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CONTINGENCY EDITION

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2022

Free to Deployed Areas

WAR IN UKRAINE

Zelenskyy courts allies to maintain momentum

BY HANNA ARHIROVA
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — President Volodymyr Zelenskyy worked Thursday to add political momentum to Ukraine's recent military gains against Russia, while missile strikes that caused flooding near his hometown demonstrated Moscow's determination to reclaim the battlefield advantage.

A week after a Ukrainian counteroffensive caused Russian troops to retreat from a northeast region, Zelenskyy met with European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen during her third visit to Kyiv since Russia's Feb. 24 invasion. Von der Leyen publicly conveyed the wholehearted support of the 27-nation bloc and wore an outfit in Ukraine's national colors.

"It's absolutely vital and necessary to support Ukraine with the military equipment they need to defend themselves. And they have proven that they are able to do

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LEO CORREA/AP

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy poses for a selfie with a police officer after attending a national flag-raising ceremony in the freed Izium, Ukraine, on Wednesday.



COREY DICKSTEIN/Stars and Stripes

Sections of Fort Benning's Olson Hall, known as the Cuartels barracks, are under renovation, as shown Tuesday. The historic barracks date to the 1920s. The Army expects to spend about \$125 million renovating 361,000 square feet of quarters during the next decade.

'We've got work to do'

Army secretary pledges more money for barracks, fears problems beyond Fort Bragg

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

FORT BENNING, Ga. — Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said she promises big boosts in barracks spending in the coming years, saying she fears soldiers across the service are living in substandard quarters.

The Army's top civilian on Tuesday made her first trip to Fort Benning, Ga., and said she did not yet know how large a funding increase would be needed to the service's roughly \$1 bil-



Wormuth

— known as Smoke Bomb Hill — where troops were living with relentless mold and an outdat-

ed, often nonworking heating and air conditioning system.

lion annual budget for barracks upkeep and renovations. What is clear, Wormuth noted, is more must be done considering the situation at Fort Bragg, N.C., where post leaders last month ordered hundreds of soldiers to relocate from barracks buildings

ed, often nonworking heating and air conditioning system.

"Our goal is to try to get to a point where we don't have any more Smoke Bomb Hill barracks — where we don't have a situation where there are barracks that we didn't realize were as bad as they were," Wormuth said after touring near-century-old barracks now undergoing renovations at Fort Benning. "I think with

SEE BARRACKS ON PAGE 6

BUSINESS/WEATHER

States approved for car-charging network plan

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — The Biden administration said Wednesday it has approved ambitious plans by 34 states and Puerto Rico to create a national electric vehicle charging network as the U.S. begins in earnest its transition away from gas-powered transportation.

The plans' approval means \$900 million can begin to flow to the states, which are tasked with using money from President Joe Biden's huge infrastructure law

to form the network of chargers across the nation. Building out a reliable and convenient network is critical to spur more adoption of the technology, which is itself key to reducing greenhouse emissions that cause global warming.

The announcement came on the same day that Biden toured the North American International Auto Show in Detroit to tout the new law that includes tax incentives to purchase electric vehicles.

In practical terms, it means res-

idents in some of those states could see more charging stations start popping up along major travel corridors as early as next summer. Biden has a goal of ultimately installing 500,000 chargers across America and building a network of fast-charging stations across 53,000 miles of freeways from coast to coast.

Federal officials said they will continue to review the plans not approved in this round with the goal of approving all the states' EV roadmaps by Sept. 30.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		South Korea (Won)	
Euro costs (Sept. 16)	\$0.98	Switzerland (Franc)	0.9573
Dollar buys (Sept. 16)	0.9745	Thailand (Baht)	36.86
British pound (Sept. 16)	\$1.12	Turkey (NewLira)	18.2625
Japanese yen (Sept. 16)	140.00	(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 (Sept. 16)	1359.00	INTEREST RATES	
Commercial rates		Prime rate	5.50
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770	Interest Rates Discount rate	3.00
Britain (Pound)	1.1515	Federal funds market rate	2.32
Canada (Dollar)	1.3174	3-month bill	3.21
China (Yuan)	6.9897	30-year bond	3.46
Denmark (Krone)	6.4355		
Egypt (Pound)	19.4218		
Euro	0.9999		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8486		
Hungary (Forint)	408.08		
Israel (Shekel)	3.4318		
Japan (Yen)	143.28		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3089		
Norway (Krone)	10.1148		
Philippines (Peso)	57.32		
Poland (Zloty)	4.72		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7586		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.4072		

WEATHER OUTLOOK



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MILITARY



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL SLAVIN/Stars and Stripes

Military leaders from various countries participating in the U.S. Army-led African Land Forces Colloquium walk through the field Wednesday, at the Vilseck training area, where they watched soldiers from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment test for the Expert Infantryman Badge.

US Army gives African militaries look at their training in Germany

By MICHAEL SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

VILSECK, Germany — High-ranking military leaders from Africa joined over 350 U.S. soldiers on Vilseck's training grounds this week, as the Army fulfilled its part in a broader strategy that calls for deepening ties on the continent.

