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STARS AND STRIPES

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CONTINGENCY EDITION

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021

Free to Deployed Areas

20 YEARS AFTER 9/11

Reflecting on service



Members of the 25th Infantry Division prepare for a mission during a dust storm at Forward Operating Base Kushamond, Afghanistan, in 2004.

ANDRYA HILL/U.S. ARMY

Troops affected by 9/11 now lead a generation that doesn't recall the attacks

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

Daniel Maynard was just four weeks into Army boot camp training at Fort Knox, Ky., to become a cavalry scout in what he expected to be a peacetime Army.

Then everything changed.

In the middle of a first-aid lesson, Maynard's drill instructors pulled the Army recruits out of the class and lined them up in formation outside. It was Sept. 11, 2001. The United States had been attacked, the older soldiers told them, offering few details about al-Qaida's assault on U.S. soil that millions of other Americans were watching live on television.

Later that day, after the startled recruits

returned to their barracks, their instructors provided more details — the World Trade Center in New York City had been hit by a pair of airliners and the towers had collapsed. A plane crash landed in Pennsylvania. The Pentagon, the military's headquarters in Arlington, Va., had been hit too. Thousands were dead.

The next words from Maynard's drill sergeant would largely come to define the next two decades for the U.S. military. Twenty years later, Maynard recalls that sentence like it was spoken yesterday.

"He paused after explaining everything, to let it sink in, and then he told us: 'Get ready, because you're probably going to

SEE SERVICE ON PAGE 5



U.S. ARMY

Daniel Maynard was one month into boot camp on Sept. 11, 2001. He has since served 20 years.

AFGHANISTAN

Measles cases at US bases halt airlift of evacuees

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER
Associated Press

The U.S. on Friday halted U.S.-bound flights of Afghan evacuees, pulling some off planes, after discovering a few cases of measles among new arrivals in the United States.

A U.S. government document viewed by The Associated Press warned the development would have a severe impact on an evacuation that since Aug. 15 has moved many thousands of people out of Taliban-held Afghanistan, but also been grindingly drawn out for Afghan evacuees and Americans alike, and was plagued by attacks and other deadly violence.

The decision was made by U.S. Customs and Border Protection on the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said the halt stemmed from discovery of measles among four Afghans who had arrived in the United States. It was not immediately clear from Psaki's remarks whether the stop applied to flights from all transit sites overseas, or only two of the biggest ones, in Qatar and in Germany.

Customs and Border Protection spokespeople did not immediately respond to questions, including how long the halt would last.

FINAL FEW

32 Americans and green-card holders left Afghanistan on Friday, 19 on a Qatar Airways flight and 13 others by land. Roughly 100 U.S. citizens are thought to remain.

SOURCE: AP

INSIDE

America solemnly marks 20-year anniversary of 9/11 terrorist attacks Page 4

SEE FLIGHTS ON PAGE 8

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Tech slide pulls S&P 500 down for weekly loss

Associated Press

Wall Street capped a choppy day of trading Friday with another pullback for stocks and the S&P 500's first weekly loss in three weeks.

The benchmark index fell 0.8%, its fifth straight decline, and ended 1.7% lower for the holiday-shortened week. That's its biggest weekly drop since June. The other major U.S. stock indexes also posted weekly losses.

The selling was widespread, though technology, health care

and communications stocks weighed most heavily on the S&P 500. Smaller company stocks also fell broadly. Treasury yields mostly rose. The price of U.S. crude oil rose 2.3%.

Stocks have traded in a narrow range for several weeks as most investors are sitting on the sidelines waiting to get a fuller understanding of where the economy is headed and how the pandemic is impacting corporations.

"There isn't any new good news coming, and that's important be-

cause we've gotten a decent amount of good news that has flowed up until this point this year," said Liz Young, head of investment strategy at personal finance company SoFi.

The S&P 500 fell 34.70 points to 4,458.58. The index is now within 1.8% of the all-time high it set last week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 271.66 points, or 0.8%, to 34,607.72. The tech-heavy Nasdaq composite shed an early gain, dropping 132.76 points, or 0.9%, to 15,115.49.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Sept. 13)	\$1.15
Dollar buys (Sept. 13)	0.8239
British pound (Sept. 13)	\$1.35
Japanese yen (Sept. 13)	107.00
South Korean won (Sept. 13)	1143.00

South Korea (Won)	1167.54
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9177
Thailand (Baht)	32.66
Turkey (NewLira)	8.4173

(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.)

Commercial rates	
Bahrain(Dinar)	0.3770
Britain (Pound)	1.3870
Canada (Dollar)	1.2597
China(Yuan)	6.4380
Denmark (Krone)	6.2841
Egypt (Pound)	0.8451
Euro	15.7108
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7773
Hungary (Forint)	295.77
Israel (Shekel)	3.1994
Japan (Yen)	109.89
Kuwait(Dinar)	0.3005
Norway (Krone)	8.6234
Philippines (Peso)	49.87
Poland (Zloty)	3.84
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7507
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3384

INTEREST RATES

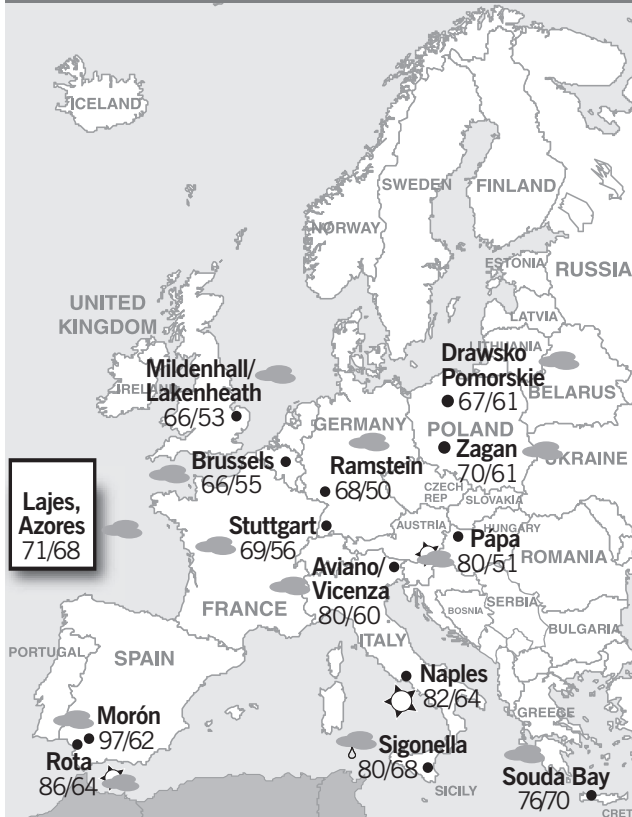
Prime rate	3.25
Interest Rates Discount rate	0.75
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.04
30-year bond	1.90

WEATHER OUTLOOK

SUNDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



SUNDAY IN EUROPE



MONDAY 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

US pulls missile defenses in Saudi Arabia

By **JON GAMBRELL**
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. has removed its most advanced missile defense system and Patriot batteries from Saudi Arabia in recent weeks, even as the kingdom faced continued air attacks from Yemen's Houthi rebels, satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press show.

The redeployment of the defenses from Prince Sultan Air Base outside of Riyadh came as America's Gulf Arab allies nervously watched the chaotic withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, including their last-minute evacuations from Kabul's besieged international airport.

While tens of thousands of American forces remain across the Arabian Peninsula as a counterweight to Iran, Gulf Arab nations worry about the U.S.'s future plans as its military perceives a growing threat in Asia that requires those missile defenses. Tensions remain high as negotiations appear stalled in Vienna over Iran's collapsed nuclear deal with world powers, raising the danger of future confrontations in the region.

"Perceptions matter whether or not they're rooted in a cold, cold reality. And the perception is very clear that the U.S. is not as committed to the Gulf as it used to be in the views of many people in decision-making authority in the region," said Kristian Ulrichsen, a research fellow at the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University.

"From the Saudi point of view, they now see Obama, Trump and Biden — three successive presidents — taking decisions that signify to some extent an abandonment."

Prince Sultan Air Base, some 70 miles southeast of Riyadh, has hosted several thousand U.S. troops since a 2019 missile-and-drone attack on the heart of the kingdom's oil production. That attack, though claimed by Yemen's Houthi rebels, appears instead to have been carried out by Iran, according to experts and physical



A member of the U.S. Air Force stands near a Patriot missile battery at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia, in February 2020.

ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS, POOL/AP

debris left behind. Tehran has denied launching the attack, though a drill in January saw Iranian paramilitary forces use similar drones.

Just southwest of the air base's runway, a third-of-a-square-mile area set off by an earthen berm saw American forces station Patriot missile batteries, as well as one advanced Terminal High Altitude Area Defense unit, according to satellite images from Planet Labs Inc. A THAAD can destroy ballistic missiles at a higher altitude than Patriots.

A satellite image seen by the AP in late August showed some of the batteries removed from the area, though activity and vehicles still could be seen there. A high-resolution Planet Lab satellite picture taken Friday showed the batteries' pads at the site empty, with no visible activity.

A redeployment of the missiles

had been rumored for months, in part due to a desire to face what American officials see as the looming "great powers conflict" with China and Russia. However, the withdrawal came just as a Houthi drone attack on Saudi Arabia wounded eight people and damaged a commercial jetliner at the kingdom's airport in Abha. The kingdom has been locked in a stalemate war with the Houthis since March 2015.

Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby acknowledged "the redeployment of certain air defense assets" after receiving questions from the AP. He said the U.S. maintained a "broad and deep" commitment to its Mideast allies.

"The Defense Department continues to maintain tens of thousands of forces and a robust force posture in the Middle East representing some of our most advanced air power and maritime

capabilities, in support of U.S. national interests and our regional partnerships," Kirby said.

In a statement to the AP, the Saudi Defense Ministry described the kingdom's relationship with the U.S. as "strong, longstanding and historic" even while acknowledging the withdrawal of the American missile defense systems. It said the Saudi military "is capable of defending its lands, seas and airspace, and protecting its people."

"The redeployment of some defense capabilities of the friendly United States of America from the region is carried out through common understanding and realignment of defense strategies as an attribute of operational deployment and disposition," the statement said.

Despite those assurances, Saudi Prince Turki al-Faisal, the kingdom's former intelligence

chief whose public remarks often track with the thoughts of its Al Saud ruling family, has linked the Patriot missile deployments directly to America's relationship to Riyadh.

"I think we need to be reassured about American commitment," the prince told CNBC in an interview aired this week. "That looks like, for example, not withdrawing Patriot missiles from Saudi Arabia at a time when Saudi Arabia is the victim of missile attacks and drone attacks — not just from Yemen, but from Iran."

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, on a tour of the Mideast in recent days, had been slated to go to Saudi Arabia but the trip was canceled due to what American officials referred to as scheduling problems. Saudi Arabia declined to discuss why Austin's trip didn't happen after the withdrawal of the missile defenses.

Saudi Arabia maintains its own Patriot missile batteries and typically fires two missiles at an incoming target.

That's become an expensive proposition amid the Houthi campaign, as each Patriot missile costs more than \$3 million.

The kingdom also claims to intercept nearly every missile and drone launched at the kingdom, an incredibly high success rate previously questioned by experts.

While Greece agreed in April to lend a Patriot missile battery to Saudi Arabia, the timing of the U.S. withdrawals comes amid wider uncertainty over the American posture in the region. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab countries have renewed diplomacy with Iran as a hedge.

"I think we saw in Biden's statements on Afghanistan, the way he said things that he's clearly going to put U.S. interests first and obviously that came as quite a disappointment to partners and allies around the world who maybe hoped for something different after Trump," said Ulrichsen, the research fellow. "He sounds quite similar to an 'America First' approach, just sort of a different tone."

Thousands pay respects to Marine

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Thousands of people lined the procession route along Omaha streets on Friday afternoon to pay tribute to a local man and Marine who died in a suicide bombing in Afghanistan.

The body of 23-year-old Cpl. Daegan Page was driven from Eppley Airfield to Braman Mortuary in southwest Omaha.

Page was one of 13 U.S. service members killed Aug. 26 in the

bombing at the Kabul airport, which also killed at least 169 Afghans. He was born in Omaha and lived his first five years in Red Oak, Iowa, before moving back to Omaha with his family.

An obituary for Page notes he was an avid hockey fan and played throughout his childhood and was a member of the 2016 state champion Westside Warriors hockey team. Page graduated from Millard South High School in 2016.

He enlisted in 2017 with the Marines on a delayed entry program and deployed multiple times during his service, including to Japan, South Korea, Australia and Jordan before his final deployment to Afghanistan.

Page is survived by his parents and four siblings.

A memorial service will be held for Page on Sept. 17 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in southwest Omaha.

Recruit who died identified

Associated Press

PARRIS ISLAND, S.C. — A recruit who died this week at a Marine Corps training center in South Carolina has been identified.

Pvt. Anthony Munoz, 21, of Lawrence, Mass., was on his first day of training with the 3rd Recruit Training Battalion's Lima Company when the accident occurred Tuesday at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island,

WSAV-TV reported.

The Beaufort County Coroner's Office confirmed Munoz fell off a balcony at the barracks. Parris Island officials said the Naval Criminal Investigative Service is investigating.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of Pvt. Anthony Munoz. Our Marines send heartfelt condolences to his family and friends," a statement from the training center said.

20 YEARS AFTER 9/11

Solemn remembrance of victims, heroes

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Americans solemnly marked the 20th anniversary of 9/11 on Saturday, remembering the dead, invoking the heroes and taking stock of the aftermath just weeks after the bloody end of the Afghanistan war that was launched in response to the terror attacks.

The ceremony at ground zero in New York began exactly two decades after the deadliest act of terrorism on U.S. soil started with the first of four hijacked planes crashing into one of the World Trade Center's twin towers.

"It felt like an evil specter had descended on our world, but it was also a time when many people acted above and beyond the ordinary," said Mike Low, whose daughter, Sara Low, was a flight attendant on that plane.

"As we carry these 20 years forward, I find sustenance in a continuing appreciation for all of those who rose to be more than ordinary people," the father told a crowd that included President Joe Biden and former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton.

The anniversary unfolded under the pall of a pandemic and in the shadow of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, which is now ruled by the same Taliban militant group that gave safe haven to the 9/11 plotters.

"It's hard because you hoped that this would just be a different time and a different world. But sometimes history starts to repeat itself and not in the best of ways," Thea Trinidad, who lost her father in the attacks, said before reading victims' names at the ceremony.

Bruce Springsteen and Broadway actors Kelli O'Hara and Chris Jackson sang at the commemoration, but by tradition, no politicians spoke there. In a video released Friday night, Biden addressed the continuing pain of loss but also spotlighted what he called the "central lesson" of Sept. 11:

"that at our most vulnerable ... unity is our greatest strength."

Biden was also scheduled to pay respects at the two other sites where the 9/11 conspirators crashed the jets: the Pentagon and a field near Shanksville, Pa. Together, the attacks killed nearly 3,000 people.

At the Pennsylvania site — where passengers and crew fought to regain control of a plane believed to have been targeted at the U.S. Capitol or the White House — former President George W. Bush said Sept. 11 showed that Americans can come together despite their differences.

"So much of our politics has become a naked appeal to anger, fear and resentment," said the president who was in office on 9/11. "On America's day of trial and grief, I

saw millions of people instinctively grab their neighbor's hand and rally to the cause of one another. That is the America I know."

"It is the truest version of ourselves. It is what we have been and what we can be again."

Calvin Wilson said a polarized country has "missed the message" of the heroism of the flight's passengers and crew, which included his brother-in-law, LeRoy Homer.

"We don't focus on the damage. We don't focus on the hate. We don't focus on retaliation. We don't focus on revenge," Wilson said before the ceremony. "We focus on the good that all of our loved ones have done."

Former President Donald Trump planned to be in New York, in addition to providing commentary at a boxing match in Florida in

the evening.

Other observances — from a wreath-laying in Portland, Maine, to a fire engine parade in Guam — were planned across a country now full of 9/11 plaques, statues and commemorative gardens.

In the aftermath of the attacks, security was redefined, with changes to airport checkpoints, police practices and the government's surveillance powers. For years afterward, virtually any sizeable explosion, crash or act of violence seemed to raise a dire question: "Is it terrorism?" Some ideological violence and plots did follow, though federal officials and the public have lately become increasingly concerned with threats from domestic extremists after years of focusing on international terror groups in the wake of 9/11.



JOHN MINCHILLO/AP

A mourner wipes tears from her eyes as she stands beside the the south pool during ceremonies to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks Saturday in New York.



GENE J. PUSKAR/AP

A National Park Service Ranger pauses in a moment of silence in front of the Wall of Names at the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pa. before a Service of Remembrance Saturday.



KRISTOPHER RADDER, THE BRATTLEBORO REFORMER/AP

Area firefighters walked the streets of Bellows Falls, Vt., on Saturday, in the second annual "Walk to Remember" to honor the 343 New York City firefighters who died on Sept. 11, 2001.

New York faced questions early on about whether it could ever recover from the blow to its financial hub and restore a feeling of safety among the crowds and skyscrapers. New Yorkers ultimately rebuilt a more populous and prosperous city but had to reckon with the tactics of an empowered post-9/11 police department and a widened gap between haves and have-nots.

A "war on terror" led to invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, where the longest U.S. war ended last month with a hasty, massive airlift punctuated by a suicide bombing that killed 169 Afghans and 13 American service members and was attributed to a branch of the Islamic State. The U.S. is now concerned that al-Qaida, the terror network behind 9/11, may regroup in Afghanistan, where the Taliban flag once again flew over the presidential palace on Saturday.

Two decades after helping to triage and treat injured colleagues at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, retired Army Col. Malcolm Bruce Westcott is saddened and frustrated by the continued threat of terrorism.

"I always felt that my generation, my military cohort, would take care of it — we wouldn't pass it on to anybody else," said Westcott, of Greensboro, Ga. "And we passed it on."

At ground zero, some victims' relatives thanked the troops who fought in Afghanistan. But Melissa Pullis — who lost her husband, Edward, and whose son Edward Jr. is serving on the USS Ronald Reagan — said she was "just happy all the troops are out of Afghanistan."

"We can't lose any more military. We don't even know why we're fighting, and 20 years went down the drain," she said.

Amid the hourslong reading of the victims' names, relatives — at this point, many of them too young to have known their lost kin — spoke in English, Spanish and other languages of lives cut short, milestones missed and a loss that still feels immediate. Several also pleaded for a return of the shared experience and common purpose that surged for a time after Sept. 11 but soon gave way.

The quest to understand the catastrophic toll of the attacks prompted changes in building design and emergency communications, but it also spurred conspiracy theories that seeded a culture of skepticism. Muslim Americans endured suspicion, surveillance and hate crimes. Schisms and resentments grew over immigration, the balance between tolerance and vigilance, the meaning of patriotism, the proper way to honor the dead, and the scope of a promise to "never forget."

20 YEARS AFTER 9/11

Service: Attack inspired many to join US military

FROM PAGE 1

war,” recalled Maynard, now an Army sergeant first class at Fort Stewart, Ga. “Then, it was just silence.”

“And I was shocked,” he said. “I think shock would probably be the best way to put it. Like, how could this happen? Like, how did nobody see this coming? I think some people were scared, but, I think really, we were all just shocked, because we just didn’t — none of us expected that to happen.”

Maynard was inspired to enlist in large part by his grandfather’s World War II service, fighting in the Battle of the Bulge. But the peacetime Army that he joined no longer existed. The 9/11 terrorist attacks would drive Maynard’s now 20-year Army career, including a combat tour in Iraq. And it would motivate many of the 3 million or so Americans who served during the last two decades, according to the Costs of War project run by Brown University’s Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs.

