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STARS AND STRIPES®

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Volume 80 Edition 129 ©SS 2021 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021 平成12年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く) 発行所 星条旗新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥ 50 50¢/Free to Deployed Areas

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Archbishop says Catholics in military can refuse vaccine

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Roman Catholic service members may refuse the coronavirus vaccine if they have a conscientious objection to the inoculation, which in certain cases was developed with cell lines derived from abortions, the archbishop for the military services said Tuesday in a statement.

Timothy P. Broglio, who heads the Military Services archdiocese in the United States, reiterated the Catholic Church's position that it is "morally permissible" to receive the COVID-19 vaccinations available in the U.S., the statement said. But that doesn't preclude a person from forming a sincerely held religious belief to the contrary, Broglio said.



Broglio

"Accordingly, no one should be forced to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if it would violate the sanctity of his or her conscience," he said.

Broglio's statement, first reported by Defense One, comes as the Pentagon moves ahead with a mandate for all troops to be fully vaccinated by late November, barring medical or religious exemptions.

Broglio singled out the Johnson & Johnson vaccine as "more problematic" than its counterparts from Pfizer and Moderna. That's because the former was developed, tested and produced with abortion-derived cell lines, he

SEE VACCINE ON PAGE 7



Dotti Dodson

Jaden Clark competes for the University of Wyoming at the 2014 Sheridan College Rodeo in Sheridan, Wyo. Clark, a specialist with the Nebraska Army National Guard's 1-134th Cavalry Squadron, is looking to earn his spurs, a rite of passage for cavalry scouts.

Not his first rodeo

Cowboy and contest champ has sights set on earning his spurs as Army cavalry scout

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

A real-life cowboy who recently took the helm of a collegiate rodeo team has his sights set on earning his spurs as an Army cavalry scout.

Spc. Jaden Clark of the Nebraska Army National Guard's 1-134th Cavalry Squadron was named the full-time rodeo coach for the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture's team this summer. He's also an agriculture instructor at



RULON TAYLOR/NCTA

Jaden Clark will serve as Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture's rodeo coach.

the two-year institution, which is part of the University of Nebraska system.

He joined the military last year out of a sense of duty and a desire "to get a little more ownership of our country," he was quoted in a Nebraska National Guard statement as saying this month.

He hasn't had a chance to complete a spur ride, the cavalry's traditional test of leadership, grit and proficiency, he said in an email, but he "will jump at the next opportunity to do so."

Troops who go through the challenging training event earn silver spurs and induction into the Order of the Spur, which for them is like the expert infantryman badge is for infantry soldiers, a U.S. Army Armor School pamphlet states.

They also earn the right to stop at the Fiddler's Green canteen on their descent into hell, according to Cavalry legend.

Clark, 27, is a native of Wellfleet, Neb., about 30 miles south of

SEE RODEO ON PAGE 5

BUSINESS/WEATHER

LA port going 24/7 to ease shipping backlog

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House said Wednesday that it has helped broker an agreement for the Port of Los Angeles to become a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week operation, part of an effort to relieve supply chain bottlenecks and move stranded container ships that are driving prices higher for U.S. consumers.

President Joe Biden planned to discuss the agreement during a speech Wednesday afternoon

about supply chain issues that have hampered the economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. The supply chain problem is tightly linked with the broader challenge of inflation confronting Biden.

Ports in Los Angeles and Long Beach, Calif., account for 40% of all shipping containers entering the United States. As of Monday, there were 62 ships berthed at the two ports and 81 waiting to dock and unload, according to the Marine Exchange of South-

ern California.

Commitments by the Los Angeles port's operator, longshoremen and several of the country's largest retail and shipping companies are expected to help relieve the backlog. Walmart, FedEx and UPS made commitments to unload during off-peak hours, making it easier for the LA port to operate nonstop and reduce the backlog. The Long Beach port has been operating 24 hours daily for seven days for roughly the past three weeks.

EXCHANGE RATES

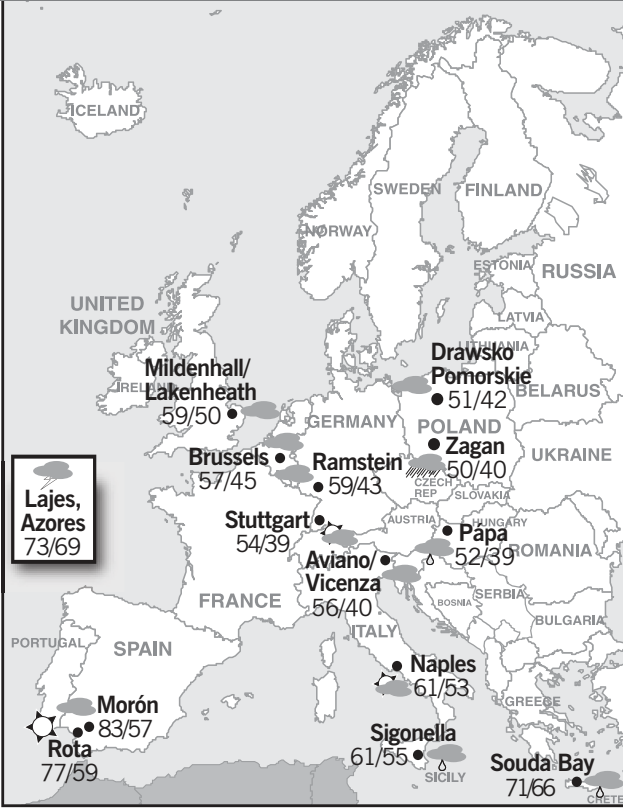
Military rates		South Korea (Won)	1,191.90
Euro costs (Oct. 14)	\$1.13	Switzerland (Franc)	.9271
Dollar buys (Oct. 14)	0.8431	Thailand (Baht)	33.27
British pound (Oct. 14)	\$1.33	Turkey (New Lira)	9.0820
Japanese yen (Oct. 14)	110.00	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military 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.)	
South Korean won (Oct. 14)	1,164.00	INTEREST RATES	
Commercial rates		Prime rate	3.25
Bahrain (Dinar)	.3770	Interest Rates Discount rate	0.75
Britain (Pound)	1.3639	Federal funds market rate	0.09
Canada (Dollar)	1.2455	3-month bill	0.06
China (Yuan)	6.4337	30-year bond	2.10
Denmark (Krone)	6.4335		
Egypt (Pound)	15.7003		
Euro	.8646		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7796		
Hungary (Forint)	311.43		
Israel (Shekel)	3.2338		
Japan (Yen)	113.43		
Kuwait (Dinar)	.3018		
Norway (Krone)	8.5295		
Philippines (Peso)	50.54		
Poland (Zloty)	3.95		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7510		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3526		

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY 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

Marine officer in viral videos to plead guilty

BY DAN LAMOTHE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — A Marine officer whose viral videos criticizing senior officials for how they withdrew from Afghanistan created a political uproar will plead guilty to several charges and seek a discharge that allows him to keep some military benefits, one of his lawyers said on Tuesday.

Lt. Col. Stuart Scheller is scheduled for court-martial at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina on Thursday, and faces charges that include disrespect toward superior commissioned officers, willfully disobeying a superior commissioned officer and dereliction in the performance of duties. He burst into public view in August when, in the immediate aftermath of a suicide bombing that killed 13 U.S. troops and about 170 Afghans, he posted a video while in uniform questioning why no senior leader had admitted making mistakes in

how the withdrawal was carried out.

One of Scheller's attorneys, Tim Parlatore, said in a phone interview that he could not yet get into the specifics of a pretrial agreement because some of the details are "still up in the air." But he said the case began with Scheller demanding accountability from others, and it would "make him a hypocrite" if the Marine did not accept responsibility for his own actions.

The Marine hopes to avoid jail time and secure either an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions.

"Our hope is for him to get a letter of reprimand, and no more," Parlatore said.

The possibility of a plea deal was first reported by Coffee or Die Magazine.

The case has been injected with partisan politics, with Scheller be-

coming a cause celebre among conservatives angry with the Biden administration and senior military officials.



Scheller

Several dozen Republicans called for his release from pretrial confinement in a letter late last month, and the case has received significant attention in conservative media. It also has been spotlighted by retired Special Operations chief Edward Gallagher, a former client of Parlatore's who was acquitted in 2019 of an alleged murder in Iraq and now advocates for other service members facing criminal charges.

Scheller has also criticized Republicans, including former President Donald Trump. In a Facebook post on Sept. 25, he wrote that "everyone" had told Scheller to

"kiss the ring" and seek Trump's help, but he said that he didn't want to and that "I hate" how Trump "divided the country."

"Tell your son to stop tweeting about me," Scheller wrote, a reference to Donald Trump Jr. "Your whole family knows nothing about US or our sacrifices. I could never work with you."

Scheller, a 17-year infantry officer who served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, posted his first video on Aug. 26, shortly after a suicide bombing by Islamic State militants targeted U.S. troops and Afghans at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul as the United States carried out a chaotic evacuation effort. The airlift ultimately transported more than 120,000 people to safety, but some U.S. citizens and thousands of Afghans who assisted the war effort were left behind.

Scheller, wearing a camouflage uniform, identified himself by

name and rank and said in a video that he knew one of the people killed in the bombing. Scheller said he knew he had "a lot to lose" by speaking out as he was close to earning a full military retirement, but thought risking his financial future gave him the moral high ground.

"People are upset because their senior leaders let them down, and none of them are raising their hands and accepting accountability or saying, 'We messed this up,'" Scheller said.

Scheller was quickly removed as the commander of the Advanced Infantry Training Battalion at Camp Lejeune. A Marine Corps spokesman, Maj. Jim Stenger, said at the time that while it was an emotional time for a lot of Marines, "there is a forum in which Marine leaders can address their disagreements with the chain of command, but it's not social media."

Air Force drops new bunker-buster bomb for first time in Fla.

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force is testing a mammoth, 5,000-pound bomb designed using advanced modeling to increase its impact in reaching and destroying hardened underground facilities the likes of North Korea's ballistic-missile and nuclear-weapons facilities.

An F-15E strike fighter completed a series of three tests Thursday with the GBU-72 Advanced 5K Penetrator dropped at 35,000 feet over the range at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., the Air Force said in a news release Tuesday.

The series, planned by the 780th Test Squadron and performed by the 40th Flight Test Squadron, began on July 23 and marked the first time the 2.5-ton bomb was loaded, flown and released, the Air Force said.

The tests successfully showed that the weapon could be safely released from the jet that had been modified from its usual capability of carrying a 2,000-pound bomb to one that weighs 5,000 pounds, the Air Force said.

The GBU-72 was also tested during a series of detonations on the ground at Eglin, the largest such "open-air" test ever held at the base's range, the Air Force said.

The warhead was surrounded by blast pressure sensors and equipment used to count fragments, measurements designed to

determine the bomb's lethality, the Air Force said.

The GBU-72 was developed using advanced modeling and simulation techniques that substantially increase its lethality compared to the GBU-28, a decades-old 5,000-pound bunker-buster bomb, the Air Force said.

The GBU-28 was first used in Iraq during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and again during the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The GBU-72 and 28 are dwarfed by the Air Force's 30,000-pound GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator bunker buster, which can only be carried by advanced bombers.

One of the advantages to the modeling and simulation process used in designing the GBU-72 is that the early prototype represents what the actual hardware and software would be when it is mass produced for the field, James Culliton, program manager for the GBU-72, said in the release. "This helps us bring our operational test partners in sooner with eyes on, hands on participation, validating our design and procedures sooner while including input that improves the weapon," he said.

The GBU-72 is slated to begin operational testing next year, the Air Force said.

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PHOTOS BY SAMUEL KING/U.S. Air Force

A GBU-72 Advanced 5K Penetrator bomb is dropped for the first time on the range at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., on Oct. 7.



Above: The 40th Flight Test Squadron at Eglin prepares to release a GBU-72 Advanced 5K Penetrator bomb. Left: An F-15E Strike Eagle from the 40th Flight Test Squadron drops the bomb.

MILITARY

Actor: Military role in films a ‘real privilege’

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Military films and motorsports were the focus of an online question-and-answer session between Australian action star Eric Bana, service members and their families organized Wednesday by the United Service Organizations.

Bana — speaking via video link from Melbourne, Australia, to troops at home and at USO clubs all over the world — told backstories to some of his famous roles in movies such as “Black Hawk Down” (2001) and “Lone Survivor” (2013).

Bana, 53, started out making sketch comedy but was acclaimed for his first dramatic role in “Chopper,” a 2001 film about notorious Australian criminal Mark “Chopper” Read. That led to a career in Hollywood action and historical flicks such as “The Hulk” (2003), “Troy” (2004), “Munich” (2005) and “Star Trek” (2009).

Director Ridley Scott cast Bana in “Black Hawk Down,” which told the story of U.S. forces in Somalia in 1993. Bana played a Delta Force soldier who fought his way out of a battle in Mogadishu after a mission went awry.

“There is huge responsibility,” he said of taking on a military role. “I felt that on ‘Black Hawk Down.’”

In “Lone Survivor,” Bana played Lt. Cmdr. Erik Kristensen, a Navy SEAL who was one of 16 troops killed in a MH-47 Chinook helicopter crash in an effort to rescue other SEALs during combat in Afghanistan on June 28, 2005.

Taking on the role of Kristensen and knowing what happened to him and his men is “something you feel the weight of, but it is a real privilege,” Bana said.

Acting in historical roles doesn’t involve trying to be the exact person you’re playing, he said.

“You’re trying to embody the spirit of that person,” he said.

Asked by a youngster at the USO

at Fort Hood, Texas, why the Hulk is green, Bana replied that he is unsure.

“Maybe I didn’t pay enough attention when I was a kid reading comics,” he said. “Maybe secretly he wishes he was a military guy.”

A sailor assigned to the Navy’s Logistics Group Western Pacific in Singapore, who was celebrating the Navy’s 246th birthday during Wednesday’s virtual event, asked Bana about resilience in acting.

“There is a lot of pressure to be resilient,” Bana said. “As a parent, one of the things I learned over the last couple of years is to encourage resilience but also have space for when resilience is not at its peak.”

Asked by another sailor what drew him to military roles and what he learned from playing them, Bana said he enjoys researching his characters. The cast of “Lone Survivor” camped on a military base and spent time with troops in the field to prepare, he added.

“The people you get to hang out with and learn from are the best,” he said.

Clad in a flannel shirt and sporting facial hair, Bana looked like a typical Down Under motorhead or “bogan,” in the local lingo, as he talked about his 1974 Ford Falcon XB coupe. The car, known as “The Beast,” is similar to the Ford Falcon driven by fellow Australian actor Mel Gibson in 1979’s “Mad Max.”

Bana has raced at Australia’s legendary Mount Panorama track, where Ford had a decadeslong rivalry with General Motors’ local Holden brand, but he said he has just as much fun riding his 450cc dirt bike in the Australian bush.

“I get on the track on my motorcycle, but less on four wheels these days,” he said.

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USO

Actor Eric Bana talks to troops about his many film roles during an online session organized by the USO on Wednesday.



ASKIA COLLINS/U.S. Navy

A U.S. Navy MH-60R Seahawk flies off Japan’s southern coast with a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force SH-60K in September.

US, Japan copter crews team up for anti-sub warfare exercise

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

A pair of American and Japanese helicopter crews paired up to practice detecting and tracking enemy submarines during a “first of its kind” exercise for the squadrons based outside Tokyo.

Two MH-60R Seahawks from the Navy’s Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 51 flew alongside an SH-60K from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force’s Air Development Squadron 51 for the Sept. 14 drills, the Navy announced in a news release Tuesday.

The focus on anti-submarine warfare was new for the two squadrons, Task Force 70 spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Joe Keiley said in a Wednesday email. Their helicopters use a collection of sensors and sonar buoys to detect and track the

subs, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Mark Langford told Stars and Stripes by phone that day.

“The exercise that we conducted with JMSDF demonstrated that we are fully capable of integration between our two nations,” one of the U.S. pilots, Lt. Kris Appel, said in the Navy’s release. “I believe this sets us up for an increase in lethality and prepares us to face any future challenges our two countries may face together.”

China and North Korea, both of which have contributed to mounting tensions in the Indo-Pacific region, have a significant number of submarines in their fleets.

China has approximately 50 diesel-electric submarines and 10 nuclear submarines, according to a 2020 Department of Defense report. North Korea has about 70

subs, although none are nuclear powered, the DOD reported in 2015.

The exercise, conducted in the Philippine Sea off Japan’s southern coast, also helped the squadrons practice flight formation safety and tactics, according to the Navy.

“We were able to improve our joint operational skills through this event,” one of the Japanese pilots, Lt. j.g. Jumpei Yoshimura, said in the release. “We are looking forward to flying the next event with the U.S. Navy.”

Both squadrons are based at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, approximately 28 miles southwest of Tokyo.

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Navy recovers bodies of 5 sailors who died in Aug. 31 helicopter crash

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

The Navy has recovered the bodies of five sailors who died Aug. 31 when their MH-60S Seahawk helicopter flipped off the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln off the coast of San Diego, Naval Air Forces announced Tuesday.

The bodies of Petty Officer 2nd Class James P. Buriak, Petty Officer 2nd Class Sarah F. Burns, Lt. Bradley A. Foster, Lt. Paul R. Fridley and Petty Officer 3rd Class Bailey J. Tucker were recovered Friday with the wreckage of the helicopter about 5,300 feet below the surface, according to a Naval Air Forces statement.

Divers for the Naval Sea Systems Command recovered the bodies, bringing them aboard the

multipurpose service vessel HOS Bayou, according to the statement. The ship arrived at Naval Air Station North Island, Calif. on Sunday.

The remains were then taken to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware for identification, Naval Air Forces said.

The crash was the first fatal Navy aviation crash of 2021, according to a Naval Safety Center report. The Seahawk had just touched down aboard the Lincoln when it “experienced side-to-side vibrations causing the main rotor to strike [the] flight deck,” according to a Naval Safety Center report.

The helicopter then fell over the side of the carrier and into the ocean off the coast of San Diego, according to the report. One sailor

was rescued.

Five additional Abraham Lincoln sailors were injured in the incident, but the Navy has not released further details about how they were hurt. Two were taken to San Diego for treatment while the others were treated on board for minor injuries, the service said Sept. 1.

The crash was the 10th “aviation class-A mishap” this year, which the service defines as one that causes a fatality or permanent total disability, more than \$2.5 million in damages or destroys an aircraft, according to the report.