Service members from six African nations, six European allies and Brazil were on hand Wednesday and will stay through Friday for the African Land Forces Colloquium, a newer gathering that coincides with the long-running annual African Land Forces Summit.

A goal was to give a smaller group of African countries a closer look at U.S. training, and particularly how it delegates responsibility to its enlisted force.

"A key hallmark of Western militaries is the use of the non-commissioned officer," said Lt. Col. Michael Weisman, a spokesman for the Southern European Task Force, Africa. "What we saw here today was training completely run by noncommissioned officers."

Among the sea of uncommon camouflage patterns on this Bavarian range were those of Chad, Egypt, Gambia, Niger, Tanzania and Uganda. Also in attendance were allied officers from France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

On Wednesday, the group watched 2nd Cavalry Regiment soldiers trudge through the mud, carry simulated casualties around obstacles and throw practice grenades as they worked to earn the Expert Infantryman Badge.

The eyes and ears of the mili-



A soldier with the 2nd Cavalry Regiment drags a simulated casualty as part of the Expert Infantryman Badge testing Wednesday at the Vilseck training area.

tary leaders and their interpreters were intently focused on the tasks, while the NCOs were kept busy all morning fielding questions about the training.

"I hope that everyone tells the challenges they are encountering in their countries," said Tanzanian Maj. Gen. Anthony Sibuti. "Those challenges can be discussed and hopefully a solution can be found."

Sibuti said his country faces terrorism threats and budget constraints, which is a common refrain among African nations faced with battles against al-Qaida affiliates and other networks.

The group later was scheduled to head to Hohenfels to see the 173rd Airborne Brigade and 13 other allied nations conclude Exercise Saber Junction. Attendees also will see the technology and weapons systems that U.S. contractors have to offer.

The African Land Forces Summit hosts 40 African nations and has been held annually for 12 years, but this is only the second running of the colloquium.

Army Maj. Gen. Todd Wasmund, the SETAF-AF commander, said the colloquium aims to host new countries every year and broaden the discussions.

This event comes amid a U.S. strategy unveiled in August that seeks to forge closer relations with sub-Saharan African nations, as Russia and China each seek to expand their inroads.

The varied aims of the new U.S. strategy include countering authoritarian regimes, encouraging government transparency and backing a civil society that empowers women, young people and other marginalized groups.

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Honea takes on role of Navy's new master chief

By JUAN KING
Stars and Stripes

James Honea became the new master chief petty officer of the Navy during a recent ceremony in Maryland presided over by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday.

Honea, installed Sept. 8 at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, takes over as the Navy's chief enlisted sailor and adviser to Gilday from Master Chief Petty Officer Russell Smith, who retired after his term ended under allegations of misconduct.

Honea "brings the exact kind of professional experience we need for this immense responsibility," Gilday said during the ceremony. "I've said it before: He's got saltwater running through his veins."

Now the 16th master chief petty officer of the Navy, Honea, with 35 years in the service, was formerly the senior enlisted leader for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. He completed the Command Master Chief Course and the Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education Keystone Course at National Defense University; he is married to Evelyn Honea, according to the Navy.

"When I was selected for MCPON, I thought heavily on what my tenure means and what I could bring to you all," Honea said, according to a Sept. 10 Navy news release. "I'm glad I chose to be challenged by this adventure and I'm proud of what it has brought me."

Honea began his naval career in 1987 as a boatswain's mate, serving at various sea assignments, including the USS Bonhomme Richard, an amphibious assault ship that was decommissioned and scrapped last year after a major on-board fire at Naval Base San Diego in July 2020.

He advanced through the ranks, and as a command master chief served on the USS Gridley, a destroyer homeported at Everett, Wash., and then the USS New Orleans, an amphibious dock ship homeported at Sasebo Naval Base, Japan. His resume also includes several shore-based commands as a command master chief.

His priorities as the Navy's top enlisted leader are laid out in a Navy document, MCPON 16 Priorities, issued Tuesday. They include "warfighting competency, professional and character development, and quality of life," the document states.

"We must ensure our principles, basic standards of technical com-

petency development, and expertise align to the Chief of Naval Operations' navigation plan," Honea said in the release.

Honea is stepping into a position overshadowed by allegations of misconduct against his two predecessors.

Master Chief Petty Officer Steven Giordano, who spent almost two years in the job prior to Smith, retired in 2018 after a Naval Inspector General's report found he created a "toxic leadership environment" and belittled his subordinates, according to a Stars and Stripes report on June 22, 2018.



Honea

Smith, who took over four years ago, also came under IG scrutiny for unspecified allegations against him, according to reports in February from the Navy Times and USNI News, which cited unidentified Defense Department officials.

The Navy found nothing in the allegations that would prevent Smith from retiring honorably, Navy spokeswoman Lt. Alyson Hands told Military.com Sept. 12.

In late April, Smith reportedly made insensitive remarks during an all-hands call on the aircraft carrier USS George Washington, during which he allegedly said that sailors should "lower their standards" to get through the ship's maintenance period.

Smith denied the accusations. "Frankly, as you probably are aware, there was quite a bit of social media furor over a non-statement that I didn't make," he told lawmakers during a House appropriations subcommittee hearing May 18.