In the weeks after the 9/11 attacks, former President George W. Bush would send American troops into Afghanistan, quickly toppling the Taliban, a hardline Islamic group that the United States accused of harboring the al-Qaida terrorists who launched the attacks on America, and began a search for Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaida who would be killed nearly a decade later.

In 2003, Bush ordered an American invasion of Iraq, which he accused of harboring weapons of mass destruction and supporting terrorists, expanding his Global War on Terror into a second country. After quickly toppling Iraqi President Saddam Hussein’s regime, U.S. troops would spend subsequent years fighting terrorists, including al-Qaida fighters and, later, the Islamic State.

The Costs of War project estimates between 1.8 million and 3 million troops served in those wars, many having fought in both countries.

For Maynard, 38, the attacks and the ensuing wars they spawned were at least partially responsible for his decision to serve the 20 years typically required for retirement benefits.

“We’re at war, whether we like it or not, and somebody has to do it,” he said of his decision to make a career out of soldiering during wartime. “So I can ... sit around asking who’s going to go, or I can raise my hand and say, ‘Here I am. Send me.’ I think that was the big part of why I chose to stay, to remain in the Army.”

For some others, the 9/11 attacks would drive them to recruiting sta-



SAMUEL GRAVES II

Army Staff Sgt. Samuel Graves II pictured during a combat deployment to Afghanistan in 2013, his third combat tour after enlisting in the Army in 2003. Graves said he was partially inspired to enlist by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

tions, as the United States for a short time would see an uptick in Americans interested in military service and the willingness of higher-qualified candidates to enlist.

Studies by the Rand Corp., the Heritage Foundation and the Congressional Budget Office in recent years all show an increase in 2002 in military recruits’ aptitude test scores, a temporary boost that Beth Asch, a RAND economist who has studied military recruiting for decades, said can likely be attributed to 9/11 and the patriotism it inspired. More candidates were showing up to recruiting stations with high school diplomas and often from higher-income families in areas that had not typically been producing military recruits during peacetime, she said.

But that would only last two to three years.

“There was like a 9/11-effect early on with recruiting in terms of an increase in interest in joining the military and an increase in quality of enlistment, but it shortly reverted back to normal levels,” Asch said.

Driven to serve

Those driven to military service by the 9/11 attacks came from many backgrounds, and often had previously considered enlistment but never fully committed, according to studies by Rand and individuals who served.

Army Sgt. First Class Brandon Harris was taking a test at his high school in Union Town, Ind., when



BRANDON HARRIS

Brandon Harris, left, is pictured in Baghdad, Iraq, during his first combat deployment in 2006. Harris, now a sergeant first class, enlisted right after graduating high school in 2004, inspired largely by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

the World Trade Center towers fell. As a 15-year-old sophomore, he recalled initial confusion after his teachers explained what had occurred in New York and at the Pentagon.

“It took me a while to wrap my head around what was actually going on,” recalled Harris, who has served five deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan as a combat engineer. “And after that it was anger.”

Joining the military “was always a thought” for Harris, but 9/11 provided the push he needed to enlist right after graduating high school in 2004. Without that catalyst, he said, he “probably would have went to college first.” Harris, 35, is certain he would not have made the Army a career without 9/11 and the combat operations that it spawned.

For Samuel L. Graves II, 9/11 probably changed the trajectory of his life, he said. Graves, now a staff sergeant at Fort Stewart, was a construction worker near his hometown of Chesapeake, Va., when the U.S. homeland was attacked.

He said he had not considered the military before 9/11, but just more than a year later in early 2003 he enlisted in the Army. Later that year, he was deployed to Iraq.

The attacks and a desire to make a change in his life drove him to enlist in the Army, said Graves, a veteran of two tours in Iraq and another in Afghanistan.

“Half patriotic, half changing the lifestyle I was living,” Graves, 40, said of his motivation.

While Graves joined the Army seeking a stable lifestyle, Harris, his battle buddy in the 3rd Infantry Division’s 1st Armored Brigade Combat, admitted he was motivated in part by 9/11. He wanted to fight.

“It’s this kind of be careful what you wish for sort of thing, right?”

Harris said. “But it was something I wanted to do, that I felt like I needed to do.”

By December 2005, he’d find the opportunity, when he was deployed for the first time to Iraq. He’d follow with two more Iraq deployments and two to Afghanistan.

Analysts said the desire to avenge the 9/11 attacks had waned among potential military recruits by 2005. With national headlines focused on the intensifying combat in Iraq and increases in U.S. casualty rates, fewer high-quality candidates were expressing interest in the military, Asch said. The 9/11-inspired recruiting boon was already over.

The Army missed its 2005 recruiting goal by almost 7,000. And the caliber of those it was enlisting fell, she said, noting the military services were increasingly using waivers to take in lower-quality candidates, including an uptick in those with past legal issues.

Recruiting would recover in the coming years, sparked largely by the 2008 economic downturn and increasing incentives offered by the Army and other military services, Asch said. The 9/11 attacks and fighting the wars spawned by them were rarely cited as a major motivator for military recruits, research by Rand and others showed.

Recruiting shifts

Maynard served as a recruiter in the Memphis, Tenn., area from 2007 to 2009, as Bush first surged forces into Iraq and later former President Barack Obama ordered his own surge of troops into Afghanistan.

It was a difficult time to recruit, Maynard said. He found some individuals were still somewhat motivated by the 9/11 attacks, but most were looking for a good job,

even if it meant combat.

“They still wanted to join the Army because they wanted to do their part,” Maynard said. “But, you could see that the desire to serve and do your part to help the nation win the war — you could see that was really starting to wane by that point.”

By the mid-2000s, Rand research showed most recruits were driven by the promise of steady jobs with benefits and, in many cases, large enlistment bonuses, Asch said. Military recruiting until recent years has remained fairly steady.

But when the Army missed its recruiting mark in 2018 for the first time since falling short in 2005, it served as a wake-up call to many at the Pentagon, officials said. The military needed to tailor recruiting efforts to a new generation of young men and women who have grown up in an increasingly digital world, and who were too young to remember the 9/11 attacks or were not even born yet.

The Army — and the other military services — have spent recent years revamping how they recruit, trying to reach Generation Z members, which is defined by the Pew Research Center as those born after 1996. So recruiting focused more on social media, video game streaming platforms and internet-based video services.

The newest generation has unprecedented access to information about the military that even those as recently as two decades ago could not have found quickly and easily online, said Army Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, the commander of U.S. Army Recruiting Command. And while those who joined around 9/11 felt called to fight for their country, the service’s newest recruits tell the Army they are

SEE RECRUIT ON PAGE 6

20 YEARS AFTER 9/11

Pentagon leaders honor lives lost in attack

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon's 9/11 observance ceremony on Saturday morning began with reading the names of the 184 victims of the attack on the building, the clang of a ship bell punctuating each one.

It took 20 minutes to read all the names. It took 20 years to end the war in Afghanistan that the attacks provoked.

The Pentagon was one of the targets hit by commercial jets hijacked by al-Qaida terrorists the morning of Sept. 11, 2001. At about 9:37 a.m., American Airlines Flight 77 slammed into the Pentagon — the third of four hijackings that day that killed a total of 2,996 people in New York, Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon.

Of those who died in the attack at the Pentagon, 125 were Defense Department employees.

"Today, we remember not just who our fallen teammates were, but the mission that they shared," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said at the ceremony. "And we recall their common commitment to defend our republic and to squarely face new dangers."

The ceremony took place at the Pentagon memorial at the side of the building that was destroyed in the attack. It remains closed to the public because of the ongoing pandemic but opened briefly for the event.

Saturday was the first 9/11 since the attacks in which no U.S. service



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Attendees stand and a couple embraces near the end of an observance ceremony at the Pentagon in Washington on Saturday on the morning of the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks.

members were on the ground in Afghanistan. The final American troops left Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, on Aug. 30, concluding nearly two decades of war in that country.

Austin reflected on the time that passed since the attacks and the great losses of life, noting that the war ended how it started — with American bloodshed. Eleven Ma-

rines, a sailor and a soldier were killed Aug. 26 when an Islamic State suicide bomber detonated an explosive vest and gunmen fired on crowds outside the Kabul airport where U.S. and coalition troops were evacuating Americans and vulnerable Afghans.

"Now, almost a quarter of the citizens who we defend today were born after 9/11," Austin said. "Many

of the 13 brave men and women who, just days ago, gave their lives to save others in Afghanistan were babies back in September 2001."

Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke to the brokenhearted still reeling from losses in Afghanistan and 9/11, calling the last two decades "incredibly emotional, exhausting and trying years."

"We are all now, this very day, very conflicted with feelings of pain and anger, sorrow and sadness, combined with pride and resilience," he said. "But one thing I have certain for every soldier, sailor, airman, Marine ... You did your duty. Your service mattered. Your sacrifice was not in vain."

Milley also expressed continuing defiance against al-Qaida, the Islamic State and the Taliban, which returned to power in Afghanistan last month after the U.S. drove the group out in 2001.

"They tried to destroy us. They tried to divide us. They tried ultimately in vain to terrify us, but their murderous intent was never realized," he said. "While we grieve for our fallen, we celebrate the lives they led, their legacies live in the idea that is America. And no terrorist anywhere on Earth can ever destroy that idea."

As Austin closed the ceremony, he thanked the crowd of survivors and victims' loved ones "for all you who have given, and for the inspiration that you provide."

"We still work here, we still remember here, we still uphold our values here," he said. "The hallways that we tread were the ones that so many of them walked. It will always be our duty to fulfill their missions, to live up to their goodness, and to stand guard over this democracy."

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Recruit: New generation of service members pave way for future

FROM PAGE 5

largely driven by the desire to serve something larger or make the world a better place, the general said.

"After 9/11, this call to serve didn't take much, because people wanted to do something, and we had a large amount of prior service folks wanting to come back on active duty or wanting to and deploy to fight," Vereen said. "Today it is more challenging and we have to be creative. But, I think as long as we understand who our population is — that 17 to 30, 34 year old — it's nothing that we can't accomplish. We have to stay in the cusp of change, and as long as we do that we'll be OK."

Leading Gen Z

For those who have served since 9/11 or shortly after, the two decades of deployments, noncombat overseas assignments, training rotations and high-demand jobs that keep troops from their families has taken its toll, Maynard, Harris and Graves all agreed.

Maynard, who entered boot camp just one month before 9/11, plans to move shortly to a new as-

"They want real people with real experiences telling them the truth about the Army, and we're trying to do that."

Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen
U.S. Army

signment at Fort Benning, Ga., and intends to retire in the coming years to spend more time with his wife and two daughters.

Graves plans to retire to Florida after serving two more years. He plans to spend more time with his wife, who is a school teacher, and their three children.

"You know I gave 20 years to the military," he said. "And, now I want to enjoy my family, you know, just because I wasn't deployed in combat, I was always gone somewhere. I really want to try and get as much family time as I can. I owe that to them."

Harris has three more years until he reaches 20 years of service. He also plans to retire shortly after reaching that benchmark to

spend more time with his wife and two kids.

"My daughter's getting older, she'll be 11 or 12 when I retire," he said. "I want to be able to see her do whatever she wants to do. I want to be around for that. I want to be able to coach my son's sports teams, you know all these things that I don't necessarily have the option to do right now."

The noncommissioned officers, who now oversee the new generation of soldiers early in their careers, said they can see some differences in the troops they are trying to shape.

The new generation of soldiers is smarter, Harris and Graves said. They are more tech savvy and comfortable questioning the

status quo, they added. They want to make the world better, said Vereen, the general in charge of Army recruiting. And, they expect the older generation to be honest with them about the Army and the world in which they are serving, he said.

"They want the truth," Vereen said. "They don't want you to lie to them, and they want to feel comfortable that we are telling them the truth ... from real people, not just some slogan on a billboard. They want real people with real experiences telling them the truth about the Army, and we're trying to do that."

The new troops have few, if any, opportunities to see combat now as the United States pulled its forces last month from Afghanistan and those serving in places such as Iraq and Syria primarily work to train local troops and rarely see fighting.

"But that's all I want to do because they hear us old timers talking about war stories and what we've done" in Iraq and Afghanistan, Graves said. "I don't think they realize what war does to you. But they still have that fire, and

that's what they want to do."

Maynard said his soldiers also want fight. But they don't want to fight the wars of the last 20 years.

"It's just not a motivator for them," he said of 9/11. The 2001 terrorist attacks for many are just something they learn in history class, like he learned about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

"[Sept. 11, 2001] to them is like Dec. 7, 1941, to me," Maynard said. "It happened a long time ago. I understand the importance of it, and I think they get it about 9/11. But to them, that's ancient history."

In an Army that has seen two decades of constant war, the new generation brings an "innocence" the military has not seen since 9/11, Maynard said. He tries to drive home to his young soldiers the importance of preparing for whatever the next threat might be.

"That's where this generation of soldiers is at — they're on Sept. 10, 2001," he said. "They haven't seen Sept. 11 yet — not their Sept. 11."

"I hope to God they don't ever have to see it."

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AFGHANISTAN

Taliban cabinet lineup sends conflicting message

By KATHY GANNON
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Reminiscent of their previous harsh rule in the 1990s, the Taliban have already begun to wipe out some of Afghanistan's gains of 20 years. They've denied women a seat at the cabinet, beaten journalists into silence and enforced their severe interpretation of Islam, on occasion violently.

And yet there seems little the international community can do about it.

The world will need to engage with the Taliban to some extent, despite disappointment with the new all-Taliban cabinet that defied earlier promises it would be inclusive.

The U.S. needs Taliban cooperation to evacuate the remaining Americans and to fight an increasingly brazen Islamic State affiliate, considered the greatest terrorist threat against America emanating from Afghanistan. In recent weeks, the ISIS flag has been seen flying from several districts of the eastern province of Nangarhar.

Meanwhile, a humanitarian disaster that threatens millions of Afghans has the world scrambling to respond. On most days, Qatar is flying in food and medical supplies. Pakistan has announced it is sending planeloads of aid to Afghanistan.

The United Nations has launched a \$606 million emergency appeal to help nearly 11 million people in Afghanistan, or nearly one-third of the population. They are deemed to be in desperate need as a result of drought, displacement, chronic poverty and a sharp increase in hostilities as the Taliban swept to power last month.

Even before the Taliban takeover, nearly half the population needed some humanitarian aid



Taliban fighters sit in a pickup truck at the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, Thursday.

BERNAT ARMANGUE/AP

ANALYSIS

and more than half of all children under the age of 5 were expected to face acute malnutrition, according to the U.N. report that accompanied the emergency appeal.

The economic challenges are steep. Most Afghans live on less than \$2 a day, 80% of the country's budget was covered by international funds over the past 20 years, and no industries of note have emerged to provide employment to a mostly young population. Tens of thousands of Afghans have fled, most of them members of the educated elite.

Yet despite such dependence on international support, the Taliban sent a message with their cabinet lineup last week that they intend to run Afghanistan on their terms. They named a government filled with veterans of their 1990s rule and the subsequent insur-

gency against a U.S.-led military coalition. Their cabinet includes former Guantanamo Bay prisoners and — perhaps one of the most eyebrow-raising appointments — Sirajuddin Haqqani, wanted by the FBI for questioning in several deadly attacks, as interior minister.

They also forbade protests without prior authorization in a new attempt to silence dissent and reportedly banned some women's sports.

The Taliban would seem to want it both ways — to run Afghanistan according to their harsh interpretation of Islam, while maintaining some level of cooperation with the international community.

In portraying their cabinet as a caretaker administration, the Taliban signaled there is still room for change and that other nations can do business with this government without recognizing it first.

In a three-page policy state-

ment that accompanied the formation of the government, the Taliban also addressed concerns of the region and the larger world. They promised Afghanistan would not be used as a staging arena for attacks on other countries. They said they would not interfere in the affairs of other nations and demanded the same in return. And they pledged to allow Afghans to leave the country, provided they have the proper travel documents.

"I imagine the use of the term 'caretaker' is very strategic," said Michael Kugelman, deputy director of the Asia Program at the U.S.-based Wilson Center. "The idea is to create an impression that at some point the government will change and become more inclusive, and therefore more amenable to the West."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, directing his words at the Taliban, warned Wednesday that "any legitimacy, any support will have to be earned." He spoke after hosting a virtual meeting of ministers from 22 countries as well as NATO and the European Union.

It's unlikely, however, that the Taliban's top leadership will change anytime soon. Its tens of thousands of fighters will have to be brought under a single Afghan National Security Force banner, even integrating some of the previous military personnel into the mix. But that won't happen without the likes of Haqqani, the new interior minister, or the Taliban founder's son Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob, the defense minister.

In time, economic necessity might prompt the Taliban to loosen their grip and allow women and non-Taliban into the administration, but likely in secondary roles. For women, this might mean work in the traditional

fields of health and education.

The Taliban "need to open the door and trust non-Taliban in governance. They need to bring technocrats ASAP to get the economy going," said Torek Farhadi, an adviser to previous Afghan governments.

The Taliban face a number of challenges to their rule.

Prolonged economic stagnation could lead to protests by the country's growing poor who might eventually decide they have little to lose by openly challenging the hard-line rulers. Afghans of 2021 are not the compliant population of 1996 — a time when the Taliban had little trouble imposing their uncompromising edicts.

There are also debates and differences within the movement and no one among the Taliban has absolute authority, unlike in the past, under the late founder Mullah Mohammad Omar who had the final word.

The West and Afghanistan's regional neighbors hope to use money and recognition as leverage to influence the Taliban.

Wednesday's ministerial meeting signaled that the U.S. and Europe will be watching the Taliban closely.

Kugelman, from the Wilson Center, said others, such as Pakistan, China and Russia, might eventually set a lower bar for formal recognition of a new Afghan government.

China has already promised to stay engaged and mine Afghanistan's vast mineral resources while helping rebuild the war-ravaged nation. Still, Kugelman said, the Taliban badly need access to billions of dollars in foreign reserves that the West has denied them.

"The announcement of its very non-inclusive cabinet will put those funds further out of reach," he said.

UN raises alarm on Taliban crackdown on dissent, media

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The United Nations on Friday sounded the alarm over Taliban crackdowns on peaceful protests, many of them by women demanding equal rights, and journalists covering such events.

In one case, two Afghan video journalists were beaten with iron rods.

Tagi Daryabi, 22, said he and a colleague were covering a protest last week by women demanding their rights from Afghanistan's new Taliban rulers. Taliban fighters stopped the two journalists, bound their hands and dragged them away to a police station in Kabul's District Three.

The photographer told The As-

sociated Press that the first thing he heard in the station were screams from a nearby room. Several fighters then began beating him and his colleague, Neamatullah Naqdi, 28.

At one point, Daryabi said he was beaten non-stop for 10 minutes. "I couldn't think. I didn't know if I would be killed or if I would live," he said, his face and body still bearing the scars.

"We call on the Taliban to immediately cease the use of force toward, and the arbitrary detention of, those exercising their right to peaceful assembly and the journalists covering the protests," the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a statement Friday.

It said reports point to an increasing use of force by the Taliban "against those involved in or reporting on the demonstrations."

Uncowed, Daryabi said he would return to the street to cover another protest.

"It's very dangerous for me to stand up to them. The Taliban say the media is free, but how can they say that when they are beating me and my colleagues?" he said. "We cannot just stop our work."

Daryabi and Naqdi work for the small, privately owned Etilaat Roz newspaper, which also broadcasts video news on a YouTube channel.

Daryabi's newspaper and other media houses say it's not clear whether the heavy handedness of some local police commanders is

sanctioned by the Taliban's media wing. That office has shown a more engaging side, welcoming foreign journalists, and allowing some women presenters to remain on the air at the country's most popular TV station, TOLO TV.