The incident remains under investigation, according to the statement.

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MILITARY

Sea base repairs in South Africa a first

Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy and its contractors have finished two weeks of work on the USS Hershel “Woody” Williams in South Africa, marking the first such maintenance and repair effort on an expeditionary sea base in a country service officials called an important partner in the region.

The Navy also flew in 26,000 pounds of supplies on the first ever naval logistical support flight into Cape Town for a U.S. warship, a service statement said Tuesday.

The flight carried supplies, mail and additional items needed for the southern reaches of the U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Naval Forces Africa areas of responsibility.

Both the U.S. and South African economies rely on maritime shipping and secure sea lanes, the statement said.

“As the only ship permanently assigned to AFRICOM, much of what we do is geared toward continuing to build ties with partner nations in Africa and exploring how we can work together,” Capt. Chad Gra-

The U.S. and South African economies both rely on maritime shipping and secure sea lanes

ham, the ship’s commanding officer, said in the statement. “This maintenance period was a perfect example of that, where we received mission-critical repairs from a South African company and benefited the local economy.”

The maintenance period wrapped up Monday. Repairs were done on the flight deck safety nets, the mission deck, the freeboard, the superstructure, the insulation and the lighting fixtures.

The flight into Cape Town involved the Multinational Heavy Lift Airlift Wing, based out of Papa Air Base, Hungary, the statement said.



MALACHI LAKEY/U.S. Navy

Petty Officers 2nd Class Nathan A. Milca, right, and Drake W. Childers perform maintenance on the forward house antennae aboard the expeditionary sea base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams while moored in Cape Town, South Africa, for maintenance, this month.

Rodeo: Guardsman’s injury set life ‘on a different trajectory’

FROM PAGE 1

where another Army cavalry scout, William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, made his home in North Platte at the height of his Wild West Show’s fame in the 1880s.

Clark rode with the cavalry squadron — in Humvees, not on horseback — during a combat training rotation at Fort Polk, La., during a long, hot and humid stretch in July, the Guard statement said.

The 10 days “in the box” were an awesome experience and “probably the most educational days of my life,” he said in an email Tuesday in response to a Stars and Stripes query.

Before earning their spurs, cavalry troops are dubbed “shave-tails,” harkening to when new cavalry soldiers rode horses with shaved tails to mark them as inexperienced riders, the Army pamphlet says.

When it comes to horsemanship, though, Clark is hardly a novice. His family has been roping, riding and ranching for generations, and his parents met at a rodeo in high school, The Rodeo News reported in a May profile of the family.

Once he was “old enough to walk, old enough to get on a saddle,” he started getting dragged along into rodeos with his older brother, also now a collegiate coach in the sport, he said in a documentary produced by his sister, Madison Clark.

A state high school rodeo champion, Jaden Clark competed three times at high school nationals and earned a full-ride rodeo scholarship to the University of Wyoming in Laramie, according to the Army and NCTA statements. As a UW Cowboy, he competed at the College National Finals Rodeo in bareback bronc riding.

His senior year, a horse rolled over him, shattering his femur, he said in the documentary. He wound up hanging up his bareback rigging for good after that, he said.

“It set my life on a different trajectory, which has ultimately been positive,” he said. “I enjoyed the heck out of my bareback riding career, but it had to end sometime.”

He’s since worked several jobs, including selling cowboy hats for Stetson, maker of the hats worn by cavalry soldiers, “which I never thought in 100 years I would be wearing,” he said by email this week.

And he may yet get back on the horse. In his email, he said his rodeo career wasn’t ended, just postponed.

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MARIE BRYANT/U.S. Army National Guard

Spc. Jaden Clark, left, of the Nebraska Army National Guard’s 1-134th Cavalry Squadron, stands with fellow Guardsmen at Fort Polk, La., in July. Clark was named full-time rodeo coach at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, where he is also an agricultural instructor.

Cemetery will allow public to place flowers at Tomb of the Unknowns

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — When Arlington National Cemetery marks the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknowns next month, members of the public will be allowed to place flowers there for the first time, the cemetery said Tuesday.

“For the first time in nearly 100 years ... as part of the ... Centennial Commemoration, the public will be able to walk on the Tomb of the

Unknowns Plaza and lay flowers,” the cemetery said in a statement.

“This is a rare opportunity for the public to walk next to the Tomb ... a privilege otherwise given only to the sentinels of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, ‘The Old Guard,’ ” who stand watch over the site 24 hours a day, the cemetery said.

Registration is required. Those interested can register at Eventbrite. Attendees must have govern-

ment-issued identification.

Visitors are encouraged to bring their own flowers, the cemetery said. But complimentary roses, daisies and sunflowers will be available.

The cemetery’s trams will be available free of charge for the public to reach the Memorial Amphitheater, adjacent to the tomb.

The tomb was established Nov. 11, 1921, when the body of an unknown soldier who perished dur-

ing World War I was brought from France and buried at the site.

Two additional crypts, for unknowns from World War II and the Korean War, were added in 1958, the cemetery states on its website. In 1984, an unknown from the war in Vietnam was interred at the Tomb.

But in 1998, the Vietnam remains were removed and identified as Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie. They were reburied

in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis in 1999. The crypt remains empty.

An array of events is scheduled at the cemetery to mark the anniversary. “On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, the public will be invited to observe a joint full honors procession” and aircraft flyover, the cemetery said. More information is available at Arlington National Cemetery’s website: arlingtoncemetery.mil.

MILITARY

Navy spouse's debut must-see TV on base

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A Navy spouse is set to compete on Bravo's "Project Runway," and this base south of Tokyo will be hosting a watch party to support and celebrate her debut.

Yokosuka resident Katie Kortman, 40, of West Palm Beach, Fla., is taking on 15 other designers in Season 19 of the Emmy-winning fashion competition series. They'll compete in a variety of challenges for a grand prize of \$250,000 and a chance to show a collection at New York Fashion Week.

American Forces Network and the naval base are hosting the watch party on the second floor of the Yokosuka Officer's Club at 7 p.m. Saturday, when the first show is aired in Japan.

"We are always looking to celebrate the achievements of our sailors, family members and community members whenever possible," base spokesman Randall Baucom said in a Wednesday email. "When we heard Ms. Kortman was a contestant on this season's 'Project Runway,' we started looking at ways to recognize this unique achievement."

A self-taught designer, Kortman recently told Stars and Stripes that the chance to appear on the show is a "life-changing situation" — one that she didn't even seek out.



DANIEL BETANCOURT/Stars and Stripes

Navy spouse Katie Kortman shows off her home design studio at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, last month. She is a contestant on the upcoming season of Bravo's fashion competition series "Project Runway."

Starting in 2018, Kortman began posting pictures on Instagram of designs she had made for herself and soon developed a following. In February 2020, a "Project Runway" casting agent reached out to ask if she'd consider auditioning for the show.

"I was like 'Oh my gosh, are you kidding? It's a joke, this has to be a prank call,'" Kortman said. "But they were for real. It's a show that I've watched since it started. It's

like a dream."

Initially set to film in May 2020, the coronavirus pandemic delayed that schedule by a year. By the time the show was ready to shoot, Kortman and her husband, Lt. Cmdr. Francisco Kortman, and their four children had moved to Japan.

Despite the logistical challenges of caring for her children, working around her husband's busy schedule as an obstetrician and traveling internationally during the pandem-

ic, Kortman managed to fly out to New York for filming in May.

Kortman said her lack of professional experience proved challenging. Having previously designed clothes only for herself, she had to learn a variety of skills.

For example, the show's format has designers making clothes for a different model for each episode.

"I had only ever sewn for myself — my body, my measurements — so I was very scared of having to

sew for all different bodies," Kortman said. "Every challenge, you have a different person, and you don't always get to pick your person. I was really scared of that, but I learned a few tricks about how to use a dress form to make the pattern."

Kortman also hopes to use her "Project Runway" debut to launch her clothing line, Katie Kortman Clothing.

As for her design choices and influences, Kortman said she strongly prefers comfortable clothing that looks artistic. She said many of the more stylistic choices are meant for going out or formal wear, but she wanted to design more creative choices for casual clothing, too.

"I'm a little dramatic — there's usually something interesting like a crazy sleeve or volume — but color is a big part of it," Kortman said. "You see a lot of moms with kids wearing jeans and a shirt or workout clothes because it's comfortable. I was really looking for clothing that felt just as comfortable but that was more dramatic and fun and exciting, and it felt like wearing art."

Season 19 of "Project Runway" premieres on Bravo at 9 p.m. EST on Thursday in the United States, and at 7 p.m. Saturday on AFN in Japan.

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Vet who smothered grenade blast, earned Medal of Honor, dies at 89

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

Korean War veteran Duane Dewey, whom President Dwight Eisenhower described as "made of steel" when he presented the machine-gunner with the Medal of Honor in 1953, died Monday at age 89.

The Marine Corps corporal earned the medal for smothering an enemy grenade with his body and sheltering his squad members from the blast as they fought near Panmunjom on April 16, 1952. Dewey spent months in the hospital recuperating from the blast to his hip. His death in St. Augustine, Fla., was announced Tuesday by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

Dewey was born Nov. 16, 1931, in Grand Rapids, Mich., into a family that was greatly impoverished during the Great Depression, he said during a videotaped interview posted on the Veterans History Project's website. He and his cousin enlisted in the Marine Corps in March 1951. During the first day of special training at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dewey volunteered for machine-gun training. By October 1951, he was fighting north of the 38th Parallel on



Congressional Medal of Honor Society
Marine Cpl. Duane Dewey, left, receives the Medal of Honor from President Dwight Eisenhower at the White House, on March 12, 1953.

the Korean Peninsula.

On April 16, 1952, Dewey and his machine-gun squad were among about 80 Marines who found themselves surrounded by a force of roughly 600 Chinese troops, he said during the interview.

He had used up almost all his ammo when a grenade whizzed by him.

"A grenade went off behind my left heel, got me three places in my left leg and put me down," he said. A corpsman — on his first night on the battle line — lay Dewey on his back

and began cutting his trousers to patch him up. A second grenade plopped down beside Dewey.

"I grabbed that, and my first impulse was to throw it, but I'm lying flat on my back, and I don't know if I can get it out of reach of my own men," he recalled in the video. "So, I scooped it under me and grabbed [the corpsman] and pulled him down on top of me. It went off and took us both a couple feet off the ground. Then I told him, better get me out of here. I don't think I can take any more of this."

Roughly a year later, Dewey was standing in the Oval Office, where the newly inaugurated Eisenhower presented his first Medal of Honor. The citation read in part that the Marine had "bravely smothered the deadly missile with his body, personally absorbing the full force of the explosion to save his comrades from possible injury or death."

"Mr. Eisenhower looked at me after he heard the citation," Dewey recalled in the video, "and he says, 'You must have a body made of steel.'"

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Changes in Air Force promotion scoring give credit for experience

By KYLE ALVAREZ
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force is changing its enlisted promotion points system to better value experience and performance over time, the service said in a statement.

The Promotion Recommendation Score will still place more emphasis on the most recent evaluation, but it will also grant bonus points for airmen who have consistently performed well in previous years.

"Our Air Force values the experience that our airmen bring with them," Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne Bass said. The new scoring system "is a step in the right direction to ensuring we recognize that experience, along with sustained superior performance."

Under the existing system, airmen who received the highest promotion statement, Promote Now, and were in the first year of promotion eligibility would receive the maximum score of 250 points.

But if they were passed over and received a Promote Now for a second year, they received fewer points for the same level of work.

The new system makes airmen eligible for the same maximum number of base points in successive years in grade. It also grants up to 20 bonus points in the second year of promotion eligibility and up to 15 points in the following year, depending on the rating, the statement said.

Additionally, those given the Not Ready Now recommendation will no longer receive promotion points, and the Do Not Promote recommendation will be eliminated.

These changes will affect senior airmen and staff sergeants who are promotion-eligible beginning with the 22E6 promotion cycle, which begins in February and March.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

US to reopen land borders for fully vaccinated

By Zeke Miller
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States will reopen its land borders to nonessential travel next month, ending a 19-month freeze due to the COVID-19 pandemic as the country moves to require all international visitors to be vaccinated against the coronavirus.

Vehicle, rail and ferry travel between the U.S. and Canada and Mexico has been largely restricted to essential travel, such as trade, since the earliest days of the pandemic. The new rules, announced Wednesday, will allow fully vaccinated foreign nationals to enter the U.S. regardless of the reason for travel starting in early November, when a similar easing of restrictions is set to kick in for air travel into the country. By mid-January, even essential travelers seeking to enter the U.S., like truck drivers, will need to be fully vaccinated.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said he was “pleased to be taking steps to resume regular travel in a safe and sustainable manner” and lauded



MARK SPOWART, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Motorists make their way to Ambassador Bridge connecting Canada to the U.S. in Windsor, Ontario, in 2012.

the economic benefits of it.

Both Mexico and Canada have pressed the U.S. for months to ease restrictions on travel that have separated families and curtailed leisure trips since the onset of the pandemic. The latest move follows last month’s announce-

ment that the U.S. will end country-based travel bans for air travel and instead require vaccination for foreign nationals seeking to enter by plane.

Senior administration officials had previewed the new land border policy late Tuesday. Both pol-

icies will take effect in early November, the officials said.

The new rules only apply to legal entry to the U.S. Officials cautioned that those seeking to enter illegally will still be subject to expulsion under so-called Title 42 authority, first invoked by former President Donald Trump, that has drawn criticism from immigration advocates for swiftly removing migrants before they can seek asylum. One of the officials said the U.S. was continuing the policy because cramped conditions in border patrol facilities pose a COVID-19 threat.

Travelers entering the U.S. by vehicle, rail and ferry will be asked about their vaccination status as part of the standard U.S. Customs and Border Protection admissions process. At officers’ discretion, travelers will have their proof of vaccination verified in a secondary screening process.

Unlike air travel, for which proof of a negative COVID-19 test is required before boarding a flight to enter the U.S., no testing will be required to enter the U.S.

by land or sea, provided the travelers meet the vaccination requirement.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. will accept travelers who have been fully vaccinated with any of the vaccines approved for emergency use by the World Health Organization, not just those in use in the U.S. That means that the AstraZeneca vaccine, widely used in Canada, will be accepted.

Officials said the CDC was still working to formalize procedures for admitting those who received doses of two different vaccines, as was fairly common in Canada.

The delay in the vaccination requirement for essential cross-border travel is meant to provide truck drivers and others with additional time to get a shot and minimize potential economic disruption from the vaccination mandate, officials said.

All told, the new procedures move toward a policy based on the risk profiles of individuals, rather than less targeted country-based bans.

FDA grapples with J&J booster timing

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Food and Drug Administration said Wednesday that it is wrestling with whether and when recipients of the single-shot Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine need another dose — at six months or as early as two months.

In an online review, FDA scientists didn’t reach a firm conclusion, citing shortcomings with J&J’s data, including little information on protection against the extra-contagious delta variant of the coronavirus.

The review comes ahead of meetings Thursday and Friday when an

FDA advisory panel will recommend whether to back booster doses of both the J&J and Moderna vaccines. That’s one step in the government’s vaccine review process: Next week, the FDA will make a final decision on authorizing those boosters and then the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will debate who should get them.

Health authorities have said all the vaccines used in the United States continue to provide strong protection against severe disease or death from COVID-19. But amid signs that protection against milder

infections may be waning, the government has already cleared booster doses of the Pfizer vaccine for certain people starting at six months after their last shot.

Aiming for uniform recommendations, Moderna likewise asked the FDA to clear its booster at six months. But J&J complicated the decision by proposing a second shot over a range of two to six months.

FDA reviewers said a study of the two-month plan suggests “there may be a benefit,” while pointing to only small numbers of people who got a booster at six months instead.

Vaccine: Archbishop calls shots ‘morally permissible’, but Catholics can still reject them on grounds of morality

FROM PAGE 1
said.

“If it were the only vaccine available, it would be morally permissible,” Broglio said. “But the faithful Catholic is to make known his or her preference for a more morally acceptable treatment.”

Broglio added that although the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines had been tested using a cell line derived from abortions, that type of linkage is considered “remote material cooperation with evil” and therefore “is never sinful.”

The Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith said in December that taking a vaccine derived from a fetal cell line did not constitute “formal cooperation

with abortion.”

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain fetal cells. The cell line used for certain vaccine development came from two abortions in the 1970s and 1980s, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website.

The cells from those decades continue to divide and “grow in a lab as a cell line,” the website says.

Broglio said that those who refuse vaccines must take steps to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus for the sake of the “common good” by wearing face coverings, practicing social distancing, undergoing routine testing and quarantining.

In addition, those troops should

remain open “to receiving a treatment should one become available that is not derived from, or tested with abortion-derived cell lines,” Broglio said.

So far, about 96.7% of active-duty personnel have received at least one vaccine dose, while 83.7% are fully vaccinated, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said Tuesday.

Medical exemptions from COVID-19 vaccination for service members must be approved by a health care professional. Religious exemptions are granted or denied by the military services.

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NATION

House approves debt limit hike, avoiding default

By KEVIN FREKING
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House has approved a short-term increase to the nation's debt limit, ensuring the federal government can continue fully paying its bills into December and temporarily averting an unprecedented default that would have decimated the economy.

The \$480 billion increase in the country's borrowing ceiling cleared the Senate last week on a party-line vote. The House approved it Tuesday so President Joe Biden can sign it into law this week. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen had warned that steps to stave off a default on the country's debts would be exhausted by Monday, and from that point, the department would soon be unable to fully meet the government's financial obligations.

A default would have immense fallout on global financial markets built upon the bedrock safety of

U.S. government debt. Routine government payments to Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans and active-duty military personnel would also be called into question.

The relief provided by passage of the legislation will only be temporary, though, forcing Congress to revisit the issue in December — a time when lawmakers will also be laboring to complete federal spending bills and avoid a damaging government shutdown.

The year-end backlog raises risks for both parties and threatens a tumultuous close to Biden's first year in office.

"I'm glad that this at least allows us to prevent a totally self-made and utterly preventable economic catastrophe as we work on a longer-term plan," said Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass.

Republicans signaled the next debt limit debate won't be any easier and warned Democrats not to expect their help.



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Rep. Michelle Fischbach, R-Minn., looks at the final version of the bill to increase the debt limit as the House Rules Committee meets at the Capitol in Washington on Tuesday.