The George Washington has been in dry dock since August 2017 in Newport News, Va. The IG launched separate investigations into a number of suicides among the crew and low morale attributed to subpar living conditions during the overhaul.

Sailors were offered the opportunity to move off the ship shortly after. The ship's maintenance is expected through March 2023.

During the ceremony Sept. 8 ceremony, Gilday acknowledged Smith's leadership and accomplished Navy career.

"Thank you for everything you have done over these past four years," he said. "Our Navy and our Navy family are much stronger than it was four years ago."

MILITARY

USFK coronavirus cases drop to 3-month low

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Cases of COVID-19 among U.S. military personnel in South Korea have dipped to a three-month low as overall cases in the country also declined.

U.S. Forces Korea reported 51 new infections over the seven-day period ending Tuesday, according to an update on its official website.

The command, which is responsible for the roughly 28,500 service members and civilian employees in South Korea, reported 120 new cases the previous week.

The most recent weekly tally is the second-lowest recorded since January, when USFK began reporting its positive cases over a seven-day period; the command counted 50 new infections June 14-20.

USFK reported a record high of 1,599 positive cases Jan. 4-10.

The new Moderna and Pfizer bivalent vaccine booster shots are expected to arrive in South Korea for military personnel by the end of this month, Dr. Timothy Batig, an Army lieutenant colonel attached to the 65th Medical Brigade out of Camp Humphreys, said on Sept. 8.

“Once we can get this and we can get people boosted with the bivalent, then we should see fewer cases of the omicron [variant],” he told Stars and Stripes.

USFK rescinded a host of social-distancing restrictions starting in June but still requires personnel to adhere to local regulations, such as mandatory mask wear on public transportation.

Since Sept. 3, proof of a negative PCR test for COVID-19 is no longer required prior to traveling to



STANLEY JAMES/U.S. ARMY

Community members attend a fair Wednesday at Camp Humphreys, South Korea. U.S. Forces Korea reported a drop in cases of COVID-19 among U.S. military personnel in South Korea.

South Korea, although the test is required upon arrival.

South Korea counted 71,471 new daily cases on Wednesday, down from 93,981 on Tuesday and 72,646 on Sept. 8, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency.

The nation's caseload has slowly declined after brief upswings from waves of the BA.5 omicron subvariant.

Health agencies, including the KDCA, warned last week of a potential surge of new cases as millions of South Koreans traveled in the country during a four-day holiday in observance of Chuseok, the autumn harvest holiday. South Korea reported a peak of 621,328 new daily cases in March. About 24.2 million people have been infected since the beginning of the

pandemic in 2020.

Despite the decreased caseload, health authorities are warning people not to get complacent due to a potential surge of influenza cases.

“The number of people with seasonal influenza, which has not been prevalent for the past two years since the COVID-19 pandemic, is steadily growing at present,” KDCA commissioner Peck Kyong Ran said during a news briefing Thursday.

Peck predicted that influenza cases are “highly likely to be prevalent this year” and that the medical community will be focusing on providing screening and treatment for both infectious diseases.

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S. Korea honors its vets who served abroad

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — The South Korean Cabinet has approved a measure to designate a day honoring South Korean service members who served abroad, including those sent on United Nations peacekeeping missions.

If President Yoon Suk Yeoul signs the measure, as expected, May 29 will become Overseas Deployed Warrior Day in South Korea, a day to remember those who “deployed abroad and greatly contributed to permanent world peace and co-prosperity of mankind,” according to a Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs press release.

Overseas Deployed Warrior Day would fall on the same day as the International Day of U.N. Peacekeepers, which pays “tribute to the uniformed and civilian personnel’s invaluable contribution” to the international organization, according to the U.N.’s website.

Since 1948, roughly 4,200 U.N. peacekeepers have died while in service, and 135 died in 2021.

Over 500 Korean troops are deployed to Lebanon, South Sudan and the Gulf of Aden in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations and anti-piracy missions, according to the U.N.

By 1973, South Korea had sent more than 300,000 troops to Vietnam during the conflict there, second only to the number sent by the United States. South Korea’s contribution was “disproportionate to the country’s population, not to mention its prosperity,” according to the National Library of Medicine journal in 2017.

South Korean forces also played a role in the global war on terrorism.

In 2004, South Korea became the third-largest supplier of manpower to the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq when it deployed roughly 3,000 troops, nearly half of whom were marines and special forces personnel, according to a Heritage Foundation report that year.



NORTHERN TERRITORY SUPREME COURT

Australian nightclub bouncer Hayden Robert Bruce Summers, 34, was found guilty of “unlawfully causing serious harm” by a jury in the Northern Territory Supreme Court, on Sept. 2.

Bouncer convicted in 2021 attack on US Marine in Australia

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

A nightclub bouncer who knocked a U.S. Marine to the ground during a street confrontation last year in Darwin, Australia, has been convicted of causing serious harm, according to a local court official.

The Marine’s injuries led to a “significant amount of time” in a hospital and then in rehabilitation after having part of his skull removed, Australia’s state broadcaster, the ABC reported Sept. 2.