"My own feeling is that there seems to be a disconnect between the leadership and ... the rank-and-file type commanders, who are doing this on the ground," said Saad Mohsini, executive director of Moby Media Group, which owns TOLO TV. "The way they behave reflects perhaps, not the official Taliban media policy, but more the attitude of that particular commander."

Etilaat Roz chief editor Khaa-

dim Karimi, who went to the police station to rescue his reporters, said one Taliban fighter tried to stop the beating of the two journalists by his comrades.

"I saw his humanness. He tried to help," Karimi said. Daryabi and Naaqdi were freed after about four hours.

Mohsini said the media needs guarantees and protection. He called for a commission including both the Taliban information ministry officials and representatives of the media to hear complaints from both sides.

Mohsini, whose TOLO TV employs hundreds, says he has stayed engaged with the Taliban leadership as it navigates its way forward.

AFGHANISTAN

US gives public look inside base housing evacuees

By FARNOUSH AMIRI
Report for America/AP

FORT BLISS, Texas — The Biden administration on Friday provided the first public look inside a U.S. military base where Afghans airlifted out of Afghanistan are being screened, amid questions about how the government is caring for the refugees and vetting them.

“Every Afghan who is here with us has endured a harrowing journey and they are now faced with the very real challenges of acclimating with life in the United States,” Liz Gracon, a senior State Department official, told reporters.

The three-hour tour at Fort Bliss Army base in El Paso, Texas, was the first time the media has been granted broad access to one of the eight U.S. military installations housing Afghans.

But even so, reporters, including those with The Associated Press, were not allowed to talk with any evacuees or spend more than a few minutes in areas where they were gathered, with military officials citing “privacy concerns.”

Nearly 10,000 Afghan evacuees are staying at the base while they undergo medical and security checks before being resettled in the United States. The operation was described by officials at the Department of Homeland Security and Department of State as a “historic” and “unprecedented” effort to facilitate the relocation of a huge number of refugees in less

than a month’s time.

On Friday, Afghan children with soccer balls and basketballs played outside large white tents. Families walked down a dirt driveway with stacks of plastic food containers piled under their chins and Coca-Cola cans under their arms. One young girl, still wearing dirty clothing, cried in the middle of the road after her food spilled and soldiers attempted to help her. Inside the containers, which refugees had spent around 15 minutes in line for in the blistering sun, were traditional Afghan meals of basmati rice and hearty stew.

The U.S. government spent two weeks building what it calls a village to house the Afghans on the base. It is a sprawling area with scores of air-conditioned tents used as dormitories and dining halls on scrubby dirt lots, a landscape that in some ways resembled parts of the homeland they fled.

Under the program called “Operation Allies Welcome,” some 50,000 Afghans are expected to be admitted to the United States, including translators, drivers and others who helped the U.S. military during the 20-year war and who feared reprisals by the Taliban after they quickly seized power last month.

Nearly 130,000 were airlifted out of Afghanistan in one of the largest mass evacuations in U.S. history. Many of those people are still in transit, undergoing security vetting and screening in other



PHOTOS BY DAVID GOLDMAN/AP

Afghan refugees line up for food outside a dining hall at Fort Bliss' Dona Ana Village where they are being housed in Chaparral, N.M., Friday.



A child looks over artwork made by kids in a tent at Fort Bliss, where Afghan refugees are being housed in Chaparral, N.M., Friday.

countries, including Germany, Spain, Kuwait and Qatar.

Members of Congress have questioned whether the screening is thorough enough. Many of the Afghans who worked for the

U.S. government had undergone years of vetting before they were hired, and then again to apply for a special immigrant visa for U.S. allies.

After they are released from

the base, they will be aided by resettlement agencies in charge of placing the refugees. The agencies give priority to places where the refugees either have family already in the United States or there are Afghan immigrant communities with the resources to help them start a new life in a foreign land. Those with American citizenship or green cards are able to leave once arriving at the base, according to a State Department representative.

If other evacuees — whose release is dependent on completing health protocols mandated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — choose to leave prior to the full resettlement period, that may be used against them.

So far, no one at Fort Bliss has been released for resettlement.

The Pentagon has said all evacuees are tested for COVID-19 upon arriving at Dulles International Airport outside Washington.

Flights: Halt affects transit sites at bases in Qatar, Germany

FROM PAGE 1

The development had American officials overseas Friday removing from planes Afghan families who already had struggled through a grueling, dangerous escape to safety after Kabul fell to the Taliban on Aug. 15. Afghans faced Taliban checkpoints and crushing crowds to enter the Kabul airport. A suicide attack at an airport gate killed 169 Afghans and 13 U.S. military members.

The government document viewed by The Associated Press said the halt would “severely impact” operations at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, one of the biggest transit sites. It also said U.S.-bound flights would stop from the U.S. al-Udeid base in Qatar.

Many thousands of Afghan evacuees airlifted out of Kabul are still en route to new homes in the United States. Some face relocation for further screening in Kosovo.

The government document said the flight halt announced Friday would also have an “adverse effect” on the nearly 10,000 evacuees at Ramstein. It noted many have been there more than 10 days and are increasingly fatigued.

Germany had set a 10-day limit for Afghans to stay at the U.S. base, but the time has appeared more as a guideline than a hard deadline. Some German politicians and media grumbled when some Afghans asked for asylum after reaching Germany.

Germany and Qatar, along with Italy, Spain, Kosovo, Kuwait and other countries, agreed to temporarily host U.S. processing sites for evacuees after Kabul fell, after allies initially balked over worries of getting stuck with U.S. security problems. Refugee groups have criticized the Biden administration for not bringing the Afghan evacuees to U.S. territory for screening.

Processing at many of the transit sites largely appears to be taking place in a peaceful and orderly fashion.

It was not clear Friday if the halt would affect evacuation flights from Kabul itself. Friday was only the second day that the Taliban have allowed evacuation

flights to leave the country, after the frantic U.S. military-led airlifts ended with the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan on Aug. 30.

National Security Council spokeswoman Emily Horne said Friday that 32 Americans and U.S. green-card holders had left Afghanistan on Friday, 19 on a Qatar Airways flight and 13 others by land.

The U.S. government believes about 100 American citizens remain in Afghanistan, a State Department spokeswoman, Jalina Porter, said.

It was the same number the U.S. had given before the week’s evacuation flights took out Americans. Porter said she could not

immediately explain why the number had not changed.

Vaccination campaigns prevent major measles outbreaks in the United States, but measles can be a deadly disease for adults and children in countries where violence or other obstacles block immunization. Hundreds of Afghan children have died of measles in some recent years.

Psaki said the United States was requiring measles vaccinations for entry to the United States, and that Afghans were receiving other immunizations at U.S. military bases before heading to new homes around the country. Officials were exploring vaccinating people while still overseas, she said.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

New vaccine rules ignite instant GOP opposition

BY JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden’s aggressive push to require millions of U.S. workers to get vaccinated against the coronavirus is running into a wall of resistance from Republican leaders threatening everything from lawsuits to civil disobedience, plunging the country deeper into culture wars that have festered since the onset of the pandemic.

In South Carolina, Gov. Henry McMaster says he will fight “to the gates of hell to protect the liberty and livelihood of every South Carolinian.” South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, a potential 2024 presidential candidate, says she is preparing a lawsuit. And J.D. Vance, a conservative running for a U.S. Senate seat in Ohio, is calling on businesses to ignore mandates he describes as Washington’s “attempt to bully and coerce citizens.”

“Only mass civil disobedience will save us from Joe Biden’s naked authoritarianism,” Vance says.

Biden is hardly backing down. In a visit to a school Friday, he accused the governors of being “cavalier” with the health of young Americans, and when asked about foes who would file legal challenges, he retorted, “Have at it.”

The opposition follows Biden’s announcement Thursday of a major plan to tame the coronavirus as the highly contagious Delta variant drives 1,500 deaths and 150,000 cases a day. Biden is mandating that all employers with more than 100 workers require their employees to be vaccinated or test for the virus weekly, affecting about 80 million Americans. Another 17 million workers at health facilities that receive federal Medicare or Medicaid also will have to be vaccinated, as will all employees of the executive branch and contractors who do business with the federal government.

The move brought Republican outrage from state capitals, Congress and the campaign trail, including from many who have supported vaccinations and have urged their constituents to take the shots.

“The vaccine itself is life-saving, but this unconstitutional move is terrifying,” tweeted Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves.



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP

President Joe Biden speaks at Brookland Middle School on Friday in Washington. Biden has encouraged every school district to promote vaccines, including with on-site clinics, to protect students as they return to school amid a resurgence of the coronavirus.

Texas Rep. Dan Crenshaw, who has promoted the vaccines’ safety to his constituents, said, “The right path is built upon explaining, educating and building trust, including explaining the risks/benefits/pros/cons in an honest way so a person can make their own decision.”

The pandemic is worsening in many of the states where governors are most loudly protesting the president’s actions. South Carolina, for example, is averaging more than 5,000 new cases per day and has the nation’s second-highest infection rate. A hospital system there started canceling elective surgeries last week to free staff to help with a crush of COVID-19 patients.

In a section of Idaho, overwhelmed hospitals have implemented new crisis standards to ration care for patients. And in Georgia, hospitals have been turning away ambulances bringing emergency or ICU patients.

“I am so disappointed that particularly some Republican governors have been so cavalier with the health of these kids, so cavalier with the health of their communities,” Biden said during his school visit.

“This isn’t a game.”

But Republicans and some union officials say the president is overreaching his constitutional authority. They take issue, in particular, with the idea that millions could lose their jobs if they refuse to take the shots.

“That’s a ridiculous choice,” said Mississippi Gov. Reeves.

Biden, however, says he’s doing what needs to be done to fight resistance that has continued despite months of encouragement and incentives. In his White House speech announcing the new measures, he was visibly frustrated, criticizing the remaining holdouts and accusing some elected officials of “actively working to undermine the fight against COVID-19.”

“Instead of encouraging people to get vaccinated and mask up, they’re ordering mobile morgues for the unvaccinated dying from COVID in their communities,” he said.

GOP pollster Frank Luntz, who has held focus groups and worked with the Biden administration to try to combat vaccine hesitance, says that, without further measures,

Biden is likely to see vaccinations top out at about 75% of the population.

“The only way to exceed that, which he needs to for herd immunity, is to mandate it,” Luntz said. “It will make a lot of people angry and even more resistant, but those who are simply hesitant will act now. He’s done the best he can under the circumstances.”

Still, many Republicans are unmoving and unforgiving, especially those who are running for office and see the issue as one that could motivate Republican voters to turn out in next year’s midterm elections.

Mike Gibbons, who is running for the U.S. Senate in Ohio, accused “Joe Biden and his Big Brother administration” of having “crossed into authoritarian territory.”

“The American people have a right to assess the risks and benefits of the vaccine and make the decision on what is best for themselves and their families,” he said. “That decision should be made by doctors and the individual, not the government.”

With the midterms coming, Drew McKissick, South Carolina’s GOP chairman, says he imagines Democrats in his state being tied to their party’s “radical liberal” policies.

“South Carolinians don’t take kindly to mandates. They never have,” McKissick said, arguing the national political tenor is “going to put (Democrats) more in a corner.”

But Steve Schale, a Democratic strategist who leads the pro-Biden super PAC Unite the Country, which has done polling showing support for mandates, said he’s not especially concerned about potential political backlash. He argued those who are most likely to be angered by the move are probably already Biden critics.

“Of all the things I worry about in the midterms,” he said, “that doesn’t scare me.”

White House spokesperson Jen Psaki also dismissed the blowback.

“Yes, we do see some loud vocal opponents of what the president announced yesterday. That’s not a surprise. It’s unfortunate, it’s disappointing, it’s sad because, ultimately, these steps will save lives,” she said, “but we remain confident in our ability to move the agenda forward.”

CDC finds unvaccinated 11 times more likely to die of COVID-19

Associated Press

New U.S. studies released Friday show the COVID-19 vaccines remain highly effective against hospitalizations and death even as the extra-contagious delta variant swept the country.

One study tracked over 600,000 COVID-19 cases in 13 states from April through mid-July. As delta surged in early summer, those who were unvaccinated were 4.5 times more likely than the fully vaccinated to get infected, over 10 times more likely to be hospitalized and 11 times more likely to die, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Vaccination works,” Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC’s director, told a White House briefing Friday. “The bottom line is this: We



JEFF AMY/AP

Protesters call for Georgia university administrators to mandate masks and vaccination at a “die-in” at Georgia State University, Thursday, in Atlanta.

have the scientific tools we need to turn the corner on this pandemic.”

But as earlier data has shown,

protection against coronavirus infection is slipping some: It was 91% in the spring but 78% in June and

July, the study found.

So-called “breakthrough” cases in the fully vaccinated accounted for 14% of hospitalizations and 16% of deaths in June and July, about twice the percentage as earlier in the year.

An increase in those percentages isn’t surprising: No one ever said the vaccines were perfect and health experts have warned that as more Americans get vaccinated, they naturally will account for a greater fraction of the cases.

Walensky said Friday that well over 90% of people in U.S. hospitals with COVID-19 are unvaccinated.

CDC released two other studies Friday that signaled hints of waning protection for older adults. One examined COVID-19 hospitalizations in nine states over the sum-

mer and found protection for those 75 and older was 76% compared to 89% for all other adults. And in five Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, protection against COVID-19 hospitalizations was 95% among 18- to 64-year-olds compared to 80% among those 65 and older.

It isn’t clear if the changes seen over time are because immunity is waning in people first vaccinated many months ago, that the vaccine isn’t quite as strong against delta — or that much of the country abandoned masks and other precautions just as delta started spreading.

But U.S. health authorities will consider this latest real-world data as they decide if at least some Americans need a booster, and how soon after their last dose.

NATION

Rain aids Calif. fire fight; storm sets off others

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Thunderstorms that dropped light rain gave some breathing room to crews struggling to quench California's massive wildfires but lightning sparked several new blazes in the drought-stricken north, fire officials said.

The storms that rolled through Thursday night into Friday were followed by weekend forecasts of clear weather and a warming trend in fire areas into next week.

The National Weather Service said there were more than 1,100 cloud-to-ground lightning strikes in California between Thursday evening and Friday morning. Fire officials said lightning strikes ignited at least 17 fires.

Firefighters were diverted from the huge Caldor Fire south of Lake Tahoe to fight multiple overnight lightning fires throughout El Dorado County, fire officials said. However, most of the blazes were kept to under 10 acres.

Three new fires were reported in Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks in steep, dense forest areas of the Sierra Nevada.

"Fire management officials in the parks believe the fires have spread potential and could affect operations in the coming days or weeks," a statement from the parks warned.

Up to a half-inch of rain fell on portions of the Dixie Fire, which began in mid-July and has burned through huge swaths of the northern Sierra Nevada and southern Cascades. The second-largest fire in California history has burned 1,490 square miles of land and

more than 1,300 homes and other buildings. It was 59% contained.

The rain wet tinder-dry vegetation and will cool down the fire for one or two days, which firefighters hoped to use to strengthen and expand fire lines in an effort to finally surround the blaze, fire officials said.

However, after a weekend of clear skies and light winds, a ridge of high pressure could bring a warming trend through next week, Jack Messick, incident meteorologist for the fire, said Friday evening.

The rain slowed down the fire but "once the sun gets on it, the wind's blowing on it, it eventually is going to pick up again and dry off enough and it's going to start running again," said Tony Brownell, an operations section chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The threat of new lightning-sparked fires came as more than 13,000 firefighters were working to rein in 13 major fires and more than 12,000 residents were still waiting to return to evacuated homes, according to state agencies.

The Caldor Fire, which at its peak forced 22,000 people to evacuate South Lake Tahoe and areas near the Nevada state line, was 53% contained after burning more than 341 square miles and destroying more than 1,000 structures, including hundreds of homes.

President Joe Biden will survey fire damage during a visit to California next week in which he will also campaign for Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat who faces a recall election on Tuesday.



MICHAEL SEARS, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL-SENTINEL/AP

Anissa Weier, one of two Wisconsin girls who tried to kill a classmate to win favor with a fictional horror character named Slender Man, is led into the Waukesha County Court for her sentencing hearing, in Waukesha, Wis., on Dec. 21, 2017.

Woman in Slender Man attack on classmate to be freed Monday

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — A Wisconsin woman who admitted to helping stab a classmate to please online horror character Slender Man will be freed Monday from a mental health institution under strict conditions, a judge ruled Friday.

Anissa Weier, 19, will be released after spending almost four years at the Winnebago Mental Health Institute in Oshkosh. A conditional release plan calls for her to live with her father, submit to around-the-clock GPS monitoring and receive psychiatric treatment, among other things. She won't be allowed to use the internet except at home, and the state Department of Corrections will monitor her online activity.

Weier and a friend, Morgan Geyser, both were committed to Winnebago after pleading guilty to attacking Payton Leutner when they were all 12 years old. Geyser

stabbed Leutner multiple times as Weier urged her on. Leutner suffered 19 stab wounds — including one that narrowly missed her heart — and barely survived.

Waukesha County Judge Michael Bohren said the conditions of Weier's release were fair and the plan "provides for the protection of the community" as well as for Leutner and for Weier herself.

Weier, dressed in a dark suit and smiling occasionally, said nothing during the 20-minute proceeding. The judge delayed her release until Monday after her attorney, Maura McMahan, said the mental health facility would be able to better process her release after the weekend.

"She looks forward to moving on into a productive life," McMahan told the judge.

Leutner's family declined to speak during the hearing. Leutner declined to comment when reac-

hed by phone later Friday afternoon.

As part of Weier's release conditions, a case manager will monitor her medication for post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and a personality disorder. Her cell-phone won't be able to access the internet, and she won't be allowed to use social media at all. She also won't be allowed to consume alcohol or drugs, enter a bar, possess a weapon or have any contact with Leutner or her family.

Deputy District Attorney Ted Szczupakiewicz said he had no objections to the release conditions.

The attack happened in May 2014, after Weier and Geyser invited Leutner to a sleepover. The next day they lured Leutner into the woods at a Waukesha park. Weier and Geyser left Leutner for dead, but she managed to crawl out of the woods and a passing bicyclist found her.

Judge loosens Apple's grip on app store in Epic decision

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE

Associated Press

SAN RAMON, Calif. — A federal judge ordered Apple to dismantle a lucrative part of the competitive barricade guarding its closely run iPhone app store, but rejected allegations that the company has been running an illegal monopoly that stifles competition and innovation.

The ruling issued Friday continues to chip away at the so-called "walled garden" that Apple has built around its crown jewel, the iPhone, and its app store, without toppling it completely.

The 185-page decision from U.S. District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers also provided Apple with some vindication. The judge didn't brand Apple as a monopolist or require it to allow competing stores to offer apps for iPhones, iPads and iPods.

Those were two of the biggest objectives sought by Epic Games, the maker of the popular Fortnite video game that filed what it would hoped would be a landmark antitrust case last year after brazenly defying an exclusive payment system that funnels 15% to 30% of all in-app digital transactions on iPhones to Apple.

Such transactions can include everything from Netflix or Spotify subscriptions to the sale of digital items such as songs, movies or virtual tchotchkes for video games. Epic cast that highly lucrative fee as a price-gouging tactic that wouldn't be possible if competing stores were allowed to offer iPhone apps.

While parts of her decision raised questions about whether Apple's fees were driving up prices for consumers, Gonzalez Rogers left the fee structure intact and upheld the company's right to block other stores from offering apps for its iPhone. She sided

with Apple on every other key point of the case.

But the judge did conclude Apple has been engaging in unfair competition under California law, prompting her to order the company to allow developers throughout the U.S. to insert links to other payment options besides its own within iPhone apps. That change would make it easier for app developers to avoid paying Apple's commissions, potentially affecting billions of dollars in revenue annually.