"Unless and until Democrats give up on their dream of a big-government, socialist America, Republicans cannot and will not support raising the debt limit and help them pave the superhighway to a great entitlement society," said Rep. Tom Cole, R-Okla.

Procedurally, the House took a single vote Tuesday that had the effect of passing the Senate bill. The measure passed by a party-line vote of 219-206.

The present standoff over the debt ceiling eased when Senate Republican leader Mitch McCon-

nell, R-Ky., agreed to help pass the short-term increase. But he insisted he won't do so again.

In a letter sent Friday to Biden, McConnell said Democrats will have to handle the next debt-limit increase on their own using the same process they have tried to use to pass Biden's massive social spending and environment plan. Reconciliation allows legislation to pass the Senate with 51 votes rather than the 60 that's typically required. In the 50-50 split Senate, Vice President Kamala Harris gives Democrats the majority

with her tiebreaking vote.

In his focus on the debt limit, McConnell has tried to link Biden's big federal government spending boost with the nation's rising debt load, even though they are separate and the debt ceiling will have to be increased or suspended regardless of whether Biden's \$3.5 trillion plan makes it into law.

The current debt ceiling is \$28.4 trillion. Both parties have contributed to that load with decisions that have left the government rarely operating in the black.

Inflation rises 5.4% from year ago, matching 13-year high

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Another surge in consumer prices in September sent inflation to 5.4% from a year ago, matching the highest such rate since 2008 as tangled global supply lines continue to create havoc.

Consumer prices rose 0.4% in September from August as supply chain disruptions kept many goods scarce. The costs of new cars, food, gas and restaurant meals all jumped.

The annual increase in the con-

sumer price index matched readings in June and July as the highest in 13 years, the Labor Department said Wednesday. Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core inflation rose 0.2% in September and 4% compared with a year ago. Core prices hit a three-decade high of 4.5% in June.

The unexpected burst of inflation this year reflects sharply higher prices for food and energy, but also new and used cars, hotel rooms, clothing and furniture, among other goods and services. COVID-19 has shut down factories

in Asia and slowed U.S. port operations, leaving container ships anchored at sea and consumers and businesses paying more for goods that don't arrive for months.

"Price increases stemming from ongoing supply chain bottlenecks amid strong demand will keep the rate of inflation elevated, as supply/demand imbalances are only gradually resolved," said Kathy Bostjancic, an economist at Oxford Economics, a consulting firm. "While we share the Fed's view that this isn't the start of an upward wage-price spiral, we

look for inflation to remain persistently above 3% through mid-2022."

Higher prices are also outstripping the pay gains many workers are able to obtain from businesses, who are having to pay more to attract employees. Average hourly wages rose 4.6% in September from a year earlier, a healthy increase, but not enough to keep up with inflation.

The rapid price increases have raised pressure on the Federal Reserve, which has pegged its benchmark interest rate at nearly

zero to spur more borrowing and spending. Yet inflation is far above its target of 2%. Chair Jerome Powell has repeatedly said that the price gains should "abate" next year, bringing inflation closer to the target.

Fed Vice Chair Richard Clarida echoed that view in remarks Tuesday.

"The unwelcome surge in inflation this year, once these relative price adjustments are complete and bottlenecks have unclogged, will in the end prove to be largely transitory," he said.

Unsupported 'sickout' claims take flight amid Southwest woes

Associated Press

DALLAS — When Southwest Airlines canceled more than 2,000 flights over the weekend, citing bad weather and air traffic control issues, unsupported claims blaming vaccine mandates began taking off.

Conservative politicians and pundits, including Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, alleged the flight disruptions resulted from pilots and air traffic controllers walking off their jobs or calling in sick to protest federal vaccina-

tion requirements.

The airline, its pilots' union and the Federal Aviation Administration all denied that claim.

"The weekend challenges were not a result of Southwest employee demonstrations," Southwest spokesman Chris Mainz said Monday.

Still, Twitter posts claiming airline employees were "standing up to medical tyranny" and participating in a "mass sickout" amassed thousands of shares. Vague and anonymous messages

on social media speculated that Southwest was hiding the real reason for its disruptions. Anti-vaccine rallying cries such as #DoNotComply, #NoVaccineMandate and #HoldTheLine were among the 10 most popular hashtags tweeted in connection to Southwest over the weekend, according to a report from media intelligence firm Signal Labs.

Even as flights appeared to be running closer to normal on Tuesday, the Texas-based airline remained at the center of the latest

front in the vaccine mandate culture war, its challenges exploited by opponents of vaccine requirements.

Neither the company nor its pilots' union has provided evidence to back up their explanations for why nearly 2,400 flights were canceled from Saturday through Monday. Southwest has only said that bad weather and air traffic control issues in Florida on Friday triggered cascading failures in which planes and pilots were trapped out of position for their

next flight.

The crisis peaked on Sunday, when the airline canceled more than 1,100 flights, or 30% of its schedule. By Tuesday evening, it had canceled fewer than 100 flights, or 2% of its schedule, although more than 1,000 flights were delayed, according to tracking service FlightAware.

"When you get behind, it just takes several days to catch up," CEO Gary Kelly said Tuesday on CNBC. "We were significantly set behind on Friday."

NATION

Shatner goes where no 90-year-old has gone before

Associated Press

VAN HORN, Texas — Hollywood's Captain Kirk, 90-year-old William Shatner, blasted into space Wednesday in a convergence of science fiction and science reality, reaching the final frontier aboard a ship built by Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin company.

The "Star Trek" hero and three fellow passengers soared an estimated 66 miles over the West Texas desert in the fully automated capsule, then safely parachuted back to Earth in a flight of just over 10 minutes.

Shatner became the oldest person in space, eclipsing the previous record — set by a passenger on a similar jaunt on a Bezos spaceship in July — by eight years.

"How about that, guys? That was unlike anything they described," the actor said as the capsule descended under its brilliant blue and red chutes.

Sci-fi fans reveled in the opportunity to see the man best known as the stalwart Capt. James T. Kirk of the starship Enterprise boldly go where no star of American TV has gone before.

"This is a pinch-me moment for all of us to see Capt. James Tiberius Kirk go to space," Blue Origin launch commentator Jacki Cortese said before liftoff. She said she, like so many others, was drawn to the space business by shows like "Star Trek."

Shatner said ahead of the countdown that he planned to spend his approximately three minutes of weightlessness gazing down at Earth, his nose pressed against the capsule's windows.

"The only thing I don't want to see is a little gremlin looking back at me," he joked, referring to the



BLUE ORIGIN/AP

From left, Chris Boshuizen, William Shatner, Audrey Powers and Glen de Vries.

plot of his 1963 "Twilight Zone" episode titled "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet."

Bezos is a huge "Star Trek" fan — the Amazon founder had a cameo as an alien in one of the later "Star Trek" movies — and Shatner rode for free as his invited guest.

The blastoff brought priceless star power to Bezos' spaceship company, given its built-in appeal to baby boomers, celebrity watchers and space enthusiasts. Shatner starred in TV's original "Star Trek" from 1966 to 1969, back when the United States was racing for the moon, and went on to appear in a string of "Star Trek" movies.

Bezos himself drove the four to the pad, accompanied them to the platform high above the ground and cranked the hatch shut after they climbed aboard the 60-foot rocket. A jubilant Bezos was there to greet them when the capsule re-

turned, shouting, "WHOOOO!"

"Hello, astronauts. Welcome to Earth!" Bezos said as he opened the hatch and was embraced by Shatner.

The capsule, New Shepard, was named for the first American in space, Alan Shepard.

The flight comes as the space tourism industry finally takes off, with passengers joyriding aboard ships built and operated by some of the richest men in the world.

Virgin Galactic's Richard Branson led the way by riding into space in his own rocket ship in July, followed by Bezos nine days later on Blue Origin's first flight with a crew. Elon Musk's SpaceX made its first private voyage in mid-September, though without Musk aboard.

Last week, the Russians launched an actor and a film director to the International Space Station for a movie-making project.



LM OTERO/AP

Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket launches carrying passengers from its spaceport near Van Horn, Texas, on Wednesday.

"We're just at the beginning, but how miraculous that beginning is. How extraordinary it is to be part of that beginning," Shatner said in a Blue Origin video posted on the eve of his flight.

Shatner strapped in alongside Audrey Powers, a Blue Origin vice president and former space station flight controller for NASA, and two paying customers: Chris Boshuizen, a former NASA engineer who co-founded a satellite company, and Glen de Vries of a 3D software company. Blue Origin would not divulge the cost of their tickets.

Shatner milked his upcoming flight for laughs last week at New York Comic Con. The actor said Blue Origin informed him he would be the oldest guy in space.

"I don't want to be known as the oldest guy in space. I'm bloody Captain Kirk!" he exclaimed.

Then he stammered in a faux-panicky voice: "Captain Kirk, going where no man ... I'm going what? Where am I going?"

He confessed: "I'm Captain Kirk and I'm terrified."

Jokes aside, Blue Origin said Shatner and the rest of the crew met all the medical and physical requirements, including the ability to hustle up and down several flights of steps at the launch tower. Passengers are subjected to nearly 6 G's, or six times the force of Earth's gravity, as the capsule returns to Earth.

Shatner shooting into space is "the most badass thing I think I've ever seen," said Joseph Barra, a bartender flown in from Los Angeles to help cater Blue Origin's launch week festivities.

"William Shatner is setting the bar for what a 90-year-old man can do."

US talks global cybersecurity without a key player: Russia

BY BEN FOX

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Amid an epidemic of ransomware attacks, the United States is discussing cybersecurity strategy this week with 30 countries while leaving out one key player: Russia.

The country that, unwittingly or not, hosts many of the criminal syndicates behind ransomware attacks was not invited to a two-day meeting starting Wednesday to develop new strategies to counter the threat.

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan called it a gathering of "like-minded" governments in agreement on the urgency of the need to protect citizens and businesses from ransomware.

"No one country, no one group can solve this problem," he said in opening remarks.

The virtual discussions will fo-

cus in part on efforts to disrupt and prosecute ransomware networks like the one that attacked a major U.S. pipeline company in May, a senior administration official said. The attack on Colonial Pipeline, which led to gas shortages along the East Coast, was attributed to a Russia-based gang of cybercriminals.

The exclusion of a country so closely tied to the global ransomware phenomena reflects the overall poor relations between Moscow and Washington.

Despite that, the U.S. has used a "dedicated channel" to address cybersecurity with Russia, said the official, who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity to preview this week's meeting with around 30 countries and the European Union.

Since President Joe Biden raised the issue directly with President Vladimir Putin this summer

in a summit and later phone call, there have been "candid discussions" about cybercriminals operating within Russia's borders, the official said.

"We've had several, and they continue, and we share information regarding specific criminal actors within Russia, and Russia has taken initial steps," the official said.

It is unclear what steps Putin's government has taken. Russia does not extradite its own citizens, and FBI Deputy Director Paul Abate told a security forum last month that he has seen "no indication that the Russian government has taken action to crack down on ransomware actors that are operating in the permissive environment that they've created there."

The issue was expected to be on the agenda this week in Moscow as Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland met for talks with Russian

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov.

The Biden administration took office amid a massive cyberespionage campaign known as the SolarWinds attack, which U.S. officials have linked to Russian intelligence operatives. Ransomware attacks, perpetrated generally by criminal hacker gangs rather than state-sponsored groups, have caused tens of billions of dollars in losses to businesses and institutions and become a major source of tension between the two nations.

Ransomware payments reached more than \$400 million globally in 2020 and topped \$81 million in the first quarter of 2021, according to the U.S. government.

Actions taken by the Biden administration include imposing sanctions on a Russia-based virtual currency brokerage that officials said helped at least eight ransomware gangs launder virtual

currency, as well as issuing security directives that require pipeline companies to improve their cyber defenses.

In addition, the State Department has announced rewards of millions of dollars for information on people who engage in state-sponsored malicious cyber activities aimed at transnational criminal networks that Sullivan said operate "across multiple countries, multiple jurisdictions to carry out their attacks."

Most of this week's ransomware meeting is expected to be private as participants attend sessions led by India, Australia, Britain and Germany, and will focus on themes such as developing resilience to withstand ransomware attacks.

Other participants include Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore and Kenya.

NATION

Fed immigration agents to cease workplace raids

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Federal immigration agents will end mass workplace arrests of immigrant employees suspected of living in the U.S. without legal permission, according to a memo issued Tuesday by Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

Instead, the focus will shift to pursuing “unscrupulous employers who exploit the vulnerability of undocumented workers” and emphasize fighting worker abuse including paying substandard wages, unsafe working conditions and human trafficking.

The three-page memo directs the heads of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection and Citizenship and Immigration Services to draw up a plan within two months to increase employer penalties, encourage workers to report unscrupulous practices without fear and coordinate with other agencies, such as the Department of Labor.

Mass worksite raids were common under former President Donald Trump, including a 2019 operation targeting Mississippi chicken plants, the largest such operation in over a decade. Trump and other Republican presidents defended raids as strong deterrents against illegal immigration, while workers groups called them unfair and discriminatory. For instance, most of the 680 workers arrested at chicken plants run by companies including Illinois-based Koch Foods were Latino.

Tuesday’s move away from

raids more closely resembles the approach by former President Barack Obama, who largely avoided such operations, limiting workplace immigration efforts to low-profile audits.

“The deployment of mass worksite operations, sometimes resulting in the simultaneous arrest of hundreds of workers, was not focused on the most pernicious aspect of our country’s unauthorized employment challenge: exploitative employers,” Mayorkas wrote. “These highly visible operations misallocated enforcement resources while chilling, and even serving as a tool of retaliation for, worker cooperation in workplace standards investigations.”

Along with ending mass worksite arrests, Mayorkas said immigration authorities should also immediately start using “prosecutorial discretion” when it comes to encouraging workers to speak up about workplace exploitation and preventing employers from using retaliatory threats of deportation.

Workers rights groups applauded the move, saying immigrant workers, particularly those without legal permission to live in the U.S., are especially vulnerable. Industries such as meatpacking and chicken processing are particularly reliant on immigrant labor for backbreaking work often set in rural areas with limited access to attorneys.

During the initial weeks of the pandemic, Trump ordered meatpacking plants to remain open amid concerns about the nation’s food supply, even as COVID-19 outbreaks were closing plants.



MIKE ELIASON/AP

Santa Barbara County Fire Hand Crew members fight fire with fire and burn off pockets of grass along northbound Highway 101 north of Arroyo Hondo Canyon in Santa Barbara County, Calif., on Tuesday.

Wildfire approaches Reagan’s ‘Western White House’ in Calif.

Associated Press

SOLVANG, Calif. — A major coastal highway remained closed Wednesday and evacuation orders were in place from a growing blaze driven by intense winds that raised the risk of wildfires in much of California.

More than 200 firefighters battled the Alisal Fire, which covered 21 square miles along coastal Santa Barbara County and was only 5% contained, county fire officials said.

The fire was burning near Rancho del Cielo, which was once owned by Ronald and Nancy Reagan and was known as the Western White House during his presidency. Fire crews were protecting the ranch where Reagan hosted world leaders.

The fire erupted Monday on a ridge and swept toward the ocean, forcing the closure of U.S. 101, the

only major highway on that section of the coast. Evacuation orders and warnings were in place for ranches and several rural communities.

While the area was lightly populated, the blaze threatened more than 100 homes, ranches and other buildings, fire officials said.

“The fire is burning in dense chaparral and is being pushed by strong winds and growing at a rapid rate of speed,” a fire update said Tuesday, when gusts reached 70 mph in some areas.

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors declared a local emergency on Tuesday and asked Gov. Gavin Newsom to declare a state of emergency to free more state resources for firefighters and evacuees.

In Northern California, fire crews increased containment of a blaze that destroyed 25 mobile

homes, 16 RVs and a park building at the Rancho Marina RV Park in Sacramento County.

No injuries were reported, and the cause remained under investigation.

To the south in San Joaquin County, a man suffered severe third-degree burns over most of his body and about five mobile homes were damaged by flames that raced through the Islander Mobile Home Park, Lathrop-Manteca Fire Chief Josh Capper told Fox40-TV.

Powerful gusts swept across the state Monday, toppling trees and whipping up blinding dust clouds. In anticipation of the wind event, the Pacific Gas & Electric utility shut off power Monday to about 24,000 customers in targeted areas of 23 counties to prevent fires from being started if gusts damaged electrical equipment.

3 USPS employees killed in shooting

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Postal workers returned to their jobs Wednesday hours after the bodies of three U.S. Postal Service workers who died in a shooting spree at a sorting facility were removed.

The victims included a supervisor, a manager and a letter carrier temporarily assigned to the postal annex, relatives and co-workers said.

Two workers were fatally shot Tuesday by a third who died from a self-inflicted gunshot, authorities said. The FBI and U.S. Postal Service didn’t immediately name those involved.

Shri Green, area vice president for the National Association of Postal Su-

pervisors, told The Associated Press that a letter carrier shot a manager and a supervisor. Green said she did not know the motive, but “obviously, something was going on, in the carrier’s mind.”

Green, a retired postal transportation manager, said the pandemic has led to more work absences and new hires who are initially unfamiliar with the postal service, causing more stress among workers.

“It’s a sign of the times,” Green said. “The postal service altogether, they’re working long hours, six or seven days a week. It’s just stressful.”

A family member identified one of the dead as James Wilson, a manager

at the East Lamar Carrier Annex in Orange Mound, a historic Memphis neighborhood.

“He was a humble soul, one of the nicest supervising managers you could ever wish there was,” Roxanne Rogers said of Wilson, her cousin.

Rogers, herself a postal worker, said Wilson had just returned to the annex after filling in at a different location.

Retired mail carrier LaFerre Ryan rushed to the facility where he worked for 18 years after hearing about the shootings.

“We all postal family,” Ryan said. “They’re still my family. It hurts because it can be me or anyone else, you know what I’m saying,” said Ryan.



PATRICK LANTRIP/AP

Family members of victims wait outside of a postal facility after a shooting Tuesday in Memphis, Tenn.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Elk that had tire around neck for 2 years is freed

CO PINE — Wildlife officials in Colorado say an elusive elk that has been wandering the hills with a car tire around its neck for at least two years has finally been freed of the obstruction.

The 4½-year-old, 600-pound bull elk was spotted near Pine Junction, southwest of Denver, on Saturday evening and tranquilized, according to Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Officers with the agency had to cut off the elk’s five-point antlers to remove the encumbrance because they couldn’t slice through the steel in the bead of the tire.