Hayden Robert Bruce Summers, 34, was found guilty of “unlawfully causing serious harm” on Sept. 2 by a jury in the Northern Territory Supreme Court, court spokesman Xavier La Canna told Stars and Stripes in an email Wednesday.

Closed-circuit TV footage of the altercation provided by the court shows Summers and the Marine, identified by ABC as Glen Thomason, outside Darwin’s Monsoons nightclub early on April 11, 2021.

Darwin is home to a Marine rotational force that spends six months each year on training missions during the southern hemisphere winter. This year’s rotation includes 2,200 Marines.

In the video, the Marine appears agitated as he talks to the security guard and swings an arm across the bouncer’s face. Moments later, Summers strikes Thomason in the head, causing him to fall to ground.

The bouncer then rolls the unconscious Marine into a recovery position on his side.

Summers had pleaded not guilty, according to the broadcaster.

However, Crown prosecutor Ian Rowbottom told the jury that the bouncer’s actions were unreasonable and that he failed to explore options such as moving



NORTHERN TERRITORY SUPREME COURT

Summers, right, is seen in closed-circuit TV footage standing over a U.S. Marine after a street confrontation last year.

back, asking for help or pushing the Marine away, ABC reported.

A summary of evidence presented to the court showed some witnesses heard Thomason saying, “I could kill you; I’m a Marine,” or words to that effect, the broadcaster reported.

Summers told the court he was trying to de-escalate the situation and had told Thomason to “calm down.” He told the court he feared the Marine was about to punch him because of his hand gestures and a “death stare,” ABC reported.

However, the jury found the bouncer guilty of causing serious harm. The case returns to court for sentencing Oct. 4, La Canna said in his email.

Defense barrister Peter Maley, in an email to Stars and Stripes on Wednesday, declined comment until after his client is sentenced.

Marine Capt. Joseph Dipietro, a spokesman for Marine Rotational Force — Darwin, did not provide information about the injured Marine.

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PACIFIC

Yokota Air Base dismisses contamination claim

By JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Authorities at this airlift hub in western Tokyo dismissed as false a claim circulating on social media that the base’s water supply may be tainted by chromium VI, or hexavalent chromium, a carcinogen.

The 374th Civil Engineer Squadron, responding Tuesday on a Facebook discussion about the chromium report, said the water at Yokota Air Base is safe to drink and no chromium was detected in the 2021 water quality survey.

“Chromium was considered non-detectable and did not make the list of contaminants. Our water is safe to drink,” said the squadron’s message. Separately, it said: “Chromium isn’t listed. Because it’s not detected.”

The report of chromium contamination, first posted to the Air Force amn/nco/snco Facebook page on Aug. 24, is not true, a spokesman for the 374th Airlift Wing told Stars and Stripes by phone Sept. 7.

“There is a system in place to prevent the very concern that the

“Chromium was considered non-detectable and did not make the list of contaminants. Our water is safe to drink.”

374th Civil Engineer Squadron individual has brought up,” said 1st Lt. Danny Rangel. He said the aircraft maintenance division, the alleged source of contamination at Yokota, “did due diligence” and discounted the contamination claim.

On Wednesday, Rangel provided a statement from the wing, that read, in part: “Yokota Air Base continues to conduct operations with careful consideration for the safety of our members, our surrounding community, and our environment.”

“With the intent of strengthening public understanding of our water systems,” the statement continued, “the installation publishes an annual drinking water

quality report, which summarizes the quality of water delivered by Yokota Air Base.”

The initial anonymous post on Air Force amn/nco/snco on Aug. 24 described how power sanding the exteriors of C-130J Super Hercules, the 374th’s workhorse airlifters, over the past 10 years released hexavalent chromium into the air, after which it found its way into the soil and groundwater. Undated photographs and an undated, four-second video accompanying the post shows airmen in protective suits, on a lift, spraying a Super Hercules at Yokota while a cloud billows from the plane.

“Since 2012, there has been a memorandum in place that authorizes Yokota Air Base to perform sanding operations of Chromium (VI) compounds in an outdoors environment,” the post said. “Mind that the base location has not only our service members located throughout, but also the foreign nationals have homes and families in the immediate surrounding area.”

Hexavalent chromium causes cancer and targets the respiratory system, kidneys, liver, skin and

eyes, according to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration website. It’s used as an anti-corrosive agent in paint and other surface coatings.

Stars and Stripes contacted the poster through the Air Force amn/nco/snco Facebook page, but that person did not respond to questions about the alleged chromium contamination.

A second post on amn/nco/snco page Aug. 26 stated: “They told us that the Chrome VI levels have quadrupled in the last 6 years in Yokota’s water supply and if it reaches a certain point they will shut off all the water to the base. They told us they won’t fix it until it’s too late. Apparently [civil engineering] is going to the Japanese Government for a soil sample to be taken where we have been sanding.”

The North Kanto Defense Bureau, an arm of the Japan Ministry of Defense, on Aug. 31, and the Japan Ministry of the Environment on Sept. 1 told Stars and Stripes they have no record of a request to take soil samples at Yokota.

