Justice Department and HHS pushes the agencies to fight in court to protect women, but it conveys no guarantees that the judicial system will take their side against potential prosecution by states that have moved to outlaw abortion.

"President Biden has made clear that the only way to secure a woman's right to choose is for Congress to restore the protections of *Roe* as federal law," the White House said. "Until then, he has committed to doing everything in his power to defend reproductive rights and protect access to safe and legal abortion."

NARAL Pro-Choice America president Mini Timmaraju called Biden's order "an important first step in restoring the rights taken from millions of Americans by the Supreme Court."

NATION

NY gun applicants to share social media

By **MARINA VILLENEUVE**
AND **MAYSOON KHAN**
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — As missed warning signs pile up in investigations of mass killings, New York state is rolling out a novel strategy to screen applicants for gun permits. People seeking to carry concealed handguns will be required to hand over their social media accounts for a review of their “character and conduct.”

It’s an approach applauded by many Democrats and national gun control advocacy groups, but some experts have raised questions about how the law will be

enforced and address free speech concerns.

Some of the local officials who will be tasked with reviewing the social media content also are asking whether they’ll have the resources and, in some cases, whether the law is even constitutional.

Sheriffs haven’t received additional money or staffing to handle a new application process, said Peter Kehoe, the executive director of the New York Sheriffs’ Association. The law, he asserted, infringes on Second Amendment rights, and while applicants must list their social media ac-

counts, he doesn’t think local officials will necessarily look at them.

“I don’t think we would do that,” Kehoe said. “I think it would be a constitutional invasion of privacy.”

The new requirement, which takes effect in September, was included in a law passed last week that sought to preserve some limits on firearms after the Supreme Court ruled that most people have a right to carry a handgun for personal protection. It was signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, who noted shooters sometimes telegraph

their intent to hurt others.

Increasingly, young men have gone online to drop hints of what’s to come before executing a mass killing, including the gunman who killed 19 children and two teachers at an Uvalde, Texas, elementary school.

Under the law, applicants have to provide local officials with a list of current and former social media accounts from the previous three years. It will be up to local sheriff’s staff, judges or country clerks to scroll through those profiles as they check whether applicants have made statements suggesting dangerous behavior.

The law also will require applicants to undergo hours of safety training, prove they’re proficient at shooting, provide four character references and sit for in-person interviews.

The law reflects how the Supreme Court ruling has shifted responsibility to states for vetting those who carry firearms in public, said Tanya Schardt, senior counsel and director of state and federal policy for gun control advocacy organization Brady.

Her group said it was not aware of any other states requiring gun permit applicants to submit social media profiles.

4 bears killed in Alaska homeless campground

By **MARK THIESSEN**
Associate Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Alaska wildlife officials have killed four black bears in a campground recently reserved for people in Anchorage who are homeless after the city’s largest shelter was closed.

Employees from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on Tuesday killed a sow and her two cubs and another adult bear that was acting separately, stealing food from tents inside Centennial Park, which is managed by the city, officials said.

Anchorage is Alaska’s biggest city, with nearly 300,000 residents, but it is also bear country.

The park is located in east Anchorage, nestled between Chugach State Park and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, which state wildlife officials describe as a vast

bear habitat.

The Department of Fish and Game said Anchorage residents share the municipality with up to 350 American black bears and up to 65 brown bears.

“Certainly it’s a busy bear time for us all across Anchorage,” said department spokesperson Cynthia Wardlow.

This part of Anchorage “does tend to be a pretty active bear area because of the high-density housing,” she said.

The city closed its pandemic mass shelter at Sullivan Arena on June 30. The arena had housed hundreds of homeless people throughout the last two years, Alaska Public Media reported.

When the shelter closed, some people who are homeless moved to Centennial Park, grabbing the 84 available spots after the campground stopped taking reserva-



MARK THIESSEN/AP

Tents are shown Wednesday, inside Centennial Park in Anchorage, Alaska.

tions from the public.

Corey Allen Young, a spokesperson for Anchorage Mayor Dave Bronson, said there are 210 people living at Centennial Park, and the city has provided enhanced security for camp users.

The city “has also brought in 60

bear proof food storage containers, 20 bear proof 32 gallon containers and is doing hourly clean up efforts to mitigate the trash and food. We also continue to inspect camps and educate campers about bear safe practices,” Young said in an email.

Chauvin gets 21 years in Floyd civil rights case

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — A federal judge on Thursday sentenced Derek Chauvin to 21 years in prison for violating George Floyd’s civil rights, telling the former Minneapolis police officer that what he did was “simply wrong” and “offensive.”

U.S. District Judge Paul Magnuson sharply criticized Chauvin for his actions on May 25, 2020, even as he opted for the low end of a sentencing range called for in a plea agreement. Chauvin, who is white, pinned Floyd to



Chauvin

the pavement outside a Minneapolis corner store for more than nine minutes as the Black man pleaded, “I can’t breathe,” and became unresponsive.

“I really don’t know why you did what you did,” Magnuson said. “To put your knee on a person’s neck until they expired is simply wrong. ... Your conduct is wrong and it is offensive.”

Chauvin’s plea agreement called for a sentence of 20 to 25 years to be served concurrent with a 22 1/2-year sentence for his state conviction of murder and manslaughter charges.

Because of differences in parole eligibility in the state and federal systems, it means that Chauvin will serve slightly more time behind bars than he would have on the state sentence alone. He would be eligible for parole after 15 years on the state sentence, but must serve almost 18 years of his federal time before he could be released.

LGBTQ groups urge action amid monkeypox rise

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Community health and LGBTQ rights leaders in California are demanding a much more aggressive response to monkeypox from government and health agencies, saying shortages of vaccines and limited public outreach are exacerbating the outbreaks.

Confirmed cases of monkeypox across California have climbed by 65% in the last week, from 85 to 141. There were 47 confirmed and probable cases of the virus in Los Angeles County as of Thursday — an almost 60% increase since last week — and in San Francisco, cases have more than doubled in a similar time frame, rising from 16 to 40.

While monkeypox is nowhere near as contagious as the corona-

virus, officials said they are concerned about the increase in infections. The cases in both counties are spreading primarily among men who have sex with other men, health officials said, as has been the trend since the outbreak began in early May.

Monkeypox is primarily transmitted by skin-to-skin contact with someone who has a rash and pus-filled skin sores, which are filled with the virus. In some cases, the rash has appeared first in the genital area and in or around the anus. Symptoms can include fever, aches, chills, exhaustion, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes; and the skin lesions can be so intense that patients are prescribed painkillers.

Transmission likely accelerated at Pride events attended by gay

and bisexual men in June. The month is a season of travel for many gay and bisexual men, with Pride events held in major cities — in California, the U.S. and abroad — every weekend in June. This weekend, the city of Long Beach is hosting its Pride parade and celebrations. As reports of infection and exposure have increased, there is a clamor for vaccinations, and widespread frustration about the inability to get the shots.

“What we need most immediately is warnings and public announcements by the county department of public health — which we have not had,” said Michael Weinstein, president of L.A.-based AIDS Healthcare Foundation. “We’re not treating this seriously enough.”

Local health officials say their job is severely limited by the shortage of monkeypox vaccines, which they hope can soon be ramped up with promised federal shipments.

“Until about a couple of days ago, we only had 1,000 doses” of the Jynneos vaccine in L.A. County, said Barbara Ferrer, the county’s public health director. “We’re doing everything we can to have an equitable distribution of what is, at the moment, a scarce supply of this vaccine.”

Ferrer said that initial allotment has nearly been exhausted, but 6,000 additional doses recently arrived which will allow some expansion — but not nearly enough to meet demand. Ferrer said she expected vaccine supplies would be scarce at least through August.

NATION



SUSAN WALSH/AP

President Joe Biden awards the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to gymnast Simone Biles during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday.

Biles, McCain, Giffords among 17 given highest civilian honor

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on Thursday presented the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to 17 people, including gymnast Simone Biles, the late John McCain, the Arizona Republican whom Biden served with in the Senate, and gun-control advocate Gabby Giffords.

"Today, she adds to her medal count," Biden said as he introduced Biles, a former foster child whose 32 Olympic and World Championship medals make her the most decorated U.S. gymnast in history.

"I don't know how you're going to find room," for another medal, Biden joked. The 25-year-old is an advocate for athletes' mental health, foster care children and sexual assault victims. She's also the youngest person to ever receive the medal, Biden said.

The Democratic president also honored Sandra Lindsay, the Queens, N.Y., nurse who was the first person to be vaccinated against COVID-19 outside of clinical trials during a live television appearance in December 2020.

It was the first time Biden had awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. His recipient list included both living and deceased honorees, some of them representing various stages of the president's life, from the Catholic nuns who taught him as a boy growing up in Claymont, Del., to Republican lawmakers he served with in the Senate to a college professor like his wife, Jill, to advocates of tightening access to firearms.

Biden introduced Giffords as "one of the most courageous people I have ever known."

The former Arizona congresswoman founded the organization named Giffords to campaign for an end to gun violence and restric-

tions on access to guns. The Democrat almost died after she was shot in the head in January 2011 during a constituent event in Tucson.

Biden also recognized former Republican Sens. Alan Simpson of Wyoming and John McCain of Arizona, recalling a less partisan era of Washington in which members of different parties would argue over issues during the day and then meet over dinner at night.

McCain died of brain cancer in 2018. He spent more than five years in captivity in Vietnam while serving in the U.S. Navy. He later represented Arizona in the House and Senate, and was the 2008 Republican presidential nominee, competing against Democrats Barack Obama and Biden.

Biden said he didn't appreciate the political competition, but "I never stopped admiring John ... I knew his honor, his courage and commitment."

IRS asks Treasury IG to probe audits of Comey, McCabe

By FATIMA HUSSEIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The IRS commissioner has asked the Treasury Department's internal watchdog to immediately review the circumstances surrounding intensive tax audits that targeted ex-FBI Director James Comey and former Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, frequent targets of Donald Trump's ire during his presidency.

IRS spokesperson Jodie Reynolds said Thursday the agency has officially referred the matter to the inspector general for tax administration after Commissioner Charles Rettig, who was nominated to the job by Trump and is a close ally of the former president, personally reached out.

Reynolds insisted it is "ludicrous and untrue to suggest that senior IRS officials somehow targeted specific individuals" for such audits.

The New York Times reported Wednesday that the former FBI leaders were subjected to rare IRS audits of their tax returns. The newspaper said Comey was informed of the audit in 2019 and McCabe learned he was under scrutiny in 2021. Rettig, whose term is set to expire in November, faced blistering criticism from Democrats for helping to shield Trump's tax returns from the public.

Trump repeatedly attacked Comey and McCabe over the FBI's Russia investigation that shadowed his presidency for years.

The FBI inquiry began in the summer of 2016, months before Trump was elected. The bureau had learned that a former Trump campaign aide had been saying, before it was publicly known, that

Russia had dirt on Trump's Democratic rival for the White House, Hillary Clinton, in the form of stolen emails.

Those emails were hacked from Democratic email accounts by Russian intelligence. They were released by the anti-secrecy group WikiLeaks before the election in what U.S. officials have said was an effort to harm Clinton's campaign and help Trump's. Trump repeatedly called the investigation a "witch hunt."

According to the IRS website the audits the two men and their wives underwent are part of a program that randomly selects tax returns to examine tax compliance and improve the system.

McCabe, in comments on CNN, where he is a law enforcement analyst, described the two audits as a "coincidence that ... really is almost impossible statistically" and said they raised questions that should be answered. He said it was "appropriate for the IRS to do the responsible thing and look into it and determine whether or not something, you know, went awry in this program."

Comey said in a statement that he could not say whether anything improper happened, "but after learning how unusual this audit was and how badly Trump wanted to hurt me during that time, it made sense to try to figure it out."

A Trump spokeswoman did not respond to a request for comment.

Asked Thursday whether Biden has confidence in Rettig, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre simply noted that his term is set to expire later this year.

"He is going to be up in November, so I will leave it there," Jean-Pierre said.

Actor James Caan of 'Godfather,' 'Brian's Song' dies at 82

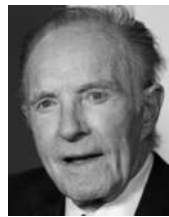
Associated Press

James Caan, the curly-haired tough guy known to movie fans as the hotheaded Sonny Corleone of "The Godfather" and to television audiences as both the dying football player in the classic weeper "Brian's Song" and the casino boss in "Las Vegas," has died. He was 82.

His manager Matt DelPiano said he died Wednesday. No cause was given and Caan's family, who requests privacy, said that no further details would be released at this time.

Caan was a grinning, handsome performer with an athlete's swag-

ger and muscular build. He managed a long career despite drug problems, outbursts of temper and minor brushes with the law.



Caan

Caan had been a favorite of Francis Ford Coppola since the 1960s, when Coppola cast him for the lead in "Rain People." He was primed for a featured role in "The Godfather" as Sonny, the No. 1 enforcer and eldest son of Mafia boss Vito Corleone.

Sonny Corleone, a violent and

reckless man who conducted many killings, met his own end in one of the most jarring movie scenes in history.

Racing to find his sister's husband, Corleone stops at a toll booth that he discovers is unnervingly empty of customers. Before he can escape he is cut down by a seemingly endless fusillade of machine-gun fire. For decades after, he once said, strangers would approach him on the street and jokingly warn him to stay clear of toll roads.

Caan was already a star on television, breaking through in the 1971 TV movie "Brian's Song," an emotional drama about Chicago

Bears running back Brian Piccolo, who had died of cancer the year before at age 26.

After "Brian's Song" and "The Godfather," he was one of Hollywood's busiest actors, appearing in "Hide in Plain Sight" (which he also directed), "Funny Lady" (opposite Barbra Streisand), "The Killer Elite" and Neil Simon's "Chapter Two," among others. He also made a brief appearance in a flashback sequence in "The Godfather, Part II."

But by the early 1980s he began to sour on films, though Michael Mann's 1981 neo-noir heist film "Thief," in which he played a pro-

fessional safecracker looking for a way out, is among his most admired films.

He returned to full-fledged stardom opposite Kathy Bates in "Misery" in 1990. In the film, based on Stephen King's novel, Caan is an author taken captive by an obsessed fan who breaks his ankles to keep him from leaving.

Caan didn't take a starring role in a TV series until 2003 but his first effort, "Las Vegas," was an immediate hit. When the series debuted, he was a casino surveillance chief dealing with cheaters and competitors of the fictional Montecito Resort and Casino.