Officer Scott Murdoch and fellow officer Dawson Swanson estimated the elk shed about 35 pounds with the removal of the tire, the antlers and debris inside the tire.

Wildlife officers first spotted the elk with the tire around its neck in July 2019 while conducting a population survey.

Saturation is part of street racing crackdown

OR PORTLAND — Police officers saturated an area of Portland on Sunday night known for street racing and stopped dozens of would-be racers, authorities said.

The Portland Police Bureau said in a news release that with Oregon State Police, police made 47 traffic stops, issued 21 citations and arrested two people.

Police said during their encounters they explained the new unlawful street takeover law.

A man in a Subaru WRX STI with license plates from Olympia, Wash., tried to elude police and the bureau said the vehicle was going over 100 mph when the driver apparently saw spike strips in the road and backed up quickly into a police car. Police said the 24-year-old driver was arrested on several charges including felony eluding.

Statue honors French officer’s battle exploits

SC CAMDEN — A statue of a French military officer killed on a South Carolina battlefield during the Revolutionary War was unveiled in Camden on Sunday.

A ceremony was held to honor Johann de Kalb, who died in the August 1780 Battle of Camden after his horse was shot out from under him and British soldiers then shot and stabbed him.

De Kalb’s statue is at the newly opened Revolutionary War Visitor Center.

De Kalb was born in a German village and received a French military commission in the 1740s. He came to America in 1777 with the Marquis de Lafayette to fight for the patriots in the War for Independence. He was 59 years old



Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute

Abandoned, then adopted

A baby cheetah born in September at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal, Va., who was the only one of a litter of three that survived, was abandoned by its mother, Sukiri. It was recently adopted by a new cheetah family at the Wildlife Safari in Winston, Ore.

when he died.

Free lunches legally earn access to lawmakers

NM SANTA FE — Companies clamoring for contracts on internet services and student testing are buying state legislators in New Mexico free lunches at meetings about education policy. It’s a legal and a frequent practice that some people find unappetizing.

On Tuesday, Democratic and Republican state legislators and their policy staff enjoyed enchiladas, roast beef sandwiches, steak salads, and other entrees with soft drinks and sides “Sponsored by Comcast,” according to an agenda released by the Legislative Education Study Committee.

The New Mexico Foundation for Open Government says that as long as they are disclosed, it’s legal for companies to buy legislators lunches and give gifts.

“And then the public needs to ask ‘Why are they doing that?’” said Melanie Majors, the foundation’s executive director.

Comcast’s name also appeared before the committee on Monday in a budget comparing bids from internet vendors collected by a school district in southern New Mexico. The Comcast bid in that district was around \$1.6 million.

THE CENSUS

\$1M The amount that was once below the median sales price of a single-family home in Hawaii’s Maui County but is now above that figure. The Maui News reported Monday the median sales price stood at \$996,500 in September. That’s up 27.3% from the same month last year. But it’s below levels from May through August, when the median topped \$1 million for four straight months. The September report from the Realtors Association of Maui said that declining affordability has had “a significant impact” on homebuyers who have been priced out of the market.

Comcast spokeswoman Julianne Phares said the company didn’t present any products at Tuesday’s lunch. She declined to comment on what the company hopes to gain by sponsoring the lunch, or how much it cost.

7th annual run to honor slain journalist Foley

NH PORTSMOUTH — The seventh annual Freedom Run to honor the memory of journalist James Foley is scheduled for Oct. 23 in Rochester, N.H., and virtually around the world.

The run raises money for the work of the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation, which advocates for the freedom of all Americans held hostage and wrongfully detained abroad and promotes the protection of journalists working in dangerous areas through preventive safety education.

Foley was publicly executed by

Islamic State members in 2014 while reporting on the conflict in Syria.

The Freedom Run consists of a traditional 5K Run/Walk held in Rochester, Foley’s former home, and a virtual Run/Walk, held globally. It seeks to raise \$100,000.

University laboratory lands \$3.2M for upgrade

TN MEMPHIS — The University of Tennessee Health Science Center has landed \$3.2 million in federal money to upgrade a laboratory used for research on infectious diseases.

In a news release, the Memphis campus said the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases awarded the money for equipment and infrastructure improvements at the Regional Biocontainment Laboratory. The school said the lab is one of about a dozen nationwide commissioned after 9/11 by the institute to study very con-

tagious pathogens as a safeguard against bioterrorism.

Judge: State must collect dues from prison workers

MO ST. LOUIS — A judge has ordered Missouri to begin collecting union dues from prison workers, finding that an attempt by Gov. Mike Parson’s administration to break the union is illegal.

In a scathing, 43-page decision, Circuit Judge Jon Beetem said it was “unconstitutional, arbitrary, capricious and unreasonable” that the state had stopped collecting the dues from members of the Missouri Corrections Officer Association, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported Wednesday.

It happened in 2019 as the state’s Office of Administration and the labor union were negotiating a new contract. The state argued at the time that the workers were no longer in a union since the contract had expired.

The move left the association with a massive funding shortfall, resulting in the closure of its headquarters, the loss of two staff and an end to the payout of hardship benefits to members.

NATION

FDA authorizes first e-cigarette

By MATTHEW PERRONE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — For the first time, the Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday authorized an electronic cigarette, saying the vaping device from R.J. Reynolds can help smokers cut back on conventional cigarettes.

E-cigarettes have been sold in the U.S. for more than a decade with minimal government oversight or research. Facing a court deadline, the FDA has been conducting a sweeping review of vaping products to determine which ones should be allowed to remain on the market.

The agency said in September it had rejected applications for more than a million e-cigarettes and related products, mainly due to their potential appeal to underage teens. But regulators delayed making decisions on most of the major vaping companies, including market leader Juul, which is still pending.

Tuesday's decision only applies to Vuse's Solo e-cigarette and its tobacco-flavored nicotine cartridges. The agency said data from the company showed the e-cigarette helped smokers significantly reduce their exposure to the harmful chemicals in traditional cigarettes.



MARK STEHLE/AP

Heath officials on Tuesday authorized the first electronic cigarette in the U.S., saying the R.J. Reynolds vaping product Vuse Solo Digital Vapor Cigarette, above, can help smokers cut back on cigarettes.

While the products can now be legally sold in the U.S., the FDA stressed they are neither safe nor "FDA approved," and that people who don't smoke shouldn't use them.

Launched in 2013, Vuse Solo is a rechargeable metallic device that's shaped like a traditional cigarette.

"The manufacturer's data demonstrates its tobacco-flavored products could benefit addicted adult smokers who switch to these products — either completely or

with a significant reduction in cigarette consumption," said Mitch Zeller, director of the FDA's tobacco center, in a statement.

E-cigarettes first appeared in the U.S. around 2007 with the promise of providing smokers with a less harmful alternative to smoking traditional tobacco cigarettes.

The devices heat a nicotine solution into a vapor that's inhaled. But there has been little rigorous study of whether e-cigarettes truly help smokers quit.

Theft-plagued Walgreens plans to close 5 more stores in San Francisco

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Walgreens said Tuesday that it will close five more stores in San Francisco next month because of organized retail theft in another blow to a city that has earned an embarrassing reputation for widespread and brazen shoplifting.

The stores will close down next month, SFGATE reported. It said Walgreens has closed at least 10 stores in the city since the start of 2019.

"Retail theft across our San Francisco stores has continued to increase in the past few months to five times our chain average" despite large increases in security, Walgreens spokesperson Phil Caruso said.

San Francisco Supervisor Ahsha Safai said he was devastated by the loss of a Mission Street store that "has been a staple for seniors, families and children for decades."

"This is a sad day for San Francisco," Safai told SFGATE. "We can't continue to let these anchor institutions close that so many people rely on."

Last year, Walgreens closed one

store where the chain said it was losing \$1,000 a day to thefts.

Frustration and fear over thefts have been fueled by widely circulating images of shoplifting caught on video. This summer, shoplifters in masks carrying armfuls of designer handbags sprinted from a downtown Neiman Marcus store and into getaway cars.

In June, a masked man was caught on video at a Walgreens, stuffing items into a trash bag before cruising out of the store on a bicycle. A suspect was arrested in that theft. Last month, Mayor London Breed and Police Chief Bill Scott announced that they will dedicate more police, beef up coordination and make it easier to report shoplifters.

The strategy aims to counter thieving that has added to the liberal city's reputation as being soft on crime.

"We care about criminal justice reform. We care about second chances. We care about making sure that people are not wrongly accused," Breed in announcing the new measures. "But don't take our kindness for weakness, our compassion for weakness."

Social Security COLA for 2022 is largest in decades as inflation jumps

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Millions of retirees on Social Security will get a 5.9% boost in benefits for 2022. The biggest cost-of-living adjustment in 39 years follows a burst in inflation as the economy struggles to shake off the drag of the coronavirus pandemic.

The COLA, as it's commonly called, amounts to \$92 a month for

the average retired worker, according to estimates released Wednesday by the Social Security Administration. That marks an abrupt break from a long lull in inflation that saw cost-of-living adjustments averaging just 1.65% a year over the last 10 years.

With the increase the estimated average Social Security payment for a retired worker will be \$1,657 a

month next year. A typical couple's benefits would rise by \$154 to \$2,753 per month.

"It goes pretty quickly," retiree Cliff Rumsey said of the cost-of-living increases he's seen. After a career in sales for a leading steel manufacturer, Rumsey lives near Hilton Head Island, S.C. He cares at home for his wife of nearly 60 years, Judy, who has advanced Alzheimer's dis-

ease. Since the coronavirus pandemic, Rumsey said he has noted price increases for food, wages paid to caregivers who occasionally help him and personal care products for Judy, not to mention energy costs.

The COLA affects household budgets for about 1 in 5 Americans. That includes Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and federal retirees, nearly 70 million people in

all. For baby boomers who embarked on retirement within the last 15 years, it will be the biggest increase they've seen.

"It's going to be welcome," said analyst Mary Johnson of the Senior Citizens League advocacy group. "But what we are hearing is that even with the COLA, buying power will still be eroded because price increases are still going up."



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WORLD



From left, South Korean cast members Park Hae-soo, Lee Jung-jae and Anupam Tripathi in a scene from "Squid Game."

N. Korea using 'Squid Game' to criticize S. Korean society

The Washington Post

"Squid Game" is now so big even North Korea's propaganda machine can't resist weighing in with an opinion on the nine-part show that Netflix just announced has become its most-watched show ever.

While the dystopian series has gripped viewers around the world with its gruesome tale of economic despair and deadly childhood-inspired games, a North Korean state-run website says the production serves to highlight the "bestly" nature of "South Korean capitalist society where mankind is annihilated by extreme competition."

In a post published Tuesday, the website said "Squid Game" reflects an "unequal society where the strong exploit the weak."

In the series, hundreds of debt-ridden contestants, including a North Korean defector, enter the games in a bid to win a climbing, billion-dollar cash prize they hope will turn their lives around. The catch: If they lose a game, they die.

The series has resonated deeply among those frustrated with income inequality, unemployment and financial challenges. The director has said the production's relatability has been paramount to its success.

China: Military drills, flights were needed to defend Taiwan

Associated Press

BEIJING — China's recent increase in military exercises and warplane missions near Taiwan — which have raised concerns around the region — were necessary to defend the nation's sovereignty and territory, a Chinese official said Wednesday.

China's military flew 56 planes off the southwest coast of Taiwan on a single day earlier this month, a single-day record that capped four days of a sustained pressure campaign involving 149 flights. All were in international airspace, but the display raised fears that any misstep could provoke an unintended escalation in the region.

Taiwan views China's moves as advertising its threat to bring the island it claims as its own territory under its control by military means as necessary. The sides split amid civil war in 1949 and have no official contacts.

The purpose of the maneuvers

was to "fundamentally safeguard the overall interests of the Chinese nation and the vital interests of people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait," said Ma Xiaoguang, spokesperson for the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office.

"The People's Liberation Army exercises are necessary actions to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Ma told reporters at a biweekly news conference in Beijing.

Ma blamed actions by Taiwan's independence-leaning democratically elected government and its relations with "external forces" for heightening tensions.

Outside observers have said the military maneuvers are intended to degrade Taiwan's physical defense capabilities through wear and tear, while turning the citizenry against their leaders through a form of psychological warfare.

Taiwan, a close U.S. ally, scrambled jets to intercept the Chinese

aircraft and activated its missile air defense systems. It is also working to boost its defenses by buying new technology from the United States and developing domestic systems, including submarines.

Public opinion surveys show the vast majority of Taiwanese wanting to keep their de facto independent status without giving in to China's demands for political unification.

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen on Sunday vowed to defend the island from China's rising pressure after a week of unprecedented tensions with Beijing.

She spoke a day after Chinese leader Xi Jinping said annexing Taiwan "must be realized," while saying that was best brought about by peaceful means.

Xi also added, however, that, "No one should underestimate the Chinese people's strong determination, will and capability to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

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FACES

Finding motivation close to home

Making 'Expensive Pain' therapeutic for Meek Mill

By DAN DeLUCA

The Philadelphia Inquirer

It's been more than three years since the Free Meek Mill movement came to fruition and the Philadelphia rapper was released from the state prison in Chester where he had been serving a two- to four-year sentence for a probation violation stemming from a 2007 gun charge.

But never fear: The freedom that Mill fully attained in 2019 when his cause celebre case was finally put to rest after he pleaded guilty to a firearms possession offense and all other charges were dropped has not blunted the intensity of his music or the capacity for soul searching that has forged a deep bond with his audience.

Mill's new album, "Expensive Pain," is his fifth. It's the first by the 34-year-old rapper and criminal justice activist since "Championships," the 2018 release that came out six months after the whirlwind day when he caught a helicopter ride from Chester to the Wells Fargo Center in South Philly in time to ring the bell at a Philadelphia 76ers playoff game.

"I don't really remember that day," Mill said, speaking on the phone last week from New York. "Everything was moving so fast, it was like a big blur to me. I don't even remember being at the Sixers game or how it felt emotionally. I have to watch it on YouTube to remember the feeling."

"Expensive Pain," whose cover features a painting by artist Nina Chanel Abney, is in many ways a celebration of freedom. It boasts a bountiful list of features that cements Mill's status as a mature artist poised at a point in his career between elder mentors like Jay-Z and Rick Ross and a younger rappers like Lil Uzi Vert, Moneybagg Yo, Lil Baby and Lil Durk as well as singers Kehlani and Brent Faiyaz.

But ask the kinetic rapper which songs on the album mean the most to him, and he responds with a list that includes "On My Soul," "Halo," "Cold Hearted III" and the title track — all of which tend toward introspection and



TYGER WILLIAMS/The Philadelphia Inquirer

Meek Mill, shown Sept. 4, is working out his personal issues on the album "Expensive Pain."

concern the mental health consequences of life in Philadelphia neighborhoods plagued by gun violence.

"It's all PTSD," said Mill, who in August received the Nelson Mandela Changemaker Award from global business group PTTOW! (Plan To Take On The World) for his work with Reform Alliance, the parole and probation organization he co-founded in 2019 with Sixers co-owner Michael Rubin. He is also a co-owner, with Rubin, of Indianapolis-based Lids, the largest hat retailer in North America.

"When we were younger, we were getting beat up by cops, and growing up in poverty, we didn't have fathers in the house," said Mill. "Probably the doctors in Philadelphia have PTSD, and the detectives and the people who live in the communities and probably some of the news reporters have PTSD, from living around all that murder that's happening in the city."

Mill grew up in South and North Philadelphia. His father was killed during a robbery in South Philly when he was 5.

"I happened to live in those areas for 20 years of my life," he said. "You can't just re-

move it. Some of my friends and family was killed. My father was killed."

"Expensive Pain" explores the limits of material success. But it also aims to celebrate achievement.

"The album is me showcasing my talent, showcasing my flows," said Mill. "But it's also about giving people motivation. When you come from poverty, it's motivating to see people win."

"Expensive Pain" has its share of such light-hearted moments, but being a Meek Mill album, it's a serious affair. "Angels" mourns Lil Snupe, Mill's protege Addaren Ross who was murdered in Louisiana in 2013. "He was like one of my little babies, the first person I brought my energy to," Mill says. "He was like a little brother to me."

Facing up to trauma, Mill raps, "Boy you need some therapy" on the title track. And then responds to himself: "And I can't lie, I probably do."

Has he taken his own advice? Not yet.

"My therapy was making this album," he said. "Expressing myself by making music that people can relate to."

Mark Harmon exits 'NCIS'

From wire reports

The lead character of television's most popular drama exited the show Monday without a fuss, and without the immediate ratings bump that would be expected if there had been.

"NCIS" star Mark Harmon, who has played Special Agent Leroy Jethro Gibbs since the CBS drama began in 2003, had his final night as a regular character on Monday's show. Gibbs informed his partner after working on a case in Alaska that he was going to stay there.

At Harmon's request, CBS made no special promotion of the occasion, a muted departure for an industry that has never been shy about hawking the movements of big stars.

That may partly be because Harmon, 70, hasn't ruled out the possibility of an occasional return.

Kanye West selling Wyoming properties

Kanye West isn't just dashing his marriage and presidential aspirations.

The self-proclaimed "greatest artist that God ever created" has put up his Wyoming ranch on sale for \$11 million.

The ranch, located near Cody, Wyo., is just one of the rapper and fashion mogul's properties in the area and boasts more than 4,000 acres, according to the Cody Enterprise.

In addition to the home and land, the property comes with a host of other amenities including eight lodging units, two freshwater lakes, a restaurant, an event center, meeting facilities, horse barns, a go-kart track and corrals.

Smash Mouth's Steve Harwell retires

Smash Mouth singer Steve Harwell announced his retirement following the uproar over a concert performance that one attendee described as "the most chaotic show I've ever seen in my entire life."

Representatives for Smash Mouth said Tuesday that Harwell, 54, has left the band to focus on what they described as longstanding medical issues.

"Despite Steve's best efforts to work through these ailments, he is heartbroken to share that it has become impossible for him to continue doing what he loves most, performing in front of the band's millions of fans around the world," they said.

"I've tried so hard to power through my physical and mental health issues, and to play in front of you one last time, but I just wasn't able to," Harwell added in a statement, saying he expects the band to continue without him. "I cannot wait to see what Smash Mouth accomplishes next."