The prospect of Apple taking a hit to its lofty profit margins rattled investors, causing the com-

pany's stock price to fall by more than 3% in Friday's trading. That downturn delivered an \$80 billion blow to Apple's market value.

Yet Apple did its best to frame the decision as a complete victory, even as it acknowledged it may appeal the portion of the ruling that will make it easier for app developers to sidestep Apple's commissions.

"We are very pleased with the court's ruling and we consider this a huge win for Apple," said Kate Adams, the company's general counsel. "This decision validates that Apple's 'success is not illegal,' as the judge said."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Fetuses at funeral home were university collection

ID POCATELLO — Police say the remains of roughly 50 fetuses found at a Pocatello, Idaho, funeral home were part of a biological collection that Idaho State University provided to the funeral home for cremation in 2017.

The fetuses and at least 12 other decomposing bodies were discovered at the Downard Funeral Home after a state health inspector alerted police. Investigators have been working to identify the remains.

The business was previously in charge of donating cadavers to Idaho State University for scientific study, but the relationship ended last year after the university had stopped receiving donations for a time. ISU spokesperson Stuart Summers said in a statement that the fetuses recovered from Downard Funeral Home were part of a decades-old biology collection showing fetal development, and that the collection had been brought to the funeral home for cremation four years ago, the Idaho State Journal reported.



BRETT COOMER, HOUSTON CHRONICLE/AP

Tiny state music history museum now open

VT BURLINGTON — A new museum dedicated to Vermont's musical heritage is now open in Burlington.

The Tiny Museum of Vermont Music History opened during the first day of the annual South End Art Hop, the Burlington Free Press reported.

The museum on Howard Street is a permanent addition to the headquarters of the nonprofit group Big Heavy World, which promotes and preserves Vermont-made music.

The museum features photographs, posters, instruments and even menus from old venues, the newspaper reported.

Woman who missed flight says bomb on plane

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — A Chicago woman falsely claimed a bomb was on a plane at a South Florida airport after missing her flight, authorities said.

The woman, 46, was arrested at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport and charged with falsely reporting a bomb, explosive or weapon of mass destruction, according to a Broward Sheriff's Office news release.

Airline employees told responding deputies that the woman had stated that a bomb was in her checked-in luggage that was aboard a plane, officials said. She made the claim after workers told her that she and her party had arrived too late to board the plane, detectives said.

No explosives were found, officials said.

Hands on the horse

Meador Elementary School students pet a horse visiting the school with the 3rd Annual Pasadena Rodeo Round-Up Ride Thursday in Houston.

State names 8th grade instructor teacher of year

WV CHARLESTON — A Cabell County instructor has been named the West Virginia teacher of the year.

Brian Casto was recognized along with School Service Personnel of the Year Katherine Miller during a ceremony at the Culture Center in Charleston.

Casto teaches West Virginia studies to eighth graders at Milton Middle School. He creates lessons and two-minute animated videos that preserve the state's history and culture, the Department of Education said in a news release.

Casto will receive a car to use in teacher of the year activities along with thousands in cash prizes from various groups.

Police want state probe after man dies in custody

AL HUNTSVILLE — Huntsville police are asking state law officers to investigate the circumstances of a man who died while in their custody.

Huntsville officers were investigating a report of a stolen vehicle and encountered the man, who tried to run from police but was taken into custody, police said.

Police say he showed signs of a possible drug overdose, and paramedics were called to treat him. He later died at a hospital.

Huntsville police have asked the Alabama Law Enforcement Agen-

THE CENSUS

\$20K

The approximate amount in claims from customers of New Castle, Del.-based Totaltranslogistics LLC. for items missing from shipments or never delivered, according to a company official. Per an unsealed FBI affidavit, Delaware state trooper Jamal J. Merrell, 31, is a suspect in the investigation into the thefts from the company, which specializes in shipping packages to the country of Georgia. According to the affidavit, employees reported that Merrell had visited the company at least 10 times beginning in February. He told employees during his first visit that he was conducting an investigation and that he would need to inspect packages.

cy's State Bureau of Investigation to investigate, WHNT-TV reported.

Spinal device company charged with bribing docs

MA BOSTON — A Massachusetts spinal device company and two of its top executives have been charged with carrying out a scheme to bribe surgeons to use the company's products, federal prosecutors said.

SpineFrontier, Inc.'s chief executive officer and chief financial officer are accused of conspiring to pay millions of dollars in bribes disguised as consulting fees to surgeons in exchange for the surgeons using the manufacturer's products, according to court documents.

Authorities say the company paid the surgeons between \$250 and \$1,000 per hour. They often determined how much to pay the doctors based on the number of procedures they performed and the amount of money those procedures made for the company, prosecutors say.

The company's chief executive officer and founder, Kingsley R. Chin of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and its chief financial officer, Aditya Humad of Cambridge, Mass. face charges including conspiracy to violate the anti-kickback statute and conspiracy to commit money laundering. The Malden, Mass.-based company has also been charged.

State moves to outlaw 'stealth' of condoms

CA SACRAMENTO — California lawmakers moved to make the state the first to outlaw "stealthing," which is removing a condom without permission during intercourse.

Legislators sent Gov. Gavin Newsom a bill adding the act to the state's civil definition of sexual battery. It makes it illegal to remove the condom without obtaining verbal consent.

But it doesn't change the criminal code. Instead, it would amend the civil code so that a victim could sue the perpetrator for damages, including punitive damages.

Democratic Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia has been pushing for the legislation since 2017, when a Yale University study said acts of stealthing were increasing against both women and gay men. Her original bill attempted to make it a crime.

Police: 2 die in separate driving, parking disputes

OR SALEM — A suburban Portland man was stabbed to death over a parking spot while a Salem man was shot and killed during a "road rage incident" near Beaverton, according to police.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reported Shawn Hamilton is suspected of stabbing Robert "Randy" Ricketts, 68, at the Hogan Woods Apartments.

Police say the two men had been arguing over a parking space at the complex before Ricketts was attacked. Police booked Hamilton into jail on suspicion of second-degree murder.

On the same day, deputies and Beaverton Police responded to a report of a shooting during a road rage incident, the Statesman Journal reported.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office said Mark E. Stadmire, 51, of Salem, died. The sheriff's office says he and another man got out of their vehicles with handguns, and multiple shots were fired.

MUSIC



READY TO RUMBLE

After being forced off the road by hearing damage, Brian Setzer is back with a new solo album

By JON BREAM
Star Tribune

Unlike you, me and the rest of the world, Brian Setzer welcomed the pandemic shutdown. How's that? The singer-guitarist-bandleader absolutely, positively needed a break. Doctor's orders. Setzer has tinnitus, a constant ringing in his ears — the bane of any musician who likes to play loud.

In 2019, after a successful summer reunion tour with '80s hit-makers Stray Cats, tinnitus forced him

to cancel his annual holiday shows with the Brian Setzer Orchestra.

"I needed to put the brakes on. Forty years on the road," Setzer said recently. "This [pandemic] made me slow down because I probably wouldn't have. So it was good timing."

COVID-19 knocked out any chance of a holiday tour in 2020 and 2021 (he had to decide by February, when vaccines were just ramping up).

So Setzer recorded a solo album. In isolation.

SEE RUMBLE ON PAGE 13



Brian Setzer released his first solo album in seven years, "Gotta Have the Rumble," on Aug. 27.

Russ Harrington

MUSIC REVIEWS

A revival for Kanye West on divorce album 'Donda'

BY RYAN PEARSON

Associated Press

Kanye West donned a full face mask to host three livestreamed listening parties for his 10th studio album. Beyond that, he didn't say a word, or even tweet. After years of alienating longtime fans with forays into conservative politics and sometimes exhausting media spectacle, pop's King of All Controversy mostly let the music speak for him when unveiling "Donda."

In the tradition of Marvin Gaye's "Here, My Dear" or Phil Collins' "Face Value," it's a prickly, personal divorce album full of introspection, conflicting emotions and bursts of musical innovation. It's also a nearly-overbooked

showcase for of-the-moment talent, some half West's age: Shenseea, Fivio Foreign, Baby Keem, The Weeknd, Lil Yachty, Roddy Ricch. There's drill music alongside church organs — so many organs!

There's New Kanye earnest praise of God — "he's done miracles on me" — mingling with Old Kanye jokey self-awareness: "I'll be honest, we all liars," "I repent for everything that I'mma do again." There's reggae legend Buju Banton, rap legends Jay-Z, The LOX and Jay Electronica, multiple jabs at longtime foil Drake. Its 27 tracks clock in at one hour, 49 minutes.

It turns out it may not be a divorce album after all: At the

final listening party in Chicago, West appeared to set himself on fire, then reconcile with his estranged wife, who wore a veiled wedding dress. OK, so maybe he's not quite done with the media spectacle thing.

It's a lot to take in. But West somehow wrangles a surprisingly cohesive collection, his best album since 2010's "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy." There's a vague narrative arc, from sinning to salvation, that's reflected in dark sonic beauty.

West leans into pain throughout, reflecting on his mother Donda's 2007 death and marital failures. The searing and bright "Believe What I Say" finds him rapping over a Lauryn Hill sample to

directly address Kim Kardashian West and "celebrity drama that only Brad will know. Too many family secrets." Rocker Marilyn Manson is credited as a songwriter on "Jail" and was on hand at the Chicago listening party, a classic West provocation that many fans won't forgive after Manson was dropped by his own record label in February amid sexual abuse accusations.

It "gets the people going," yes, and West seems to intend Manson's inclusion as part of his broader exploration of duality, morality, mortality, legacy. "Pure Souls," a standout, has a chanted chorus that transforms halfway from the Trumpian aphorism "The truth is only what you get

away with" to the existential "The truth the only thing you get away with."

As ever, though, West is more focused on evoking feeling through sound than complex wordplay. The sung melody of "Remote Control" is so emotionally arresting that it's hard to fault Young Thug for the lyrics "I live on the Titanic, I can rock your boat." While the many guests deliver career-best verses, particularly Fivio Foreign's "Off the Grid" tale of restarting after jail, they can meander off-topic and distract from West's throughline.

Still, "Donda" represents a revival, in every sense of the word, for one of pop's most singular talents.

Rumble: Album collects variety of guitar styles

FROM PAGE 12

Remotely.

He made "Gotta Have the Rumble" — released Aug. 27, his first solo album in seven years — by recording his guitars and vocals in the Terrarium, a northeast Minneapolis studio, with engineer Jason Orris.

"It was the easiest thing," he said. "There was nobody else in the studio. [It wasn't:] 'One guy's on the phone, one guy's got a hanger. I make a mistake and we all have to do it again.' It was just me and the engineer."

Actually, Setzer thought he was just making demos of a few songs. But producer Julian Raymond — with whom he'd worked on a 2011 Glen Campbell album, "Ghost on the Canvas" — wanted to hear the demos. Raymond said he had a way of making an album happen remotely.

"The drummer was in Nashville and the bass player was in Memphis," said Setzer, who calls himself an "old-school guy" accustomed to musicians recording in the same room. "I wasn't expecting much, but he sent it back and I was pretty blown away by it."

Setzer hasn't even met his rhythm section. "I barely know who they are. I know Dave Roe was Johnny Cash's bass player for the last [several] years. The drummer [Victor Indrizzo] is from Long Island. He got it. He almost played like a big band drummer."

"Gotta Have the Rumble" is a splendid showcase for Setzer's versatile guitar mastery, embracing surf twang, spaghetti western film music, jump blues, rockabilly bop, bluesy rock and his signature twang-abilly.

He chose the title for two reasons: motors and guitars.

"The rumble of motorcycles and hot rods, that's me. That inspires me. But it's also about me missing that sound of my guitar amp that makes the guitar rumble.

"Dealing with tinnitus — picture a tea kettle going off in your head all the time — it was maddening. It never goes away. You deal with it. I felt despondent that I wouldn't be able to use my nice big Fender amp again. It [the title] really fit my life right now."

Setzer, 62, vividly remembers the first time he drove fast.

"The first time I got that adrenaline rush was when I first started with hot rods when I was a teenager. ... That's really how I write

songs. I need some kind of rush. It could be adrenaline from going fast. It could be love. It could be anger. ... I can't write a song taking a shower."

Living out by Lake Minnetonka, Setzer rides his motorcycles and clears his head. Melodies come to him, some sparked by ideas from lyricist Mike Himmelstein, who helped pen six of the new album's 11 numbers.

"He came to a show and introduced himself about 20 years ago. We just hit it off. I've had that with very few people. I had that with Joe Strummer," the late Clash frontman, who collaborated on two tracks for Setzer's 1996 album, "Guitar Slinger."

A professional songwriter in Los Angeles for four decades, Himmelstein has also collaborated with Stray Cats and blues guitarist Joe Bonamassa while working on many Disney projects including Winnie-the-Pooh and the Mickey Mouse Club.

"Brian is a big title guy," Himmelstein said. "He always had 'Rockabilly Riot,' which I thought was just a great title, so I sent him lyrics."

He and Setzer came up with the new song "Stack My Money" via a phone conversation about how neither had lived up to his parents' expectations. "Learn a trade, young man. Music isn't a career" was what both heard.

"I didn't take my dad's advice," Himmelstein said, "and here I am unloading a truck [full of cash]."

In "The Cat With 9 Wives," Himmelstein penned a line about twins from the Twin Cities who married the same guy. "I had to get nine wives into a song at a manageable length, so the idea of having twins was to save some time," the lyricist explained.

Said Setzer: "I read the lyrics and I laughed. That's so clever.

"I collect guitar riffs. I pull out my trusty plectrum holder and my sheet music. I think I've got something that will fit. I wrote the song in like 10 minutes."

Setzer's own wife, Hopkins, Minn.-reared Julie Reiten Setzer, sings backup on two tunes with a bandmate from her 1990s Twin Cities group the Dust Bunnies, Jennifer Go-forth.

"I let them talk at the end of 'Off Your Rocker.' I said, 'I want you girls to give me a sass.' I would answer them, and they would

cut me off. We did it for a laugh, and it came out so funny that we left it on the record."

The closing track on "Rumble" comes with a self-explanatory twist, "Rockabilly Banjo."

"My grandfather gave me a banjo when I was a kid. I used to take it to school and play 'She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain' for singalongs," Setzer recalled.

At the same time, he was playing guitar — which of course became his favored instrument.

Setzer grew up on New York's Long Island, where he formed Stray Cats in 1979 with two school friends, bassist Leon Drucker, aka Lee Rocker, and drummer Jim McDonnell, aka Slim Jim Phantom. They became 1980s MTV sensations with "Rock This Town" and "Stray Cat Strut."

In 2019, Stray Cats reunited for a 40th anniversary album, "40" — their first studio album in 26 years — and a limited tour.

"I really want to play with the Stray Cats again," Setzer said. "It was really surprising, the turnout and response we had, and I really had a good time with the boys. In Europe, it was crazy, the amount of people. And we didn't play too much here [in the States]."

While his tinnitus will never go away, Setzer feels it's under control.

"It happened in Amsterdam. There's nothing I could do on the road. The earplugs fell and I thought: 'These guys are so loud.' All of a sudden, it came on. It's a nightmare. You have to give yourself a break. You have to start wearing hearing aids that play [noise-masking sounds] like leaves rustling.

"Eventually it gets better, and you get used to it. You just gotta tough it out. The COVID came just at the time when it [tinnitus] was at its worst, and it forced me to take a break."

One thing that's always under control is Setzer's vintage hairdo. Unlike you, me and most of the rest of the world, he has a fabulous pompadour.

"You gotta start with good product. The modern stuff is too expensive, and it doesn't do anything. Go with the old Murray's [pomade]. Put a little of that so it'll hold, then comb it the way you like it and put a little bit of quick spray to hold it. That'll give you the good look. You've really got to get that greasy hold going."

Then he's ready to rock and rumble.



Iron Maiden

Senjutsu (BMG)

Iron Maiden is not a band for those with short attention spans.

Since blasting out of England in the late '70s in what would become known as the new wave of British heavy metal, Iron Maiden has never been one to give record companies the three-minute anthems they craved.

Instead, they wrote and played (and played some more) until they were good and satisfied, and the result was often an epic track of 8-10 minutes or more, completely exploring a topic or idea until no stone was left unturned.

That is particularly the case on their 17th studio album, "Senjutsu," which translates from Japanese as "strategy and tactics." It deals with Maiden's obsession with war and battle, from the title track to "Darkest Hour," an ode to Winston Churchill's perseverance during World War II.

The album's 10 tracks average eight minutes apiece; the last three are a combined 34 minutes.

Give singer Bruce Dickinson and Co. props for sticking to their musical guns and writing a song to be as long as it needs to be. As far back as the mid 1980s, they were breaking these barriers with tracks like "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," which clocked in at nearly 14 minutes.

The guitar trio of Dave Murray, Janick Gers and Adrian Smith bring firepower to each track, and the duo of bassist Steve Harris and drummer Nicko McBrain has long been among the best in metal.

— Wayne Parry
Associated Press

LIFESTYLE

BY TRACEE M. HERBAUGH
Associated Press

Anthropologists believe our ancient human ancestors spent their time in trees, so it should be no surprise we love treehouses today.

Treehouses of all kinds are experiencing a renaissance.

When an acre-size slice of land in Gold Hill, Colo., came on the market earlier this year, local resident Jessica Brookhart, 41, snapped it up for \$80,000.

The draw for her: The house was a treehouse.

It was a place she could hang out with her husband and two young boys.

"I had never been inside it, but had admired it from a distance," she said, admitting it was an emotional purchase.

The man who owned the land had built the treehouse with materials from a recycling center in neighboring Boulder. The structure can fit two adults and two children. There's no bathroom or running water, and a squat potty is outside down on the ground. There's a camping stove for cooking, and water has to be brought up. From the windows, you can see Longs Peak and the Continental Divide.

"Since I was a little girl, I was obsessed with little mini-houses, or sheds and treehouses," Brookhart said.

She sometimes rents the treehouse out online, and to her surprise, lots of people want to use it.

"For me, it's this magical place," she said. "I have to block off a bunch of weekends just so we can spend time there too."

Treehouses have proliferated during the pandemic. There are stylish backyard ones built by professionals and makeshift ones thrown up just to escape the four walls of home. There are listings on sites like Airbnb for treehouses to camp in.

Unlike the rickety treehouses of yore, many of these new ones have been upgraded. Most are still accessed with a ladder, however, requiring you to climb.

As pandemic lockdowns droned on, Nanci and Ethan Butler of Newton, Mass., decided to build a backyard treehouse for their two kids. Ethan, an engineer, found treehouse floor plans online and modified them to accommodate their family.

Building the house was a family affair, and in about three months, the Butlers had a beautiful hideaway with built-in bunk beds and a front deck. They enjoyed some nights camping out in it.

Then, on a serene day about three weeks after it was finished, a big oak in the yard broke in two. Part of it fell directly onto the treehouse, crushing it. Carpenter ants had brought the tree down.

"It was traumatic; I was



The popularity of treehouses has grown, especially amid the pandemic as adults, kids seek an outdoor escape



AP PHOTOS

Top: A Pagosa Springs, Colo., treehouse built by Aaron Smith and his firm, Treecraft Design-Build in Fort Collins, Colo. Smith said interest in treehouses has increased in recent years.

Above: Ethan Butler takes a photo in the backyard treehouse he and his family built during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. About three months after it was built, an oak tree fell on top of it and demolished it.

stunned," Nanci, 45, said. "But we were also so saturated with despair at that point. Nobody cried."

More people have been drawn outdoors and into nature during COVID-19, and treehouses are part of that pattern, said Jeff Galak, associate professor of marketing at Carnegie Mellon University's Tepper School of Business.

"They are an attempt to do something fun and interesting and away from other people," Galak said.