WORLD

British hopefuls jostle to replace Johnson

BY JILL LAWLESS
AND DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON — A field of Conservative candidates seeking to replace departing British Prime Minister Boris Johnson began to take shape Friday, even as some party lawmakers pushed to get the scandal-tarnished leader out of office before his replacement is elected over the summer.

Johnson announced his resignation on Thursday — a dizzying about-face after months of insisting he would stay in the job despite mounting ethics scandals and growing Conservative discontent.

He quit as party leader with a statement to the nation outside 10 Downing St., but said he would stay on as prime minister until his successor is chosen by the party. That decision didn't sit well with some of his Conservative colleagues, who worry that Johnson lacks the authority to hang on, or could do mischief even as a caretaker prime minister.

Party officials on Monday are expected to set out the timetable for a leadership contest, with the aim of having a winner by the end of the summer. The two-step process involves Tory lawmakers voting to reduce the field of candi-

dates to two, who will go to a ballot of all party members.

Lawmaker Tom Tugendhat, who chairs the House of Commons' influential Foreign Affairs Committee, became the second candidate to declare he is running, after Attorney General Suella Braverman. Former Health Secretary Sajid Javid and ex-Treasury chief Rishi Sunak — whose resignations this week helped topple Johnson — are also likely contenders, along with Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, Defense Secretary Ben Wallace and Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi.

Tony Travers, professor of go-

vernment at the London School of Economics, said the party would be seeking a leader "a bit less exciting" than Johnson.

"Less exciting, but competent," he said

Johnson remains in office atop a caretaker administration but many Conservatives say a lame-duck leader is the last thing the country needs amid Russia's war in Ukraine and a worsening cost-of-living crisis triggered by soaring food and energy prices.

The prime minister's spokesman, Max Blain, said Johnson would abide by convention and "stick with pre-agreed policies"

during in his remaining time.

But Johnson's government plans to push ahead with contentious legislation to rip up parts of its Brexit deal with the European Union, and with a plan to send asylum-seekers to Rwanda that is being challenged in the courts.

Some Conservatives also are wary of Johnson's intentions after a resignation speech in which he made clear he didn't want to leave, but had failed "to persuade my colleagues that it would be eccentric to change governments when we're delivering so much and when we have such a vast mandate."

Abe: Attacker used homemade weapon

FROM PAGE 1

had admitted to attacking Abe, telling investigators he had plotted to kill him because he believed rumors about the former leader's connection to a certain organization that police did not identify.

Dramatic video from NHK showed Abe standing and giving a speech outside a train station in Nara ahead of Sunday's parliamentary election. As he raised his fist to make a point, two gunshots rang out, and he collapsed holding his chest, his shirt smeared with blood as security guards run toward him. Guards then leapt onto the gunman, who was face down on the pavement.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and his Cabinet ministers hastily returned to Tokyo from campaign events around the country after the shooting, which he called "dastardly and barbaric." He pledged that the election, which chooses members for Japan's less-powerful upper house of parliament, would go on as planned.

"I use the harshest words to condemn (the act)," Kishida said, struggling to control his emotions. He said the government planned to review the security situation, but added that Abe had the highest protection.

Even though he was out of office, Abe was still highly influential in the governing Liberal Democratic Party and headed its largest faction, Seiwakai.

Opposition leaders condemned the attack as a challenge to Japan's democracy. In Tokyo, people stopped on the street to grab extra editions of newspapers or watch TV coverage of the shooting. Bouquets to Abe were placed near the scene of the killing.

When he resigned as prime minister, Abe said he had a recur-

rence of the ulcerative colitis he'd had since he was a teenager.

He told reporters at the time it was difficult to leave many of his goals unfinished, especially his failure to resolve the issue of Japanese abducted years ago by North Korea, a territorial dispute with Russia, and a revision of Japan's war-renouncing constitution.

That last goal made him a divisive figure. His ultra-nationalism riled the Koreans and China, and his push to create what he saw as a more normal defense posture angered many Japanese. Abe failed to achieve his cherished goal of formally rewriting the U.S.-drafted pacifist constitution because of poor public support.

Loyalists said that his legacy was a stronger U.S.-Japan relationship that was meant to bolster Japan's defense capability.

But Abe made enemies by forcing his defense goals and other contentious issues through parliament, despite strong public opposition.

Abe was groomed to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather, former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi. His political rhetoric often focused on making Japan a "normal" and "beautiful" nation with a stronger military and bigger role in international affairs.

Tributes to Abe poured in from world leaders, with many expressing shock and sorrow. U.S. President Joe Biden praised him for "his vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific will endure. Above all, he cared deeply about the Japanese people and dedicated his life to their service."

Biden, who is dealing with a summer of mass shootings in the U.S., said "gun violence always leaves a deep scar on the communities that are affected by it."

Japan is particularly known for



KYODO NEWS/AP

Japan's former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is attended on the ground in Nara, Japan, after being shot during a campaign speech Friday.



NARA SHIMBUN, KYODO NEWS/AP

Tetsuya Yamagami, left, holding a weapon, is detained near the site of Abe's shooting.

its strict gun laws. With a population of 125 million, it had only 10 gun-related criminal cases last year, resulting in one death and four injuries, according to police.

Eight of those cases were gang-related. Tokyo had no gun incidents, injuries or deaths in the same year, although 61 guns were seized.

Abe was proud of his work to strengthen Japan's security alliance with the U.S. and shepherding the first visit by a serving U.S. president to the atom-bombed city of Hiroshima.

He also helped Tokyo gain the right to host the 2020 Olympics by pledging that a disaster at the Fukushima nuclear plant was "under control" when it was not.

Abe became Japan's youngest prime minister in 2006, at age 52, but his overly nationalistic first stint abruptly ended a year later, also because of his health.

The end of Abe's scandal-laden first stint as prime minister was the beginning of six years of annual leadership change, remembered as an era of "revolving door" politics that lacked stability and long-term policies.

When he returned to office in 2012, Abe vowed to revitalize the nation and get its economy out of its deflationary doldrums with his "Abenomics" formula, which combines fiscal stimulus, monetary easing and structural reforms.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Oldest Magellanic penguin at zoo dies at 40

CA SAN FRANCISCO — The oldest Magellanic penguin at the San Francisco Zoo & Gardens — one of the oldest penguins living under human care anywhere in the world — died Wednesday at age 40, the zoo reported.

The estimated age of the male, called Captain Eo, was well over the species' average life expectancy of 20 to 30 years, the zoo said in a statement.

Captain Eo was named for a 1980s Michael Jackson short film that was a Disneyland attraction and he was the last remaining founding member of the zoo's Magellanic penguin colony.

The aging animal had lost much of his eyesight and hearing and needed special feeding techniques, the zoo said.

Man charged with mailing many threatening letters

CT HARTFORD — A Connecticut man was arrested Wednesday, charged with mailing more than 100 threatening letters to journalists, judges, public officials and other individuals in Connecticut and elsewhere.

Federal authorities said the 43-year-old from Hamden has been previously prosecuted, convicted and sentenced for mailing similar threatening letters three prior times. He completed his most recent term of "federal supervision" in August 2021.

Several of the letters, mailed through the postal system, said: "If you don't obey what this letter says, along with others including people in Washington DC and everywhere and you. You all will be killed!!"

A message was left seeking comment with a public defender who previously represented the man, who appeared before a federal magistrate judge and was released on a \$100,000 bond.

Officials: Worker killed during truck maintenance

FL BRADENTON — A worker is dead following an accident while performing maintenance on a garbage truck in Florida, officials said.

The accident occurred Tuesday evening at a Waste Pro USA facility near Sarasota Bradenton International Airport, according to a Manatee County Sheriff's Office news release.

Leroy Firestone, 59, had been standing on a ladder and performing maintenance on the hydraulics of a garbage truck, officials said. At some point, the door on the side of the truck activated, causing it to close on the victim's head.

Rescue workers pronounced Firestone dead at the scene.

Investigators said the death appears to be accidental, resulting from a miscommunication with another worker.



GREG EANS, THE MESSENGER-INQUIRER/AP

Cool kids

Jemma Velotta, 7, left, and her sister Mya, 8, cool off while playing at the spray park at Panther Creek Park on Wednesday in Owensboro, Ky.

3 plead guilty to scam targeting grandparents

RI PROVIDENCE — Three men have pleaded guilty to defrauding 14 Rhode Island seniors out of more than \$350,000 by pretending to be their grandchildren.

U.S. Attorney Zachary Cunha said Tuesday that the victims ranged in age from 79 to 94 and were all contacted by phone by someone claiming to be family members or attorneys.

The callers typically claimed a grandchild needed money for bail after being arrested during a motor vehicle accident. The victim was then instructed to hand off the cash to a courier sent to their home.

Bryan Valdez-Espinosa and Diego Alarcon, both 22 and from Union City, N.J., and Jason Hatcher, 40, of New York, admitted to participating in the scheme last June during a hearing in Providence federal court.

Prosecutors say the men defrauded the victims out of between \$9,500 and \$85,000 and were caught only after a family member intervened in one of the scams, leading to the arrests.

Study: Salmon decrease threatens killer whales

WA BELLINGHAM — Southern Resident killer whales have not had enough food for several years, which

could affect their already small numbers, according to a study by the University of British Columbia.

Researchers looked at requirements and availability of prey for Northeastern Pacific Southern Resident killer whales. The study found a fluctuating level of salmon from spawning areas on rivers had a detrimental effect on killer whale health, threatening a small and fragile group of whales, the Bellingham Herald reported.

"It really appears like they cannot take (many) more rough years," said Fanny Couture, lead researcher for the study.

About 75 of the Southern Resident killer whales span from the California coast to Haida Gwaii in British Columbia's Queen Charlotte Islands.

They feed on Chinook salmon, but the number of Chinook has decreased even as fishing regulations attempted to bolster their numbers. That leaves animals high on the food chain, like killer whales, without adequate prey.

Teacher hall of fame accepting nominations

KY BOWLING GREEN — The Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame at Western Kentucky University is accepting nominations for this year's class.

The Hall of Fame was established in 2000 with a gift from former Gov. Louie B. Nunn. It recognizes educators from around the state

who positively impact the teaching profession and their students, the university said.

The induction ceremony will be in November.

All nominations must be submitted by Aug. 15.

Lifeguards set to make \$19.46 an hour to start

NY NEW YORK — Starting wages for lifeguards in New York City will be \$19.46 an hour this summer under an agreement reached with the lifeguard union, Mayor Eric Adams announced Wednesday.

Under the deal, a retention bonus will be awarded in September for those lifeguards who work every week through the summer season. Also, a new training program will be developed to fully staff 17 mini pools throughout the city.

Adams said in a statement that with an influx of lifeguards, the city will be able to "very quickly open all of our mini pools, an essential cooling center for young New Yorkers." But he warned the agreement reached with the union won't entirely solve the city's challenge of fully guarding public swim areas.

"While these changes are a step in the right direction, our ability to safely open beaches and pools has been impacted by a national lifeguard shortage, and has also been held back by inefficient practices that are in dire need of further re-

form," he said.

The mayor last month said he didn't believe a pay raise would help the city attract more lifeguards, noting how lifeguards do the job for the "love of swimming" and "love of protecting people."

State and local communities across the country have been grappling with the lack of available lifeguards this year, with many offering higher pay.

Governor proposes 10% personal income tax cut

WV CHARLESTON — West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice on Wednesday proposed a permanent 10% reduction in the personal income tax after the state ended the fiscal year with a record \$1.3 billion surplus.

The Republican governor said he plans to call a special session of the Legislature during its interim meetings from July 24 to 26 to address the tax cut. It's the third time a personal income tax cut has been proposed in the past year. The other two attempts failed.

Justice said it's a way for residents to deal with inflation, including the high cost of gasoline, while hoping to lure more businesses into the state.

The governor said the 10% reduction is the maximum cut allowed while remaining in compliance with funding stipulations in the American Rescue Plan Act.

VIDEO GAMES



Studio MDHR photos

Ms. Chalice adds another playable character to the Cuphead series. A whale-wielding ice wizard named Mortimer Freeze is one of five new bosses.

Food for the eyes

Cuphead: The Delicious Last Course will satisfy fans of the fiendishly difficult, artistic shooter

BY TIM RIZZO
The Washington Post

Studio MDHR's debut title, Cuphead, sold millions of copies, won numerous awards, reinvigorated a popular game genre and blossomed into its own Netflix series. It's a tough act to follow.

There are expectations now, more so than there were when the run-and-gun shooter's release shook the gaming world in 2017, and fans have been eager to see if the developer is going to be a one-hit wonder. It's a relief, then, that its long-awaited downloadable content, Cuphead: The Delicious Last Course, not only builds upon the original but leaves your palate exhilarated and inspires confidence that the Michelin star chef who wowed you the first time didn't just get lucky.

Upon firing up the DLC, players are met with a familiar jingle before noticing that something is different. Cuphead's opening score has been given a fresh coat of paint as players are introduced to the new and third playable character in the franchise, Ms. Chalice, who is available to play in both the DLC and main story missions.

Returning players can access the DLC content right away as they're introduced to a mysterious new clock-faced character sent by the Legendary Chalice, a spectral ally in the main story, to request the aid of the game's protagonists, Cuphead and Mugman. (New players can unlock the DLC's content by completing the first Mausoleum stage.)

Soon, the Legendary Chalice (known going forward as Ms. Chalice) greets the duo by hopping out of a portal from another

dimension (called the astral plane). She reinforces what parents have been telling their children for decades: Don't accept food from strangers. She tricks Mugman into biting a cookie that causes their beings to swap dimensions. Ms. Chalice, now in physical form, urges Cuphead and his now-ghostly right-hand man to follow her to learn more about what brought them there in the first place.

The duo meet Chef Saltbaker, who created the magical cookie with a temporary effect. In order for Ms. Chalice to stay in the physical world, the talents of Mugman — now back in his real body — and Cuphead are requested.

By gathering a handful of special ingredients across the island, Chef Saltbaker can create the ultimate treat — the Wondertart — that can give Ms. Chalice a permanent body and control of the astral plane. What will players have to do to acquire the ingredients? Defeat five punishingly difficult bosses, of course.