Clinton, Penny team up to write political thriller

By HILLEL ITALIE

Associated Press

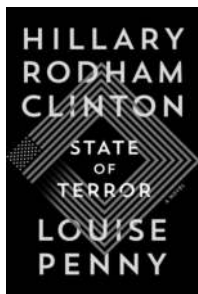
As U.S. forces left Afghanistan this summer and the Taliban seized control, Hillary Rodham Clinton responded not just as a former secretary of state but in a capacity she never imagined for herself — as a novelist seeing her first work of fiction anticipate current events.

"State of Terror," completed months ago and coming out this week, is a thriller co-written by Clinton and her friend Louise Penny, the bestselling crime novelist. The main character, Ellen Adams, is a new secretary of state with a backstory familiar to Clinton watchers — the surprise choice for an incoming administration led by her onetime political rival, as Barack Obama had been when

he brought in Clinton after the 2008 election.

Secretary Adams will soon be caught up in what Clinton calls one of her nightmare scenarios — an international terrorist plot involving nuclear weapons. The trouble in part originates in Afghanistan,

where the previous administration of Trump-like President Eric Dunn has made a deal (as Trump did) that Adams sees as effectively giving the country back to the Taliban and raising the risk of terrorist activity.



"We did do the outline a year or so before the (2020) election. We didn't know who was going to win. We didn't know what was going to happen," Clinton explained during a recent interview. "Whoever was going to win — Trump or, I hoped, Biden — would be facing a fait accompli."

The nearly 500-page novel combines other details that resonate with recent news — for instance, a chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who, like Gen. Mark Milley under Trump, challenges the civilian leadership — along with explorations of friendship; a cameo for Penny's famed fictional investigator, Armand Gamache; and, for the writers, the enjoyment of placing women of a certain age at the heart of a political thriller.

The book is shaped by Penny's

narrative style and by Clinton's government experiences and global outlook, but also by grief that Clinton still finds hard "to fully accept." Ellen Adams is based in part on Clinton's friend, former Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher, who died in April 2019. Betsy Johnson Ebeling, the inspiration for Ellen's best friend, Betsy Jameson, in "State of Terror," died just a few months later. Ellen Adams' daughter, Katherine, is named for Tauscher's daughter.

Fiction allows for what politicians call "plausible deniability," and that extends to whether Clinton and Penny may team up again. The novel's ending suggests that another Ellen Adams novel seems likely. Is one on the way?

"That's for way another day," Clinton says.



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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published week-days (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA, Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations where overseas DOD personnel are located. The appearance of advertising in this publication does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or Stars and Stripes of the products or services advertised. Products or services advertised shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.
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OPINION

The right Lee biography at the right time

By GEORGE F. WILL
Washington Post Writers Group
WASHINGTON
In 1935, the year before Margaret Mitchell's magnolia-scented novel "Gone with the Wind" began 21 months on bestseller lists, Douglas Southall Freeman, the son of a veteran of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's legions, published, to critical acclaim and commercial success, the final two volumes of his worshipful four-volume biography of Lee. Freeman called Lee "the Southern Arthur" who "accepted fame without vanity and defeat without repining."

Today, the nation is wiser and better than when President Franklin D. Roosevelt dispensed rhetorical treacle about Lee having been "one of our greatest American Christians and one of our greatest American gentlemen." Or when President Dwight D. Eisenhower hung Lee's portrait in the Oval Office as one of the four greatest Americans, with George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Benjamin Franklin.

Lee was unambiguously a traitor, guilty of, in the Constitution's language about treason, "levying war against" the United States. He also was a bore. His life coincided with extraordinarily complex controversies — about the nation's nature, civic duty, the meaning of patriotism and the demands of honor. Remarkably, there is no record of his expressing a thought (here is a Lee sample: "Never exceed your means") more interesting than Polonius' bromides ("Neither a borrower nor a lender be").

Princeton's Allen C. Guelzo, an eminent Civil War historian, has now published exactly what the nation needs as it reappraises important historical figures who lived in challenging times with assumptions radically unlike today's. "Robert E. Lee: A Life," Guelzo's scrupulously measured assessment, is mercifully free of the grandstanding by which many moralists nowa-

Lee was unambiguously a traitor, guilty of, in the Constitution's language about treason, "levying war against" the United States. He also was a bore.

days celebrate themselves by indignantly deploring the shortcomings of those whose behavior offends current sensibilities. But by casting a cool eye on Lee, Guelzo allows facts to validate today's removals of Lee's name and statues from public buildings and places.

Contemporaries gushed about Lee's gentility, dignity, probity, manners, presence, composure, etc. If mid-19th century America had been a debutante ball, Lee, who graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at 22 without a single demerit, would have been a paragon. Life then was, however, a moral test. Lee flunked.

Lee, Guelzo writes, "raised his hand" against the nation that, as an Army officer, he had sworn to defend. He did so for an agenda that a much greater man, Ulysses S. Grant, called one of "the worst for which a people ever fought." Lee thought slavery was a "greater evil" to white people than to Black people. He enveloped himself in what Guelzo calls a "cloud of pious wishes" and decided, as Guelzo tartly says, "it was up to the whites to decide when enough was enough." Guelzo writes that to Lee, slavery's victims were "invisible, despite their presence all around." His indifference was "cruelty in self-disguised velvet." Not well disguised, when he presided at the whipping of three recaptured runaways, ordering a constable to "lay it on well."

For all Lee's maunderings about his loyalty to Virginia, he worried intensely about his family's property if he ignored Virginia's summons. Lee's wife later portrayed him as enacting what Guelzo calls "a kind of Gethsemane." She might, Guelzo says dryly, "have been a little too eager to cast her husband's decision as a rehearsal of Christian agony." At least 10 Southern U.S. Army officers chose not to assist treason.

With exquisitely parsimonious praise, Guelzo notes Lee's "comparative harmlessness" — compared with, say, Nathan Bedford Forrest, who in 1864 oversaw war crimes such as the massacre of many of the 262 soldiers of the U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery after they had surrendered at Tennessee's Fort Pillow, crimes Lee never punished.

Because the apotheosis of Lee has fed sentimentality about the Confederacy's "Lost Cause," Guelzo's biography is necessary. In 2019, the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Alpharetta, Ga., claimed that their First Amendment expressive rights were violated when the city forbade their carrying the Confederate battle flag in the city's Old Soldiers Day parade. Last month, a U.S. district court noted astringently that the Sons "did not get the message" of the Supreme Court's 2015 ruling that a government-sponsored parade is government speech and government can decide what to say. The district court unlimbered its rhetorical artillery:

Southern governments began displaying the Confederate flag not soon after 1865 but in the 1950s and 1960s in defiance of laws against desegregation. Quoting Alpharetta's city government, the court said, "The public purpose of the Parade was to celebrate the service of veterans who 'defended the rights and freedoms enjoyed by everyone.'"

The court italicized the city's word. The message of Guelzo's 214,000 words requires no typographical enhancement.

Leave no one behind: Invest in home care

By ANNETTE MOODY
Special to Stars and Stripes
In the military, we are taught principles to live by. One of them is, leave no one behind. And that doesn't just mean fellow active duty service members. It includes our families, neighbors and the broader community. We have a duty to care for everyone.

Right now, the country is leaving behind elderly Americans and Americans with disabilities, as well as working class families who care for them. Over 70% of American voters consistently support funding home care, and it's the best way for patients to get individual attention in the familiar setting of their own homes. But our nation's home care industry is underfunded and crumbling.

On average, home caregivers make \$17,200 a year and rarely receive benefits or proper training for the challenging work they do. They are quitting the profession, and families are left struggling to make up the shortfall. Millions of women in particular are leaving the workforce to step up and care for their loved ones.

That's my story as well: I closed my small business to care for my mother and sister. After my time in the service I left a subsequent job with the federal government in

2014 and started a healing center in Cottonwood, Ariz., where I offered counseling, acupuncture and meditation. I offered free services to veterans to help with their post traumatic stress, because it was something I cared about and knew about firsthand. I worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the local medical center to offer free workshops as well.

I had a beautiful office in town and I was really excited about my business, which was really taking off after about a year. I was at the point of turning a profit. At the same time, I was helping care at home for my ailing sister and my aging mom, who had become sick with dementia.

My need for home care was immense, but the nearby agencies who provide home care staff did not have available personnel to send. It was impossible for me to grow my business and care for my family at the same time, and I came to the realization that I would have to make a choice. A growing business needs 24/7 attention, as does a frail or ailing loved one.

I made the difficult decision to sell everything, close my business and take on the task of caring for my relatives full time. My mother passed away in May of this year. It was such a difficult time, but I had to put my grief

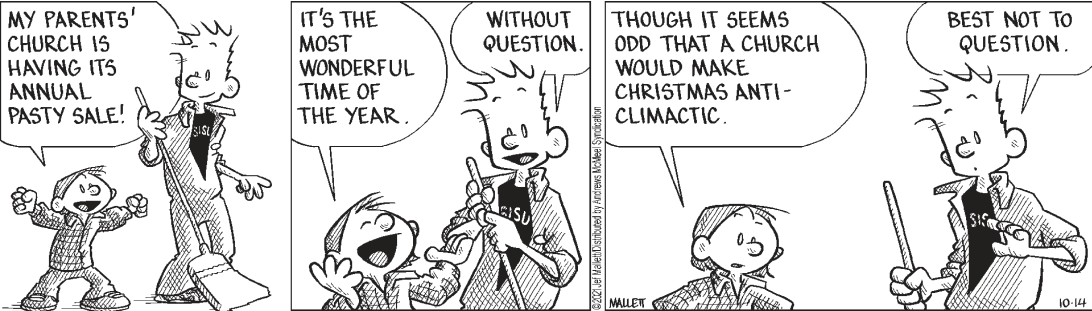
aside and continue caring for my sister. I realize that there sometimes are people who are able to just write a check and hire someone to live with and care for their loved ones. Most of us, however, are not able to do that. We rely on scarce social services provided in our communities.

The Biden administration has proposed investing \$400 billion in the home care industry, which would expand access to home caregivers. It would increase workers' pay, and improve their training and benefits. But as Congress debates components of the reconciliation bill, investment in home care may be cut significantly. Lawmakers should include as much funding as possible as home care reaches a crisis point.

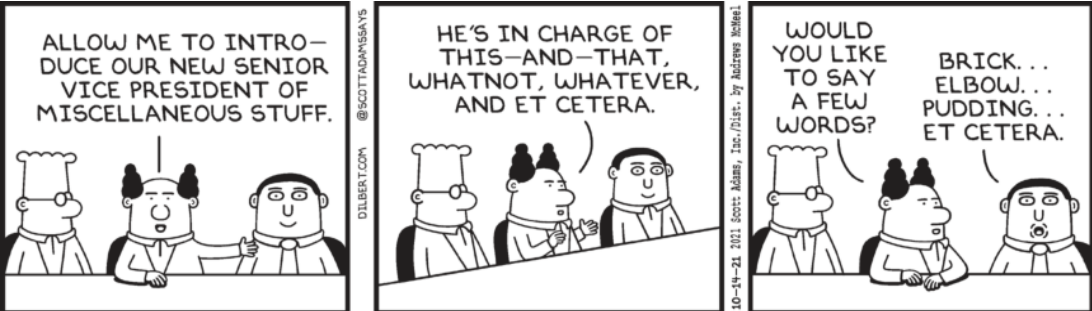
In Arizona, Sen. Kyrsten Sinema comes from a military family and Sen. Mark Kelly is a veteran. Their votes will be a key factor in whether home care investment remains in the bill. I urge them to remember the principle of leaving no one behind. In this country, Americans deserve access to the care they need, whether they are elderly or disabled, working families, or four-star generals.

Annette Moody, a U.S. Coast Guard veteran, wrote this column in partnership with the Center for American Progress Action Fund, which advocates for progressive policies.

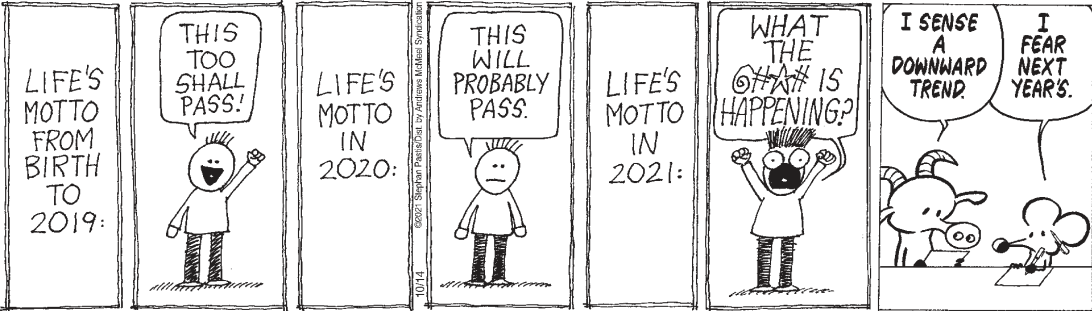
Frazz



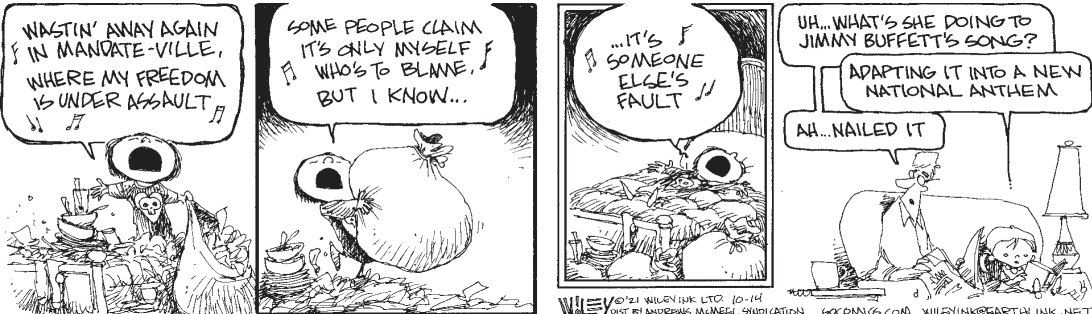
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



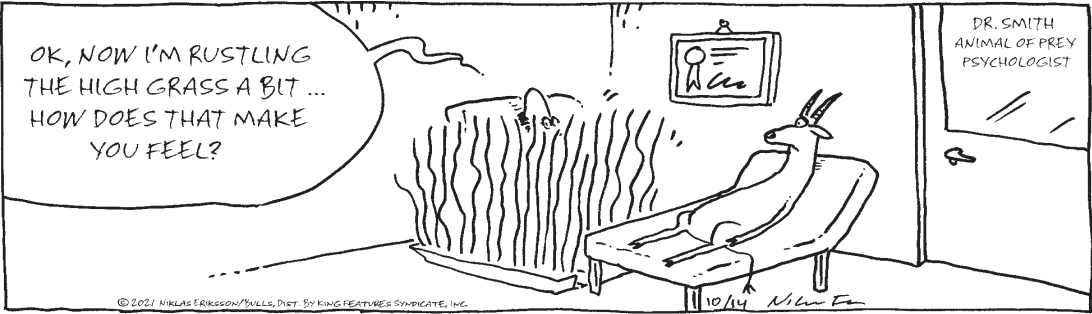
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
		18				19		20				
21	22				23		24					
25				26		27		28		29	30	31
32				33		34		35		36		
37				38		39		40		41		
			42		43		44		45			
46	47	48				49		50				
51					52		53				54	55
56					57					58		
59					60					61		

- ACROSS**
- 60 Chemists' rooms
61 Levy
- 22 Actress Falco
23 Wapiti
27 "Whatever"
29 Type of soup
30 Bonkers
31 Poses
33 Factor
35 Hiatus
38 More, to Manuel
40 Razzes
43 Beach accessory
45 Airport org.
46 Ship's staff
47 Peregrinate
48 Mid-month date
49 Zilch
53 Pen tip
54 Ecol. watchdog
55 Box office
- DOWN**
- 1 "Terri!"
2 Verse by Pablo Neruda
3 Maryland city
4 Snoopy, for one
5 Comic Schumer
6 IRS enforcer
7 Head lights?
8 Daydream
9 First victim
10 Hoosegow
11 "Downton Abbey" role
16 Snitch
20 YouTube upload (Abbr.)
21 Piglet's dad

Answer to Previous Puzzle

P	U	B		E	M	U	S		H	A	T	E
O	H	O		A	B	R	A		E	G	A	D
D	O	N		R	A	N	C	O	R	O	U	S
S	H	E	B	A				K	I	M		
			U	C	L	A		L	E	T	T	S
R	A	N	C	H	E	R	O		S	A	R	A
A	R	E		E	A	R	N	A		L	I	S
S	L	A	W		R	A	N	D	O	L	P	H
H	O	P	I	N		Y	O	D	A			
			S	E	X			R	S	V	P	S
R	A	N	D	O	M	I	Z	E		O	R	K
E	X	P	O		E	R	A	S		T	A	I
P	E	R	M		N	A	G	S		E	M	S

10-14 CRYPTOQUIP

VQJDSFG AVK XCEX JGGAD

AQNVOK VOXS ERR XCG

SXCGQ EOVFERD' AGQDSOER

EZZEVQD: E OSDN ASQJGQ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT MIGHT GOLFERS USE IF THEY WANT TO SEND EACH OTHER SUPER-SPEEDY CORRESPONDENCE? TEE-MAIL.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals R

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SCOREBOARD/NFL

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Tuesday's score
SOUTH
Louisiana-Lafayette 41, Appalachian State 13
Schedule
Thursday's games
SOUTH
Navy (1-4) at Memphis (3-3)
Georgia Southern (2-4) at South Alabama (3-2)

PRO FOOTBALL

NFL
AMERICAN CONFERENCE
East
W L T Pct PF PA
Buffalo 4 1 0 .800 172 64
New England 2 3 0 .400 96 92
Miami 1 4 0 .200 79 154
N.Y. Jets 1 4 0 .200 67 121

South
W L T Pct PF PA
Tennessee 3 2 0 .600 132 130
Houston 1 4 0 .200 89 141
Indianapolis 1 4 0 .200 108 128
Jacksonville 0 5 0 .000 93 152

North
W L T Pct PF PA
Baltimore 4 1 0 .800 136 117
Cincinnati 3 2 0 .600 114 100
Cleveland 3 2 0 .600 142 114
Pittsburgh 2 3 0 .400 94 112