Part of treehouses' popularity, he said, is parents' desire to create more backyard amenities so kids will go outside.

Nostalgia is another part of it. "Nostalgia is a huge driver for consumers in general," he said. "People are being creative with how they engage with that type of nostalgia."

Business is booming for Aaron Smith, who owns the Fort Collins, Colo.-based treehouse architecture firm Treecraft Design-Build. He started it in 2015 and now employs a second designer and eight carpenters.

"In COVID times, I saw a spike in requests for backyard treehouses just because everyone was at home and the kids needed to get out of the house too," Smith said.

His treehouses have ranged from a basic backyard structure costing around \$10,000 to a livable treehouse with indoor plumbing for half a million dollars. He has clients all over the country.

For many people, basic is OK for treehouses. Jim Brook, 71, of Breckenridge, Colo., built his three grandsons a small platform treehouse nestled among some aspen trees a few years ago.

"I love to introduce them to nature and encourage them to play outdoors, so a simple structure with a metal pole 'fireman' exit seemed like it would be fun," Brook said. "At times we have also set a small tarp overhead and a carpet remnant on the plywood platform."

Others like their treehouses with a bit of luxury. The Mohicans Treehouse Resort in Glenmont, Ohio, is packed with amenities for those who want to enjoy the outdoors with the comforts of modern living.

The nine treehouses (and two under construction) at Mohican are indeed built with supporting trees, but they have the feel of a fancy hotel: black walnut or cherry wood floors, 100-year-old barn siding, nice linens and throw pillows, indoor plumbing, air conditioning and heat.

"The goal was to have them available all year round, with all amenities," said Laura Mooney, who owns the resort. "We didn't want guests to have to go to a shower house. They could stay in the treehouse and everything is there."

CROSSWORD AND COMICS

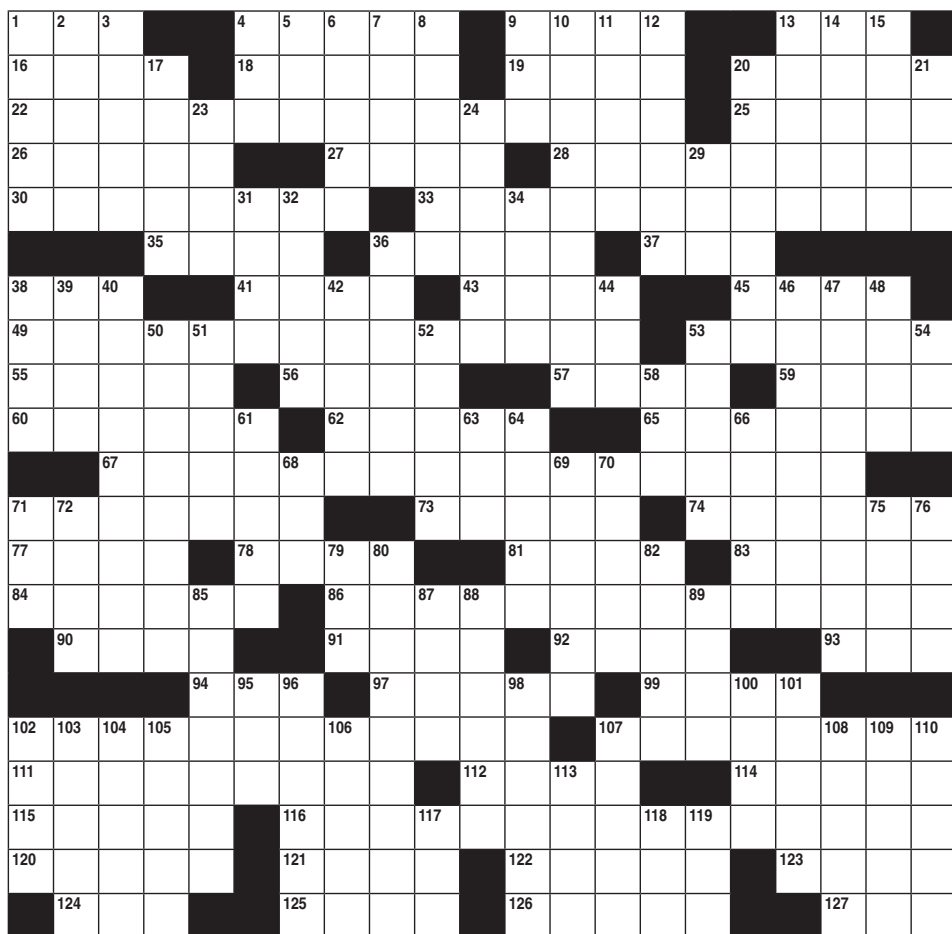
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

UH? OH ...

BY DORY MINTZ / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Dory Mintz, of the Bronx, is a software engineer for Wunderkind, a digital marketing company. He likes to bowl (he recently rolled a career-high 218) and calls himself "a passionate albeit subpar Scrabble player." He was reading an old art textbook when the phrase at 33-Across jumped into his head, and a crossword theme idea was born. This is his second puzzle for The Times, and his first Sunday. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Sliver
 - 4 Politician with the campaign slogan 30-Across
 - 9 Word with poetry or proportions
 - 13 Something you might click to open
 - 16 Elicits a "Whoa" from, say
 - 18 Trimmed (down)
 - 19 Wrestling star John
 - 20 Tailor
 - 22 Beams of one's dreams?
 - 25 Food served in an omakase meal
 - 26 Having very little mental energy left
 - 27 Moonfish
 - 28 Swimmers in kelp forests
 - 30 See 4-Across
 - 33 Visit a museum to see a Rembrandt exhibit?
 - 35 One prone to looking down
 - 36 His tomb is in Red Square
 - 37 Diamondbacks, on scoreboards
 - 38 Face cards?
 - 41 Destination for oenophiles
 - 43 Sicily's Parco dell' _____
 - 45 Bug-spray ingredient
 - 49 Bird of prey that's gently petted?
 - 53 Popular pops
 - 55 Kind of attack
 - 56 Longtime hockey star Kovalchuk
 - 57 To read: Sp.
 - 59 Gross
 - 60 Error, in totspeak
 - 62 Buys in
 - 65 Look down on
 - 67 Actor Justin sitting poolside?
 - 71 Adds insult to injury
 - 73 Santa-tracking org.
 - 74 River across the New York/New Jersey border
 - 77 Some rideshare info
 - 78 Exploit
 - 81 Award-winning film set in Tehran
 - 83 Bishop's headgear
 - 84 Hang up the cleats, so to speak
 - 86 Make fun of small orange fruits?
 - 90 Something rectangular that might have more than four sides
 - 91 Two-player card game
 - 92 TV character who said "Time to hit the hay ... oh, I forgot, I ate it!"
 - 93 Old auto with its founder's monogram
 - 94 Storage spot
 - 97 Opposite of "avant"
 - 99 Reason to reschedule
 - 102 Mashed potatoes, on a Thanksgiving plate?
 - 107 Instrument heard in Spanish folk music
 - 111 Vinyl collection
 - 112 Food brand whose sales boomed after the premiere of "Stranger Things"
 - 114 "When We Were Young" singer
 - 115 Sharp
 - 116 Fourth-quarter meltdown at an N.B.A. game in Oklahoma City?
 - 120 Made out
 - 121 Take home
 - 122 Lather gatherer
 - 123 Remained in bed, e.g.
 - 124 Something to shoot for
 - 125 "... sting like ____"
 - 126 Clubs
 - 127 ____ Bleus, nickname for France's soccer team
 - 12 Wrinkly-skinned fruit
 - 13 Largest object in the Kuiper belt
 - 14 And the following, in footnotes
 - 15 His birthday is celebrated as "Children's Day" in India
 - 17 Worries anxiously
 - 20 Mounted on
 - 21 Angry reaction
 - 23 Main port of Yemen
 - 24 They're banned in many classrooms nowadays
 - 29 Thing seen in the foreground of "Washington Crossing the Delaware"
 - 31 N.Y. neighbor
 - 32 Calculators of old
 - 34 Partner of starts
 - 36 Speaking part?
 - 38 "In that case ..."
 - 39 Paul of "Little Miss Sunshine"
 - 40 Didn't hear the alarm, say
 - 42 Where fruit bat soup is eaten as a delicacy
 - 44 Orange follower
 - 46 Widespread
 - 47 Nonstop flight?
 - 48 Maori for "image"
 - 50 Redeems at a casino
 - 51 Sooners, by another name
 - 52 Have a home-cooked meal
 - 53 Like some obligations
 - 54 Dict. listing
 - 58 Setting for Mets games: Abbr.
 - 61 Gradually diminish
 - 63 Residential suffix with Angel
 - 64 High-priced violin, informally
 - 66 All-knowing sort
 - 68 It's represented by a dot in the top-left corner, in Braille
 - 69 Mideast palace parts
 - 70 Son of Gloucester in "King Lear"
 - 71 & 72 A pop
 - 75 ____ Alonso, Mets slugger with the most home runs by a rookie in M.L.B. history (53)
 - 76 "... ish"
 - 79 People people, for short
 - 80 Exit
 - 82 "What's ____, Doc?" (old Bugs Bunny short)
 - 85 Grapefruit descriptor
 - 87 Kelly of "Live"
 - 88 Remark after losing
 - 89 Nutritional figs.
 - 95 "____ be an honor!"
 - 96 Snapple competitor
 - 98 "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" writer, 1880
 - 100 Leaning right: Abbr.
 - 101 Four-time U.S. Open champ
 - 102 Four-time Australian Open champ
 - 103 It has its highlights
 - 104 Maker of the MDX, NSX and TLX
 - 105 Bloc party?
 - 106 Fix up again
 - 107 Brown hue
 - 108 Home of many Sherpas
 - 109 ____ Hughes, name of main roles in "Westworld" and "Downton Abbey"
 - 110 Decade after the aughts
 - 113 Blossom
 - 117 Taipei-to-Seoul dir.
 - 118 Frequently
 - 119 ____ Palmas

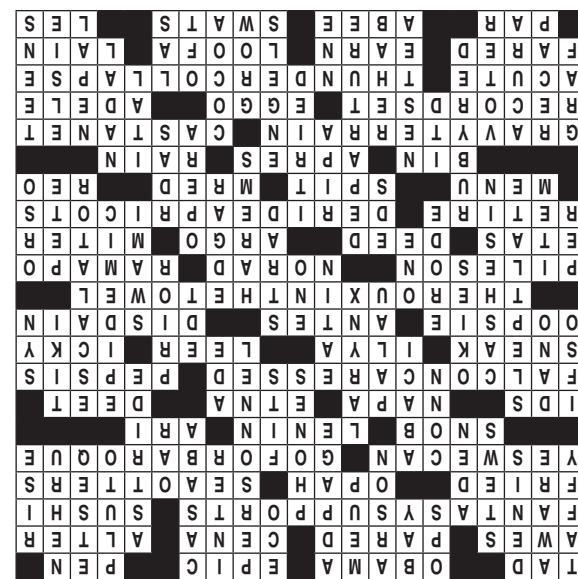


GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

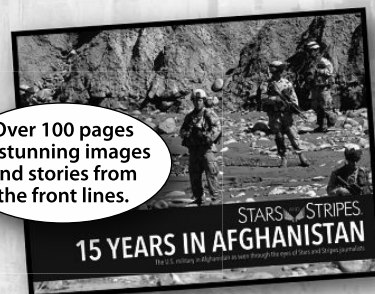
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BOOKS

A medieval masterpiece

Groff's latest novel, 'Matrix,' tells a 12th-century story of the raw power of female creativity in a corrupted world

By **RON CHARLES**
The Washington Post

If "Matrix" were written by anyone else, it would be a hard sell. But Lauren Groff is one of the most beloved and critically acclaimed fiction writers in the country. And now that we've endured almost two years of quarantine and social distancing, her new novel about a 12th-century nunnery feels downright timely.

Still, a medieval abbess is a challenging heroine — living, as she does, a millennium away from us, suspended in that dim historical period long after the Romans but centuries before Shakespeare. We need a trusted guide, someone who can dramatize this remote period while making it somehow relevant to our own lives.

Groff is that guide largely because she knows what to leave out. Indeed, it's breathtaking how little ink she spills on filling in historical context. Details about the court of King Henry II are omitted as though the Angevin Empire were as familiar to contemporary Americans as Westeros. What you might already know about Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Second Crusade — probably little — will not be much increased by reading "Matrix." And though it covers more than 50 tumultuous years, this entire novel wraps up in the space it would take Ken Follett to warm a cauldron of gruel.

At the center of Groff's story is Marie de France, a shadowy

writer known today as the author of a series of courtly love poems. The rest of Marie's biography is an open conjecture, and Groff rides into that lacuna on a noble steed.

Her Marie descends from a line of "loud opinionated unnatural women," warriors in the Ladies' Army during the Crusades. "A creature absent of beauty or even the smallest of feminine arts," this Marie is "three heads too tall" with a shockingly low voice and massive hands. She's also the product of rape, but she's closely enough related to Queen Eleanor to re-

Though "Matrix" is radically different from Groff's "Fates and Furies," it is, once again, the story of a woman redefining both the possibilities of her life and the bounds of her realm.

ceive at least a smidgen of royal patronage.

When "Matrix" opens, Marie, all of 17 years old, is appointed prioress of a dilapidated abbey, founded centuries earlier, where a few nuns remain scavenging for food. The beautiful queen, whom Marie adores, frames this assignment as a great honor, but the young woman knows she's "being thrown away like rubbish ... sent into her living death alone." Indeed, there's a whiff of Edgar Allan Poe as Marie approaches this "dark and strange and piteous place" surrounded



Eli Sinkus

by fresh graves. She's greeted by two derelict nuns — one mad, the other angry. She dismounts and falls into a pile of manure.

Things go downhill from there.

Marie finds the accommodations primitive, the food repulsive, the domestic and prayerful duties stultifying.

"The nun's life seems as bad as she thought it would be," Groff writes. "She thinks of running away from the abbey; of running

fining both the possibilities of her life and the bounds of her realm.

Unable to leave and unwilling to fail, Marie brings her considerable physical and mental powers to bear on the abbey's financial and managerial problems. The sisters — most of them, anyway — grudgingly come round to her wisdom because, although she feels no particular spiritual motivation, she's wholly dedicated to their work.

almost camouflages its defensive function.

That's a strategy Marie will pursue again and again as she struggles to transform this once impoverished abbey into a female oasis. And inevitably, her efforts will conflict with the masculine tropes and rituals embedded in the Roman Catholic faith. How far she can push back against that outer world without provoking forces arrayed against her generates much of the novel's suspense.

Almost a decade ago, in a gorgeous novel called "Arcadia," Groff explored the inevitable failure of a commune in upstate New York. But given the multiple shocks of the past few years, the utopian impulse that once felt so tragic and nostalgic suddenly looks curiously viable — even translated into the alien world of 12th-century monasticism. Although there are no clunky contemporary allusions in "Matrix," it seems clear that Groff is using this ancient story as a way of reflecting on how women might survive and thrive in a culture increasingly violent and irrational. The costs and sacrifices are high, but on a planet grown "too hot to bear humanity," who isn't tempted to have faith in the possibilities of a small society of like-minded believers walled off from the flames?

One of the novel's most curious elements is the way Marie's labor accrues a kind of holiness that redounds to her in startling visions. The authenticity of her sightings of the Blessed Virgin remains ambiguous, but there's no doubting her determination to create a sanctuary for women beyond the reach of men. It's an audacious goal. But Marie becomes dazzlingly adept at using the elements of repression to her own advantage. In her most provocative move, around the abbey she engineers a vast labyrinth, a structure whose devotional aura

into the woods alone and catching beasts to eat with her hands and drinking from the freshets, becoming a wildwoman or a lady brigand or a hermit in a hollowed trunk of a tree. But even on this island there are few wild places left, no place that did not at last end up too close to a village with other humans in it. No, she is caught in a great net made by her sex."

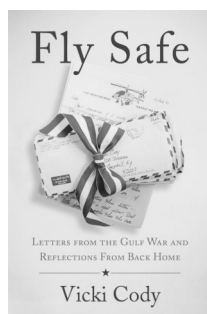
In the end, Marie is a warrior, not a quitter. Though "Matrix" is radically different from Groff's "Fates and Furies," it is, once again, the story of a woman rede-

'Fly Safe' author's letters, journals will resonate with military families

By **TERRI BARNES**
Special to Stars and Stripes

As the world marks the 20th anniversary of 9/11 and the end of the war in Afghanistan, Vicki Cody's new book, "Fly Safe: Letters from the Gulf War and Reflections from Back Home," is timely — a reminder that the service of military families doesn't end when one war is over. Cody's experience of wars in the past bears resemblance and relevance to the present.

Families of military members deployed today will recognize the same emotions Cody felt decades ago, first as the spouse of a soldier and later as a mother. Both her sons became Army helicopter pilots and



followed their father's boot prints into combat. At one time, all three were on active duty. The words that became the title of her book were also the words she used to end every letter to her soldiers, "Fly Safe."

Told through letters and journal entries, Cody's narrative begins just before her husband's deployment in 1991 and ends with her sons' letters from deployments in 2003. Technology has changed, but the stark fears

and home-front victories still resonate.

Some of Cody's recollections may seem quaint through the lens of 2021. In the early '90s, deployment created pay issues for some troops who were still being paid in cash — yes, paper money and coins. Personal email was uncommon, and phone calls from deployment locations were rare before worldwide cell connectivity. Writing letters was the best and often the only way to stay in touch. Families checked actual mailboxes for the latest news from their loved ones or depended on news from the unit by phone or in person.

But these contrasts are only technology deep, while the personal and practical struggles of deployment are foundational.

Military spouses manage the home front and their own work responsibilities, lean on their friends, quell fears stoked by the rumor mill and reassure their kids through it all. When deployment is over, they regroup and do their best to put life and the family back together again. It's never as easy as they make it look.

Cody's book is a reassuring reminder of the important contributions of military spouses, even in the mundane but essential task of caring for their families and for each other. At a time when military families may wonder whether any of their sacrifices make a difference, this book reminds us that they do. In war and in peacetime, they always will.

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OPINION

Taliban caretakers will keep the neighbors up

By **BOBBY GHOSH**

Bloomberg Opinion

Earlier this month, anxious Afghans and credulous Biden administration officials were trying to take comfort in reports that Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar would head the Taliban's new government in Kabul.

It seemed like the least bad option. As leader of the group's political wing, Baradar had been the Taliban's chief representative in peace negotiations with the U.S. in Qatar, and was thought to hold somewhat more moderate views than most of the military commanders. In interviews, he promised an "inclusive" government, representing all of the country's ethnic and tribal groups.

As it turned out, Baradar may himself have been fortunate to be included in the government. Announced on Tuesday, the new caretaker administration is dominated by the Taliban's military faction, with hardliners in key positions. Baradar is only in the third tier of the hierarchy, as one of two deputy prime ministers. He will report to Prime Minister Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, who will in turn answer to Supreme Leader Haibatullah Akhundzada.

Baradar's relegation undermines Afghan hopes for a kinder, gentler "Taliban 2.0." Far from being inclusive, the Cabinet is entirely male, overwhelmingly from the Pashtun community and has no representative from the Shiite minority. This makes it even harder to believe the group's other reassurances, whether about women's freedoms or religious tolerance.

More alarming for the wider world, the new dispensation in Kabul abounds with

men with bona fides that would be welcomed at the high tables of al-Qaida and Islamic State. The composition of the government lengthens the odds on President Joe Biden's gamble that the Taliban will make common cause with Washington in the fight against jihadi terrorism.

The most prominent of the hardliners in office is Sirajuddin Haqqani, a U.S.-designated terrorist with long ties to al-Qaida and other jihadi groups. Afghans with a morbid sense of humor can now claim the \$10 million bounty offered by the FBI "for information leading directly to the arrest" of their new interior minister.