Shortly after leaving the bakery, Chef Saltbaker lets you know that you can battle as Ms. Chalice anytime by slotting the Astral Cookie into your Charm slot. Charms are equipable items that manipulate the way you dash, provide extra health or add other combat buffs.

Cosmetic differences aside, Ms. Chalice's kit functionally creates a playing experience worthy of experimenting with for players all too familiar with Cuphead and Mugman's tricks. In fact, it can be argued she's perfect for brand new players or those struggling with a boss.

A nifty optional tutorial outside the bakery allows players to gain a level of



Cuphead: The Delicious Last Course contains eye-catching hand-drawn animations.

comfort with Ms. Chalice's Double Jump, Parry Dash and Dodge Roll. She also starts with four health points as opposed to the standard three.

From there, the first important choice can be made: Which boss do you start with? I chose to investigate a suspicious rocky mountain, which is revealed to be a grumpy giant named Glumstone.

Wielding an arsenal of flying geese, acrobatic gnomes, an ornery bear and hand puppets, Glumstone's combat is as remarkably creative as it is beautiful to experience. The hand-drawn animations of each of the constantly moving projectiles, obstacles and backgrounds is awe-inspiring. The physical transformations bosses go through between stages of their combat are seamless, colors bold and vibrant, and the unique musical scores act as a phonic rendition of the madness taking place on screen.

The boss fights are brutal as ever. Combat is much faster and the battlefields are more dynamic. New camera perspectives bring players into the action more so than in the original. In one particularly tricky aerial skirmish, the camera and world around you rotate at times, causing your brain and fingers to go into a panic.

Immense difficulty aside, you'll find

yourself staring at the calm, watercolor backdrops that act in complete polarity to what's in the foreground. I found myself not caring if the "Defeat" screen popped up because I got lost watching the 1930s-style animations whizzing around. The list of artists and musicians in the end credits of the DLC number in the dozens.

Over the course of the next 10-ish hours, you fight a whale-wielding ice wizard named Mortimer Freeze, a crew of prohibition-era insects called the Moonshine mob and an absurdly difficult bout with a team of battle-worn pooches called the Howling Aces.

What prevents these handful of bosses from feeling like a fresh coat of lipstick on a pig is the way in which Studio MDHR's development team continues to push the boundaries on what hand-drawn animation can look like and how fluid it can be in an age of CGI becoming all the more popular in digital media.

Studio MDHR's Cuphead: The Delicious Last Course provides players with a five-star meal. I can only hope that the DLC's name was just a play on words — and that there's still room left for dessert.

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

Online: cupheadgame.com

FOOD

By G. DANIELA GALARZA

The Washington Post

One evening in early April 2021, before much of the country had access to the coronavirus vaccine, New Yorker cartoonist Roz Chast and her husband looked at each other and said, “Shall we fend?”

They poked their heads into their pantry and refrigerator. They pulled out a handful of odds and ends, maybe: last night’s Chinese fried rice and yesterday’s chicken salad, lox, a brick of cream cheese, a box of Triscuits, leftover roasted cauliflower, a jar of pickles. “Fend it is,” they said.

Essentially, Chast explained in a New Yorker cartoon and story, the idea of “fending” for dinner is to minimize dishes and waste, and to assemble a plate of proteins and carbohydrates, fiber and vegetables in an effort to form a full meal.

Maybe you fend, too? Or maybe you snack or have a loose charcuterie plate for dinner? Maybe you nosh or filch or graze or munch?

It’s not uniquely a pandemic trend, but when millions of people started spending a lot more time in their homes, the habit became more popular. Chast, who has written more than a dozen books, got curious about what other people called this habit, so she posed the question to her Instagram followers. More than 1,700 people responded.

Some call them spa plates or have an eek, a getcheroni, a goblin meal, rags and bottles, engage in an anarchy kitchen or a black-out bingo, go feral, go Darwin, oogle moogle or serve a jungle dinner.

“Two different people used the term ‘ifits,’” Chast wrote, “as in if it’s in the refrigerator, it’s fair game.”

“I kind of like eating out of the refrigerator and not wasting food,” Chast told me by phone from her home in Connecticut. “I think it’s kind of gross to waste your money.”

The chef of Nami Nori in New York City, Taka Sakaeda, agrees. For him, it’s about the Japanese concept of *mottainai*, which is commonly used to express “a feeling of regret when something is put to waste without deriving its value.”

For others, especially those generally responsible for getting a meal on the table every night, it’s about relinquishing the responsibility of dinner.

Last year, recipes editor Ann Maloney wrote about her mother’s Friday night meal plan, such a novel concept that her mother, Lee C. Maloney, wrote an article about it for *Woman’s Day* magazine in 1976:

“Since Friday night has always been a raggedy time for our family, with me tired from a week’s juggling of teaching and home-



REY LOPEZ/For The Washington Post

A plate of odds and ends can look preplanned, if there are enough items and enough variety.

Why fending for dinner is snacking practically

The trend, more popular during the pandemic, not just a habit of the tired or lazy but also a way to minimize waste, cater to others

making, I decided to label that night on the menu calendar EMFH, which means Every Man for Himself.

“At first the children and my husband were startled, and they felt a little abandoned and awed at the prospect of getting it all together. Gradually, after some spilled soup, a few eggs tumbling off the counter, several tough pizzas, they all began to take hold and develop a pattern of operation.”

She elaborated on how her family adapted to the new schedule, learning to scrape together a dinner for themselves and sometimes each other with whatever was lying around.

Sarah Thomas, author of “Kalamata’s Kitchen: Taste Buds in Harmony,” and co-founder of the educational resource Kalamata’s Kitchen, is a “heavy snacker” most days.

“When I find myself foraging for dinner, I try to adopt a chaat mentality,” Thomas says, noting that chaats are about having sweet, spicy and pungent flavors alongside saucy, crunchy and chewy textures in every bite. It’s about balance. “Chaat-ifying my bowl of disparate ingredients is a nice loose framework for me to tentatively follow while I’m scrounging in my cupboards and

trying to convince myself that, despite not buying groceries for a week, I really am an adult,” she says.

But the concept can also be a new way to approach entertaining. Once, while traveling up the California coast, cookbook author Lukas Volger was invited to a friend’s home for lunch.

“I kind of like eating out of the refrigerator and not wasting food. I think it’s kind of gross to waste your money.”

New Yorker cartoonist Roz Chast

“I am the type of home cook who, when I have people over, I like to make sure I have everything prepared before they arrive. I have appetizers out, I have drinks premixed,” Volger told me by phone. “But when I arrived at my friend’s place, she seemingly hadn’t done a thing to prepare for dinner. I was a little anxious at first, like ‘Oh no, we’re

not going to eat for hours ...”

But then Volger’s friend started pulling things out of her fridge and setting the table. Minutes later, a feast of tapenades, bread, cheese, cured meats, olives and fruit filled the table. Wine was poured. Dinner — really, fewer than a dozen prepared snacks — was served.

That dinner inspired Volger’s latest cookbook, a fun and elegant meditation on fending called “Snacks for Dinner.” The concept is more Ina Garten than Martha Stewart. It’s about relaxing in your own skin, about enjoying your own party, about not having so many dishes to do, about being a little bit lazy.

Laziness, too, is a hallmark of fending. In this, the third year of the pandemic, almost all of us have reached what some are calling goblin mode at least once. Characterized by an abundance of inertia, by an absence of motivation to accomplish even the most mundane tasks — Showering? Brushing one’s teeth? Taking out the trash? These are not things a goblin would pay any mind.

In goblin mode, one might have a goblin meal, which involves scavenging and cobbling together what can only barely pass for dinner.

It’s as simple and base as “pouring the end of a bag of chips in your mouth” or “downing Eggo toaster oven waffles with hot sauce over the sink because you can’t be bothered to put them on a plate,” according to Kari Paul, who wrote about the concept this year for the *Guardian*.

As Chast found when doing research for her cartoon piece, fending can take on many forms. It can happen at any meal, though dinnertime fending seems to be especially popular.

For chefs, meals are almost always made up of the odds and ends that look like they’re about to go bad. Chef Greg Baxtrom of Brooklyn’s Olmsted, Maison Yaki and Patti Ann’s restaurants frequently “forages” in his walk-in cooler and dry storage for meals for himself and his staff.

Baxtrom says he’s looking for what’s “extra” to be sure he doesn’t let anything go to waste. Then, he posts these foraged meals on Instagram. Sometimes the meals take the form of an open-face sandwich, with all the bits and bobs layered on, one at a time. Other times they’re a new spin on breakfast for dinner or a riff on a classic dish, such as cassoulet. They’re admittedly much more cheffy than a goblin meal, but they fit into the category because of the last-minute, haphazard nature of their assembly.

“Sometimes I don’t even know what I’m going to make when I start cooking,” Baxtrom notes.

Leaving the meal open to chance, as though it’s an adventure, can be part of the point.

Chast tells me that she learned how to fend from her father, who simply seemed to love to eat that way.

“He used to like to just take everything out of the refrigerator and kind of lay it out on the table. This was his favorite way of making a meal. He would have some borscht and some pickles and maybe a piece of muenster cheese. ... It was about sort of picking out what he liked,” Chast says, noting that both of her parents worked. “It wasn’t like [my mother] woke up in the morning thinking, ‘Now what kind of gourmet dinner shall I prepare today?’”

Chast doesn’t fend while she works — “usually I have a cup of coffee,” she says — but she fends frequently.

Besides the New Yorker cartoons, “I usually have a few projects going on ... I’m usually working on at least one book, often two. I have some craft thing going. I like a lot of stuff because I think I don’t like to get bored. So if I’m getting tired of doing something, there’s always something else to draw on,” she says.

“I guess you could say my whole life is fending,” she says. “I like that.”

HEALTH & FITNESS



iStock

Finding mental health support in numbers

With therapists in short supply and anxiety, depression on the rise, group therapy and peer-led groups offer options

BY JULI FRAGA

Special to *The Washington Post*

During the pandemic, Angela Lundberg's mental health plummeted.

"I became anxious and depressed, and it disrupted my life," the 43-year-old Minneapolis substitute teacher says. "I lived in a constant state of fear and worried that everyone I loved would die."

Lundberg's struggles are far from unique in the coronavirus era. Her decision to try group therapy might offer a way forward for others, as well.

Initially, Lundberg, who is also a freelance writer, worried about "sharing my personal life with strangers," but she says she decided to give group therapy a try. "I was desperate to feel better," she says, and group therapy has helped.

Since 2019, America's mental health needs have climbed. "More than four out of 10 adults, 43%, told a Census Bureau pulse survey in November 2020 they suffered from anxiety or depression," *The Washington Post* reported last year. From late August 2020 through Feb. 1, 2021, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Americans reported "symptoms of an anxiety or a depressive disorder increased significantly," from 36.4% to 41.5%.

Unfortunately, many mental health professionals are too busy to accommodate the rising demand, says Vaile Wright, the senior director of health care innovation at the American Psychological Association (APA). "We had a shortage of providers before the pandemic began, and it's even worse now," Wright adds.

One possible solution, she says, is to find more innovative ways to reach people, including telehealth, support groups and group therapy.

For some, the idea of group mental health care might generate worries. A 2021 study found that social anxiety, anger from others and fear of humiliation kept people from trying it.

But a 2021 meta-analysis found that group therapy for mood disorders such as depression and bipolar disorder were more effective than individual therapy and could be just as curative as taking medication.

Groups also foster benefits that individual therapy cannot, says psychologist Nicole Cammack, a clinical advisory board member for Sesh, a mental health platform that offers therapist-led support groups. "Not everyone is comfortable opening up right away, even to their own therapist," Cammack says. In a group, however, people can hear from others facing similar struggles.

Like individual therapy, group therapy is led by a men-

tal health professional, such as a psychologist, social worker or psychiatrist, trained to provide "competent group therapy," Wright says.

Group therapy is often structured around a specific theoretical orientation. For instance, research shows that cognitive-behavioral therapy can help alleviate social anxiety. In contrast, interpersonal groups can help address relationship concerns including asking for help, expressing emotions and working through conflict.

Group treatment can also help people overcome eating disorders, depression and substance use, all of which have increased since the pandemic began.

Lundberg's group met three times a week via Zoom for several months.

"The main benefit was being part of a caring group of people," she says. "I looked forward to seeing them each week, and it helped me feel less alone."

"The main benefit was being part of a caring group of people. I looked forward to seeing them each week, and it helped me feel less alone."

Angela Lundberg

Lundberg, who has an autoimmune illness and worried about becoming seriously ill if she caught COVID-19, says the group therapist taught coping skills such as mindfulness, breathing work and self-care tools that have been clinically proved to help manage stress and symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Another potential takeaway is that group therapy gives members the chance to receive feedback from many individuals. "This can lead to a broader perspective to solving life's troubles," Cammack says.

But although groups offer many positives, Wright cautions that they are not the first line of treatment for people having thoughts of self-harm or in a crisis. In those cases, group therapy might be used in conjunction with individual therapy, she says.

Unlike group therapy, peer-led groups are not managed by a mental health professional. Instead, they're led by people who have faced challenges the group members are also experiencing.

After her mother died many years ago, Barri Leiner Grant, 56, a certified grief coach in Chicago, played host

to a group event for motherless daughters.

"I realized that we don't 'get over' grief; we learn to live with the loss," Grant says. Recognizing the need for more support, Grant was inspired to start "the Memory Circle," a grief group for anyone coping with loss.

Even though peer-led groups such as Grant's don't deliver psychotherapy, they can still soothe emotional pain and ease stress. One study found that these groups can increase resilience and help people feel more empowered and hopeful about the future.

Although each peer group differs, Wright says the underlying goals tend to be similar. "Peer support seeks to validate people's emotions, help them feel less alone and create community," she says.

In her groups, Grant does not set out to change anyone's beliefs or behavior: "We do not join together to fix one another, but to hold space and time to experience grief."

Teri Brister, the chief program officer for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), says peer groups can be a good fit for anyone looking for personal support and to learn from others.

Health care professionals including doctors and nurses can provide peer support and group therapy referrals. Online directories run by Psychology Today and the American Group Psychotherapy Association provide lists of therapy groups.

Nonprofit organizations such as NAMI offer peer-led groups for people living with mental illness. And for new parents in search of support, Postpartum Support International provides support groups for mothers struggling with postpartum depression and anxiety.