West
W L T Pct PF PA
L.A. Chargers 4 1 0 .800 142 116
Denver 3 2 0 .600 102 76
Las Vegas 3 2 0 .600 113 120
Kansas City 2 3 0 .400 154 163

NATIONAL CONFERENCE
East
W L T Pct PF PA
Dallas 4 1 0 .800 170 117
Philadelphia 2 3 0 .400 115 124
Washington 2 3 0 .400 123 155
N.Y. Giants 1 4 0 .200 103 139

South
W L T Pct PF PA
Tampa Bay 4 1 0 .800 167 122
Carolina 3 2 0 .600 115 87
New Orleans 3 2 0 .600 127 91
Atlanta 2 3 0 .400 105 148

North
W L T Pct PF PA
Green Bay 4 1 0 .800 120 122
Chicago 3 2 0 .600 84 100
Minnesota 2 3 0 .400 113 109
Detroit 0 5 0 .000 98 138

West
W L T Pct PF PA
Arizona 5 0 0 1.000 157 95
L.A. Rams 4 1 0 .800 141 116
San Francisco 2 3 0 .400 117 119
Seattle 2 3 0 .400 120 126

Thursday, Oct. 7
L.A. Rams 26, Seattle 17
Sunday, Oct. 10
Atlanta 27, N.Y. Jets 20
Green Bay 25, Cincinnati 22, OT
Minnesota 19, Detroit 17
New England 25, Houston 22
New Orleans 33, Washington 22
Philadelphia 21, Carolina 18
Pittsburgh 27, Denver 19
Tampa Bay 45, Miami 17
Tennessee 37, Jacksonville 19
Chicago 20, Las Vegas 9
L.A. Chargers 47, Cleveland 42
Arizona 17, San Francisco 10
Dallas 44, N.Y. Giants 20
Buffalo 38, Kansas City 20
Monday, Oct. 11
Baltimore 31, Indianapolis 25, OT
Thursday's game
Tampa Bay at Philadelphia
Sunday's games
Miami vs Jacksonville at London
Cincinnati at Detroit
Green Bay at Chicago
Houston at Indianapolis
Kansas City at Washington
L.A. Chargers at Baltimore
L.A. Rams at N.Y. Giants
Minnesota at Carolina
Arizona at Cleveland
Dallas at New England
Las Vegas at Denver
Seattle at Pittsburgh
Open: N.Y. Jets, Atlanta, New Orleans, San Francisco
Monday's game
Buffalo at Tennessee

PRO SOCCER

MLS
EASTERN CONFERENCE
W L T Pts GF GA
New England 20 4 5 65 57 34
Nashville 11 3 14 47 46 26
Philadelphia 12 7 9 45 38 27
Orlando City 11 8 9 42 41 41
D.C. United 12 12 4 40 49 41
NYCFC 11 10 7 40 44 32
CF Montréal 11 10 7 40 40 37
Atlanta 10 9 9 39 37 33
New York 10 11 7 37 34 30
Columbus 9 12 7 34 32 39
Inter Miami CF 9 14 5 32 25 43
Chicago 7 16 6 27 29 46
Toronto FC 6 15 7 25 34 54
Cincinnati 4 16 8 20 29 54

WESTERN CONFERENCE
W L T Pts GF GA
Seattle 17 5 6 57 48 23
Sporting KC 15 6 7 52 51 31
Colorado 14 5 9 51 41 28
Portland 14 10 4 46 45 44
Real Salt Lake 11 11 6 39 45 44
LA Galaxy 11 11 6 39 39 45
Minnesota 10 10 8 38 31 35
Vancouver 9 9 10 37 35 38
LAFC 9 12 7 34 40 41
San Jose 8 11 9 33 35 44
FC Dallas 6 13 10 28 39 47
Houston 5 12 12 27 33 45
Austin FC 7 17 4 25 29 44

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

Saturday, Oct. 9
New York 1, Miami 0
Philadelphia 2, Cincinnati 1
Seattle 4, Vancouver 1
Sunday, Oct. 10
Colorado 3, Minnesota 1
Saturday's games
Philadelphia at CF Montréal
San Jose at Los Angeles FC
Miami at Columbus
Chicago at New England
Atlanta at Toronto FC
Nashville at D.C. United
Orlando City at Cincinnati
Seattle at Houston
Minnesota at Austin FC
Colorado at Real Salt Lake
Portland at LA Galaxy
Sunday's games
New York City FC at New York
Sporting Kansas City at Vancouver
Wednesday, Oct. 20

Tuesday's transactions

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
American League
LOS ANGELES — Agreed to terms with RHP Victor Morin on a minor league contract.
National League
ATLANTA BRAVES — Recalled CF Christian Pache from Gwinnett (Triple-A East). Placed RF Jorge Soler on the 10-day IL.
BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
ATLANTA HAWKS — Signed G Ibi Watson.
CLEVELAND CAVALIERS — Waived F Mfondu Kabengele and G Brodrick Thomas.
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS — Re-signed G Terance Mann to a veteran extension.
LOS ANGELES LAKERS — Signed F Sekou Doumbouya to a two-way contract.
NEW YORK KNICKS — Waived G Tyler Hall.
OKLAHOMA CITY THUNDER — Waived F Jaylen Hoard.
ORLANDO MAGIC — Waived C Jeremiah Tilmon.
SACRAMENTO KINGS — Waived Gs Matt Coleman III and D.J. Steward.
FOOTBALL
National Football League
ARIZONA CARDINALS — Activated TE Darrell Daniels from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Released CB Luq Barcoo and WR Josh Doctson from the practice squad. Placed OLB Chandler Jones on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
ATLANTA FALCONS — Signed TE Parker Hesse to the practice squad. Released K Elliott Fry and OLB George Obinna from the practice squad.
BALTIMORE RAVENS — Placed OL Ben Cleveland on injured reserve.
DENVER BRONCOS — Released WR Josh Malone from the practice squad.
DETROIT LIONS — Signed CB Mark Gilbert. Placed WR Quintez Cephus on injured reserve. Signed WR Javon McKinley to the practice squad. Released TE Jared Pinkney from th practice squad.
CAROLINA PANTHERS — Signed OT Austen Pleasants to the practice squad.
CINCINNATI BENGALS — Signed RB Elijah Holyfield and CB Holton Hill to the practice squad. Placed CB Trae Waynes on injured reserve. Released P Drue Chrisman from the practice squad.

Chicago at Cincinnati
CF Montréal at Orlando City
New York City FC at Atlanta
New England at D.C. United
Toronto FC at Miami
Los Angeles FC at FC Dallas
Philadelphia at Minnesota
Columbus at Nashville
LA Galaxy at Houston
Seattle at Colorado
Vancouver at Portland
Austin FC at San Jose
Saturday, Oct. 23
Sporting Kansas City at Seattle
New York at Columbus
D.C. United at New York City FC
Nashville at Philadelphia
CF Montréal at Toronto FC
Los Angeles FC at Minnesota
Real Salt Lake at Chicago
Cincinnati at Miami
Portland at Colorado
FC Dallas at LA Galaxy
Vancouver at San Jose

NWSL
W L T Pts GF GA
Portland 12 6 3 39 31 16
Reign FC 12 7 2 38 33 21
Houston 9 7 5 32 31 26
North Carolina 9 7 5 32 27 18
Washington 8 7 6 30 24 25
Gotham FC 7 5 8 29 23 18
Chicago 8 8 5 29 24 27
Orlando 7 7 7 28 26 27
Louisville 4 12 5 17 16 37
Kansas City 2 12 6 12 10 30
Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.
Wednesday, Oct. 6
Washington 0, Gotham FC 0, tie
North Carolina 3, Louisville 1
Houston 3, Portland 2
Saturday, Oct. 9
Gotham FC 3, Orlando 2
Washington 3, Louisville 0
Sunday, Oct. 10
Portland 0, Kansas City 0, tie
Houston 4, North Carolina 1
Reign FC 3, Chicago 2
Wednesday's games
Washington at North Carolina
Orlando at Chicago
Houston at Kansas City
Reign FC at Portland
Saturday's games
Orlando at Louisville
Kansas City at Chicago
Washington at Reign FC
Sunday's games
Gotham FC at North Carolina
Portland at Houston
Friday, Oct. 22
Gotham FC at Kansas City

DEALS

CLEVELAND BROWNS — Placed OL Chris Hubbard, RB Andy Janovich and S M.J. Stewart on injured reserve. Promoted DE Joe Jackson and RB Johnny Stanton IV from the practice squad to the active roster. Activated CB Tim Harris from the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed T Alex Taylor to the practice squad.
DENVER BRONCOS — Signed WR John Brown to the practice squad. Released WR Josh Malone.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed CB Quinton Dunbar to the practice squad.
HOUSTON TEXANS — Promoted WR Chris Moore from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed OL Cole Toner to the practice squad. Released DB Shyheim Carter from the practice squad.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed T Greg Senat and DT Antwaun Woods to the practice squad. Placed S Ibraheim Campbell on the practice squad injured reserve.
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — Signed WR Josh Imatorbhebhe, RB Kerrith Whyte Jr. and OL Jared Hocker to the practice squad. Signed OL Rashaad Coward. Placed OL Brandon Linder on injured reserve.
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Signed RB Elijah McGuire and LB Darius Harris to the practice squad. Placed RB Clyde Edwards-Hellaire on injured reserve. Released WR Daurice Fountain. Signed RB Derrick Gore and OT Prince Tega Wanogho to the active roster.
LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Released QB Kyle Sloter from the practice squad.
LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Signed G Senio Kelemete. Placed OL Oday Aboushi on injured reserve.
LOS ANGELES RAMS — Placed CB Darious Williams on injured reserve. Activated OL Tremayne Anchrum from injured reserve.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Signed WR Travis Fulgham to the practice squad. Released WR Brandon Powell from th practice squad. Designated QB Tua Tagovailoa to return from injured reserve to practice.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Re-signed WR Dan Chisena.
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — Placed K Cody Parkey on injured reserve. Signed K Brian Johnson. Released CB Desmond Trufant and DB Brian Poole. Re-signed DT Christian Ringo. Released OT Derrick Kelly and LB Wynton McManis from the practice squad.
NEW YORK JETS — Released DB Shel-drick Redwine from the practice squad.

TENNIS

BNP Paribas Open
Tuesday
At Indian Wells Tennis Garden
Indian Wells, Calif.
Purse: \$8,359,455
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Men's Singles
Round of 32
Jannik Sinner (10), Italy, def. John Isner (20), United States, walkover.
Taylor Fritz (31), United States, def. Matteo Berrettini (5), Italy, 6-4, 6-3.
Karen Khachanov (24), Russia, def. Pablo Carreno Busta (12), Spain, 6-0, 6-4.
Nikoloz Basilashvili (29), Georgia, def. Albert Ramos-Vinolas, Spain, 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-2.
Alexander Zverev (3), Germany, def. Andy Murray, Britain, 6-4, 7-6 (4).
Gael Monfils (14), France, def. Kevin Anderson, South Africa, 7-5, 6-2.
Alex de Minaur (22), Australia, def. Cristian Garin (13), Chile, 6-4, 6-2.
Stefanos Tsitsipas (2), Greece, def. Fabio Fognini (25), Italy, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.
Women's Singles
Round of 16
Jessica Pegula (19), United States, def. Elina Svitolina (4), Ukraine, 6-1, 6-1.
Jelena Ostapenko (24), Latvia, def. Iga Swiatek (2), Poland, 6-4, 6-3.
Shelby Rogers, United States, def. Leylah Annie Fernandez (23), Canada, 2-6, 6-1, 7-6 (4).
Victoria Azarenka (27), Belarus, def. Aliaksandra Sasnovich, Belarus, 6-3, 6-4.
Paula Badosa (21), Spain, def. Barbora Krejcikova (3), Czech Republic, 6-1, 7-5.
Anett Kontaveit (18), Estonia, def. Beatriz Haddad Maia, Brazil, 6-0, 6-2.
Angelique Kerber (10), Germany, def. Ajla Tomljanovic, Australia, 6-4, 6-1.
Ons Jabeur (12), Tunisia, def. Anna Kalinskaya, Russia, 6-2, 6-2.

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA playoffs
x-if necessary
Finals
(Best-of-five)
No. 6 Chicago 1, No. 5 Phoenix 0
Chicago 91, Phoenix 77
Wednesday: at Phoenix
Friday: at Chicago
x-Sunday: at Chicago
x-Tuesday: at Phoenix
NBA preseason
Tuesday's games
Toronto 113, Washington 108
Golden State 111, L.A. Lakers 99
Wednesday's games
Portland at Phoenix
Dallas at Charlotte
Boston at Orlando
Memphis at Indiana
Detroit at New York
Denver at Oklahoma City
Milwaukee at Utah
Thursday's games
Miami at Atlanta
Minnesota at Brooklyn
Oklahoma City vs. Denver at Tulsa
L.A. Lakers at Sacramento

Signed OL Dru Samia to the practice squad.
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES — Placed TE Dallas Goedert on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Signed WR Anthony Miller and DL Isaiah Mack to the practice squad. Released NT Eli Ankou from the practice squad.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Waived CB Davontae Harris and RB Jacques Patrick.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Released CB Tre Flowers and placed on waivers. Designated C Ethan Pocic to return from injured reserve to practice.
TENNESSEE TITANS — Waived DL Woodrow Hamilton. Signed OLs Derwin Gray and Jimmy Murray to the practice squad. Placed P Brett Kern on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed OL Ty Sambrailo on the reserve/retired list. Signed LB Avery Williamson.
HOCKEY
National Hockey League
CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS — Recalled RW MacKenzie Entwistle and LW Phillipp Kurashew from Rockford (AHL). Waived RW Matej Chalupa for the purpose of termination.
COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS — Waived D Mikko Lehtonen for the purpose of termination.
DALLAS STARS — Assigned G Jake Oettinger, RW Ty Dellandrea and C Oskar Back to Texas (AHL). Recalled C Jacob Peterson and RW Joel Kiviranta from Texas.
MONTREAL CANADIENS — Re-signed C Nick Suzuki to a eight-year contract extension. Placed D Mattias Norlinder on injured reserve.
NEW YORK ISLANDERS — Released G Cory Schneider. Recalled G Jakub Skarek from Bridgeport (AHL). Assigned LW Kieffer Bellows to Bridgeport.
OTTAWA SENATORS — Re-signed C Parker Kelly to a two-year, two-way contract extension.
PITTSBURGH PENGUINS — Recalled LW Drew O'Connor and RW Anthony Angello from Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (AHL). Signed C Brian Boyle to a one-year contract.
TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS — Placed LW Alex Steeves on injured reserve.
VANCOUVER CANUCKS — Waived RW Zack MacEwewn. Signed RW Alex Chiasson.
WASHINGTON CAPITALS — Recalled LW Beck Malenstyn and D Connor McMichael from Hershey (AHL).
WINNIPEG JETS — Waived LW C.J. Suess.

London hosts combine

By KEN MAGUIRE
Associated Press

LONDON — Shouts came in multiple languages — “Allez!” by the French contingent — but grunts were universal at an NFL tryout held in an English Premier League stadium.

The NFL’s international combine on Tuesday at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium gave more than 40 players from around Europe and beyond a chance to take a step toward earning a roster spot in the league.

Unlike the top college kids at the annual NFL combine in Indianapolis, many of these guys are older and work side jobs while competing in European leagues far out of the spotlight.

Shawn Tuione, in fact, doesn’t play football anywhere.

“I’ve never played a snap of football in my life. This is something new to me,” said the 6-foot-5, 275-pound New Zealander, who was listed as a defensive lineman.

Tuione, a former rugby player who lives in Hawaii, completed drills along with the other players in an evaluation for possible spots in the NFL’s International Player Pathway program.

“I came here today with no expectations but to put my best foot forward,” the 23-year-old Tuione said on the field where the Jacksonville Jaguars will face the Miami Dolphins on Sunday. “I came here expecting to ball out, but I’m sore in places I’ve never been sore in my life.”

Instead of team scouts, it’s the the NFL that evaluates the players and selects a handful to train in the United States for three months, after which final choices are made to allocate players to NFL teams for the 2022 season. And then, they still need to win a spot on the team roster.

Players ran 40-yard sprints, cone drills and did the broad jump on Tuesday. Receivers and defensive backs worked on routes. A day earlier, they all did the vertical jump and bench press in a gym.

Created in 2017, the program has helped several players, including New England Patriots fullback Jakob Johnson of Germany, earn NFL roster spots.

“Some of these guys are going to make it,” said former Patriots offensive tackle Sebastian Vollmer, a German who won two Super Bowl rings while protecting Tom Brady. “It’s a long journey. (This) is a small step, but it’s crucially important.”

NFL

Fallout grows from Gruden resignation over emails

BY ROB MAADDI
AND BARRY WILNER
Associated Press

The NFL is not planning to make public any of the hundreds of thousands of emails it obtained as part of an investigation of the Washington Football Team, some of which led to the resignation of Las Vegas Raiders coach Jon Gruden.

“Based on the material that we have reviewed, we haven’t identified anything that needed to be reported to club or league leadership,” NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy told The Associated Press on Tuesday. “We have released no emails during this process.”

The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times reported that, from 2011-18 while he was an ESPN analyst between coaching jobs, Gruden used racist, misogynistic and homophobic language directed at union chief DeMaurice Smith, Commissioner Roger Goodell and others around the NFL in written exchanges with former Washington executive Bruce Allen.

The emails were gathered as part of an investigation of the Washington Football Team after former employees made allegations about sexual harassment and other workplace misconduct. The club, which is valued in the billions, was fined \$10 million by the NFL and owner Dan Snyder stepped away from day-to-day operations for a period of months, but there was no written report of lawyer Beth Wilkinson’s inquiry. Lawyers representing 40 former



RICK SCUTERI/AP

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers removed the name of former Las Vegas Raiders head coach Jon Gruden from their Ring of Honor. Gruden coached the Buccaneers to their first Super Bowl win in 2003.

employees of the team on Tuesday urged the NFL to immediately release the full findings of the investigation. They called it “outrageous” that only Gruden has been “held accountable” after the 10-month probe.

Gruden, who had a 10-year, \$100 million contract with the Raiders, stepped down Monday night during the fourth season of a mostly unsuccessful tenure, going 22-31 with no playoff appearances.

The fallout continued Tuesday, when the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the team he led to a Super Bowl title nearly two decades ago, removed him from the Ring of Honor at Raymond James Stadium.