If Mohammed Yaqoob, the defense minister, doesn't have Haqqani's terrorist credentials, he more than makes up for this in lineage: He is the eldest son of Mullah Omar, the Taliban's first supreme leader and host of Osama bin Laden. Yaqoob has supervised the Taliban's military operations in recent years, as the group has embraced many al-Qaida tactics, including the use of suicide bombings against civilian targets.

The new intelligence chief, Abdul Haq Wassiq, completes the troika of security bosses. He is under United Nations sanctions for his role in the previous Taliban administration, when he was "in charge of handling relations with al-Qaida-related foreign fighters and their training camps in Afghanistan." (More than half the 33-man Cabinet are under U.N. sanctions.)

If al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri could pick three men to run Afghanistan's security services, it is a safe bet that Haqqani, Yaqoob and Wassiq would have been

at the top of his list. The Biden administration must assume that they will make it their business to turn Afghanistan once again a safe haven for terrorism.

It is unlikely to be much of a consolation for Washington, but the government in Kabul will also alarm other countries with an interest in Afghanistan. For instance, there will be disquiet in China about army chief Qari Fasihuddin, who has had a long association with the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, which Beijing accuses of terrorism in its Xinjiang province. (The Trump administration last year removed the ETIM from the State Department's list of terrorist groups.)

Meanwhile, the Shiite shutout will cause grave concern in Iran, which regards itself as protector of the minority sect. There are fears of a resumption of the persecution of the predominantly Shiite Hazara community that characterized the previous Taliban administration in the late 1990s.

And there's bad news for India, which invested heavily in Afghanistan over the past 20 years. The hardliners are all closely tied to Islamabad. The Taliban have historically sided with Pakistan in its dispute with India over Kashmir, and many Indians fear the group will contribute more than just moral support to insurgents in the restive region.

Just as in Washington, fingers were crossed in Beijing, Tehran and New Delhi in the hope of a Baradar-led Afghan government. Now they must all brace for the worst.

Bloomberg Opinion columnist Bobby Ghosh writes on foreign affairs, with a special focus on the Middle East and Africa. This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Do Dems see voter suppression in Canada, Germany?

By **HENRY OLSEN**

Special to The Washington Post

Democrats have assailed Republican-passed voting laws such as those in Texas and Georgia as undemocratic acts of voter suppression. By their standards, upcoming elections in Canada and Germany won't pass muster either.

Canada and Germany are two of our closest allies in the democratic world. Each has a long history of democratic governance and are lauded internationally for their fidelity to democratic values. The global watchdog Freedom House ranks each country among the most politically free in the world.

Citizens in both countries, however, have less access to the polls than do voters in Texas or Georgia. Both states offer anywhere from 10 to 12 days of advance in-person voting at a variety of sites. Germany does not provide any widespread in-person early voting, although a person who wants to can instead cast a postal ballot in person at the local municipality's office. Canada offers widespread in-person early voting for four days. It's easier, then, to vote early in either of the purportedly anti-democratic GOP states than in two of the freest nations in the world.

Both countries allow people to vote by mail without having to state a reason, but they also require voter identification to do so, a provision decried by Democratic activists. Canada requires submission of either a photo ID, such as a driver's license, or two documents such as a bank statement show-

ing the voter's name and address. Elections Canada apparently disagrees with Vice President Kamala Harris, who opposes requiring voter ID for mail ballots because many rural Americans allegedly can't "Xerox" their photo IDs. Germany sends every voter a polling card before the election, and those who wish to vote by mail must include that card with their ballot to have it counted. Neither nation permits postal ballots to be accepted with only a signature.

Canada and Germany also have stringent Election Day voter ID requirements. Germany requires voters to produce either the voting card sent to them by their municipality or a form of photo ID such as a passport. Canada requires either a photo ID issued by a government entity or two documents, at least one of which has the person's address. These are similar to the requirements in Georgia and Texas that have been attacked as discriminating against minorities.

Neither country permits the sort of non-traditional modes of voting access pushed by progressives. The Texas law outlawed 24-hour voting or drive-through voting kiosks, where a voter never has to leave their car. Neither Germany nor Canada permits that. Nor do they allow voters to leave their ballots in unattended drop boxes. They assume that their citizens can figure out a way to cast a ballot without recourse to methods that don't provide rigorous oversight by a neutral election agency.

It might shock Democrats to learn that both countries have high turnout rates. Germany had a 76% turnout in its 2017 federal election, although that might be boosted by

the fact it votes on Sundays. Canada votes on Mondays, however, and Election Day is not a national holiday. Its turnout figures are thus directly comparable to ours, making it a good test of Democrats' claims that voter ID laws and limits on early voting and non-traditional voting procedures serve to suppress the vote. Canada had a 67% turnout in its last federal election and a 68% turnout in 2015. Both figures are higher than the United States, which in 2020 recorded its highest turnout rate in 120 years, when roughly 66% of eligible voters cast ballots.

Former President Donald Trump's claim that massive voter fraud cost him the 2020 election are risible. But so are overwrought Democratic claims of voter suppression. Both sets of charges may motivate partisans, but they also harm democracy by raising questions about the validity and fairness of our election process. We cannot long sustain a democracy if an election's losers think they've been robbed regardless of the evidence.

President Joe Biden has attacked these Republican laws as "Jim Crow in the 21st Century" and "the most significant test of our democracy since the Civil War." But it's highly doubtful he will tell the next German chancellor or Canadian prime minister that their election was tainted by undemocratic voting laws even though that's the logical consequence of his argument. That tells you all you need to know about how serious that argument is.

Henry Olsen is a Washington Post columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Friday's scores

EAST

American International 49, Pace 33
Endicott 28, WPI 21
Mass. Maritime 14, SUNY Maritime 6
W. New England 48, Westfield St. 0

SOUTH

Coastal Carolina 49, Kansas 22
Duke 45, NC A&T 17

FAR WEST

Boise St. 54, UTEP 13
Utah St. 48, North Dakota 24

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New England	16	4	4	52	45	28
Orlando City	10	5	8	38	33	29
Nashville	9	2	11	38	37	21
NYCFC	10	7	4	34	37	22
Philadelphia	8	7	8	32	28	24
CF Montréal	8	7	7	31	30	27
D.C. United	9	10	3	30	35	32
Atlanta	7	7	9	30	28	28
Columbus	7	10	6	27	27	32
Inter Miami CF	7	9	5	26	22	31
Chicago	6	11	5	23	24	33
New York	6	10	4	22	23	25
Cincinnati	3	10	8	17	21	38
Toronto FC	3	13	6	15	26	47

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Seattle	12	4	6	42	35	19
Colorado	12	4	5	41	31	20
Sporting KC	11	5	7	40	37	26
LA Galaxy	11	8	3	36	35	35
Portland	10	10	3	33	32	39
Minnesota	8	6	7	31	24	24
Real Salt Lake	8	8	6	30	34	29
Vancouver	7	8	8	29	29	33
LAFc	7	9	6	27	32	31
San Jose	6	8	8	26	24	30
FC Dallas	6	10	7	25	32	36
Austin FC	5	13	4	19	21	31
Houston	3	10	10	19	24	36

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

Friday's games

Atlanta 3, Orlando City 0
Portland 1, Vancouver 0

Saturday's games

LA Galaxy at Colorado
Minnesota at Seattle
D.C. United at New York
New York City FC at New England
Toronto FC at Cincinnati
Columbus at Miami
Nashville at CF Montréal
Austin FC at Houston
Chicago at Sporting Kansas City
San Jose at FC Dallas

Sunday's game

Real Salt Lake at Los Angeles FC

Tuesday, Sept. 14

FC Dallas at New York City FC
Miami at Toronto FC
New York at Columbus

Wednesday, Sept. 15

Cincinnati at Atlanta
CF Montréal at Orlando City
Chicago at D.C. United
Minnesota at Sporting Kansas City
Los Angeles FC at Austin FC
Colorado at Portland
Houston at LA Galaxy
Real Salt Lake at San Jose

Friday, Sept. 17

New York at Miami

Saturday, Sept. 18

D.C. United at Atlanta
Columbus at New England
Nashville at Toronto FC
New York City FC at Cincinnati
LA Galaxy at Minnesota
San Jose at Austin FC
Seattle at Real Salt Lake
FC Dallas at Houston

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Portland	10	4	2	32	24	11
North Carolina	8	4	5	29	22	9
Reign FC	9	7	2	29	24	19
Chicago	7	7	5	26	20	23
Orlando	6	5	7	25	21	20
Washington	6	5	5	23	19	18
Houston	6	7	5	23	20	23
Gotham FC	5	5	7	22	17	15
Louisville	4	8	5	17	14	24
Kansas City	2	11	5	11	9	28

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

Friday's game

Chicago 1, Houston 1, tie

Saturday's game

Louisville at Orlando

Sunday's games

Reign FC at Washington
Portland at North Carolina

PRO FOOTBALL

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Miami	0	0	0	.000	0	0
N.Y. Jets	0	0	0	.000	0	0
New England	0	0	0	.000	0	0

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Indianapolis	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Jacksonville	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Tennessee	0	0	0	.000	0	0

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Cincinnati	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Cleveland	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Pittsburgh	0	0	0	.000	0	0

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Denver	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Kansas City	0	0	0	.000	0	0
L.A. Chargers	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Las Vegas	0	0	0	.000	0	0

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Philadelphia	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Washington	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Dallas	0	1	0	.000	29	31

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Tampa Bay	1	0	0	1.000	31	29
Atlanta	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Carolina	0	0	0	.000	0	0
New Orleans	0	0	0	.000	0	0

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Chicago	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Detroit	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Green Bay	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Minnesota	0	0	0	.000	0	0

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arizona	0	0	0	.000	0	0
L.A. Rams	0	0	0	.000	0	0
San Francisco	0	0	0	.000	0	0
Seattle	0	0	0	.000	0	0

Thursday's game

Tampa Bay 31, Dallas 29

Sunday's games

Arizona at Tennessee
Jacksonville at Houston
L.A. Chargers at Washington
Minnesota at Cincinnati
N.Y. Jets at Carolina
Philadelphia at Atlanta
Pittsburgh at Buffalo
San Francisco at Detroit
Seattle at Indianapolis
Cleveland at Kansas City
Denver at N.Y. Giants
Green Bay at New Orleans
Miami at New England
Chicago at L.A. Rams

Monday's game

Baltimore at Las Vegas

NFL injury report

The National Football League injury re-

port, as provided by the league (OUT: will not play; DOUBTFUL: doubtful to play; QUESTIONABLE: questionable to play; DNP: did not practice; LIMITED: limited participation; FULL: Full participation):

SUNDAY

ARIZONA CARDINALS at TENNESSEE TITANS — ARIZONA: OUT: LB Dennis Gardeck (knee,hand), WR Antoine Wesley (illness). FULL: TE Darrell Daniels (toe). TENNESSEE: OUT: LB David Long (hamstring). QUESTIONABLE: K Sam Ficken (right groin), TE Tommy Hudson (toe), CB Chris Jackson (hamstring), WR Josh Reynolds (foot). DNP: TE Tommy Hudson (toe), LB David Long (hamstring). LIMITED: K Sam Ficken (right groin), CB Chris Jackson (hamstring), WR Josh Reynolds (foot). FULL: WR A.J. Brown (knee).

CHICAGO BEARS at LOS ANGELES RAMS — CHICAGO: DOUBTFUL: DT Eddie Goldman (knee,ankle). QUESTIONABLE: S Deon Bush (shoulder), S Tashaun Gipson (back), LB Joel Iyiegbuniwe (shoulder), S Eddie Jackson (wrist), LB Khalil Mack (groin), WR Darnell Mooney (back), LB Robert Quinn (back), LS Patrick Scales (ankle). LIMITED: S Tashaun Gipson (back). FULL: S Deon Bush (shoulder), CB Xavier Crawford (groin), TE Jimmy Graham (not injury related - resting player), TE J.P. Holtz (quadriple), LB Joel Iyiegbuniwe (shoulder), S Eddie Jackson (wrist), LB Khalil Mack (groin), WR Darnell Mooney (back), LB Robert Quinn (back), LS Patrick Scales (ankle), DT Khyiris Tonga (ankle), RB Damien Williams (abdomen). LOS ANGELES RAMS: DOUBTFUL: WR Ben Skowronek (forearm). DNP: WR DeSean Jackson (not injury related - resting player). FULL: LB Terrell Lewis (not injury related - resting player), DT A'Shawn Robinson (knee), T Andrew Whitworth (not injury related - resting player).

CLEVELAND BROWNS at KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — CLEVELAND: OUT: T Michael Dunn (back), LB Tony Fields (illness). DNP: LB Tony Fields (illness). LIMITED: WR Odell Beckham (knee), DE Jadeveon Clowney (illness), S Grant Delpit (hamstring), T Michael Dunn (back), C J.C. Tretter (knee). FULL: S Ronnie Harrison (ankle), WR Rashard Higgins (hamstring), CB Troy Hill (hamstring), K Chase McLaughlin (right hamstring), LB Sione Takitaki (hamstring), CB Greedy Williams (groin). KANSAS CITY: OUT: C Austin Blythe (abdomen). DNP: C Austin Blythe (abdomen). LIMITED: DE Frank Clark (hamstring), DT Derrick Nnadi (hip). FULL: G Laurent Duvernay-Tardif (hand), RB Clyde Edwards-Helaire (ankle), WR Mecole Hardman (oblique), T Mike Remmers (knee), G Trey Smith (shoulder).

DENVER BRONCOS at NEW YORK GIANTS — DENVER: QUESTIONABLE: LB Bradley Chubb (ankle). LIMITED: LB Bradley Chubb (ankle). FULL: TE Noah Fant (knee), LB Von Miller (ankle), TE Albert Okwuegbunam (knee), WR Courtland Sutton (knee). NEW YORK GIANTS: OUT: TE Evan Engram (calf). DNP: TE Evan Engram (calf). LIMITED: RB Saquon Barkley (knee), WR Kenny Golladay (hamstring), LB Justin Hilliard (foot), CB Adoree' Jackson (ankle), CB Josh Jackson (calf), TE Kyle Rudolph (foot), DT Danny Shelton (neck), TE Kaden Smith (knee), T Andrew Thomas (ankle), WR Kadarius Toney (hamstring).

GREEN BAY PACKERS at NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — GREEN BAY: OUT: S Vernon Scott (hamstring). QUESTIONABLE: DT Tyler Lancaster (back), LB Za'Darius Smith (back). DNP: DT Tyler Lancaster (back). FULL: TE Mercedes Lewis (not injury related - resting player), LB Preston Smith (head). NEW ORLEANS: OUT: CB Ken Crawley (hamstring), WR Tre'Quan Smith (hamstring). QUESTIONABLE: T James Hurst (knee). DNP: T Terron Armstead (back), CB Ken Crawley (hamstring), T James Hurst (knee), WR Tre'Quan Smith (hamstring). FULL: CB Marshon Lattimore (knee).

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS at HOUSTON TEXANS — JACKSONVILLE: OUT: CB Tre Herndon (knee). QUESTIONABLE: CB Tyson Campbell (calf), DE Jordan Smith (knee). LIMITED: CB Tyson Campbell (calf), DE Jordan Smith (knee). HOUSTON: OUT: CB Lonnie Johnson (thigh), QB Deshaun Watson (not injury related - personal matter). QUESTIONABLE: DE Jonathan Greenard (illness), LB Kevin Pierre-Louis (thigh). DNP: DE Jonathan Greenard (illness), CB Lonnie Johnson (thigh), LB Kevin Pierre-Louis (thigh), QB Deshaun Watson (not injury related - personal matter).

DEALS

scouting.

National League

ATLANTA BRAVES — Placed C Stephen Vogt on the 10-day IL. Recalled C William Contreras from Gwinnett (Triple-A East).
CHICAGO CUBS — Placed LHP Adam Morgan on the bereavement list. Recalled RHP Tommy Nance from Iowa (Triple-A East).
MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Reinstated C Manny Pina from the 10-day IL. Optioned C Luke Maile to Nashville (Triple-A East).
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Placed LHP Jose Quintana on the paternity list. Recalled RHP Jay Jackson from Sacramento (Triple-A West).

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association
BROOKLYN NETS — Signed F Paul Millsap.
Women's National Basketball Association
MINNESOTA LYNX — Signed F Jillian Alleyne to a seven-day contract.
FOOTBALL
National Football League
ATLANTA FALCONS — Signed K Elliott Fry to the practice squad.

FULL: DT Maliek Collins (knee), DE Whitney Mercilus (thigh).

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS at WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM — LOS ANGELES CHARGERS: OUT: S Trey Marshall (ankle). QUESTIONABLE: RB Austin Ekeler (hamstring). LIMITED: RB Austin Ekeler (hamstring). FULL: T Bryan Bulaga (groin), RB Gabe Nabers (knee). WASHINGTON: Did not practice Friday.

MIAMI DOLPHINS at NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — MIAMI: QUESTIONABLE: WR Preston Williams (foot). LIMITED: WR Preston Williams (foot). FULL: T Liam Eichenberg (thigh), S Clayton Fejedelem (shoulder), WR DeVante Parker (shoulder), LB Elandon Roberts (knee), WR Albert Wilson (quadriple). NEW ENGLAND: OUT: WR Malcolm Perry (foot). DNP: WR Malcolm Perry (foot). LIMITED: WR Nelson Agholor (ankle), T Yodny Cajuste (hamstring), S Jalen Mills (ankle), LB Ronnie Perkins (shoulder).

MINNESOTA VIKINGS at CINCINNATI BENGALS — MINNESOTA: OUT: LB Anthony Barr (knee), T Christian Darrisaw (groin). FULL: TE Tyler Conklin (hamstring), RB Alexander Mattison (ribs), S Josh Metellus (ankle), WR Dede Westbrook (knee). CINCINNATI: OUT: CB Trae Waynes (hamstring). FULL: C Trey Hill (hip), TE Mitchell Wilcox (concussion).

NEW YORK JETS at CAROLINA PANTHERS — NEW YORK JETS: OUT: S Sharrod Neasman (hamstring). QUESTIONABLE: WR Keelan Cole (knee), RB La'Mical Perine (foot). FULL: T Mekhi Becton (concussion), RB La'Mical Perine (foot). CAROLINA: OUT: WR Shi Smith (shoulder).

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES at ATLANTA FALCONS — PHILADELPHIA: OUT: G Landon Dickerson (knee), S Rodney McLeod (knee). QUESTIONABLE: LB Davion Taylor (calf). LIMITED: G Brandon Brooks (knee), G Landon Dickerson (knee), S Rodney McLeod (knee). FULL: LB Davion Taylor (calf). ATLANTA: FULL: LB Brandon Copeland (hamstring).

PITTSBURGH STEELERS at BUFFALO BILLS — PITTSBURGH: QUESTIONABLE: LB Alex Highsmith (groin). LIMITED: WR James Washington (finger). FULL: DE Tyson Alualu (elbow), C Kendrick Green (thumb), LB Alex Highsmith (groin). BUFFALO: OUT: DT Star Lotulelei (calf). QUESTIONABLE: WR Emmanuel Sanders (foot). DNP: DE Mario Addison (not injury related - personal matter). LIMITED: WR Emmanuel Sanders (foot). FULL: CB Taron Johnson (hand), WR Isaiah McKenzie (shoulder), DT Harrison Phillips (knee).