Telehealth companies including Sesh and Circles provide support groups, but it's important to read the fine print. Cammack says Sesh operates on a confidential platform, but not all telehealth apps follow these guidelines. To ensure confidentiality, check out whether your health information is sold, and if there's a data breach, what recourse members have.

If group-based mental health seems like a good fit, try a few sessions. Pay attention to how the interactions between the therapist and the other group members feel. Witnessing other people's suffering often presents an opportunity to extend empathy and altruism to someone else, which can also be healing, research shows.

Lundberg says her experience was invaluable.

"Before COVID-19, I never pictured myself trying group therapy or seeing a psychiatrist," she says. "However, it was a great source of support at a very unpredictable and frightening time."

MOVIES

Waititi takes hammer to Thor in new film

‘Love and Thunder’ surprisingly human-scaled with a focus on hero’s relationship with Jane

By JAKE COYLE

Associated Press

To a large degree, modern blockbuster movie-making has depended on the appeasement of fans to keep franchise juggernauts smoothly humming. But in making “Thor: Love and Thunder,” Taika Waititi had no interest in that. He approached the film from the opposite direction. What would actually make fans angry?

“I wanted to show him in a light that most Thor fans wouldn’t really want if you were to tell them,” Waititi says. “If you were to say to them: ‘Yeah, I’m going to make Thor in love,’ it’s probably the last thing that a Thor fan really wants to hear.”

“Thor: Love and Thunder,” now in theaters, is Marvel’s fourth Thor movie and Waititi’s second after the 2017 smash success “Thor: Ragnarok.” That film, a hit with fans and critics, reinvented Chris Hemsworth’s god of thunder and introduced a looser, idiosyncratic tone to Marvel’s most monolithic hero.

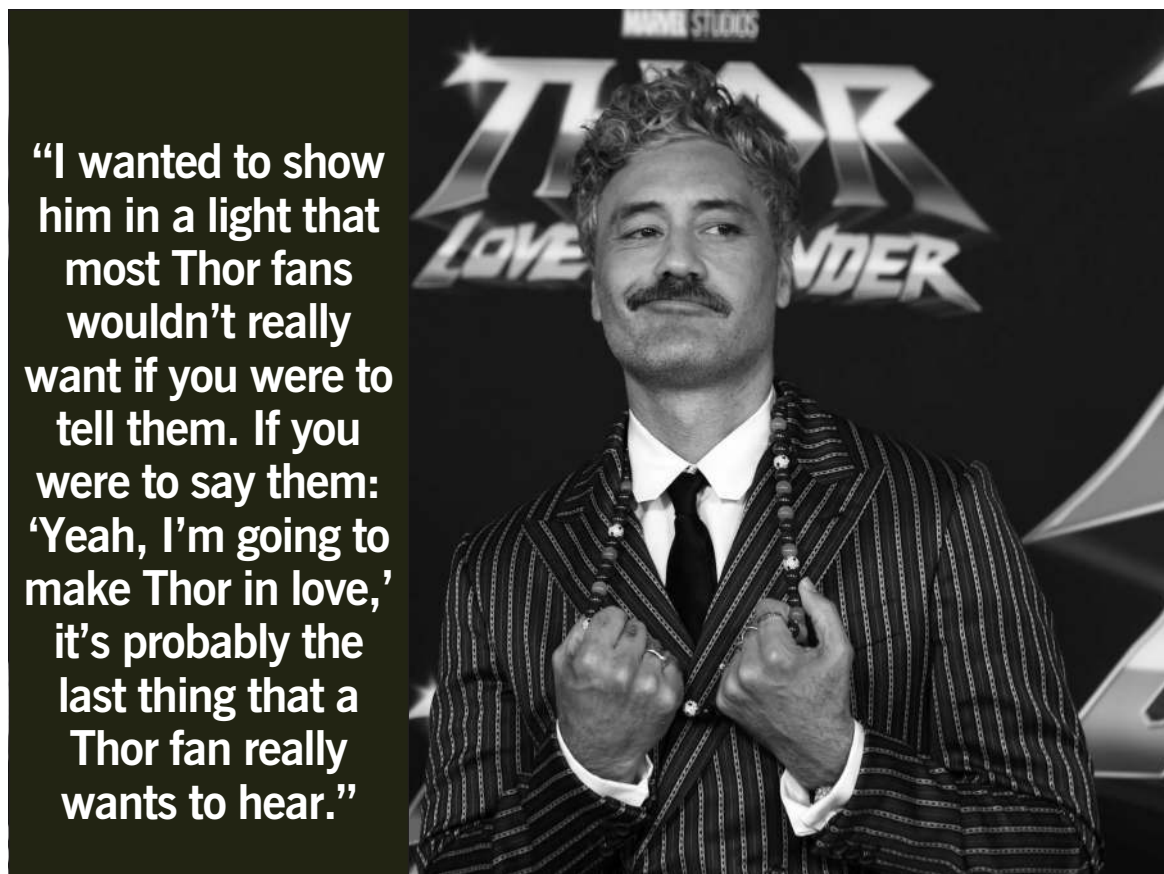
But if “Ragnarok” was Waititi’s version of a Marvel movie, “Love and Thunder” might simply be a Taika Waititi movie, without equivocation. Of the 29 films thus far in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, none may be so distinctively the work of its filmmaker.

In “Love and Thunder,” there are things that usually never enter the MCU, like kids and cancer. It’s scruffy, unruly and surprisingly human-scaled. Manly valor is mostly a joke. Thor isn’t even really Thor. His hammer, Mjolnir, has transformed Natalie Portman’s Jane into the Mighty Thor. By the time Waititi gets finished with him, Thor’s biggest battle is convincing a child to wear proper footwear before leaving home.

“For me, it’s good to give the fans something they don’t know that they want,” Waititi said in a recent video interview from Los Angeles. “With ‘Ragnarok’ especially, when I signed on, a lot of fans were freaked out by that. They were like, ‘Who is this guy? He’s going to take our precious Thor and ruin it.’ And I was like, ‘Yeah. Exactly. That’s exactly my intention. And I’m going to make it better; you just don’t know it yet.’”

When Waititi was handed the reins of “Ragnarok,” the 46-year-old New Zealand filmmaker was a less familiar figure to most Marvel fans — and the first Indigenous director to helm a major superhero movie. It was a massive leap in scale for Waititi,

“I wanted to show him in a light that most Thor fans wouldn’t really want if you were to tell them. If you were to say them: ‘Yeah, I’m going to make Thor in love,’ it’s probably the last thing that a Thor fan really wants to hear.”



JORDAN STRAUSS, INVISION/AP

Director Taika Waititi arrives at the premiere of “Thor: Love and Thunder” on June 23 at the El Capitan Theatre in Los Angeles. The film is Waititi’s second Thor film after “Thor: Ragnarok” in 2017.

who after spending years painting in his late 20s turned to making comic independent films (“Boy,” “Hunt for the Wilderpeople”) with deadpan absurdity and freewheeling tonal shifts.

But since “Ragnarok,” Waititi has emerged as a Hollywood dynamo, in front of the camera and behind it, juggling several armfuls of big studio franchises and more offbeat projects. His “Jojo Rabbit,” a child’s view of Nazi Germany in which Waititi played an imaginary Hitler, received six Oscar nominations in 2020. (Waititi won for adapted screenplay). He has another film for Searchlight Pictures, “Next Goal Wins,” upcoming, as well as two Willy Wonka series for Netflix, a “Flash Gordon” film for Disney’s 20th Century Studios, a “Time Bandits” series for Apple TV+ and a “Star Wars” movie he expects to soon write.

Hollywood has pushed just about whatever intellectual property it can find at Waititi, eager for him to dismantle it.

“It surprises me in that I never wanted to. I always wanted to make smaller things just with my friends,” says Waititi. “The idea of working with a studio never appealed to me. Then I worked with Marvel and I realized, well, there are ways you can work with studios where it doesn’t have to be painful.

“My job is to go in and have as many ideas as I can and not think about the consequences too



MARK BAKER/AP

Waititi poses for a photo with his daughters during a premiere of “Thor: Love and Thunder” June 27 in Sydney, Australia.

much, and let them keep me in the Marvel lane,” Waititi adds. “It’s not my job to go and watch every single film or read every single comic book. I’m sure that’s contrary to what a lot of people think a filmmaker should be doing.”

It’s an ironic development for a filmmaker who, as an actor in last year’s “Free Guy,” parodied business-driven demands for sequels and who once cringed at the thought of spending long months in post-production at Marvel Studios in Burbank, Calif.

“It’s more just the idea of Bur-

bank as a place,” Waititi clarifies. “Going out there is fine if you sort of close your eyes and ignore the fact that you’re in Burbank and eating Burbank food for lunch.”

But how much of Waititi’s anarchic spirit can Hollywood’s biggest franchises stomach? “Ragnarok” grossed \$850 million worldwide, and expectations are similar for “Love and Thunder.” His ability to connect with mass audiences — despite his best efforts to subvert expectations — is surpassed by few current filmmakers. Yet something like “Star

Wars” has been particularly resistant to comic tweaks of tone — something Waititi is keenly aware of.

“It has to feel authentic to my tone,” he says of the “Star Wars” film first announced two years ago. “I wouldn’t say any of my films are just comedies. I’ve never made a broad comedy. I’ve never made something that’s all jokes. It always has something that’s resonant or taps into some human problem. They’re all about family. They’re all about (expletive)-up families. I don’t believe that blood makes you family at all.

“Families are just a mishmash of people who somehow gravitate toward each other,” adds Waititi, who was raised by a Jewish mother, a largely absent Maori father (they separated when Waititi was 5) and a wide range of relatives. “My family is so gigantic. It’s thousands of people.”

That includes collaborators like Jemaine Clement (with whom Waititi made television’s “What We Do in the Shadows”), Rhys Darby (currently paired together in the HBO Max series “Our Flag Means Death”) and many others. Another is Sterlin Harjo, whom Waititi met on the festival circuit years ago, where they bonded as Native artists with a similar sense of humor. Waititi helped Harjo get his acclaimed FX series “Reservation Dogs,” about four Native American teenagers in Oklahoma, off the ground.

“The way Taika directs, the way that he does things, it’s about spontaneity,” say Harjo, who next month will debut the series’ second season. “It’s about the magic trick of it all. Having everything going at once is where the creativity lies for him. It’s like he’s operating at this level where he has to have it all buzzing.”

The love of “Love and Thunder,” which Waititi co-wrote, most directly applies to the relationship between Thor and Jane, but it also relates to other aspects of the “Thor” sequel, including Christian Bale’s grieving villain and the kidnapped children who play increasingly central roles in the film. Waititi, who has two daughters with film producer Chelsea Winstanley (they separated in 2018), relied on his kids and others to help design the monsters in the movie. Children of Hemsworth, Bale and Portman all appear in the film.

“It’s nepotism at its very best,” Waititi says. “And why not? It’s a film about parenting and putting someone else before yourself.”

STARS AND STRIPES.

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New war between the states after Roe reversal

By DOYLE McMANUS

Los Angeles Times

The polarization of American politics, a trend that began long before Donald Trump ran for president, isn't running out of steam. If anything, it's accelerating.

Last month it got a boost from a new source: a conservative Supreme Court majority pushing hot-button issues back to the states — not only abortion, but also gun control and environmental regulation, with others likely to come.

Americans were already divided over abortion rights; now, thanks to the court, they get to debate the issue in a dozen or more state legislatures. The result is a Pandora's box of new questions: Can a state prohibit its citizens from traveling elsewhere to seek an abortion? From buying mifepristone pills through the U.S. mail? From merely seeking information about abortion options?

The battle won't be confined within state boundaries. It's already turning into a virtual war between the states. Texas has passed a law allowing its citizens to sue abortion providers in other states if they treat Texan women. Missouri's Legislature is considering similar legislation. California, in return, has not only passed a law protecting its citizens from liability for aiding an abortion, but Gov. Gavin Newsom has also promised to provide "sanctuary" for out-of-state women who seek the procedure in his state.

Nor is abortion the only question states are contesting. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said last week that he's willing to argue a Roe-style challenge to the 2015 Supreme Court decision that guarantees the right to same-sex marriage. New York's Legislature passed a raft of new gun control regulations last week to counter the Supreme Court's decision to strike down its restrictive concealed-carry law. In the Midwest, Democratic Illinois is blaming Republican Indiana for Chicago's

flood of bootleg guns. And despite the court's decision to limit the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, California plans to press ahead with tougher regulations.

"It's very hard to find any area where divisions among states are not growing," Donald F. Kettl of the University of Maryland, a leading scholar of federalism, said last week. "You can see it in income, education, health and basic governance — and now, how we count the votes after Election Day. It's increasingly the case that the government we get depends on where we live."

Those widening divergences have prompted some pundits, and even a few scholars, to suggest that the United States is sliding toward a second civil war.

"We clearly are closer to civil war than we were 50 years ago," Robert D. Putnam of Harvard, an eminent and even-tempered sociologist, told me. "The only comparable period in our history, I think, is 1850-1860" — the decade that led to the Civil War.

One especially troubling factor: Our divisions have become self-reinforcing. Primary elections in gerrymandered districts reward politicians who run as ideological purists, not moderate compromise-seekers. More Americans are telling pollsters they distrust people on the other side of the political divide. Some even decide where to live based partly on political allegiances, a trend first noted by Texas journalist Bill Bishop in his 2008 book "The Big Sort."

Sen. Josh Hawley, a Missouri Republican, celebrated that phenomenon last month when he lauded the Roe decision as "a watershed moment" that could strengthen the GOP's grip on power in red and purple states by prompting Democrats to move elsewhere.

"Red states, they're going to become more red, and purple states are going to become red, and the blue states are going to get a lot bluer," Hawley predicted.

The good news is that protests, litigation and moving to new states are nonviolent actions. They don't add up to civil war in the Fort Sumter sense.

But smaller-scale political violence is already on the rise, mostly on the extreme right, according to the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. About 1 in 3 Republicans and 1 in 5 Democrats agreed with the statement that "it may be necessary at some point soon for citizens to take up arms against the government," a poll released last week by the University of Chicago's Institute of Politics found.

Few if any reputable scholars think a shooting war is likely soon.

"There are still a lot of equilibrating mechanisms built into our system — not just political, but economic," Putnam said. He noted that red states and blue states are fully integrated in a single national economy, unlike during the 19th century. "The costs of economic fracture to both sides would be enormous," he said.

Kettl agreed — halfway.