“The Tampa Bay Buccaneers have advocated for purposeful

change in the areas of race relations, gender equality, diversity and inclusion for many years,” the Bucs said in a one-paragraph statement. “While we acknowledge Jon Gruden’s contributions on the field, his actions go against our core values as an organization.”

Others in and around the sport wondered what, if any, other ramifications might be on the horizon.

What did Allen write to Gruden? Allen hung up the phone when contacted by The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Could other emails involving current or former coaches or front-office types surface? What disciplinary steps, if any, would the NFL take, after standing back while the Gruden episode played out?

Bucs’ Brady plans to play despite his heavily wrapped right hand

BY ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Tom Brady says his heavily wrapped throwing hand is sore but he expects to play when the Buccaneers visit the Philadelphia Eagles on Thursday night.

Brady injured his right hand in the first half of Tampa Bay’s 45-17 win over Miami on Sunday. He finished off his first career 400-yard, five-TD performance with a pair of scoring passes in the fourth quarter.

“It’s a little sore but I expected it to be,” Brady said Tuesday. “We signed up for a contact sport. You get different bumps and bruises throughout the year and we’ll just deal with it the best we can. This bump and bruise happens to be on my hand. Just trying to be preventive and precautions, be smart. It’s less than 48 hours since it happened

so it’s not like it’s had five days, but again I feel confident I’ll be able to go out there and do what I need to do.”

The defending Super Bowl champion Buccaneers (4-1) are playing their third road game and fourth overall in 19 days. The 44-year-old Brady leads the NFL with 1,767 yards passing and is second with 15 TDs.

“If it was my left hand, I wouldn’t think two seconds about it,” Brady said. “The fact that it’s your throwing hand, there aren’t many things that are that important to a quarterback other than your right shoulder or your right elbow. Anytime you get banged on one of those, it could be an issue, but I think there is no serious injury at all. It’s more discomfort, but I think it’ll be gone in about a day or two.”



JASON BEHNKEN/AP

Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady says he plans to play this week despite an injured right hand.

Weekly statistics

AFC individual statistics

Quarterbacks						
	Att	Com	Yds	TD	Int	
Carr, Las	205	131	1605	8	4	
Herbert, LAC	207	139	1576	13	3	
Jackson, Bal	167	112	1519	8	3	
Mahomes, KC	195	135	1490	16	6	
Allen, Buf	183	114	1370	12	2	
Wentz, Ind	173	113	1322	7	1	
Roethlisberger, Pit	195	124	1286	6	4	
Burrow, Cin	145	104	1269	11	6	
Tannehill, Ten	173	110	1251	6	3	
M.Jones, NE	190	135	1243	5	5	

Rushers						
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
Henry, Ten	142	640	4.5	60t	7	
Chubb, Cle	90	523	5.8	52t	4	
J.Robinson, Jac	67	387	5.8	58	4	
Mixon, Cin	93	386	4.2	27	3	
Ekeler, LAC	67	349	5.2	20	4	
Jackson, Bal	56	341	6.1	31	2	
Taylor, Ind	73	327	4.5	38	2	
Harris, Pit	78	307	3.9	20	2	
Edwards-Helaire, KC	65	304	4.7	17	0	
Hunt, Cle	55	295	5.4	33	5	

Receivers						
	No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
Hill, KC	37	516	13.9	75t	4	
Williams, LAC	31	471	15.2	72t	6	
Chase, Cin	23	456	19.8	70t	5	
Brown, Bal	28	451	16.1	49t	5	
Andrews, Bal	29	400	13.8	41	2	
Cooks, Hou	31	392	12.6	52	1	
Sutton, Den	25	377	15.1	55	1	
Diggs, Buf	28	374	13.4	61	1	
Allen, LAC	34	369	10.9	42	1	
Kelce, KC	30	369	12.3	46t	4	

Punters				
	No	Yds	Lg	Avg
Cole, Las	23	1202	70	52.3
Bailey, NE	17	847	68	49.8

Scoring					
Touchdowns					
	TD	Rush	Rec	Ret	Pts
Ekeler, LAC	7	4	3	0	42
Henry, Ten	7	7	0	0	42

Kicking				
	PAT	FG	LG	Pts
Bass, Buf	19/19	11/12	48	52
Folk, NE	6/8	14/15	52	48

AFC team statistics

AVERAGE PER GAME			
OFFENSE			
	Yards	Rush	Pass
Baltimore	440.6	148.8	291.8
Kansas City	420.4	128.2	292.2
Cleveland	417.6	187.6	230.0
L.A. Chargers	411.4	108.4	303.0
Buffalo	410.4	140.4	270.0
Tennessee	389.2	167.8	221.4
Las Vegas	377.0	78.6	298.4
Indianapolis	363.4	114.2	249.2
Denver	357.8	118.6	239.2
Jacksonville	348.0	129.4	218.6
Cincinnati	333.8	99.0	234.8
New England	319.8	80.0	239.8
Pittsburgh	319.6	73.6	246.0
Houston	282.6	79.8	202.8
N.Y. Jets	267.0	74.0	193.0
Miami	261.8	70.4	191.4

DEFENSE			
	Yards	Rush	Pass
Buffalo	251.8	78.4	173.4
Denver	292.4	85.4	207.0
Cleveland	298.8	75.6	223.2
New England	317.6	111.0	206.6
Las Vegas	339.8	134.4	205.4
Cincinnati	351.6	101.4	250.2
Pittsburgh	361.0	100.4	260.6
Indianapolis	369.2	108.4	260.8
L.A. Chargers	371.8	157.6	214.2
N.Y. Jets	372.8	123.4	249.4
Tennessee	377.4	112.8	264.6
Baltimore	389.6	93.2	296.4
Houston	391.8	134.8	257.0
Jacksonville	408.4	121.8	286.6
Miami	422.2	133.6	288.6
Kansas City	437.4	141.0	296.4

NFC individual statistics

Quarterbacks						
	Att	Com	Yds	TD	Int	
Brady, TB	225	149	1767	15	2	
Stafford, LAR	172	117	1587	12	3	
K.Murray, Ari	165	124	1512	10	4	
Cousins, Min	191	133	1396	10	2	
Prescott, Dal	165	122	1368	13	3	
Darnold, Car	183	120	1366	6	6	
Hurts, Phi	182	118	1365	7	3	
Ryan, Atl	204	141	1332	10	3	
Goff, Det	196	131	1303	7	3	
Jones, NYG	157	101	1282	4	1	

Rushers						
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
Elliott, Dal	85	452	5.3	47	5	
Kamara, NO	94	368	3.9	23t	1	
Pollard, Dal	51	325	6.4	28	1	
Gibson, Was	79	313	4.0	27	3	
Jones, GB	70	309	4.4	57	2	
Montgomery, Chi	69	309	4.5	41	3	
Henderson, LAR	60	294	4.9	29	3	
Edmonds, Ari	49	270	5.5	54	0	
Mattison, Min	65	258	4.0	48	0	
Hurts, Phi	43	256	6.0	27	3	

Receivers						
	No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD	
Adams, GB	42	579	13.8	59	2	
Samuel, SF	31	548	17.7	79t	3	
Kupp, LAR	37	523	14.1	56t	5	
Jefferson, Min	33	462	14.0	37	3	
Moore, Car	35	440	12.6	39	3	
McLaurin, Was	29	400	13.8	37	3	
Evans, TB	29	393	13.6	34t	4	
Lockett, Sea	25	390	15.6	69t	3	
Metcalfe, Sea	25	383	15.3	30	5	
Godwin, TB	29	366	12.6	28	2	

Punters				
	No	Yds	Lg	Avg
Lee, Ari	18	911	60	50.6
Fox, Det	18	902	67	50.1

Scoring					
Touchdowns					
	TDRush	Rec	Ret	Pts	
Elliott, Dal	6	5	1	0	36
Conner, Ari	5	5	0	0	30

Kicking				
	PAT	FG	LG	Pts
Gay, LAR	15/16	10/11	53	45
Zuerlein, Dal	17/19	9/11	56	44

NFC team statistics

AVERAGE PER GAME			
OFFENSE			
	Yards	Rush	Pass
Dallas	439.6	172.8	266.8
Tampa Bay	431.4	82.0	349.4
Arizona	413.2	128.0	285.2
L.A. Rams	408.2	98.0	310.2
Minnesota	382.8	113.8	269.0
N.Y. Giants	380.6	95.8	284.8
Philadelphia	372.6	116.4	256.2
San Francisco	368.2	122.0	246.2
Carolina	363.4	107.8	255.6
Seattle	351.0	104.0	247.0
Washington	348.2	108.8	239.4
Green Bay	347.6	100.6	247.0
Atlanta	345.6	91.0	254.6
Detroit	339.0	103.0	236.0
New Orleans	295.2	125.8	169.4
Chicago	240.0	126.8	113.2

DEFENSE			
	Yards	Rush	Pass
Carolina	255.8	94.2	161.6
Green Bay	322.6	102.2	220.4
San Francisco	329.8	113.2	216.6
Chicago	331.8	103.8	228.0
Philadelphia	336.8	142.0	194.8
Atlanta	352.6	108.2	244.4
Arizona	353.4	139.0	214.4
New Orleans	354.0	79.0	275.0
Tampa Bay	360.2	45.8	314.4
Minnesota	368.8	130.0	238.8
Detroit	381.8	130.2	251.6
L.A. Rams	388.2	117.2	271.0
Dallas	390.4	79.4	311.0
Washington	407.8	114.4	293.4
N.Y. Giants	408.6	138.4	270.2
Seattle	450.8	145.2	305.6

NHL



The Capitals' Alex Ovechkin starts a new five-year contract ready to chase Wayne Gretzky's career goals record that long seemed unbreakable. The Washington captain needs 165 to pass Gretzky.

Ovechkin begins tracking Gretzky

By Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Va. — Wayne Gretzky's 894 career goals has for a long time been one of hockey's hallowed numbers, a record that would never be broken with scoring in the NHL so different now.

But great players will keep coming after the "Great One." Alex Ovechkin is ready to take his shot.

Ovechkin starts a new five-year contract with the Washington Capitals with 730 goals, 165 away from passing Gretzky. The Russian superstar is 36 and would need to score at a pace never before seen from an older player to approach that mark by the time his contract is up.

"You never know," Ovechkin said after signing the \$47.5 million deal. "I'm going to try (my) best. That's why I want to play five more years. To have a chance to catch the 'Great One,' why not?"

Age and health are his biggest obstacles. Ovechkin has been absurdly durable during his career, especially for a 6-foot-3 power forward who's not afraid to throw his body around, but the seven games he missed to injury late last season are more than the previous decade combined.

The hard-shooting Russian suffered a lower-body injury in Washington's exhibition finale, though coach Peter Laviolette hopes his captain plays in the opener and does not expect him to be out long term.

No matter how long the absence, it's the kind of thing Gretzky thinks Ovechkin will need to avoid.

"You've got to get a little bit lucky in the sense that you want to stay away from injuries as much as possible," Gretzky said. "And I don't just mean missing game injuries. I'm talking about nagging injuries where your knee is sore or your ankle's sore or your shoulder's sore, but you play through that. If he can stay healthy, I think this is the greatest thing for the game."

Ovechkin needs to average 33 goals a season to get to 895 over the next five seasons, but he's also trying

ing to keep up with Father Time. Gretzky put up 21 goals at age 36, and Ovechkin probably needs to clear 40 this season and maybe next to have a legitimate chance.

General manager Brian MacLellan senses that Ovechkin is energized, motivated to chase the record and in good shape to try it.

"He has a passion for the game, for goal-scoring, and I think that'll carry over over the next five years," MacLellan said.

No one has ever doubted that. Ovechkin's unbridled joy after scoring goals became one of the most endearing things about the NHL coming out of the 2004-05 lockout that wiped out an entire season.

Ovechkin does not harbor the same enthusiasm for repeatedly answering questions about Gretzky's record or climbing up the career list. He's one back of Marcel Dionne for fifth and could realistically pass Brett Hull (741) and Jaromir Jagr (766) this season to put himself in third, behind only Gretzky and Gordie Howe.

"Let's don't look too far," Ovechkin said. "Game by game, step by step."

Ovechkin's teammates are glad to be along for the ride and aiding in his quest. Winger Tom Wilson guesses "there's going to be some pressure on his linemates to get him the puck." That's no pressure for longtime running mate Nicklas Backstrom, who has assisted on 269 of Ovechkin's goals since entering the league in 2008.

"I absolutely think it's realistic," Backstrom said of Ovechkin's record pursuit. "If anyone can do it, it's him. That's the kind of hunger he's got, and that's the kind of goal scorer he is."

Having a good team around him helps. The Capitals are built to contend for at least two or three more seasons, and there's no shortage of skilled players ready to dish Ovechkin the puck.

Ovechkin will take his shot but acknowledged, "If I'm going to be second, it's a pretty good number, as well."

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference								
Atlantic Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Tampa Bay	1	0	1	0	0	2	6	
Detroit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ottawa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Florida	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Buffalo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Boston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montreal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Toronto	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Metropolitan Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Pittsburgh	1	1	0	0	2	6	2	
N.Y. Islanders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
N.Y. Rangers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Washington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Carolina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Columbus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
New Jersey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Philadelphia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Western Conference								
Central Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Nashville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Colorado	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Winnipeg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Dallas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Arizona	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Minnesota	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Chicago	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Pacific Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Vegas	1	1	0	0	2	4	3	
Seattle	1	0	1	0	0	3	4	
Edmonton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Anaheim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Vancouver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
San Jose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Los Angeles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Calgary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Tuesday's games	
Pittsburgh 6, Tampa Bay 2	Vegas 4, Seattle 3
Wednesday's games	
Montreal at Toronto	N.Y. Rangers at Washington
Chicago at Colorado	Vancouver at Edmonton
Winnipeg at Anaheim	
Thursday's games	
Arizona at Columbus	Dallas at N.Y. Rangers
Montreal at Buffalo	N.Y. Islanders at Carolina
Pittsburgh at Florida	Toronto at Ottawa
Tampa Bay at Detroit	Seattle at Nashville
Vegas at Los Angeles	
Friday's games	
Chicago at New Jersey	Vancouver at Philadelphia
Minnesota at Anaheim	

ROUNDUP

Penguins roll past sluggish Lightning

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Tristan Jarry had 26 saves, Danton Heinen and Brian Boyle scored early second-period goals, and the short-handed Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Stanley Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning 6-2 in their regular-season opener on Tuesday night.

Dominik Simon, Teddy Blueger, Bryan Rust and Evan Rodrigues also scored, and Kris Letang had two assists for the Penguins, who played without injured stars Sidney Crosby and Evgeni Malkin. The final three Pittsburgh goals were into an empty net.

"It's a process but I think we proved that we can play against a team like that, we can play well and we can win," Simon said.

Tampa Bay got goals from Anthony Cirelli and Andrew Killorn, and Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 29 shots. Star right wing Nikita Kucherov didn't have a shot on goal, while defenseman Mikhail Sergachev was minus-5.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman was in attendance as the Lightning unveiled their 2020-21 Stanley Cup banner during a pregame ceremony. They have won two consecutive titles following pandemic-impacted and abbreviated regular seasons.

"We wanted to kind of spoil it," Heinen said.

Tampa Bay coach Jon Cooper said the outcome would have the same if the opponent had been the Penguins' minor league team.

"They beat us to every puck, they worked harder than us, they were better than us in every facet of the game," Cooper said. "If it wasn't for our goalie it probably would have been way worse. They came here to win a hockey game, we came here and watched the banner raising, and then watched a team want to win a hockey game. We did a lot of watching tonight."

Jarry turned aside Brayden Point's low slot shot during the game's first power play midway through the second.

Pittsburgh blocked 15 shots.

"It makes my job really easy," Jarry said. "They're playing hard, and they're blocking shots. They did a great job for me."

Golden Knights 4, Kraken 3: Vegas earned a victory in its first game in franchise history four years ago. The host Golden Knights denied Seattle the same accomplishment.

Max Pacioretty scored twice, Chandler Stephenson and Jonathan Marchessault also scored and Robin Lehner made 25 saves as Vegas spoiled the Kraken's debut.

The Golden Knights held off a rally from the NHL's latest addition in what turned out to be a scrappy effort from Seattle.

The Kraken erased a 3-0 deficit and tied the score, but Chandler Stephenson's goal midway through the third period held up.

Ryan Donato got Seattle's first goal in franchise history, while Jared McCann and Morgan Geekie also scored. Phillip Grubauer had 18 saves in his first game as a Seattle player.



Penguins center Brian Boyle, front, celebrates with the Pittsburgh bench after his goal against the Tampa Bay Lightning during the second period on Tuesday. Pittsburgh won 6-2.

CHRIS O'MEARA / AP

MLB PLAYOFFS/NBA

Altuve, Astros rout White Sox, return to ALCS

By JAY COHEN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — It was Jose Altuve, Carlos Correa and Alex Bregman once again.

The Houston Astros are going to the AL Championship Series for the fifth straight year. Their October-tested stars led the way.

Altuve hit a three-run homer and scored four times, and Houston eliminated the Chicago White Sox with a 10-1 victory in Game 4 of their AL Division Series on Tuesday.

“We don’t get tired of this moment,” Correa said. “They’re special, and we perform our best when October comes.”

Correa and Bregman each hit a two-run double as the Astros bounced back from Sunday night’s 12-6 loss with their usual relentless brand of baseball. Michael Brantley had three hits and two RBIs.

Next up for Altuve and company is Game 1 of the ALCS against for-

mer Houston bench coach Alex Cora and the Boston Red Sox on Friday in Houston. The Red Sox eliminated Tampa Bay with a 6-5 victory in Game 4 on Monday night.

“We’re playing another good team,” Altuve said.

It’s the Astros’ second ALCS under 72-year-old manager Dusty Baker, whose club got the best of 77-year-old Chicago skipper Tony La Russa. Baker replaced A.J. Hinch, who was fired in the fallout from the Astros’ 2017 sign-stealing scandal that also resulted in a one-year ban for Cora.

A testy La Russa argued with umpire Tom Hallion after he felt Houston reliever Kendall Graveman hit reigning AL MVP José Abreu intentionally with two out in the eighth. Abreu was plunked 22 times during the regular season.

“There is a character choice there that they should answer for,” La Russa said. “Stupid, too. I’ll be interested to see if they admit it. If



NAM Y. HUH/AP

The Houston Astros’ Jose Altuve celebrates his home run as White Sox catcher Yasmani Grandal looks on during the ninth inning of the Astros’ 10-1 win Tuesday in Chicago that clinched their ALDS series.

they don’t admit it, then they’re very dishonest.”