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS at DETROIT LIONS — SAN FRANCISCO: OUT: WR Jalen Hurd (knee). DOUBTFUL: DT Javon Kinlaw (knee), CB Emmanuel Moseley (knee). QUESTIONABLE: DT Kevin Givens (hip). DNP: DT Javon Kinlaw (knee), CB Emmanuel Moseley (knee). LIMITED: DT Kevin Givens (hip), QB Trey Lance (right finger). FULL: WR Brandon Aiyuk (hamstring), G Aaron Banks (shoulder), DE Nick Bosa (knee), DE Dee Ford (back), LB Dre Greenlaw (hip), CB Jason Verrett (foot). DETROIT: OUT: T Taylor Decker (finger). QUESTIONABLE: DE Michael Brockers (shoulder), DT Levi Onwuzurike (hip), CB A.J. Parker (shoulder), DE Nicholas Williams (elbow). LIMITED: DE Michael Brockers (shoulder), DT Levi Onwuzurike (hip), CB A.J. Parker (shoulder), DE Nicholas Williams (elbow). FULL: TE Darren Fells (shoulder), TE T.J. Hockenson (shoulder), RB D'Andre Swift (groin).

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS at INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — SEATTLE: Practice Not Complete. INDIANAPOLIS: OUT: T Eric Fisher (Achilles), CB Xavier Rhodes (calf), DE Kemoko Turay (groin). QUESTIONABLE: G Quenton Nelson (foot, back), G Danny Pinter (foot). DNP: LB Darius Leonard (ankle), CB Xavier Rhodes (calf), DE Kemoko Turay (groin). LIMITED: T Eric Fisher (Achilles). FULL: WR Parris Campbell (Achilles), TE Jack Doyle (not injury related - resting player), G Quenton Nelson (foot, back), G Danny Pinter (foot), QB Carson Wentz (foot).

MONDAY

BALTIMORE RAVENS at LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — BALTIMORE: DNP: DT Brandon Williams (not injury related - resting player), DE Derek Wolfe (back, hip). LIMITED: LB Daelin Hayes (knee), CB Jimmy Smith (ankle). LAS VEGAS: DNP: G Richie Incognito (calf), CB Roderic Teamer (shoulder, ankle). LIMITED: RB Josh Jacobs (toe). FULL: DE Clelin Ferrell (back), T Alex Leatherwood (shin), DE Carl Nassib (pectoral).

BALTIMORE RAVENS — Signed RB Lata-vius Murray and RB Devonta Freeman to the practice squad. Placed CB Marcus Peters, TE Nick Boyle and RB Gus Edwards on injured reserve.

CAROLINA PANTHERS — Promoted WR Alex Erickson from the practice squad to the active roster.
DETROIT LIONS — Named Don Mulbach special assistant to the executive vice president, general manager and head coach.

LOS ANGELES RAMS — Activated G Coleman Shelton from the reserve/COVID-19 list.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Promoted QB Sean Mannion from the practice squad to the active roster.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Signed S Kai Nacua to the practice squad. Released LB Rashad Smith from the practice squad.

TENNESSEE TITANS — Signed K Michael Badgley to the practice squad. Released OL Christian DiLauro from the practice squad.
WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM — Placed WR Curtis Samuel on injured reserve.

TENNIS

U.S. Open

Friday

At USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center
New York
Purse: \$27,200,000
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Men's Singles Semifinals

Daniil Medvedev (2), Russia, def. Felix Auger-Aliassime (12), Canada, 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.
Novak Djokovic (1), Serbia, def. Alexander Zverev (4), Germany, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 4-6, 6-2.

Men's Doubles Championship

Rajeev Ram, United States, and Joe Salisbury (4), Britain, def. Bruno Soares, Brazil, and Jamie Murray (7), Britain, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2.

Women's Doubles Semifinals

Sam Stosur, Australia, and Zhang Shuai (14), China, def. Alexa Guarachi Mathison, Chile, and Desirae Krawczyk (7), United States, 6-2, 7-5.

Caty McNally and Coco Gauff (11), United States, def. Gabriela Dabrowski, Canada, and Luisa Stefani (5), Brazil, 6-6, ret.

Mixed Doubles Semifinals

Desirae Krawczyk, United States, and Joe Salisbury (2), Britain, def. Austin Krajicek and Jessica Pegula, United States, 7-6 (2), 6-4.

Karlsruhe Open

Friday

At Tennis Club Ruppurr Karlsruhe, Germany
Purse: \$125,000
Surface: Red clay
Women's

MLB

Scoreboard

American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	88	53	.624	—
Boston	80	63	.559	9
New York	78	63	.553	10
Toronto	77	63	.550	10½
Baltimore	46	94	.329	41½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	81	60	.574	—
Cleveland	69	70	.496	11
Detroit	67	75	.472	14½
Kansas City	64	77	.454	17
Minnesota	62	79	.440	19
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	82	58	.586	—
Oakland	77	64	.546	5½
Seattle	77	64	.546	5½
Los Angeles	69	72	.489	13½
Texas	51	89	.364	31
National League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	75	65	.536	—
Philadelphia	71	70	.504	4½
New York	71	71	.500	5
Miami	59	82	.418	16½
Washington	58	83	.411	17½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	87	55	.613	—
Cincinnati	75	67	.528	12
St. Louis	71	69	.507	15
Chicago	65	77	.458	22
Pittsburgh	51	90	.362	35½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	91	50	.645	—
Los Angeles	89	53	.627	2½
San Diego	74	66	.529	16½
Colorado	65	77	.458	26½
Arizona	45	96	.319	46

Friday's games

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

Saturday's games

Texas at Oakland
 Toronto at Baltimore, 1st game
 Toronto at Baltimore, 2nd game
 Milwaukee at Cleveland
 Tampa Bay at Detroit
 Boston at Chicago White Sox
 Kansas City at Minnesota
 L.A. Angels at Houston
 Arizona at Seattle
 San Francisco at Chicago Cubs
 Colorado at Philadelphia
 Washington at Pittsburgh
 Cincinnati at St. Louis
 Miami at Atlanta
 N.Y. Yankees at N.Y. Mets
 San Diego at L.A. Dodgers

Sunday's games

Tampa Bay (Archer 1-1) at Detroit (Skubal 8-12)
 Toronto (Matz 11-7) at Baltimore (TBD)
 Boston (TBD) at Chicago White Sox (Lynn 10-4)
 Kansas City (Bubic 4-6) at Minnesota (Ober 2-2)
 L.A. Angels (Barria 2-3) at Houston (McCullers Jr. 11-4)
 Texas (Hearn 5-4) at Oakland (Kaprielian 7-4)
 Arizona (Gilbert 1-2) at Seattle (Kikuchi 7-8)
 Colorado (González 3-7) at Philadelphia (Nola 7-8)
 Washington (Espino 4-4) at Pittsburgh (Wilson 2-6)
 Milwaukee (Woodruff 9-8) at Cleveland (Allen 1-6)
 Miami (Cabrera 0-1) at Atlanta (Fried 11-7)
 Cincinnati (Gray 7-6) at St. Louis (Happ 8-8)
 San Francisco (Webb 9-3) at Chicago Cubs (Steele 3-2)
 San Diego (Snell 7-6) at L.A. Dodgers (Scherzer 13-4)
 N.Y. Yankees (TBD) at N.Y. Mets (Carrasco 1-2)

Mets cruise past reeling, bumbling Yanks

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The reeling Yankees made a Subway Series of mental and physical mistakes in their weekend opener at the Mets.

Catcher Gary Sánchez had a pair of glaring defensive lapses, and throwing errors by third baseman Gio Urshela and shortstop Gleyber Torres led to three runs in the Yankees' 10-3 loss on Friday night.

The Yankees lost their season-high seventh in a row and for the 11th time in 13 games following a 13-game winning streak. They remained a half-game ahead of Toronto for the AL's second wild-card berth.

"I think we're beyond frustrated," second baseman DJ LeMahieu said, "but now's not the time to point fingers at anyone, and just everyone to raise their game and collectively get out of it together."

Rookie Tylor Megill struck out a career-high 10 in a career-long seven innings, and Jeff McNeil had a drag bunt for an RBI single in a five-run third inning.

"Just a poor performance, period," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "It's a bit of a broken record. We got to keep grinding at it. We got to keep working at it and we will, and trust that it will turn, but it's obviously going to take everyone and, obviously, that starts with me and making sure we're ready to roll."

This is the Yankees' worst 13-game stretch since losing 13 of their final 15 in 2000 — before rebounding to win their fourth World Series title in five seasons.

They wasted a 1-0 lead in the first when Sánchez bailed on a play at the plate and al-



ADAM HUNGER/AP

The Mets' Michael Conforto scores against the New York Yankees during the fourth inning of Friday's game of the Subway Series at Citi Field in New York.

lowed Jonathan Villar to score on a throw by left fielder Joey Gallo that beat the runner by more than 20 feet. Sánchez's defensive lapse was the type that hardly occurs since Major League Baseball and the players' association adopted a rule in 2014 limiting home plate collisions.

Plate umpire Ted Barrett called out Villar on Gallo's throw, but a video review showed that by standing up and reaching out, Sánchez allowed the sliding Villar to get his foot on the plate before his helmet was tagged.

"Obviously he's going to be out easy," Boone said. "He got out of his crouch and athletic position. In that spot, where you've got a guy dead to rights, you got to just lower your body, maybe initiate the contact but remain

athletic in your legs."

Jordan Montgomery (5-6) allowed a career-high seven runs in 3½ innings — just five earned. Francisco Lindor chased him with an opposite-field home run just inside the right-field pole.

The Mets, who closed within four games of a playoff spot, got their first win in four games this year while wearing black jerseys.

Megill (3-4) allowed two runs, four hits and one walk as the Mets got back to .500 at 71-71. The 26-year-old right-hander threw up to 97.2 mph, well above his 94.5 mph average coming in.

"I commanded the zone from bottom to top with all three of my pitches," Megill said. "I was making them feel uncomfortable."

ROUNDUP

Bryant returns to Wrigley Field, Giants beat Cubs

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Kris Bryant drew a pair of standing ovations in his return to Wrigley Field, Evan Longoria and Brandon Belt homered in the seventh inning and the San Francisco Giants beat the Chicago Cubs 6-1 on Friday for their fifth straight victory.

The Giants improved to a major league-best 91-50.

Bryant was traded to the Giants for two prospects at the July 30 deadline as the rebuilding Cubs unloaded marquee stars who were set to become free agents after this season. The 29-year-old got a standing ovation from the crowd of 29,439 during a pregame video tribute and again before his first inning at-bat. Bryant went 0-for-3 with a walk, run and struck out swinging twice.

San Francisco's Dominic Leone opened with two perfect innings on a bullpen day, and the Giants used eight pitchers in a combined two-hitter. Camilo Doval (2-1) got the final out of the sixth for the win. Trevor Megill (1-1) was the loser.

Rookie Frank Schwindel hit a solo drive for the Cubs, giving him 12 homers and seven in the last 11 games. Chicago lost for just the second time in 10 games.

White Sox 4, Red Sox 3: José



NAM Y. HUH/AP

The San Francisco Giants' Kris Bryant greets Cubs fans as he walks to the dugout before a game in Chicago on Friday.

Abreu hit a three-run homer and Carlos Rodón pitched five effective innings on extended rest, helping Chicago beat visiting Boston.

The Red Sox lost for the fourth time in five games, but maintained their one-game lead for the top AL wild card because of the New York

Yankees' 10-3 loss to the Mets. Boston also remained nine games back of AL East-leading Tampa Bay.

Dodgers 3, Padres 0: Julio Urias pitched seven shutout innings for his major league-leading 17th victory, Max Muncy slugged a two-run homer and host Los Angeles beat San Diego to snap a two-game skid.

Pirates 4, Nationals 3: Ke'Bryan Hayes capped off a ninth-inning rally with an RBI single and Pittsburgh slipped past visiting Washington.

Brewers 10, Indians 3: Lorenzo Cain hit a grand slam to cap a six-run fifth inning, Eduardo Escobar homered from both sides of the plate and Milwaukee beat host Cleveland to move closer to the NL Central title.

Orioles 6, Blue Jays 3: Cedric Mullins and Ryan McKenna homered off Robbie Ray and Baltimore ended visiting Toronto's season-high winning streak at eight.

Tigers 10, Rays 4: Miguel Cabrera got his ninth straight hit before the string ended, Jonathan Schoop launched a grand slam and host Detroit beat Tampa Bay.

Braves 6, Marlins 2: Jorge Soler had a two-run single during a five-run fifth inning, Ian Anderson

tied a career high with nine strikeouts and Atlanta beat visiting Miami.

Rockies 11, Phillies 2: Elias Díaz hit a grand slam, Germán Márquez pitched six shutout innings and Colorado continued to hurt host Philadelphia's playoff chances.

Astros 10, Angels 5: Shohei Ohtani hit his major league-leading 44th home run, but got tagged early by José Altuve and Alex Bregman in Houston's victory over visiting Los Angeles.

Mariners 5, Diamondbacks 4: Tom Murphy hit a two-run home run in the second inning and added a solo shot in the sixth and host Seattle beat Arizona for its eighth victory in 11 games.

Royals 6, Twins 4 (11): Andrew Benintendi had four hits and two home runs, the last a two-run shot in the 11th to send visiting Kansas City past Minnesota.

Reds 4, Cardinals 2: Jose Barrero made the most of an unexpected start by doubling in the tie-breaking run in the ninth inning, leading Cincinnati past host St. Louis.

Athletics 10, Rangers 5: Matt Olson had four hits and drove in four runs, Starling Marte added an RBI triple and Oakland beat visiting Texas for its third straight win.

SPORTS BRIEFS/US OPEN

BRIEFLY

Gasol's rights traded to Grizzlies

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Lakers have traded the rights to Marc Gasol back to the Memphis Grizzlies, where the 36-year-old center spent his first 11 NBA seasons.

The Lakers also sent a second-round pick in 2024 and cash to Memphis on Friday in exchange for the draft rights to Chinese big man Wang Zhelin.

ESPN then reported the Grizzlies intend to waive Gasol, who plans to begin the new NBA season at home in Spain. The move saves the Lakers about \$10 million against the salary cap and the league's luxury tax.

The 36-year-old Gasol averaged a career-low 5.0 points and 4.1 rebounds per game last season with the Lakers, who signed him to a two-year deal last November. The 7-foot-1 center never found a regular role in the injury-plagued Lakers' rotation while they lost in the first round of the postseason.

Gasol's role for the upcoming season looked increasingly tenuous this summer after the Lakers signed centers Dwight Howard and DeAndre Jordan, who officially returned to Los Angeles on Thursday. The Lakers also weren't even certain Gasol wanted to return for another NBA season, prompting them to stock up on big men.

Newton blames test for release

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Former Patriots quarterback Cam Newton says he was caught by surprise by his release in New England and believes his weeklong absence near the end of training camp due to a mishap related to COVID-19 testing protocols contributed to coach Bill Belichick's decision.

In a 45-minute video posted on social media Friday Newton, 32, made it clear he doesn't plan to retire and thinks rookie Mac Jones will have success as the starter this season.

Joined by his father, Cecil Newton Sr., and sitting at the 50-yard line of his alma mater Westlake High School in Atlanta, Cam Newton said though the Patriots coaching staff never treated him differently, he did begin "seeing signs of change" late in training camp that led him to believe his starting job might not be secure.

Newton started each of New England's three preseason games, but also missed five days of practice leading into the exhibition finale against the New York Giants after a "misunderstanding" of NFL COVID-19 protocols. Newton attended a doctor's appointment in Atlanta, and because he was unvaccinated, he had to stay away from the team for five days.

Pelé remains in intensive care

SAO PAULO — Retired Brazilian soccer star Pelé remained in intensive care on Friday as he recovered from surgery to remove a tumor on the right side of his colon.

Hospital Albert Einstein in Sao Paulo said in a statement that 80-year-old Edson Arantes do Nascimento was recovering "in a satisfactory manner," though still in intensive care. The hospital said on Monday that Pelé was expected to be moved to a regular room on Tuesday.

The hospital also said Pelé is "awake, actively talking and keeping his vital signs in normality."

The three-time World Cup champion also said on his Instagram that "each day I feel a little better."

From the Associated Press



PHOTOS BY JOHN MINCHILLO/AP

Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns a shot to Germany's Alexander Zverev during their semifinal match Friday in New York.

One to go: Djokovic into final

Serb has to get past Medvedev to take calendar-year Grand Slam

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

NEW YORK — If Novak Djokovic does complete the first calendar-year Grand Slam for a man since 1969 — and he is headed to the U.S. Open final, just one victory away — he, and everyone else, will remember one particularly pivotal, and epic, game along the way.

It came at the conclusion of the third set of what eventually became a 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 victory over Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Alexander Zverev in the semifinals at Flushing Meadows on Friday night, making Djokovic 27-0 in major championships this season.

Beating No. 2 Daniil Medvedev on Sunday for the title will allow Djokovic to secure two significant milestones. He would add the 2021 U.S. Open trophy to those he won at the Australian Open in February, French Open in June and Wimbledon in July. And the 34-year-old from Serbia would collect his 21st Slam title in all, breaking the men's career mark he currently shares with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

"There's only one match left. ... All in. Let's do it," Djokovic said, spreading his arms wide, in an on-court interview. "I'm going to put my heart and my soul and my body and my head into that one. I'm going to treat the next match like it is the last match of my career."

That key game against Zverev featured one extended exchange after another, including a 53-shot, minute-plus point that was the longest of the tournament and actually was lost by Djokovic. Zverev delivered a forehand winner, then hunched over



Russia's Daniil Medvedev will face Djokovic in the final after defeating 12th-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime of Canada 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.

with his hands on his knees. Djokovic went to grab a towel. Both men were breathing heavily as most of Arthur Ashe Stadium's 21,139 spectators rose in unison on a cool, crisp evening.

But that one, tiny outcome didn't matter. Never seems to with Djokovic, especially in best-of-five-set matches on his sport's most prestigious stages. As usual, he used his superb returning and never-take-a-rest defense to wear down Zverev.

"I'm proud of the fight that I delivered," Djokovic said.

So, yes, Djokovic lost that point — which was preceded by others lasting 13, 19, 22 and 31 shots, and followed by one that went 16 — but he won that game, and that set with

it. Just as he had lost the first set about 1 1/2 hours earlier but turned things around, with the help of a dip in level from the fourth-seeded Zverev. And just as, later, Djokovic lost the fourth set but immediately rebounded and was nearly untouchable while going ahead 5-0 in the fifth then held on.

Djokovic, who has spent more weeks at No. 1 in the ATP rankings than anyone, figures out what is required to emerge on top and does it. In each of his past four matches — and 10 in all at the Slams this year — he trailed by a set and won.

He equaled Federer by getting to a 31st career Slam final; Djokovic's total now includes a record nine in New York, where he has won three championships.

It will be Slam final No. 3 for Medvedev, a 25-year-old from Russia, who eliminated 12th-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime of Canada 6-4, 7-5, 6-2 in the afternoon. Medvedev was defeated by Djokovic in this year's Australian Open final and by Nadal in the 2019 U.S. Open final.

"The more you lose something, the more you want to win it. The more you want to gain it and take it," said Medvedev, who has lost only one set over the past two weeks. "I lost two finals. I want to win the third one."

Djokovic is trying to go 4-for-4 at the majors over the course of one season, something last done in men's tennis by Rod Laver 52 years ago. It was also done by Laver in 1962 and Don Budge in 1938. Three women have completed what's known as a true Grand Slam, most recently Steffi Graf in 1988. Serena Williams' attempt in 2015 ended at the U.S. Open with a semifinal loss to Roberta Vinci.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL/BASKETBALL



PHOTOS BY NELL REDMOND/AP

Coastal Carolina wide receiver Kameron Brown, right, catches a pass next to Kansas cornerback Jacobee Bryant during the first half of Friday's game in Conway, S.C.