"Our ability to muddle through and find an equilibrium has eroded," he said. "The danger is that we will slip back into the kind of tensions between the states that occurred in the 1850s. I don't think we're there yet, but I'm pretty worried."

As for ready solutions, both came up empty. "I don't have any therapy to prescribe," said Putnam, who spent much of his career working to build cohesion in American communities.

Perhaps the only way to soften these divisions will be through old-fashioned political competition — not only in national elections, but critically also in the state and local elections that Republicans have learned to dominate. It took a generation or more for the tide of polarization to build. Reversing it will be the work of a generation too.

Doyle McManus is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

Replace cancel culture with a culture of honesty

By EMILIE KAO

The Heritage Foundation

Upon leaving the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin told his fellow citizens that it had produced "a Republic, if you can keep it." His answer contained a warning that still resonates. The continued success of America's journey depends on our ability to settle our domestic political disagreements through dialogue rather than force.

But recent trends are dismaying. "Cancel culture" has moved through the professions with blinding speed. Elite arbiters of opinion have sought to throw doctors, software engineers, comedians, artists and first responders overboard for dissenting from political orthodoxy on matters surrounding sex, marriage and transgender ideology.

More recently, abortion-rights advocates threatened any Supreme Court justice who wouldn't accomplish their will. Even before the court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, there was an assassination attempt, the targeting of children and vandalism. Protesters have broken windows at crisis pregnancy centers and set fire to churches. Leading abortion-rights organizations and many Democratic politicians have failed to condemn the threats and the actions.

Polling shows that a large majority of Americans believe that free speech is endangered

by "cancel culture." The New York Times reports that 84% of Americans either think we have a "somewhat serious" or "very serious" problem telling others the truth about what we believe. Despite the danger that cancel culture poses to our political discourse and the functioning of society, few in power are doing anything to stop it.

Like our elected officials, leaders in academia are giving free rein to the "cancelers." For example, Yale Law School administrators failed to swiftly and firmly disapprove of the actions of students — future lawyers, jurists, lawmakers and CEOs — who chose to bang on walls and engage in name-calling and physical intimidation rather than engage with ideas they dislike. The Yale students and the abortion-rights extremists have persuaded no one to change their views. Instead, they have revealed a misplaced confidence in their own infallibility and an eagerness to vilify and silence those who disagree. All of us share responsibility for stopping cancel culture. In light of how elites are failing to protect free speech, regular citizens may be the nation's last hope.

In a conversation with friends who hold diverse political viewpoints, I related the experience of being "canceled" by a friend last summer. She and I have not spoken since our dinner discussion turned into a debate that became a cold war. As I thanked them for being open to dialogue, I searched for words to de-

scribe the opposite of "cancel culture." Then, it occurred to me that listening to someone with a different perspective fosters "a culture of honesty."

A June 2021 study from the American Enterprise Institute found that 15% of Americans have ended a friendship over politics. This number can't be blamed on elites. This figure reflects the unwillingness of friends, family and neighbors to listen to and seek to persuade those who disagree with them.

Instead of canceling one another or advocating that free speech is violence, we can listen to each other. Scholar Daniel A. Cox, who oversaw AEI's study, says that there's a lot to be gained by maintaining friendships across the political divide. Americans with such ties are "less likely to have extreme attitudes and develop stereotypes of the other side."

Recognizing that every American has the capacity for reason and the obligation to live according to his or her conscience could go a long way toward building a culture of honesty. Listening to disagreement requires humility, and persuasion takes patience. But both produce genuine dialogue and foster integrity, the best hope for a well-functioning society that honors and rewards decency.

Emilie Kao, senior counsel and vice president of advocacy strategy with Alliance Defending Freedom, is a visiting fellow with The Heritage Foundation.

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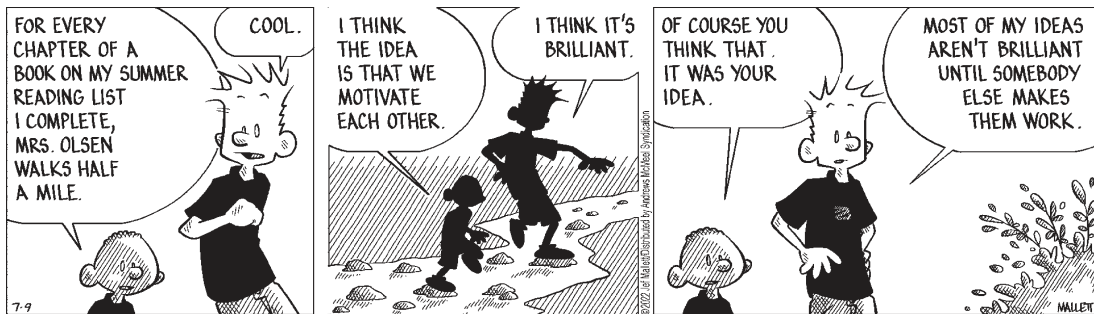
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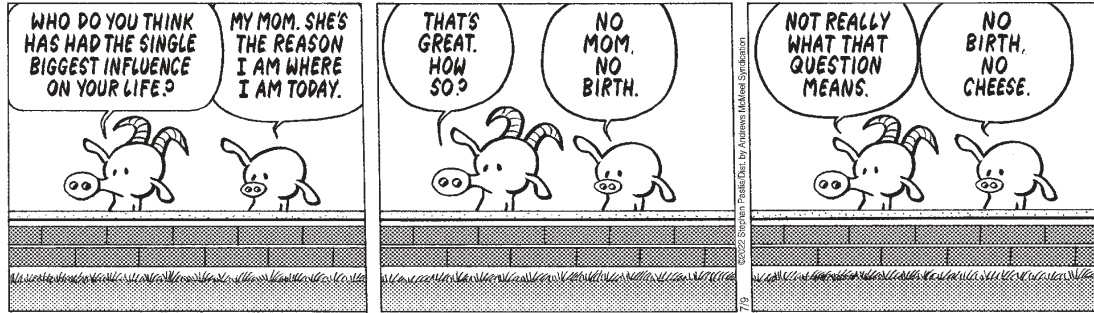
Frazz



Dilbert



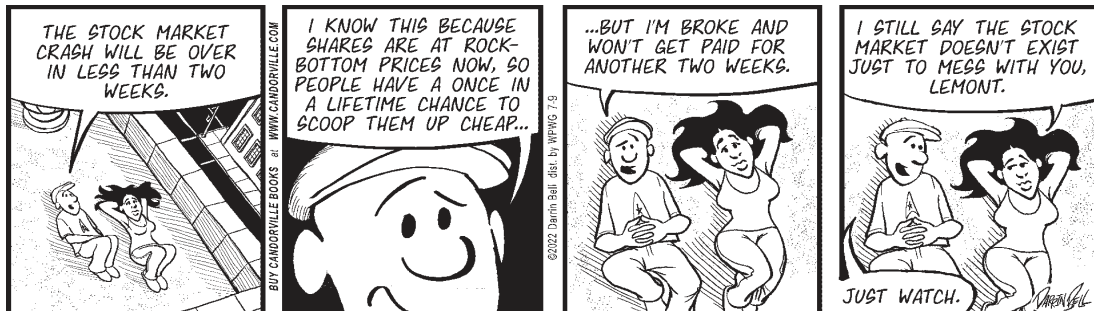
Pearls Before Swine



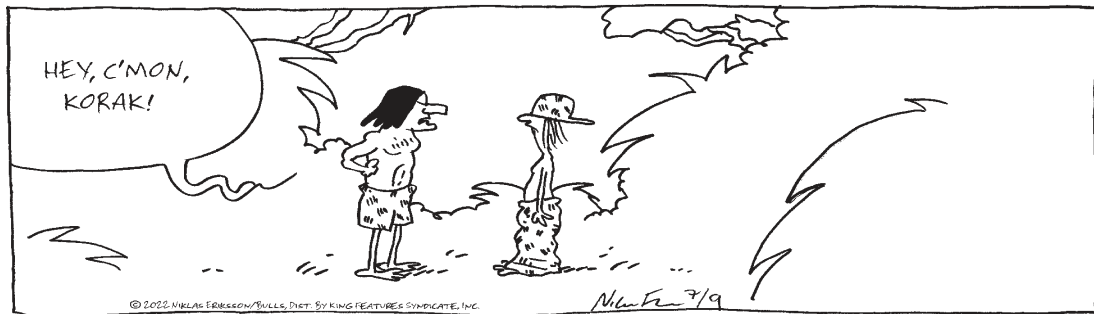
Non Sequitur



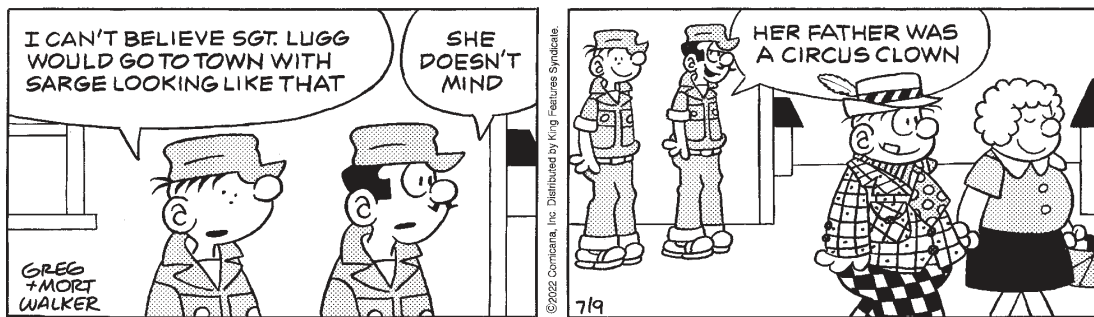
Candorville



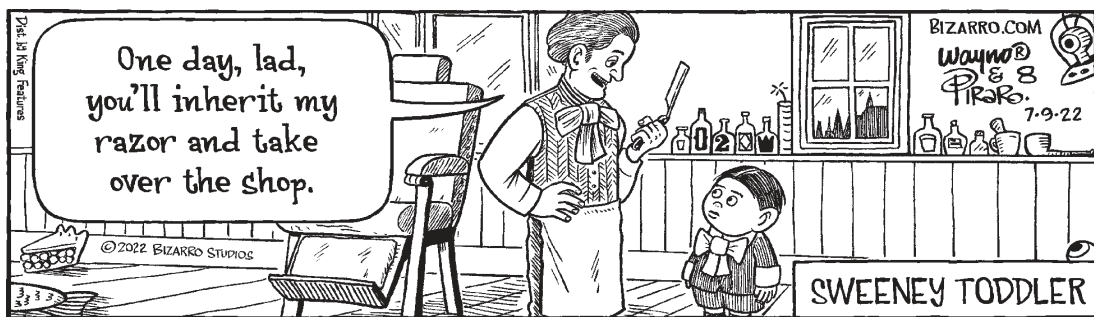
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11
12							13					
14							15					
16					17	18				19		
			20	21				22	23			
24	25	26		27			28		29		30	31
32			33				34					
35					36					37		
		38		39		40			41			
42	43			44	45				46	47	48	49
50			51				52	53				
54							55					
56							57					

ACROSS

- 1 Ganges garments
- 6 Stern and Asimov
- 12 Raging rant
- 13 Seafood soup
- 14 Foolish talk
- 15 Guarantee
- 16 Faction
- 17 Overdue
- 19 Days of yore
- 20 Entryway
- 22 Bankroll
- 24 Billboards
- 27 Mooches
- 29 Plunks (down)
- 32 Wake-up calls
- 35 Gambling game
- 36 Poet Teasdale
- 37 Water tester
- 38 Tummy muscles
- 40 Iditarod terminus
- 42 Jazz lover
- 44 Ballet attire
- 46 Slightly
- 50 Loves to pieces
- 52 Cancel out
- 54 Some beers
- 55 Of France
- 56 Constitution writer
- 57 Upright

DOWN

- 1 iPhone voice
- 2 Desert-like
- 3 Carried on suffix
- 4 Chemical
- 5 Traitors
- 6 "Yeah, right"
- 7 Tendon
- 8 Ninny
- 9 Water conduit
- 10 Ringlet
- 11 Feeder filler
- 12 Pro Bowl stats
- 18 Marching insect
- 21 Kimono sash
- 23 Chest-beating beast
- 24 Canine greeting

- 25 Narc's org.
- 26 Revolutionary War battle
- 28 Forage for food, say
- 30 Ring decision
- 31 Away from NNW
- 33 High tennis shot
- 34 Deli meat
- 39 Cubic meter
- 41 Aerie builder
- 42 Young whale
- 43 Purim's month
- 45 Cold War initials
- 47 Body powder
- 48 Bickering
- 49 Calendar abbr.
- 51 Sleep acronym
- 53 Corn unit

Answer to Previous Puzzle

L	I	P		C	O	B	B		H	E	A	R		
O	W	E		O	T	T	O		A	L	T	O		
R	O	S	E	B	O	W	L		I	M	H	O		
E	N	T	I	R	E				E	F	T			
				G	A	S			R	A	I	S	E	D
S	I	G	H	S			F	O	B		W	R	Y	
A	B	I	T		R	E	S		Y	A	L	E		
G	I	L		B	O	Z			E	A	G	E	R	
A	D	A	G	E	S				B	I	D			
					H	E	E		E	L	I	C	I	T
L	O	G	O				A	L	L	E	G	R	O	S
I	B	I	S				T	A	L	E		A	T	A
T	I	N	T				E	D	E	N		B	A	R

7-9

CRYPTOQUIP

IVYS IHTCU YK YKDAY SJU
 AHPDJ YNHTS SVJ NQDSDLV
 BHKLJQPYS DPJ ZYQSF NJ
 BYCCJU? "SHQF LSHQF."
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A MARKET WERE RUNNING A TWO-FER ON SPRINGY BOUNCING STICKS, A SIGN MIGHT SAY "BOGO POGOS!"
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals Y

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SCOREBOARD

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MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New York	9	5	5	32	29	20
Philadelphia	7	2	9	30	22	13
CF Montréal	9	7	2	29	32	33
NYCFC	8	4	5	29	33	19
Cincinnati	7	7	4	25	29	32
Orlando City	7	7	4	25	23	28
New England	6	5	7	25	29	28
Charlotte FC	7	10	2	23	19	23
Inter Miami CF	6	7	4	22	18	26
Columbus	5	5	7	22	20	18
Atlanta	5	7	5	20	26	26
Toronto FC	5	10	3	18	24	34
D.C. United	5	9	2	17	23	30
Chicago	4	9	5	17	16	24