“If there’s high levels, the group will have to pay for all damages for

contamination,” the Aug. 26 post continued. “Bio says Chrome VI doesn’t leave the 50ft cordon but how is it that the levels are so high now? Everyone has been turning a blind eye to this and nothing will be changed until the levels get too high.”

That post stimulated discussion on the Yokota Community page on Facebook, an online forum where base residents air community issues.

“Any news on the water quality issues that were reported recently?” commenter Felisa Leppo posted Monday. “Anyone know where we can get whole house filtering systems for base housing? Or at minimum RO for the kitchen and shower/bath filtration that can handle the chromeVI?”

That post generated more than 40 comments. The civil engineer squadron responded with its comments and a link to the 2021 water quality report, which contains no reference to chromium in the water supply.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.
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MILITARY

Barracks: Leaders putting more focus on living conditions

FROM PAGE 1

an inventory of barracks as large and as old, in some cases, [as the Army has] I couldn't look you in the eye and say, 'No, there's nothing else like [Smoke Bomb Hill] out there.' ”

Wormuth and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, the service's top enlisted soldier, toured Fort Benning's historic Olson Hall quarters, known as the Cuartels, during their stop at the southwest Georgia training post for the annual Army Maneuver Warfighter Conference. The senior leaders said they came away impressed with the renovation efforts at the barracks, which date to the 1920s and have for years housed Army noncommissioned officers attending advanced schooling at the installation.

Fort Benning began the Cuartels renovation project about two years ago and just recently completed the first of seven sections of the building to allow soldiers to begin moving into the upgraded quarters. That first section cost some \$31 million, and Benning officials expect to spend about \$30 million on the second. The full renovation, which should be completed in about a decade, is estimated to cost about \$125 million, according to Amy Vaughn, resident engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Savannah District, which is leading the effort.

The upgrades include complete renovations of the building's antiquated heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, its plumbing and its electrical systems, according to Derick Wolf, the chief of engineering for Fort Benning's public works department. It also includes modern upgrades such as large bathrooms with walk-in showers, efficient toilets and LED lighting.

“I'm really proud of this. This is really cool,” Grinston said over the background sounds of hammers and power tools after viewing the upgraded quarters and rooms in a section that has yet to be completed. “We've got to keep pushing on it and making sure we're renovating barracks like this.”

‘It takes leadership’

It was Grinston's own inspection of Fort Bragg's Smoke Bomb Hill barracks in late July that led installation leaders to order their near-immediate closure of 17 buildings — setting off the ongoing effort to relocate the nearly 1,200 soldiers living in subpar conditions. The 1970s-era barracks already had been planned for demolition or renovation in the coming years, but after Grinston found the quarters were hot, moldy and, in some cases, in disrepair, Bragg leaders determined they must close all the buildings as soon as



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, center, tours newly renovated barracks rooms at Fort Benning's Olson Hall, known as the Cuartels barracks, during a visit to the installation Tuesday.

possible.

The Army quickly moved some \$115 million in its current budget to pay to demolish 12 of the barracks buildings and rapidly refurbish three others within about one year. Two of the Smoke Bomb Hill buildings already had been funded for some \$30 million in renovations, which are expected to be completed within the next three years, Bragg officials said last week. The other three renovations will cost some \$75 million and are planned to be completed within 12 months after contracts are awarded at the end of this month, officials said.

Wormuth said the rapid decision to shutter the Smoke Bomb Hill barracks and find the money to address the problem even before the next budget cycle showed her and other top service leaders' commitment to “do what's necessary in the year of execution to take care of our soldiers” when “health and safety problems” come to light. She has long publicly stated soldiers' quality of life is her top priority.

But it should not take the Army's top officials flying in from their Pentagon offices for installation leaders to realize soldiers are living in poor conditions in aging barracks, Grinston said.

Army leaders at every level — from the smallest units to those in charge of the service's largest organizations — must listen to soldiers when they speak about their living conditions and take it upon themselves to visit barracks and other on-post quarters, the sergeant major of the Army said. They cannot simply rely on the most recent inspection grades in the Army's internal systems to determine the state of barracks.

“So, if the system says this is the rating of that building, and you see something different, it takes leadership,” Grinston said. “That



Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, right, toured barracks at Fort Benning, Ga., currently under renovation, during a visit Tuesday.

leader has to go, ‘Hey, wait a minute, this isn't right.’ They have got to connect the dots at the ground level.”

Grinston said he recalled visiting Fort Benning's Cuartels barracks several years ago at the request of another noncommissioned officer living in them who had complained about the conditions. Within a few years, the service had marked the old quarters for the ongoing renovations.

Meeting ‘the challenge’

Wormuth on Tuesday morning told a packed auditorium of Maneuver Warfighter Conference attendees, including hundreds of uniformed soldiers, she had met with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin the previous day to discuss the service's barracks issue.

“I think we have underinvested a little bit in housing, and so that is something that I am really, really focused on,” the Army secretary told the crowd. “I want to make sure that our soldiers — that you all and that your families have quality housing to live in. ... And that's an area I think [in which] we've got work to do.”

Barracks problems are not new

for the Army. Soldiers for decades have complained of mold and inadequate heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in their living spaces, even as Army leaders publicly pledged to do better.