No. 17 Coastal Carolina wins third straight over Kansas

BY PETE IACOBELLI
Associated Press

CONWAY, S.C. — Reese White was thinking even bigger for No. 17 Coastal Carolina after his strong start to the season.

White finished with 102 yards and three rushing touchdowns and the Chanticleers beat Kansas for a third straight year, 49-22, as the fledging FBS program hosted a Power Five team for the first time Friday night.

White is a junior who was a backup behind last year's rushing leader, C.J. Marable, during Coastal's breakthrough season in college football's top division.

So far, White is filling in very nicely. He had two rushing touchdowns in a 52-14 victory over The Citadel last week and wondered if he couldn't do even better.

How about his first-ever 100-yard performance and those three critical TDs.

"I wanted to add one to the total," he said. "I thought, 'Why not go for three?' and I did it."

So is four on the table when Coastal Carolina travels to play Buffalo next week?

"Maybe," White said with grin.

Quarterback Grayson McCall threw for two scores and ran for a third in the victory.

It was a big spot for a program on the rise and Kansas (1-1) didn't have the firepower to spoil the home team's "White Out" promotion in front of the largest crowd here ever at 17,697.

"I never imagined this could

happen," said freshman defensive tackle Josiah Stewart, who set a team record with 3½ sacks. "It's unreal."

Much like the Chanticleers' wins at Kansas the last two years that certainly raised eyebrows. This one wasn't much of a shocker as Coastal Carolina showed off a deep, talented offense and a relentless defense to put away its Big 12 Conference opponent.

White had touchdown runs of 2, 19 and 3 yards against Kansas after two touchdowns in his team's 52-14 opening victory over The Citadel last week. McCall began the scoring with a 33-yard TD pass to Jaivon Heiligh, then had a 2-yard scoring run.

White talked this week of going for three touchdowns after his two a week ago.

Kansas quarterback Jason Bean, a North Texas transfer, had touchdown runs of 34 and 46 yards as the Jayhawks drew to 28-22 midway through the third quarter.

However, the Chants responded with White's final two touchdowns to open up a 20-point lead.

Kansas entered after snapping a 13-game losing streak in the opener and hoped to keep the momentum going on Coastal's teal blue turf.

But the Chanticleers and McCall proved too potent for first year Jayhawks coach Lance Leipold's program. They scored on three of their first four possessions and got a blocked punt for a TD by Alex Spillum to take a 28-9



Chanticleers safety Alex Spillum dives on the ball in the end zone for a touchdown after blocking a Kansas punt during the first half.

lead.

McCall finished 17-for-21 passing for 245 yards. Heiligh had six catches for 122 yards, his fourth consecutive game with 100-plus receiving yards.

Spillum, a speedy, 6-foot-2, 190-pound safety, blew through the line to block the punt deep in Kansas territory. He followed the ball into the end zone and covered up for the score.

Bean led Kansas with 102 yards rushing.

"Our margin of error is very small right now. I think that's pretty evident," Leipold said. "We had some moments where we were knocking on the door, but just couldn't quite get over the hump."

Pierce leads class of 16 into hoops Hall of Fame

By JIMMY GOLEN
Associated Press

If it didn't really sink in when he slipped to the 10th pick in the 1998 NBA Draft, Paul Pierce got the message when he went home to Los Angeles to play in the All-Star Game and got booed by his hometown fans.

"That's just the story of my career: Being the underdog, not really being liked. I guess somebody has to be the villain," Pierce said Friday, a day before he is to be inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. "I'm comfortable with that."

A 10-time All-Star and the MVP of the 2008 NBA finals, Pierce was in a class of 16 scheduled to be honored at the Springfield, Mass., shrine Saturday night. Also giving the event a Celtics feel: Bill Russell, who is already in the Hall as a player, will be inducted as a coach, making him the fifth person to be honored for both roles.

Others to be inducted are Villanova coach Jay Wright, defensive Pistons star Ben Wallace, two-time NBA champion Chris Bosh, longtime Portland and Sacramento coach Rick Adelman, three-time WNBA MVP Lauren Jackson, Washington and Sacramento All-Star Chris Webber and two-time Olympic gold medalist Yolanda Griffith.

The Hall's committees, which are focused on preserving all areas of the game, have also selected former WNBA commissioner Val Ackerman, longtime coach Cotton Fitzsimmons and scouting pioneer Howard Garfinkel to be inducted as contributors. Clarence "Fats" Jenkins was picked by the Early African American Pioneers Committee, Croatian Chicago Bulls star Toni Kukoc was tabbed by the International Committee, Bob Dandridge by the Veterans Committee and Pearl Moore from the Women's Veterans Committee.

Ackerman had worked for the NBA and USA Basketball when

she was named the first president of the newly created WNBA in 1996. She guided the startup for its first decade, helping it survive where other women's leagues have faltered.

"To see them at 25 is first and foremost a feeling of great pride," said Ackerman, who is now the Big East commissioner. "To see how women's sports have evolved, and with the 50th anniversary of Title IX that's another cause for celebration. ... It has been really, really great to see."

Webber went from Michigan's Fab Five freshman class to play 17 seasons in the NBA. He even noted the most ignominious moment of his career: The extra timeout he called in the 1993 NCAA championship game against North Carolina.

"Calling timeout, one of the worst moments you can have, 60 days later to be drafted, it was a whirlwind," he said. "I really did enjoy the journey. The ups and downs and everything that came with it."

Wallace broke down in tears while talking about his road from Virginia Union to a four-time defensive player of the year who won the 2004 NBA title with the Pistons. Going undrafted, he said, was a blessing.

"Either you're going to find your true strength, or you're going to prove to me why you want to be here," he said. "There's moments on your journey when you have to ... stay on your path. If there's a roadblock in your path, you've got to find a way to overcome that roadblock."

Kukoc joined the Michael Jordan-led Bulls midway through their run of six NBA titles in eight years. Although he was a three-time MVP of the European League Final Four, his new teammates were skeptical.

"When we came here it was different times. People didn't know about us," he said. "We were pioneers."



JESSICA HILL/AP

Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2021 inductee Paul Pierce speaks at a news conference at the Mohegan Sun on Friday in Uncasville, Conn.

NFL

Test: Browns typically don't do well in Week 1

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since they returned to Cleveland for the 1999 season. Last year was a particularly gruesome 38-6 loss at Baltimore.

"Obviously any time you're playing in the NFL, you're playing against the best of the best," Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield said. "For us, it's about playing the guy in front of us and doing our job. ... For us, we erased last year. We're trying to start from Game 0 and move on from there."

The personnel alone make Sunday's game one of the marquee matchups of Week 1.

Mahomes and Mayfield are two of the best quarterbacks in the league. The Chiefs have one of the best wide receivers in Tyreek Hill, the Browns counter with a healthy Odell Beckham Jr. and Jarvis Landry. Both teams have talented tight ends and running backs, to say nothing of playmakers on the opposite side of the ball.

The Browns signed Jadeveon Clowney to pair with pass rusher Myles Garrett, and cornerback Denzel Ward is among the best in the game. The Chiefs feature fearsome Chris Jones, who is moving from defensive tackle to defensive end, and have safety Tyrann Mathieu on the back end — assuming he is cleared of last week's positive COVID-19 test.

"They have a lot of good players," Mahomes said, "that's the biggest thing. They have talented players at every position, a mixture of younger players and veteran players, and players that have made plays in this league for a long time."

Beckham's back

Beckham is expected to play for the first time since a season-ending knee injury in Week 7 last season. One of the NFL's fastest players, Beckham made an equally speedy recovery and will likely start, giving Mayfield another option alongside Landry, tight end Austin Hooper and running backs

Nick Chubb and Kareem Hunt.

Unfamiliar faces

Mahomes won't recognize Cleveland's defense, which has nine new starters since the previous time the teams met. That includes free agents such as Clowney, linebacker Anthony Walker Jr. and safety John Johnson III.

"We're in a great spot right now," said Walker, who spent the past four seasons with Indianapolis. "Obviously not where we want to be, but where we're at right now, I think we're taking right steps in the right direction."

Rebuilding up front

The Chiefs scrapped their entire offensive line after it was dominated by Tampa Bay in the Super Bowl. They traded for Pro Bowl left tackle Orlando Brown Jr., signed standout left guard Joe Thuney in free agency, welcomed back right tackle Lucas Niang after he opted out of his rookie season and drafted center Creed Humphrey and right guard Trey Smith.

That means they'll have three players protecting Mahomes on Sunday that have never played a regular-season NFL game.

Arrowhead Stadium

The Chiefs were limited to 22% of capacity (about 16,500 fans) for home games last season, including that playoff matchup with the Browns. But there are no restrictions for Week 1 and a crowd of more than 75,000 is expected.

"The only time I've been in the stadium where it was full was the Garth Brooks concert," said second-year Chiefs running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire. "It's one thing sitting in the stands, but when you can put on a helmet and get on the field and the stadium is full, you have a different outlook. It's going to be a surreal feeling."

AP sports writer Tom Withers contributed from Berea, Ohio.



REED HOFFMANN/AP

Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, left, scrambles away from pressure by Myles Garrett during their NFL divisional playoff on Jan. 17 in Kansas City, Mo. The Chiefs won 22-17.



JEFFREY T. BARNES/AP

Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen throws a pass during a preseason game in Orchard Park, N.Y. Allen and the Bills host the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday in both teams' season opener.

Steelers, Bills collide for third straight year

BY JOHN WAWROW

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Josh Allen was 8 years old when he marveled at how then-Steelers rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger ably shed tackles and eluded charging defenders before completing passes from awkward stances and angles.

"Watching his game back in the day, the play was never over with him," Allen recalled this week as Buffalo prepares to open its season hosting Big Ben and the Steelers on Sunday.

"He's able to find ways to escape and get the ball out in some funky ways," the Bills quarterback added. "He's never had a play given up on him, and he's never given up on a play."

Allen won't dispute how his description of Roethlisberger compares to his own strong-armed and mobile attributes, which he displayed in his only preseason appearance by bursting out of the pocket and throwing across his body to hit Cole Beasley against Green Bay.

"I think it's more than I ever realized as a kid. ... I see the comparisons of where we're at physically," he said. "But that's a Hall of Fame quarterback. And I've got some time to go before we get into that conversation."

For everything Allen accomplished last year in setting numerous single-season franchise passing and scoring records, he faces

Pittsburgh Steelers at Buffalo Bills

AFN-Sports

7 p.m. Sunday CET

2 a.m. Monday JKT

the challenge of maintaining his production entering his fourth season.

At 39, Roethlisberger is a two-time Super Bowl champion with a long-established reputation of success, reflected in the Steelers' run of stability. Pittsburgh's never experienced a losing season during his 17 seasons behind center.

Mike Tomlin noted as much when asked how he has benefited from having just one quarterback during his 15 seasons as Steelers coach.

"I don't know the alternative, to be honest with you. Obviously, continuity is an asset," Tomlin said.

"But it's very similar to the traction (Bills coach Sean) McDermott and Josh Allen are gaining up there," he added. "Every day spent together facing the challenges that this game provides us all, I think there's collective growth in that. There's cohesion in that."

Familiar foes

The Bills and Steelers meet for a third consecutive season, with Buffalo having won the past two meetings to end a six-game skid dating to 2001. Roethlisberger threw two interceptions in a 26-15

loss at Buffalo last season.

Minus cornerback Joe Haden, who was sidelined by a concussion, the Steelers were burned by receiver Stefon Diggs, who had 10 catches for 130 yards and a touchdown.

Dancing JuJu?

Buffalo players took issue with Steelers receiver JuJu Smith-Schuster posting a video on social media of him dancing on the Bills logo at midfield before the game last year.

"Obviously, I remember, but I'm not going to get into that," Bills safety Jordan Poyer said.

"That's old news," Tomlin said, when asked if he has addressed the matter with Smith-Schuster since. "We've moved beyond that."

Full house

Diggs is looking forward to enjoying a full house in Orchard Park, after fans weren't allowed to attend regular-season games last year, and only 6,600 were let in for the playoffs.

"I think it's going to be crazy, it's going to be loud," Diggs said. "That's what people have been talking about all week. 'You haven't had a game with the fans.' I was like, 'No, I have, but I'm gonna actually just focus because listen, obviously I can't do both.'"

AP sports writer Will Graves in Pittsburgh contributed.

NFL

Saints open Winston era against Rodgers, Pack

BY BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

Before Jameis Winston answered the first question of his first regular-season interview as the New Orleans Saints' starting quarterback, he took a moment to speak about what he said was foremost on his mind.

It wasn't football.

But it did have something to do with why New Orleans' Week 1 home game against the Green Bay Packers will be played in Jacksonville, Fla., on Sunday instead of in the Superdome.

"I have something on my heart," Winston began after practice this week in the Dallas area, where the Saints have temporarily moved daily operations since Aug. 28, the night before powerful Hurricane Ida struck Louisiana's coast.

"I want to say thank you to all the first responders, the people on the ground right now, and all the people in the grassroots organizations working in New Orleans to help our city," Winston said. "New Orleans, I know we've been through this before, but our culture is strong, and we are going to feed off of this adversity to make us stronger. We are with you. Everybody in Louisiana, we are with you."

Leading off with comments supporting disaster-stricken fans, rather than highlighting his own football aspirations, was reminiscent of the tack the recently retired Drew Brees took when he joined the Saints in 2006, while



BRETT DUKE/AP

New Orleans quarterback Jameis Winston (2) will lead the Saints in their season opener against the Green Bay Packers on Sunday in Jacksonville, Fla., where New Orleans will temporarily play its home games in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida.

New Orleans was still reeling from Hurricane Katrina.

Winston has indicated his approach to leading coach Sean Payton's offense also will be similar to that of the record-setting Brees — at least in terms of opting for the play that should be made, instead of higher risk-reward plays he might like to attempt.

If Winston follows through on

that pledge, perhaps he'll realize more of the potential his career held when Tampa Bay made the 2013 Heisman Trophy winner the NFL's top draft choice in 2015.

"Consistent preparation. That is all I am focused on," Winston said. "Our day-to-day (approach) has to be the same. We cannot lose focus."

Particularly not when they open against reigning NFL MVP

Aaron Rodgers and a Packers team that captured the NFC's top playoff seed a season ago before falling in the conference title game to Tom Brady and the eventual champion Buccaneers.

Rodgers exudes confidence entering his 17th season, both while talking about his own vast experience and his receiving targets, led by Davante Adams, whose 18 touchdowns receiving last season

**Green Bay Packers
at New Orleans Saints**
AFN-Prime Atlantic
10:25 p.m. Sunday CET
5:25 a.m. Monday JKT

ranked first in the NFL. A favorite target of his past, 11th-year veteran Randall Cobb, also is back with the Packers after two years with other clubs. There's also young deep threat Marquez Valdes-Scantling.

"I love the versatility of those guys and the depth that we have," Rodgers said. "I feel good about different things we can throw at teams, and especially if they try and take Davante away the entire game."

No Dome advantage

When the Packers visited New Orleans last September, pandemic restrictions on crowds provided Rodgers the luxury of communicating clearly with teammates at the line of scrimmage in a largely empty Superdome. Even with Adams sidelined, the Packers put up 37 points and won by a touchdown.

Now Rodgers visits the Saints again in unusual circumstances. The game is a more than an eight-hour drive from New Orleans, and Brees has moved on to broadcasting.

"This will be different, obviously not playing in New Orleans and with some of the changes on their roster, most notably the quarterback," Rodgers said.

Titans set to unveil new-look offense against Cards

BY TERESA M. WALKER
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Tennessee Titans finally get to show off what adding a seven-time Pro Bowl wide receiver can do for their already high-powered offense.

Julio Jones, a trade acquisition in June, joins AP NFL Offensive Player of the Year Derrick Henry, Pro Bowl wide receiver A.J. Brown and quarterback Ryan Tannehill coming off a career year of his own. The Titans open the season Sunday hosting Arizona, believing an offense already was one of the NFL's best is a bit better.

"It is a big opportunity, we are finally getting everyone back out there," Tannehill said. "A lot of opportunities in front of us, it is just a matter of making it happen."

The Titans are coming off their first AFC South title in 12 years, and this will be their first game without pandemic restrictions in 630 days. In that span, this franchise also reached the AFC championship game in January 2020, and Henry now is the NFL's back-to-back rushing champ.

This also will be the first time the Titans have opened a season at home since Mike Vrabel was hired as head coach.

Add in Arizona with Kyler Murray and All-Pro DeAndre Hopkins, it should be quite a game.

The Cardinals have made changes as well

after going 8-8 last season and missing the playoffs after a strong start. They now have three-time AP NFL Defensive Player of the Year J.J. Watt and their own seven-time Pro Bowl receiver in A.J. Green.

Linebacker Isaiah Simmons can't wait to see how the Cardinals, old and new, match up with Tennessee.

"The good thing is we have players who bring special things to the game as well," Simmons said.

Titanic offense

Not only did Henry lead the NFL in rushing in 2020, he was the eighth man to run for at least 2,000 yards with 2,027 the fifth-best total in league history. The Titans tied for second averaging 396.4 yards per game and fourth scoring 30.7 per game. Tannehill set a franchise record with 40 touchdowns.

Now comes Jones, determined to prove himself at 32 after a nagging hamstring limited him to nine games last season. He is averaging 95.5 yards receiving per game, most in NFL history.

This will be Todd Downing's debut as offensive coordinator, replacing Arthur Smith — now Atlanta's head coach. Downing is Vrabel's first offensive coordinator with previous experience calling plays, having been coordinator for the Raiders in 2017.



JOHN AMIS/AP

Tennessee Titans receiver Julio Jones warms up before a preseason game last month.

Green's debut

Green also gets a fresh start with a new team after a decade with the Bengals. He played nine seasons in Cincinnati and was once one of the NFL's top receivers before his production dropped over the past few years. He missed the entire 2019 season be-

cause of injuries.

But the 33-year-old Green appears healthy and relishes the chance to be the second option behind Hopkins. Green essentially takes over for Larry Fitzgerald, who hasn't said he's retiring but also hasn't committed to returning for his 18th season.

SPORTS



One victory away
Djokovic closing in on calendar-year Grand Slam » **US Open, Page 20**



NFL

Cleveland Browns running back Nick Chubb, left, is tackled by Chiefs safety Tyrann Mathieu during their divisional playoff on Jan. 17 in Kansas City. Mathieu still hasn't been cleared to return from the COVID-19 protocol.

CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP

A stern early test

Playoff foes meet in season opener

Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield

TONY DEJAK/AP

BY DAVE SKRETTA
Associated Press

Cleveland Browns at Kansas City Chiefs
AFN-Sports
10:25 p.m. Sunday CET
5:25 a.m. Monday JKT

The Kansas City Chiefs have ruled the AFC for the better part of three seasons, making back-to-back trips to the Super Bowl and beating the San Francisco 49ers about 19 months ago for their first championship in 50 years.

The Cleveland Browns could offer the stiffest test to their perch at the top.

The two teams met in the divisional round of the playoffs last season, when Kansas City beat the Browns 22-17 in part by converting an audacious fourth-down pass play near midfield with just over a minute to go. And perhaps fitting-

ly, they will start this season back at Arrowhead Stadium, where a full house is expected for the Sunday afternoon kickoff.

"I don't think you can go there right now," said Chiefs coach Andy Reid, when asked about Super Bowl aspirations harbored by both teams. "You work on what you can control. That's the game plan and making sure we master that, and master the opponent, the best we can before game time. And once you

get in the game, take care of each play."

The Chiefs have certainly mastered the art of winning in September. They've won 14 consecutive games in the first month of the regular season, and quarterback Patrick Mahomes is 10-0 with 32 touchdown passes and no interceptions.

The Browns? They've gone an NFL-record 16 seasons without winning their opener, and they're 1-20-1 in Week 1

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