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LAFc	11	4	3	36	35	19
Austin FC	10	4	4	34	35	22
Real Salt Lake	8	5	5	29	22	22
LA Galaxy	8	6	3	27	24	19
FC Dallas	7	5	6	27	28	21
Nashville	7	5	6	27	24	21
Seattle	8	7	2	26	26	19
Minnesota	7	8	3	24	23	23
Vancouver	7	8	3	24	19	28
Portland	5	6	8	23	29	29
Houston	6	9	3	21	22	23
Colorado	5	8	4	19	19	24
San Jose	4	7	6	18	27	35
Sporting KC	4	11	4	16	16	33

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

Monday, July 4
 D.C. United 5, Orlando City 3
 Austin FC 3, Colorado 2
 Miami 1, FC Dallas 1, tie
 LA Galaxy 4, CF Montréal 0

Friday's games
 D.C. United at Philadelphia
 LA Galaxy at Los Angeles FC
 Minnesota at Vancouver

Saturday's games
 New England at New York City FC
 Portland at Seattle
 Austin FC at Atlanta
 Nashville at Charlotte FC
 New York at Cincinnati
 Sporting Kansas City at CF Montréal
 San Jose at Toronto FC
 Miami at Orlando City
 Columbus at Chicago
 FC Dallas at Houston
 Colorado at Real Salt Lake

Tuesday's game
 Houston at Austin FC

Wednesday's games
 Real Salt Lake at Atlanta
 Toronto FC at Chicago
 Vancouver at Cincinnati
 Columbus at D.C. United
 Philadelphia at Miami
 Sporting Kansas City at Minnesota
 Seattle at Nashville
 Orlando City at Colorado
 New York City FC at FC Dallas
 San Jose at LA Galaxy

Saturday, July 16
 Toronto FC at CF Montréal
 New England at Philadelphia
 Seattle at Chicago
 Charlotte FC at Miami
 D.C. United at Minnesota
 LA Galaxy at Colorado
 Austin FC at FC Dallas

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
SD Wave FC	6	2	3	21	18	9
Chicago	5	1	4	19	17	10
Portland	4	1	5	17	22	8
OL Reign	4	2	4	16	9	6
Houston	4	3	3	15	16	12
Angel City FC	4	4	2	14	8	10
Kansas City	3	4	3	12	10	14
Louisville	2	4	4	10	12	16
Gotham FC	3	5	0	9	5	12
Washington	1	4	6	9	11	14
Orlando	2	5	3	9	11	26
North Carolina	2	5	1	7	12	14

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

Friday's games
 Houston at Orlando
 Gotham FC at Louisville

Saturday's game
 San Diego Wave FC at Angel City FC

Sunday's games
 Kansas City at Washington
 North Carolina at Chicago
 Portland at OL Reign

Friday, July 15
 Angel City FC at North Carolina
 Louisville at San Diego Wave FC

Saturday, July 16
 Chicago at Houston
 Gotham FC at Portland

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	16	6	.727	—
Connecticut	14	8	.636	2
Washington	14	10	.583	3
Atlanta	10	12	.455	6
New York	9	13	.409	7
Indiana	5	19	.208	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Las Vegas	15	7	.682	—
Seattle	15	8	.652	½
Los Angeles	10	12	.455	5
Dallas	10	12	.455	5
Phoenix	10	14	.417	6
Minnesota	8	15	.348	7½

Thursday's games
 Chicago 93, Indiana 84
 Phoenix 84, New York 81
 Seattle 106, Los Angeles 69

Friday's games
 No games scheduled.

Saturday's games
 No games scheduled

Sunday's games
 2022 All-Star Game
 Team Wilson vs Team Stewart

CYCLING

Tour de France

Thursday 136th Stage
A 219.9-km (136-mile) Binche to Longwy

1. Tadej Pogacar, Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates, 4:27:13.
2. Michael Matthews, Australia, Team BikeExchange-Jayco, same time.
3. David Gaudu, France, Groupama-FDJ, same time.
4. Thomas Pidcock, Great Britain, Ineos Grenadiers, same time.
5. Nairo Quintana, Colombia, Team Arkéa-Samsic, same time.
6. Dylan Teuns, Belgium, Bahrain Victorious, same time.
7. Jonas Vingegaard, Denmark, Jumbo-Visma, same time.
8. Daniel Martinez, Colombia, Ineos Grenadiers, same time.
9. Primož Roglič, Slovenia, Jumbo-Visma, same time.
10. Romain Bardet, France, Team DSM, same time.

Also
 14. Neilson Powless, United States, EF Education-EasyPost, 4:27:13.
 22. Brandon McNulty, United States, UAE Team Emirates, :05 behind.
 47. Kevin Vermaerke, United States, Team DSM, 1:17.
 68. Matteo Jorgenson, United States, Movistar Team, 4:04.
 72. Joe Dombrowski, United States, Astana-Qazaqstan, same time.
 105. Sepp Kuss, United States, Jumbo-Visma, 7:28.
 157. Quinn Simmons, United States, Trek Segafredo, 11:28.

Overall Standings
 1. Tadej Pogacar, Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates, 20:44:44.
 2. Neilson Powless, United States, EF Education-EasyPost, :04 behind.
 3. Jonas Vingegaard, Denmark, Jumbo-Visma, :31.
 4. Adam Yates, Great Britain, Ineos Grenadiers, :39.
 5. Thomas Pidcock, Great Britain, Ineos Grenadiers, :40.
 6. Geraint Thomas, Great Britain, Ineos Grenadiers, :46.
 7. Aleksandr Vlasov, Russian, Bora-Hansgrohe, :52.
 8. Daniel Martinez, Colombia, Ineos Grenadiers, 1:00.
 9. Romain Bardet, France, Team DSM, 1:01.
 10. David Gaudu, France, Groupama-FDJ, 1:02.

Also
 30. Brandon McNulty, United States, UAE Team Emirates, 2:59 behind.
 55. Matteo Jorgenson, United States, Movistar Team, 7:42.
 77. Sepp Kuss, United States, Jumbo-Visma, 11:59.
 152. Quinn Simmons, United States, Trek Segafredo, 26:35.
 153. Joe Dombrowski, United States, Astana-Qazaqstan, 26:57.
 167. Kevin Vermaerke, United States, Team DSM, 36:36.

Young Riders Standings
 1. Tadej Pogacar, Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates, 20:44:44.
 2. Thomas Pidcock, Great Britain, Ineos Grenadiers, :40 behind.

Also
 4. Brandon McNulty, United States, UAE Team Emirates, 2:59.
 6. Matteo Jorgenson, United States, Movistar Team, 7:42.
 22. Quinn Simmons, United States, Trek Segafredo, 26:35 behind.
 25. Kevin Vermaerke, United States, Team DSM, 36:36.

Mountain Standings
 1. Magnus Cort Nielsen, Denmark, EF Education-Easypost, 11 points.
 2. Alexis Vuillermoz, France, TotalEnergies, 2.
 3. Wout van Aert, Belgium, Jumbo-Visma, 2.
 4. Quinn Simmons, United States, Trek Segafredo, 1.

TENNIS

Wimbledon

Thursday

At All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club

London

Surface: Grass
Women's Singles Semifinals
 Ons Jabeur (3), Tunisia, def. Tatjana Maria, Germany, 6-2, 3-6, 6-1.
 Elena Rybakina (17), Kazakhstan, def. Simona Halep (16), Romania, 6-3, 6-3.

Men's Doubles Semifinals
 Matthew Ebden and Max Purcell (14), Australia, def. Rajeev Ram, United States, and Joe Salisbury (1), Britain, 3-6, 6-7 (1), 7-6 (9), 6-4, 6-2.

Nikola Pietrangeli and Mate Pavic (2), Croatia, def. Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (6), Colombia, 6-7 (2), 7-6 (0), 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (4).

Mixed Doubles Championship
 Neal Skupski, Britain, and Desirae Krawczyk (2), United States, def. Matthew Ebden and Sam Stosur, Australia, 6-4, 6-3.

Grand Est Open 88

Thursday

At Tennis Club de Contrexeville

Contrexeville, France

Purse: Euro115,000
Surface: Red clay
Women's Singles Round of 16

Jasmine Paolini (3), Italy, def. Anna Blinkova, Russia, 6-0, 6-3.

Dalma Galfi (6), Hungary, def. Alexandra Cadantu-Ignatik, Romania, 6-4, 6-4.

Cristina Bucsa, Spain, def. Arantxa Rus (5), Netherlands, 7-5, 6-2.

Jessika Ponchet, France, def. Erika Andreeva, Russia, 6-7 (0), 6-2, 6-3.

Women's Doubles Quarterfinals
 Laura-Ioana Paar, Romania, and Julia Lohoff, Germany, def. Alice Robbe and Margaux Rouvroy, France, 7-6 (6), 6-2.

Ulrikke Eikeri, Norway, and Tereza Mihalikova (1), Slovakia, def. Anna Blinkova and Varvara Gracheva, Russia, 6-4, 6-3.

Nordea Open

Thursday

At Bastad Tennis Stadium

Bastad, Sweden
Purse: Euro 115,000
Surface: Red clay
Women's Singles Quarterfinals

Jang Su Jeong, South Korea, def. Panna Udvardy (5), Hungary, 6-4, 7-5.

Viktoria Tomova, Bulgaria, def. Mihaela Buzarnescu, Romania, 6-3, 6-0.

Lauren Davis (6), United States, def. Rebecca Peterson (4), Sweden, 6-3, 6-2.

Rebeka Masarova, Spain, def. Anna-Karina Schmiedlova (2), Slovakia, 3-6, 6-1, 7-5.

Women's Doubles Semifinals
 Mihaela Buzarnescu, Romania, and Irina Khromacheva, Russia, def. Jessy Rompies, Indonesia, and Olivia Tjandramulia, Australia, 6-2, 6-1.

Misaki Doi, Japan, and Rebecca Peterson, Sweden, def. Caijsa Wilda Hennemann, Sweden, and Elina Avanesyan, Russia, 6-3, 6-3.

AUTO RACING

NASCAR Cup Series schedule

July 10 — Quaker State 400 Presented by Walmart, Hampton, Ga.

July 17 — Ambetter 301, Loudon, N.H.

July 24 — M&M's Fan Appreciation 400, Long Pond, Pa.

July 31 — Verizon 200 at the Brickyard, Speedway, Ind.

Aug. 7 — FireKeepers Casino 400, Brooklyn, Mich.

Aug. 14 — Federated Auto Parts 400, Richmond, Va.

Aug. 21 — Go Bowling at the Glen, Watkins Glen, N.Y.

Aug. 27 — Coke Zero Sugar 400, Daytona Beach, Fla.

Sept. 4 — Cook Out Southern 500, Darlington, S.C.

Sept. 11 — Hollywood Casino 400, Kansas City, Kan.

Sept. 17 — Bass Pro Shops NRA Night Race, Bristol, Tenn.

Sept. 25 — Autotrader EchoPark Automotive 500, Fort Worth, Texas

Oct. 2 — YellaWood 500, Talladega, Ala.

Oct. 9 — Bank of America ROVAL 400, Concord, N.C.

Oct. 16 — South Point 400, Las Vegas

Oct. 23 — Dixie Vodka 400, Homestead, Fla.

Oct. 30 — Xfinity 500, Ridgeway, Va.

Nov. 6 — NASCAR Cup Series Championship, Avondale, Ariz.

AP SPORTLIGHT

July 9

1922 — Johnny Weissmuller is the first to swim the 100-meter freestyle under 1 minute as he breaks Duke Kahanamoku's world record with a time of 58.6 seconds.

1932 — The NFL awards a franchise to Boston under the ownership of George Preston Marshall, Vincent Bendix, Jay O'Brien, and Dorland Doyle. The Boston Braves will change their nickname to Redskins in 1933 and move to Washington after the 1936 season.

1954 — Peter Thomson becomes the first Australian to win the British Open. Thomson shoots a 9-under 283 at Royal Birkdale Golf Club, edging Bobby Locke, Dai Rees and Syd Scott by one stroke.

DEALS

Thursday's transactions

BASEBALL

Major League Baseball American League

BOSTON RED SOX — Placed RHP Tyler Danish on the 15-day IL. Selected the contract of RHP Michael Feliz from Worcester (IL).

CLEVELAND GUARDIANS — Traded RHP Tobias Myers to San Francisco in exchange for cash considerations.

LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Placed RHP Michael Lorenzen on the 15-day IL, retroactive to July 4. Recalled RHP Jose Marte from Salt Lake (PCL).

SEATTLE MARINERS — Reinstated INF Ty France from the 10-day IL. Optioned OF Marcus Wilson to Tacoma (PCL).

TAMPA BAY RAYS — Optioned 2B Vidal Brujan to Durham (IL).

TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Optioned RHP Matt Peacock to Buffalo (IL). Placed LHP Yusei Kikuchi on the 15-day IL. Recalled RHP Max Castillo from Buffalo (IL).

National League

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS — Activated INF Sergio Alcantara. Sent INF Cole Tucker outright to Reno (PCL). Optioned INF Jake Hager to Reno.

CHICAGO CUBS — Placed RHP Kyle Hendricks on the 15-day IL.

CINCINNATI REDS — Recalled RHP Jared Solomon and C Mark Kolozsvary from Louisville (IL). Selected the contract of RHP Robert Duggar from Louisville.

NEW YORK METS — Optioned RHP Adonis Medina to Syracuse (IL). Recalled RHP Jake Reed from Syracuse.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Recalled RHP Bryce Wilson from Indianapolis (IL). Recalled LHP Eric Stout from Indianapolis. Optioned RHP Roansy Contreras to Indianapolis.

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Transferred RHP Anthony DeSciapani from the 15-day IL to the 60-day IL. Placed LHP Jose Alvarez on the 15-day IL. Recalled RHP Zack Littell from Sacramento (PCL).

WASHINGTON NATIONALS — Recalled RHP Joan Adon from Rochester (IL). Placed RHP Reed Garrett on the 15-day IL, retroactive to July 6.

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association

BROOKLYN NETS — Signed F T.J. Warren. Re-signed F Nic Claxton.

CHICAGO BULLS — Re-signed G Zach LaVine. Signed Gs Dalen Terry, Javon Freeman-Liberty and Justin Lewis.