At Fort Stewart, Ga., 3rd Infantry Division leaders Monday held a stand down for several units so soldiers could discuss moldy barracks with post leaders after troops raised the issue through official channels and via social media posts, officials at the base said.

Wormuth said such examples show how seriously she and other Army officials are taking the issue.

She pointed to myriad issues that have contributed to standard housing and barracks. The Army is enormous, she said. It owns thousands of barracks buildings across the world. For example, Fort Bragg — the Army's most populous base — has some 129 barracks buildings.

With so many buildings, it is not a simple task for the Army to budget for all the maintenance needed in its barracks or ensure it has insight about the state of every single room the Army owns, Wor-

muth said.

But she added soldiers' living conditions probably have not been as high of a priority as they should have been for the service during two decades of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. More recently, the Pentagon has focused its top efforts on modernization, pouring hundreds of billions of dollars into new classes of weapons meant to prepare it for large-scale combat operations against rivals such as China or Russia.

Ultimately, Wormuth said new funding for improved quality-of-life issues, including better barracks has become a higher priority for service leaders.

“With everything that we were doing in the last 20 years, where the focus was so much downrange, you know, we probably were not paying as close attention to our own infrastructure, as we are right now,” she said.

She fingered one other major problem impacting living spaces across much of the Army — global climate change. Wormuth and other Army leaders have said hotter, wetter weather has made it more difficult to combat mold and air condition problems in their barracks and other on-post housing.

At Fort Bragg, officials said part of the reason that the problems at the Smoke Bomb Hill barracks arose was a hotter-than-normal summer that led to mold growth at levels that they had not previously seen. The problems were exacerbated by taxing old HVAC systems, which would fail, leaving soldiers suffering in sweltering rooms.

“A lot of places — just like where we are today at Fort Benning — it's getting hotter, you're seeing more extreme weather, more rain makes it harder to deal with mold,” Wormuth said. “I think that that has been a key part of the challenge.”

Grinston agreed, adding Congress must also do its part to ensure the Army can pay for the improvements needed to ensure barracks are hardened against a warming climate. Congress has failed repeatedly in recent years to pass a Pentagon budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, which can impact when military officials can begin projects including construction and renovations.

“It really does take timely, adequate and predictable long-term funding,” Grinston said. “And when you don't have that — when you don't know what [funding] is going to be exactly two years from now ... It's hard to go, ‘Hey, we're going to renovate this level.’ We don't have unlimited funds in the Department of the Army.”

PHOTOS BY COREY DICKSTEIN/Stars and Stripes

MILITARY

Ishee steps in to lead 6th Fleet in Naples

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — U.S. 6th Fleet said goodbye to a commanding officer Thursday who was credited with leading the service through operations in Europe and Africa during Russia’s war on Ukraine, along with some unprecedented challenges over the last two years. Vice Adm. Eugene Black III relinquished command of the fleet and Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO to Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee during a roughly hour-long ceremony at U.S. Naval Support Activity Naples.

Black, who assumed the command in July 2020, now will serve as deputy chief of naval operations for operations, plans and strategy in Washington, D.C., the Navy said.

Ishee most recently was director of global operations for U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.

A Georgia native who was commissioned in 1988, he previously served as director of maritime operations for U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, deputy commander of U.S. 6th Fleet and commander of Submarine Group 8, among other assignments.

Adm. Stuart Munsch, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples, lauded Black for his moxie and acumen in deterring Russian aggression and defending NATO.

He coordinated a visible maritime presence in the 6th Fleet area of responsibility, including the Mediterranean and Black seas,



KAILA PETERS/U.S. Navy

Vice Adm. Gene Black, right, salutes Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee, incoming commander of U.S. 6th Fleet, at U.S. Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy, on Thursday.

and strengthened partnerships with African countries to counter Russian and Chinese activity on the continent, Munsch said.

Black also made history in transferring authority of some U.S. naval forces to NATO three times, as a way of “demonstrating our resolve to defend every inch of allied territory,” Munsch said.

“In summary, Gene made sure we were all in this together and that we all stood together against our adversaries,” Munsch said.

Black said he was proud of the ingenuity and dedication of commanders and sailors alike in tackling a multitude of challenges, such as assisting Afghanistan refugees, ensuring the well-being of personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic and deterring Russia from further aggression, as the Kremlin mounted the full-scale attack on Ukraine that began Feb. 24. While he will miss task force commanders, international peers and others, it’s the service mem-

bers who are hardest to leave, he said.

“Most of all I will miss the sailors and Marines standing the watch on our ships, submarines and operation centers ... making sure if the orders come, the missiles fly, the guns shoot, the aircraft launch, the torpedoes run true and the Marines get ashore,” Black said.

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New legislation allows Coast Guard to step up in Arctic region

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Coast Guard will step up operations in the increasingly contested Arctic region, crack down on illegal fishing and forced labor, and improve oil spill response under legislation approved Wednesday by a Senate committee wary of competition from Russia and China.



MATTHEW ABBAN /U.S. Coast Guard

The USCG Cutter Bear transits out of Torngat National Park, Canada, on Aug. 9.