Baker, who has sparred with La Russa in the past, said his team did not throw at Abreu intentionally.

“There was no reason for us to hit Abreu,” Baker said. “He hadn’t done anything to us.”

Gavin Sheets connected for the

White Sox, becoming the third rookie in franchise history to homer in a postseason game. But Carlos Rodón was knocked out in the third inning of his first start since Sept. 29, and the AL Central champions left eight runners on base.

Chicago also lost in the first round of the 2020 playoffs, drop-

ping two of three in Oakland. Before this year, the franchise had never made consecutive postseason appearances.

“It was a fun ride. Ended a little short,” Rodón said.

The Astros are looking for the franchise’s second championship after winning it all in 2017.

COMMENTARY

Nets’ Irving skips the jab and benches himself — for now

By JIM LITKE
Associated Press

It’s hard to know where Kyrie Irving is getting his vaccination information. Hope it’s not the same sources that had him convinced for a while the Earth was flat.

True story.

So maybe it wasn’t much of a surprise Tuesday, when science tripped up the seven-time All-Star again. Hemmed in by a New York COVID-19 vaccine mandate that covers pro athletes and would have limited Irving to playing road games only, the Brooklyn Nets gave him an ultimatum: a.) take the shot; or b.) take the 2021-22 season off.

The argument for a.) is pretty straightforward. The Nets are paying Irving \$34 million per year to blend with Kevin Durant and James Harden — two of the best players in the game — and maybe deliver an NBA title to Brooklyn. But b.) is not bad, either.

Irving can stay glued to his couch and still collect a cool \$16 million or so. That’s because Nets general manager Sean Marks and owner Joe Tsai, who together decided the “half-a-loaf” approach wasn’t worth the disruption, also said Ir-



ELISE AMENDOLA/AP

Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving must either get the COVID-19 vaccine or not play this year, the team has said.

ving would be paid for road games where he would have been eligible to play.

“Will there be pushback from Kyrie and his camp?” Marks said at a news conference. “I’m sure that this is not a decision that they like. ... But again, this is a choice that Kyrie had, and he was well aware of that.”

Irving has ducked questions about whether he was vaccinated, saying three weeks ago in a Zoom interview with reporters, “I think I

just would love to just keep that private, handle it the right way with my team and go forward together with the plan.”

Whatever that plan is, Marks made clear that Irving, a vice president of the NBA Players Association, was not among the 96% of players the union said had taken the jab. “If he was vaccinated,” Marks said, “we wouldn’t be having this discussion.”

How much more they talk remains to be seen. It’s worth noting

the NBA was the first major sports league to pull the plug on its season when the pandemic began raging in March 2020, just hours after Commissioner Adam Silver got word that Utah Jazz star Rudy Gobert had tested positive for COVID-19. It was also the only league to devise a single “bubble” to resume games and among the first to let some fans back in the stands. The people in charge aren’t likely to start bending the rules now.

Irving is an engaging, curious 29-year-old who does a lot of charity work behind the scenes, but he’s got a contrarian’s streak a mile long. He fought the league over the bubble setup and then skipped out on the Nets a few times last season, citing “personal reasons” only to be caught partying. He’s dabbled in conspiracy theories before, too, most famously with his “earth-is-flat” pronouncement during a 2017 podcast interview.

Then, just as now, Irving was coy about who he listened to on the topic and encouraged people to “do their own research.” But he’s no more qualified to pass judgment on the validity of the vaccine studies than one of those researchers would be running a fast break in the

closing minutes of a big game.

Speaking of big, more than a few former NBA greats have joined the campaign to convince not just Irving, but the few remaining holdouts, to get the vaccine.

Wherever else Irving is looking for advice, he’d better finish up soon. His kind of talent doesn’t come along often, and the chance to play alongside Durant and Harden and add another NBA title to the one he claimed in Cleveland might not last for long.

Right now, Irving is staying mostly silent, perhaps remembering the sting he felt after the flat-Earth episode. He tried laughing it off, then repeated it in an interview months later with The New York Times, and laughed it off a second time before finally apologizing.

“To all the science teachers, everybody come up to me ... I’m sorry,” he said. “I apologize. I apologize.”

Silver — who like Irving went to Duke — took a light-hearted approach to the whole matter back then.

“Kyrie and I went to the same college,” he said at the time. “He may have taken some different courses.”

MLB PLAYOFFS

Freeman's homer puts Braves in NLCS

By PAUL NEWBERRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Freddie Freeman and the Atlanta Braves will get another chance to finish the job they came agonizingly close to achieving a year ago.

It doesn't matter at all that they had fewer wins than any other playoff team.

Freeman hit an improbable, tiebreaking homer off Milwaukee closer Josh Hader with two outs in the eighth inning and the Braves advanced to the NL Championship Series for the second year in a row, finishing off the Brewers 5-4 on Tuesday night.

The Braves won the best-of-five Division Series three games to one, advancing to face either the 107-win San Francisco Giants or the 106-win Los Angeles Dodgers with a trip to the World Series on the line.

"I've had a lot of cool moments in my career," Freeman said. "I think that's gonna top 'em all. Hopefully it's not the last one and I've got a couple more in these playoffs."

The game was tied at 4 when the Brewers brought on Hader to make sure it stayed that way. The hard-throwing lefty struck out Eddie Rosario and Dansby Swanson, but he couldn't get past the 2020 NL MVP.

Freeman caught up with an 84-mph slider, launching a 428-foot drive into the seats in left-center — only the fourth homer all season off Hader, and first since July 28.

Freeman became the first left-hander to homer off Hader since Jason Heyward in 2020.

"The first two guys went down, so I just



JOHN BAZEMORE/AP

The Braves' Adam Duvall, left, and Freddie Freeman, right, celebrate Tuesday after winning Game 4 of their National League Division Series against the Milwaukee Brewers in Atlanta. The Atlanta Braves won 5-4 to advance to the NLCS.

tried to get a pitch up and he hung a slider and I put a good swing on it," Freeman said. "There was no rhyme or reason to it."

Freeman celebrated wildly on his way around the bases, and popped back out of the dugout for a curtain call as the crowd of 40,195 roared. He became the first player in franchise history to hit a go-ahead home run in the eighth inning or later in a series-clinching win, ESPN Stats & Info said.

"When Freddie hit that ball, I mean, I lost my poise. Everybody in the dugout was going crazy," teammate Ozzie Albies said.

Will Smith pitched a scoreless ninth for his third straight save in the series, getting Christian Yelich to look at strike three with a runner on first for the final out. Tyler Matzek claimed the win with a perfect eighth.

"Freddie! Freddie! Freddie!" the crowd

chanted as the Braves celebrated in the center of the field.

Despite having fewer wins (88) than any other playoff team — and even two teams that didn't make the postseason — the NL East champion Braves are headed back to the NLCS for the second season in a row.

A year ago, manager Brian Snitker's team had a 3-1 series lead, only to lose three straight games to the eventual World Series champion Dodgers.

Atlanta hasn't been to the World Series since 1999, and hasn't won it all since 1995.

But this team, which floundered under .500 until Aug. 6, overcame so much adversity to clinch its fourth straight division title in the final week.

A season-ending injury to star Ronald Acuña Jr. and legal issues that sidelined Marcell Ozuna forced the Braves to acquire a whole new outfield before the trade deadline.

It paid off.

"We've been feeling really good about ourselves in the second half, playing really good baseball," Freeman said. "We carried it over to the postseason."

After the Braves and the Brewers combined for just nine runs through the first 30 innings of the series, the offenses suddenly came to life in the fourth.

The NL Central champ Brewers touched home for the first time since Game 1, getting RBI singles from Omar Narváez and Lorenzo Cain to snap a 22-inning scoreless streak. Narváez's hit also broke an 0-for-20 performance by 95-win Milwaukee with runners in scoring position in the series.

Scoreboard

Playoffs	
x-if necessary	
WILD CARD	
American League	
Boston 6, New York 2	
National League	
Los Angeles 3, St. Louis 1	
DIVISION SERIES	
(Best-of-five)	
American League	
Boston 3, Tampa Bay 1	
Tampa Bay 5, Boston 0	
Boston 14, Tampa Bay 6	
Boston 6, Tampa Bay 4, 13 innings	
Boston 6, Tampa Bay 5	
Houston 3, Chicago 1	
Houston 6, Chicago 1	
Houston 9, Chicago 4	
Chicago 12, Houston 6	
Tuesday: Houston 10, Chicago 1	
National League	
San Francisco 2, Los Angeles 2	
San Francisco 4, Los Angeles 0	
Los Angeles 9, San Francisco 2	
San Francisco 1, Los Angeles 0	
Tuesday: Los Angeles 7, San Francisco 2	
Thursday: Los Angeles (Urias 20-3) at San Francisco (Webb 11-3) AFN-Sports, 3 a.m. Friday CET; 10 a.m. Friday JKT	
Atlanta 3, Milwaukee 1	
Milwaukee 2, Atlanta 1	
Atlanta 3, Milwaukee 0	
Atlanta 3, Milwaukee 0	
Tuesday: Atlanta 5, Milwaukee 4	
LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES	
(Best-of-seven)	
American League	
Boston vs. Houston	
Friday: at Houston AFN-Sports, 2 a.m. Saturday CET; 9 a.m. Saturday JKT	
Saturday: at Houston	
Monday: at Boston	
Tuesday, Oct. 19: at Boston	
x-Wednesday, Oct. 20: at Boston	
x-Friday, Oct. 22: at Houston	
x-Saturday, Oct. 23: at Houston	
National League	
Saturday: Atlanta at San Francisco or Los Angeles at Atlanta	
Sunday: Atlanta at San Francisco or Los Angeles at Atlanta	
Tuesday, Oct. 19: San Francisco at Atlanta or Atlanta at Los Angeles	
Wednesday, Oct. 20: San Francisco at Atlanta or Atlanta at Los Angeles	
x-Thursday, Oct. 21: San Francisco at Atlanta or Atlanta at Los Angeles	
x-Saturday, Oct. 23: Atlanta at San Francisco or Los Angeles at Atlanta	
x-Sunday, Oct. 24: Atlanta at San Francisco or Los Angeles at Atlanta	

Force: Dodgers, Giants familiar with each other

FROM PAGE 24

Next, the 106-win Dodgers head back to San Francisco to play the 107-win Giants one more time Thursday night, with the winner advancing to face Atlanta in the NL Championship Series. The Braves eliminated Milwaukee earlier Tuesday.

"They know us, we know them really well," Smith said. "It's going to come down to who wants it a little more."

San Francisco won the NL West by one game over the Dodgers in an historic race that went down to the final day of the regular season. Now, these storied rivals are set for a winner-take-all showdown.

"This is what baseball wants," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "We're going to be the only show in town. If you have a pulse or you're a sports fan, you better be watching Dodgers-Giants."

The Dodgers managed just five hits during a 1-0 loss in Game 3 — the second time they were shut out in this series — to reach the brink of elimination. Los Angeles had that many by the second inning Tuesday and pounded out 12 in all to back a brief but effective outing from Buehler on three days' rest.

"Tonight's a great example of kind of 26 guys coming together



ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

The Dodgers' Mookie Betts circles the bases Tuesday after hitting a two-run home run against the San Francisco Giants during the fourth inning of Game 4 of their NL Division Series in Los Angeles.

and figuring out a way to survive," Buehler said.

Buehler went to Roberts as early as the Dodgers' 9-2 victory in Game 2 and said he wanted the ball in Game 4 to start on short rest for the first time in his career. The right-hander allowed one run and three hits in 4⅓ innings. He struck out four and walked two on 71 pitches.

"I actually felt great," Buehler said. "Probably the best I have in the second half of the year. We'll

see how I feel tomorrow, but for tonight I felt pretty good."

After giving up a leadoff single to Evan Longoria and walking pinch-hitter Steven Duggar, Buehler exited to a standing ovation from blue towel-waving fans.

The Dodgers chased starter Anthony DeSclafani in the second. He gave up two runs and five hits and struck out two.

The Giants ran through six pitchers by the fifth, leaving them with just three relievers. By the

seventh, only backup catcher Curt Casali was available off the bench and he pinch-hit in the eighth.

The Giants have been outscored 16-9 in the series. They had seven hits Tuesday.

"This time of year you're going to face great pitching night-in and night-out," All-Star catcher Buster Posey said. "You're hoping that when you do get some traffic out there, you can get a big hit because sometimes those opportunities are limited. Hopefully that's something we will be able to do on Thursday."

The biting, steady wind that prevailed throughout Game 3 was gone, leaving just a slight breeze to ruffle the center-field flags.

Smith hit a two-run homer to center in the eighth, extending the lead to 7-2.

Betts homered in the fourth, and his bases-loaded sacrifice fly scored Cody Bellinger in the fifth for a 5-1 lead.

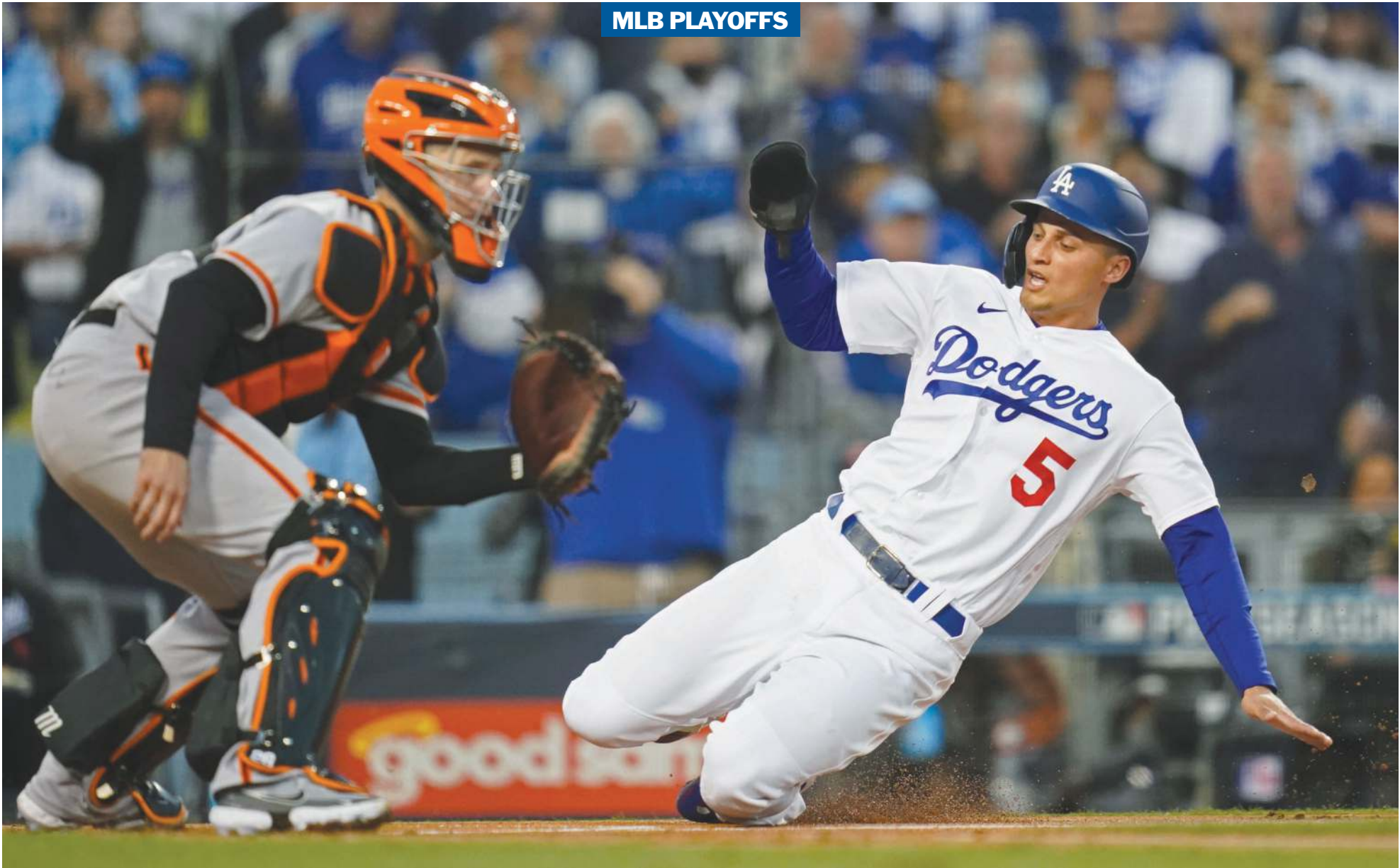
"I told him after the homer that's the best swing he's taken all year," Roberts said.

The Giants' runs came in the top of the fifth on Darin Ruf's RBI groundout off winner Joe Kelly, and Kris Bryant's RBI groundout in the eighth. Posey, a career .257 hitter in the playoffs, went 0-for-4.

SPORTS

Chasing Gretzky

Ovechkin begins new 5-year contract going after career goals record » **NHL, Page 21**



MLB PLAYOFFS

ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

The Dodgers' Corey Seager scores on a double by Trea Turner as Giants catcher Buster Posey awaits the throw Tuesday during the first inning of the Dodgers' 7-2 win in Game 4.

Dodgers force deciding game



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

The Dodgers' Will Smith, left, is greeted by Albert Pujols after Smith hit a two-run home run during the eighth inning of Game 4 of their National League Division Series on Tuesday in Los Angeles.

LA, San Francisco will square off once more with spot in NL Championship Series on line

BY BETH HARRIS
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Facing a second elimination game in less than a week, the Los Angeles Dodgers kept the same calm and cool approach.

It was their 52,935 fans who went bonkers, celebrating a 7-2 victory over the San Francisco Giants on Tuesday night to force a decisive Game 5 in their NL Division Series.

Mookie Betts homered and drove in three runs, and Will Smith also went deep to keep the season

alive for the defending World Series champions. The Dodgers beat St. Louis in the NL wild-card game last Wednesday.

"Everybody was kind of chill, relaxed and wanted to play," Betts said. "It's not like we're all of a sudden going to start hitting it harder or throwing it further or throwing it faster or whatever. It's the same game we have been playing. It's just a win-or-go-home situation."

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Inside: Astros, Braves wrap up division series, Pages 22-23

Brady plans to play despite bruised hand » NFL, Page 20