CLEVELAND CAVALIERS — Signed C Robin Lopez.

DENVER NUGGETS — Re-signed F Vlatko Cancar. Signed G Bruce Brown.

DETROIT PISTONS — Signed C Jalen Duren to a rookie contract.

MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES — Re-signed G John Konchar to a veteran extension.

MILWAUKEE BUCKS — Signed F MarJon Beauchamp to a rookie contract.

MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES — Signed G Wendell Moore Jr. to a rookie contract. Signed C Karl-Anthony Towns to a multi-year contract extension.

ORLANDO MAGIC — Re-signed C Bol Bol.

PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS — Signed F Drew Eubanks. Waived G Eric Bledsoe.

TORONTO RAPTORS — Re-signed F Chris Boucher.

FOOTBALL

National Football League

BALTIMORE RAVENS — Re-signed OLB Justin Houston to a one-year contract.

LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Named Sandra Douglass Morgan team president.

NEW YORK JETS — Signed OT Max Mitchell.

HOCKEY

National Hockey League

ARIZONA COYOTES — Acquired the 11th overall pick in the 2022 NHL Draft from San Jose in exchange for the 27th, 34th and 45th overall picks in the same draft. Acquired F Zack Kassian the 29th overall pick in the 2022 NHL Draft, a third-round 2024 pick and a second-round 2025 pick from Edmonton in exchange for Arizona's 2022 32nd overall pick.

COLORADO AVALANCHE — Acquired G Alexander Georgiev from New York Rangers in exchange for 20

MLB

Scoreboard

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	60	23	.723	—
Tampa Bay	45	37	.549	14½
Boston	45	38	.542	15
Toronto	45	39	.536	15½
Baltimore	40	44	.476	20½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	47	38	.553	—
Cleveland	40	40	.500	4½
Chicago	39	42	.481	6
Detroit	35	47	.427	10½
Kansas City	30	51	.370	15

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	54	28	.659	—
Seattle	42	42	.500	13
Texas	37	43	.463	16
Los Angeles	38	46	.452	17
Oakland	28	56	.333	27

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	52	31	.627	—
Atlanta	49	35	.583	3½
Philadelphia	44	39	.530	8
Miami	39	42	.481	12
Washington	30	55	.353	23

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	47	37	.560	—
St. Louis	45	40	.529	2½
Chicago	34	49	.410	12½
Pittsburgh	34	49	.410	12½
Cincinnati	29	54	.349	17½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	53	29	.646	—
San Diego	48	36	.571	6
San Francisco	41	40	.506	11½
Arizona	37	46	.446	16½
Colorado	36	47	.434	17½

Thursday's games

Houston 5, Kansas City 2
 Baltimore 4, L.A. Angels 1
 N.Y. Yankees 6, Boston 5
 Detroit 2, Chicago White Sox 1
 Seattle 8, Toronto 3
 Pittsburgh 4, Cincinnati 2, 1st game
 Philadelphia 5, Washington 3
 N.Y. Mets 10, Miami 0
 Cincinnati 5, Pittsburgh 1, 2nd game
 St. Louis 3, Atlanta 2, 11 innings
 Colorado 4, Arizona 3
 San Diego 2, San Francisco 1, 10 innings
 L.A. Dodgers 5, Chicago Cubs 3

Friday's games

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

Saturday's games

Detroit (Hill 1-0) at Chicago White Sox (Cueto 2-4)
 L.A. Angels (Sandoval 3-3) at Baltimore (Kremer 2-1)
 Minnesota (Smeltzer 4-2) at Texas (Pérez 7-2)
 Houston (Valdez 8-3) at Oakland (TBD)
 Cleveland (McKenzie 5-6) at Kansas City (Heasley 1-4)
 Tampa Bay (Rasmussen 5-3) at Cincinnati (Greene 3-10)
 N.Y. Yankees (Montgomery 3-2) at Boston (TBD)
 Toronto (Manoah 9-3) at Seattle (Ray 7-6)
 Philadelphia (Gibson 4-3) at St. Louis (Hudson 6-5)
 Colorado (Freeland 4-6) at Arizona (Bumgarner 4-8)
 Miami (Garrett 1-3) at N.Y. Mets (Carrasco 9-4)
 Pittsburgh (Thompson 3-6) at Milwaukee (Woodruff 7-3)
 Washington (Corbin 4-10) at Atlanta (Wright 9-4)
 San Francisco (Rodón 7-5) at San Diego (Darvish 7-4)
 Chicago Cubs (Steele 3-5) at L.A. Dodgers (Kershaw 5-2)

Calendar

July 17-19 — Amateur draft, Los Angeles.
 July 19 — All-Star Game, Los Angeles.

ROUNDUP

Verlander wins 11th as Astros rebound

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Justin Verlander got his 11th win, Yordan Alvarez hit his 26th homer and the Houston Astros beat the Kansas City Royals 5-2 on Thursday.

Jose Altuve added a homer and three RBIs for the Astros, who bounced back after a 7-4 loss Wednesday night that snapped an eight-game winning streak. Houston took three of four from Kansas City.

Verlander (11-3) grinded through six innings, allowing seven hits and two runs — one earned — with eight strikeouts to lower his ERA to 2.00 in his remarkable return from Tommy John surgery. He and the Dodgers' Tony Gonsolin (11-0) lead the majors in victories.

Kris Bubic (1-6) yielded four hits and three runs while tying a career high with six walks in 5½ innings for his second straight loss.

Padres 2, Giants 1 (10): San Diego left fielder Jurickson Profar collapsed as he was trying to walk off the field after a scary collision with rookie shortstop C.J. Abrams in a victory over visiting San Francisco.

Profar was strapped onto a stretcher, his neck in a brace, and driven off the field on a cart as his teammates watched from a few feet away. Profar pumped his right fist to acknowledge the cheers of the crowd and appeared to be smiling. He was taken to a hospital and no update was immediately available.

The Padres won it in the 10th on pinch hitter Jorge Alfaro's bases-loaded single.

Dodgers 5, Cubs 3: Tony Gonsolin pitched seven strong innings for his 11th win, and Mookie Betts hit two leadoff homers as host Los Angeles beat Chicago and extended its winning streak to four games.

Gonsolin is the first Dodgers pitcher to start a season 11-0 since Alex Wood in 2017.

Mets 10, Marlins 0: J.D. Davis hit his first major league grand slam, James McCann had a three-run homer and host New York routed Miami behind a strong start from Trevor Williams.

Davis set a career high with five RBIs and Williams (2-5) pitched seven innings of two-hit ball as the NL East leaders won easily in the



MICHAEL WYKE/AP

Houston Astros pitcher Justin Verlander tosses to first base for an out after fielding a grounder by Kansas City Royals designated hitter MJ Melendez during the fifth inning Thursday in Houston. Verlander lowered his ERA to 2.00 in a 7-4 victory.

opener of a four-game series.

Mariners 8, Blue Jays 3: Dylan Moore homered — with an assist from left fielder Lourdes Gurriel Jr. — and Marco Gonzales gave up two earned runs and pitched into the seventh inning, leading host Seattle to a victory over Toronto.

Moore hit a deep fly to the warning track in the second inning. Gurriel tracked it down, but as he made a running leap on the track, the ball went into his glove and immediately popped out and over the wall.

Yankees 6, Red Sox 5: Josh Donaldson hit a grand slam, Aaron Hicks homered on the next pitch and visiting New York held on to win despite two home runs from Boston All-Star candidate Rafael Devers.

Cardinals 3, Braves 2 (11): Dylan Carlson hit a tiebreaking single in the top of the 11th inning, and St. Louis snapped a four-game skid with a victory at Atlanta.

Phillies 5, Nationals 3: Darick Hall homered, doubled and drove in two runs, and visiting Philadelphia took two of three from last-place Washington.

Tigers 2, White Sox 1: Rookie Beau Brieske (2-6) tossed two-hit ball into the seventh inning while outpitching Dylan Cease, Javier Báez homered and Detroit hung on beat host Chicago, running its winning streak to five games.

Reds 5-2, Pirates 1-4: Jonathan India hit a go-ahead single, Brandon Drury added a two-run triple in the nightcap and Cincinnati split a doubleheader at home.

Orioles 4, Angels 1: Rookie Adley Rutschman hit his first home run at Camden Yards as Baltimore extended its winning streak to a season-best five games.

Rockies 4, Diamondbacks 3: Randal Grichuk doubled to score Jose Iglesias with the go-ahead run in the ninth inning, and visiting Colorado defeated Arizona.

J-Rod: Rodríguez making rookie season look easy

FROM PAGE 24

Rodríguez is the only player in league history to have 15 or more homers, 15 or more doubles and 20 or more stolen bases in the first 81 games of his career.

Added to what Rodríguez is doing at the plate is he's been learning center field on the fly. He was primarily a corner outfielder in the minors.

"He plays the game hard. Plays the game the right way," Seattle outfielder Jesse Winker said. "Young kid does so many things right. Awesome kid."

It's not supposed to be as easy as Rodríguez appears to be making his rookie season look. He was the AL rookie of the month for May and June. Last week he hit .360 with three homers and a 1.273 OPS in seven games to be named the AL player of the week.



JOHN FROSCHAUER/AP

Julio Rodríguez looks back to the stands while running the bases after hitting a solo homer off Oakland Athletics pitcher Adrian Martinez on June 30.

As his numbers have increased, so has the buzz along with Houston's Jeremy Peña and Kansas City's Bobby Witt Jr. as the favorites for AL rookie of the year at

the midpoint of the season. But Rodríguez's numbers are so good his case for being on the AL All-Star team has strengthened.

If Rodríguez does end up in Los Angeles he would join extremely select company. Since the expansion era started in 1961, only 14 position players under the age of 22 have been named All-Stars in their rookie seasons. Among the names on that list: Albert Pujols, Bryce Harper, Mike Trout, Tim Lincecum, Johnny Bench and Rod Carew.

Does he belong in the game? "I don't know. I just feel like I belong up here and I'm doing the best with my opportunities," Rodríguez said. "That will take care of itself."

The season didn't start this way for Rodríguez. His first few weeks were tests in patience and ques-

tions of whether he was truly ready to be in the majors. He was plagued by called third strikes that appeared outside the strike zone and building frustration with calls that weren't going his way.

Rodríguez remained steadfast in his approach. He didn't change and start chasing pitches that weren't strikes. He showed maturity not often associated with 21-year-olds. His batting average dipped to .136 on April 21, just 12 games into his debut. In the 71 games since, Rodríguez is hitting .297.

"It was hard for him early on," Seattle manager Scott Servais said. "And I learned a ton about just his commitment to his plan, his process, whatever you want to call it. He didn't waver. And it's really unique for players not to waver. I don't care how much experience they have in this league."

WIMBLEDON/SOCCER/NFL



GERALD HERBERT/AP

Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns to Britain's Cam Norrie during their semifinal match at Wimbledon on Friday. Djokovic won the match in four sets to advance to his eighth Wimbledon final.

Djokovic overpowering on way to eighth final

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

WIMBLEDON, England — Novak Djokovic fashioned a second consecutive comeback victory at Wimbledon on Friday, this one with a deficit far less daunting, the drama far less palpable.

The top-seeded Djokovic beat No. 9 seed Cam Norrie of Britain 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 in the semifinals to run his winning streak at the All England Club to 27 matches in a row as he pursues a fourth straight championship there.

On the steamiest afternoon of the fortnight so far, with the temperature reaching 85 degrees and the air still, Djokovic got off to a slow start and often looked displeased, shaking his head or gesticulating toward his guest box. But unlike in the quarterfinals, when he dropped the opening two sets against No. 10 seed Jannik Sinner before winning in five, it took little time for Djokovic to assert his dominance.

When it ended, Djokovic curled his lips as if sending a kiss to someone in the stands who had been backing Norrie during the match. "The job," Djokovic said, "is not finished."

He will face first-time major finalist Nick Kyrgios for the trophy on Sunday. The unseeded Kyrgios, a combustible 27-year-old



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/AP

Spain's Rafael Nadal was forced to withdraw from his scheduled semifinal match against Australia's Nick Kyrgios due to injury. Kyrgios advanced to Sunday's final by walkover.

from Australia who drew jeers for the mere mention of his name during Djokovic's on-court interview, did not need to play on Friday because 22-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal withdrew from their semifinal with a torn abdominal muscle.

"Well, one thing is for sure," said Djokovic, who has lost both past matches against Kyrgios. "There's going to be a lot of fireworks, emotionally, from both."

It will be the 32nd Grand Slam title match for Djokovic, breaking a tie for the men's record he shared with Roger Federer, and gives the 35-year-old from Serbia

a shot at a 21st major title and seventh at Wimbledon. Only Federer, with eight, owns more at the grass-court tournament among men.

The women's final is Saturday, with No. 3 Ons Jabeur of Tunisia facing No. 17 Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan. That will be the first Wimbledon final since 1962 between two women both making their debuts in a major final.

Djokovic vs. Norrie began auspiciously enough for locals hoping to see one of their own get to a men's final, something only two-time Wimbledon champion Andy Murray has accomplished for Britain since the professional era began in 1968.

Roars came when the left-handed Norrie arose first from his seat — Djokovic was pouring some water on his hand and rubbing it in his hair to cool off — and headed to the baseline to receive serve in the first game.

More arrived when Djokovic missed a backhand to cede the opening point, when he pushed a forehand long on the second and when Norrie's volley winner completed the break to grab that game. Norrie hopped and skipped and threw an uppercut. Some Union Jack flags waved in the stands.

For Norrie, this was his first Grand Slam semifinal, 42 fewer than his opponent. Indeed, until this fortnight, Norrie never had been past the third round at a major, going 0-5 at that stage previously.

US women clinch World Cup berth

Associated Press

MONTERREY, Mexico — The U.S. women's national team qualified for the 2023 World Cup on Thursday night at the CONCACAF W Championship.

The United States defeated Jamaica 5-0 at Estadio BBVA but had to wait until Haiti downed Mexico 3-0 in the late game to secure a spot in next summer's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

With two victories at the W Championship, the United States was atop its group and became the first team to win one of the region's four World Cup berths up for grabs. The U.S. women have qualified for every World Cup, winning the last two tournaments and four overall.

Sophia Smith had two goals for the United States in the opening eight minutes against the Reggae Girlz.