Sullivan, R-Alaska, a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve and a member of the committee.

Members of the service, or “Coasties,” are also expected to see more options for child care, better access to affordable housing and expanded medical care and education opportunities as they fulfill a mission to safeguard ports and waterways and secure the maritime economy, according to the Coast Guard Authorization Act for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

The bill would authorize \$14.94 billion for the service for fiscal 2023, which begins Oct. 1. It would amount to a 21.5% budget increase from fiscal 2021.

The Senate Committee on Com-

merce, Science and Transportation overwhelmingly advanced the legislation on Wednesday.

“In my view, the Coast Guard often gets overlooked on many issues — funding, support, retirement ... I’m glad to say that this bill makes good strides in a couple areas that will bring the Coast Guard up to what the other services in the military have,” Sullivan said.

The Coast Guard is the only military branch that falls outside the jurisdiction of the Defense Department and instead operates in peacetime under the Department of Homeland Security. During times of war, it can be transferred to the Navy by order of the president or Congress.

Lawmakers said they also are prioritizing efforts to end illegal fishing and forced labor on the high seas, acts largely committed by China.

The bill calls for new enforcement and coordination to catch illegal fishermen and provides new training for Coast Guard personnel to identify instances of oppressive child labor in the international fishing industry.

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Student loan forgiveness still available for service members

Stars and Stripes

Service members and Defense Department civilians with student loans have until Oct. 31 to benefit from a temporary expansion of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, which makes it easier for more borrowers to have the debt forgiven.

The program erases the remaining balance on federal direct loans after 120 qualifying monthly payments, according to a DOD memo circulated this week. It’s designed for people working full-time in public service, including the military and the federal government.

The U.S. Department of Education temporarily expanded the program’s eligibility criteria in October 2021, but the application period for those extended benefits expires in a few weeks.

Borrowers may get credit for previous repayments on federal student loans, such as Perkins and National Defense Student Loans, as long as they consolidate those loans into a federal direct loan.

Also, payments that were less than the amount due or a few days late count if made on or prior to Oct. 21, 2021, among other changes.

To get the benefit, borrowers must submit a form and consolidate nondirect federal student loans by Oct. 31. Anyone who previously applied for the program and was denied because of the loan type should try again, according to the memo.

For more information on how to qualify and complete the waiver, go to <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/pslf-limited-waiver>.

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EUROPE

Medic: Russians tortured Ukrainian detainees

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A life-saving Ukrainian volunteer medic captured by Russian forces during their deadly siege of the port city of Mariupol told U.S. lawmakers Thursday how Russians routinely tortured her and others, killing many detainees, in her most detailed public account of her months in captivity.

Yuliia Paievska, detained in Mariupol in March and held by Russian and pro-Russian forces for three months, spoke to lawmakers with the Helsinki Commission, a government agency created in part to promote compliance with human rights inter-

nationally.

Known to Ukrainians by the nickname Taira, Paievska became a popular figure in her home country. Her care of the wounded during the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war received global attention after her bodycam footage was provided to The Associated Press.

“Do you know why we do this to you?” a Russian asked Paievska as he tortured her, she recounted to the commission. She told the panel her answer to him: “Be-



Paievska

cause you can.”

A 7-year-old boy died in her lap because she had none of the medical gear she needed to treat him, she said.

Russian captors made Ukrainian prisoners remove their clothes before the Russians set to bloodying and tormenting them, she said. Prisoners lingered in pain, screaming, for weeks before dying.

“Then in this torment of hell, the only things they feel before death is abuse and additional pain,” she said.

Paievska had been one of thousands of Ukrainians believed to have been taken prisoner by Russian forces. Mariupol’s mayor

said that 10,000 people from his city alone disappeared during what was the monthslong Russian siege of that city. It fell to Russians in April, with the city all but destroyed by Russian bombardment, and with countless dead.

The Geneva Conventions single out medics, both military and civilian, for protection “in all circumstances.” Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., co-chair of the Helsinki Commission, underscored that the conditions she described for civilian and military detainees violated international law. Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., called Russian President Vladimir Putin a war criminal.

Before she was captured, Paievska had recorded more than 256 gigabytes of harrowing bodycam footage showing her team’s efforts to save the wounded in the besieged city. She got the footage to Associated Press journalists, the last international team in Mariupol, on a tiny data card.

Paievska previously had declined to speak to journalists about conditions in detention, only describing it broadly as hell. She swallowed heavily at times Thursday while testifying slowly in a mix of Ukrainian and halting English.

“It’s very unpleasant” to speak of what happened there, she said.

Ukraine: Zelenskyy urges more sanctions on Russia

FROM PAGE 1

this, if they are well equipped,” she said.

Yet highlighting the breadth of the nearly 7-month-old war, air raid sirens blared several times in the Ukrainian capital during von der Leyen’s meeting with Zelenskyy, showing the fear and damage Russian troops could still inflict.

Ukrainian officials said Russian missile strikes on a reservoir dam near Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy’s birthplace and the largest city in central Ukraine, sent water raging through some streets. Over 100 homes flooded, and efforts were underway to prevent more spillage.