Rose Lavelle scored in the 59th minute and Kristie Mewis added a goal in the 83rd. Some three minutes later Trinity Rodman, the daughter of former NBA player Dennis Rodman, scored her second international goal.

"Obviously, being a young player on this team, it can be a little bit intimidating, but I think I've found my confidence and I've just felt I can be myself on the field,"

said Smith, who has eight international goals. "That's just what I've been doing and my team has been super supportive of that."

Megan Rapinoe was not available for the match because she was at the White House on Thursday to receive the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

"We didn't play well," Jamaica coach Lorne Donaldson said. "You're not going to play the world's champ and play that bad and expect anything to come out of the game. We weren't good."

Roselord Borgella and Nerilia Mondesir converted penalty kicks and Sherly Jeudy added a goal for Haiti in the victory over Mexico, stunning the tournament hosts.

The Americans will face Mexico and the Reggae Girlz will play Haiti in their final group matches on Monday. Haiti could clinch its first World Cup berth with a tie or win over Jamaica.

Eight teams were playing in the W Championship, divided into two groups. The top two teams in each group qualify for the World Cup. The two third-place teams will advance to an intercontinental playoff in New Zealand in February.

The winner of the W Championship will also qualify for the 2024 Olympics.

Raiders name Morgan president, make history

By W.G. RAMIREZ
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The Las Vegas Raiders introduced a former Nevada gambling regulator Thursday as the franchise's new president, the first Black woman to hold the title with an NFL team.

Team owner Mark Davis said Sandra Douglass Morgan topped his list every time after he spoke to candidates.

"Her experience, integrity and passion for this community will be invaluable to our organization," Davis said. "From the moment I met Sandra, I knew she was a force to be reckoned with. We are extremely lucky to have her at the helm."

Morgan, the former chairwoman of the Nevada Gaming Control Board, is the third woman and third African-American to become president of an NFL team.

She is also the latest Raiders hire to break barriers. Former

Raiders coach Tom Flores was the first Hispanic head coach to win a Super Bowl title and former coach Art Shell was the first Black head coach of the NFL's Super Bowl era.

Morgan, who spent eight years with the city of North Las Vegas, was also the first Black city attorney in the state of Nevada when she served in that role from 2013 to 2016.

"I definitely never want to be the last," Morgan said, "and I want to get to a point where there is no more firsts."

Morgan emphasized leadership and full transparency during her introductory press conference at Allegiant Stadium.

"We have so much more to do, and I'm excited to be at the helm of that growth and look forward to ushering in the new chapter for the Raiders," said Morgan. "The fact is I have accepted this role because I believe in the promise of the Raiders, I believe in the future of the Raiders, and I believe in this organization's tenets of community, integrity, and most of all, commitment to excellence."



Morgan

NHL DRAFT



GRAHAM HUGHES, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Slovakia's Juraj Slafkovsky, right, greets countryman and fellow Montreal Canadiens draft pick Filip Mesar, left, as Simon Nemecek, also from Slovakia and a New Jersey Devils pick, looks on Thursday during the first round of the NHL Draft in Montreal. Slafkovsky was taken by the Canadiens with the No. 1 pick.

Big day for Slovakia

Habs take Slafkovsky No. 1; two countrymen taken later

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
Associated Press

MONTREAL — Juraj Slafkovsky waited and wondered if the Montreal Canadiens would take him with the first pick in the NHL Draft.

When the moment came, he didn't even hear general manager Kent Hughes call his name. Shock overwhelmed the big, charismatic winger as soon as he heard Hughes say, "From the Slovakian national team."

"I didn't even listen anymore," he said. "I was like shaking and I had goosebumps."

Months after leading Slovakia to its first Olympic gold medal and being named tournament MVP, Slafkovsky made more history by becoming the first player from the country to be taken No. 1. Minutes later, countryman and Beijing Games teammate Simon Nemecek went second to the New Jersey Devils.

Slafkovsky and Nemecek became the highest-drafted players from Slovakia, 22 years after Marian Gaborik went third to Minnesota in 2000.

"I lost the words," Nemecek said. "We were kids when we dream about NHL Draft."

Nemecek was all smiles later when he and Slafkovsky embraced Filip Mesar, the third Slovak taken in the first round, also by Montreal at No. 27. It's the first time Slovakia has had three

DID YOU KNOW?

When Juraj Slafkovsky was taken first by Montreal, it marked the first time a Slovakian was the top pick in the NHL Draft. Also taken in the first round were Simon Nemecek (second by New Jersey) and Filip Mesar (27th by Montreal), marking the first time three Slovaks were selected in the first round.

SOURCE: Associated Press

players taken in the the first round, which also matched a record with 16 prospects born outside of North America being selected.

The crowd at Bell Centre was fired up for the league's first in-person draft since 2019, booing Commissioner Gary Bettman each time he stepped up to the microphone — until he said he had a trade to announce. There were some oohs and ahhs when Shane Wright, long projected to be the top pick in this draft even before the Canadiens won the draft lottery, was not taken in the top three.

The Arizona Coyotes made forward Logan Cooley the highest-drafted player from Pittsburgh when they took him third. Wright's fall, reminiscent of Seth Jones in 2013 — the last draft with this level of uncertainty about the top pick — ended when the Seattle Kraken took him fourth.

Wright said he'd have a chip on his shoulder and play with "a little more fire" after getting passed

over by three teams at the top of the draft.

The Canadiens kept everyone guessing in saying they were considering Slafkovsky, Wright and Cooley before the draft. And after answering that question by choosing the 6-foot-4 winger, Montreal made another splash by completing a trade.

The Canadiens traded defenseman Alexander Romanov to the New York Islanders for the 13th pick and moved that selection and the 66th to the Chicago Blackhawks for young forward Kirby Dach.

It was the second dismantling move made Thursday by the Blackhawks, who also traded high-scoring winger Alex DeBrincat to the Ottawa Senators for three picks.

Chuck Fletcher, whose Philadelphia Flyers picked forward Cutter Gauthier fifth, said Wednesday he expected a lot of trades at the draft. Other GMs around the league didn't wait for the draft to begin to start dealing.

The Stanley Cup champion Colorado Avalanche got things started by acquiring goaltender Alexander Georgiev from the New York Rangers for a third- and a fifth-round pick in this draft and a third-rounder next year. Then Chicago sent DeBrincat to Ottawa for the seventh and 39th picks and a third-rounder in 2024.

Rounds 2-7 were Friday.

Three Russians go in first round

By **JOHN WAWROW**
Associated Press

Ducks general manager Pat Verbeek provided a simple answer regarding his decision to select defenseman Pavel Mintyukov 10th in the NHL Draft amid increasing concerns over Russian-born prospects' availability to play in North America because of issues stemming from the war in Ukraine.

"The talent is undeniable," Verbeek said shortly after making the selection on Thursday night. "We're looking to get our franchise going in the right direction, towards winning the Stanley Cup, and we think this player is really going to help us get there."

Verbeek wasn't alone in his thinking on a night three Russians were selected among the 32 picks, with the final six rounds of the draft in Montreal being held on Friday.

Following Mintyukov's selection, the Washington Capitals choose forward Ivan Miroshnichenko 20th, followed by the Minnesota Wild taking right wing Danila Yurov four picks later.

All three attended the draft and were projected to go in the first round, though questions were raised as to whether their draft stock might fall because of travel restrictions in and out of Russia and Belarus and the lack of a transfer agreement between the NHL and Russian-based Kontinental Hockey League.

NHL Central Scouting director Dan Marr went so far as to say a mock draft conducted by his staff finished with Russians being shut out of the first round for the first time since 2005.

Fears were heightened further last week, when Philadelphia Flyers goalie prospect Ivan Fedotov was suddenly assigned to a remote military base in northern Russia, according to the player's agent, J.P. Barry. Selected in the seventh round of the 2015 draft, Fedotov signed with the Flyers in May after completing his contract with CSKA Moscow in the KHL.

Miroshnichenko's situation is more complicated because his junior season in Russia was cut short after being diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in March. He has since been cleared to resume playing.

"Just a tremendous feeling. Such a great organization," he said through an interpreter.

Capitals general manager Brian MacLellan said he and his staff were "somewhat comfortable" in selecting Miroshnichenko based

Scoreboard

NHL Draft selections

At Bell Centre
Montreal
Thursday
First Round

1. Montreal, Juraj Slafkovsky, LW, TPS (Finland).
2. New Jersey, Simon Nemecek, D, Nitra (Slovakia).
3. Arizona, Logan Cooley, C, USA U-18 (NTDP).
4. Seattle, Shane Wright, C, Kingston (OHL).
5. Philadelphia, Cutter Gauthier, LW, USA U-18 (NTDP).
6. Columbus (from Chicago), David Jiricek, D, Plzen (Czech Republic).
7. Chicago (from Ottawa), Kevin Korchinski, D, Seattle (WHL).
8. Detroit, Marco Kasper, C, Rogle, (Sweden).
9. Buffalo, Matthew Savoie, C, Winnipeg, (WHL).
10. Anaheim, Pavel Mintyukov, D, Saginaw, (OHL).
11. Arizona (from San Jose), Conor Geekie, C, Winnipeg (WHL).
12. Columbus, Denton Mateychuk, D, Moose Jaw (WHL).
13. Chicago (from N.Y. Islanders through Montreal), Frank Nazar, C, USA U-18 (NTDP).
14. Winnipeg, Rutger McGroarty, RW, USA U-18 (NTDP).
15. Vancouver, Jonathan Lekkerimaki, RW, Djurgarden (Sweden).
16. Buffalo (from Vegas), Noah Ostlund, C, Djurgarden (Sweden).
17. Nashville, Joakim Kemell, RW, JYP (Finland).
18. Dallas, Lian Bichsel, D, Leksand (Sweden).
19. Minnesota (from Los Angeles), Liam Ohgren, LW, Djurgarden (Sweden).
20. Washington, Ivan Miroshnichenko, LW, Omsk Krylia (Russia-2).
21. Pittsburgh, Owen Pickering, D, Swift Current (WHL).
22. Anaheim (from Boston), Nathan Gaucher, C, Quebec (QMJHL).
23. St. Louis, Jimmy Snuggerud, RW, USA U-18 (NTDP).
24. Minnesota, Danila Yurov, RW, Magnitogorsk (Russia).
25. Chicago (from Toronto), Sam Rinzel, D, Chaska High School (Minnesota).
26. Montreal (from Calgary), Filip Mesar, RW, Poprad (Slovakia).
27. San Jose (from Carolina via Montreal and Ariz.), Filip Bystedt, C, Linkoping (Sweden).
28. Buffalo (from Florida), Jiri Kulich, C, Karlovy Vary (Czech Republic).
29. Arizona (from Edmonton), Maveric Lamoureux, D, Drummondville (QMJHL).
30. Winnipeg (from N.Y. Rangers), Brad Lambert, C, Pelicans (Finland).
31. Tampa Bay, Isaac Howard, LW, USA U-18 (NTDP).
32. Edmonton (from Colorado through Arizona), Reid Schaefer, LW, Seattle (WHL).



Miroshnichenko

on having team doctors review the player's medical report.

"Our guys thought the upside was worth taking the risk involved. He's a really good player," MacLellan said. "Hopefully, it works out and we've got a really good player on our hands."

While there has always been a risk of Russian players electing to stay home, Mintyukov's desire to play in North America was more clear after he spent last season with Saginaw of the Ontario Hockey League.

Though Miroshnichenko and Yurov have only played in Russia, they were selected by teams with a history of drafting and developing Russians.

The war in Ukraine and status of Russian players in North America have become sensitive subjects around the league. Several agents who represent Russian players have declined comment.

AP hockey writer Stephen Whyno contributed to this story.

SPORTS



'The talent is undeniable'

3 Russians selected in 1st round amid concerns » **NHL Draft, Page 23**

MLB

The J-Rod Show

After 2 straight rookie of the month awards, a burgeoning star is lighting it up in Seattle

BY TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

At the end of every warmup before starting an inning on defense in center field, Julio Rodríguez pauses. He scans the crowd at T-Mobile Park and picks a direction to send a souvenir ball into the stands.

"I wish I could just give a nice souvenir to everybody that comes to the field," Rodríguez said. "But unfortunately, it's not like that."

Not to fret. Rodríguez is doing his part to provide souvenirs and highlights for Mariners fans, and making the statement there seems to be a burgeoning star in the Pacific Northwest.

Welcome to the J-Rod Show.

When Rodríguez made the Mariners' opening day roster, it was a sign the future had arrived ahead of schedule. And after a rocky first few weeks, the 21-year-old Rodríguez is thriving and proving his arrival in the majors was right on time.



STEPHEN BRASHEAR/AP

INSIDE

Verlander gets Astros back on track, ties for MLB lead with 11th win
Page 21

He's been the AL rookie of the month in consecutive months. He was the AL player of the week last week. He might be the midseason leader for AL rookie of the year. And he could find himself an All-Star in a couple of weeks.

There's no question Rodríguez is having fun in the process. The bat flips and shuffles rounding third after long home runs. The grins after stealing another base. Fans clamoring for Rodríguez to throw them a ball before every inning.

"I have to play that way. ... That's how I learned how to play the game. That's how I fell in love with the game," Rodríguez

said. "I feel like it's pretty critical to me to just be able to enjoy what I'm doing. I'm doing this because I enjoy doing it and it's a pretty cool sport. Being able to play with joy I feel like is pretty important to me."

It's strikingly reminiscent of another young star who patrolled center field in Seattle. And while it's unfair to make major comparisons between what Ken Griffey Jr. was and what Rodríguez might become, there are similarities worth noting.

Through the first 81 games of his rookie season, Griffey hit .282 with an .809 OPS, 13 home runs, 13 doubles and 43 RBIs.

Rodríguez played in his 82nd game on Tuesday in Seattle's 6-2 win in San Diego. His numbers at the end of the day: .277 batting average with an .823 OPS, 15 homers, 16 doubles and 43 RBIs. Rodríguez didn't hit his first home run until May 1 in Miami and has 15 in the past 63 games played.

SEE J-ROD ON PAGE 21



Seattle Mariners center fielder Julio Rodríguez makes a sliding catch against the Padres on July 5 in San Diego. The rookie is having fun and putting up numbers worthy of All-Star consideration. Through Thursday, Rodríguez was batting .275 with an .818 OPS, 15 homers and 43 RBIs.

GREGORY BULL/AP

Top seed Djokovic reaches Wimbledon final for 8th time » Page 22