Russian military bloggers charged the attack was intended to flood areas downstream where Ukrainian forces made inroads as part of their counteroffensive.

The attack so close to his roots angered Zelenskyy, who said the strikes had no military value.

“In fact, hitting hundreds of thousands of ordinary civilians is another reason why Russia will lose,” he said.

But the president, who said Ukrainian forces had recaptured almost 400 Russian-occupied settle-

ments in less than a week, remained in a buoyant mood and shrugged off a traffic collision the previous night that left him with no major injuries

On a day when political optics stood out, the Ukrainian leader’s snug, warm meeting with the president of the European Commission contrasted with a formal encounter between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping at a regional security summit in Uzbekistan.

The European Parliament completed the drawn-out process of approving a 5 billion-euro preferential loan to Ukraine, the key part of a 9 billion-euro aid package to offset the cost of war.

Zelenskyy said more assistance cannot come quickly enough. He insisted that the West needed to impose more sanctions on the Kremlin and to provide more weapons for his frontline soldiers to use.

Zelenskyy said that the only way to guarantee the security of Ukrainians is to “close the sky” over the country with air defense systems provided by Western allies.

Germany, the EU’s economic powerhouse, announced Thursday that it would send two addi-



EVGENIY MALOLETKA/AP

Ukrainian paratroopers drive a vehicle with the Ukrainian flag on the pantone bridge across Siverskiy-Donets river in the recently retaken area of Izium, Ukraine, on Wednesday.

tional MARS II multiple launch rocket systems to Ukraine, as well as 50 DINGO armored vehicles.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock was pressuring Chancellor Olaf Scholz to decide whether to supply advanced tanks to Ukraine soon, while its counteroffensive gained traction.

“In the decisive phase that Ukraine currently finds itself, I also don’t believe that it’s a decision which can be delayed for long,” Baerbock said.

Having little with which to repay his Western partners, Zelenskyy said von der Leyen’s name

would be engraved on a plaque in a square near Ukraine’s parliament that is called “Walk of the Brave.”

“Here are the names of those leaders of Europe and the world who supported our state and were on our side against the aggression,” he said.

In Uzbekistan’s ancient city of Samarkand, Putin sought to break through his international isolation and further cement his ties with Xi in a geopolitical alliance increasingly seen as potent counterweight to the Western powers.

Putin and Xi met one-on-one on

the sidelines of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security alliance created as a counterweight to U.S. influence.

In opening remarks, the Russian leader painted the war as a litmus test for those seeking to stand up to Washington and its NATO allies.

“Attempts to create a unipolar world have recently taken an absolutely ugly shape. They are absolutely unacceptable for the vast majority of countries on the globe,” the Russian president said in opening remarks. His fiery rhetoric contrasted with the more subdued comments of Xi.

German official urges swift call on Ukraine tanks delivery

Associated Press

BERLIN — Germany’s foreign minister is putting pressure on Chancellor Olaf Scholz to decide soon whether to supply Ukraine with advanced tanks as it seeks to reclaim more of its captured territory from Russia.

Kyiv has said it would like to get German Leopard-2 tanks, but Berlin has so far rebuffed

that request while delivering other weaponry, such as howitzers and self-propelled anti-aircraft weapons.

In an interview with daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung published Thursday, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said a decision on delivering modern battle tanks to Ukraine could only be taken jointly by

Germany’s governing three-party coalition and its international partners.

“But in the decisive phase that Ukraine currently finds itself, I also don’t believe that it’s a decision which can be delayed for long,” she was quoted as saying.

Economy Minister Robert Habeck, a fellow member of the Greens party, said Thursday

that he expected Germany to deliver more of “the right weapons” to Ukraine soon.

The far-right Alternative for Germany party, which is not in government and has close ties to Moscow, warned, meanwhile, against providing tanks to Ukraine.

“The Ukraine war is not our war,” said its co-leader, Tino

Chrupalla. He called instead for Germany to open the Nord Stream 2 pipeline so the country can import gas from Russia.

Meanwhile, Germany’s defense minister announced Thursday that her country would send two additional MARS II multiple launch rocket systems to Ukraine, as well as 50 DINGO armored vehicles.

NATION

Biden: Tentative railway deal set, averting strike

By Josh Boak
and Zeke Miller
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden said Thursday that a tentative railway labor agreement has been reached, averting a strike that could have been devastating to the economy before the pivotal midterm elections.

Railroads and union representatives had been in negotiations for 20 hours at the Labor Department on Wednesday to hammer out a deal, as there was a risk of a strike starting on Friday that could have shut down rail lines across the country.

Biden made a key phone call to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh at 9 p.m. as the talks were ongoing after Italian dinner had been brought in, according to a White House official insisting on anonymity. The president told the negotiators to consider the harm to families, farmers and businesses if

a shutdown occurred.

What resulted from the back and forth was a tentative agreement that will go to union members for a vote after a post-ratification cooling off period of several weeks.

“These rail workers will get better pay, improved working conditions, and peace of mind around their health care costs: all hard-earned,” Biden said. “The agreement is also a victory for railway companies who will be able to retain and recruit more workers for an industry that will continue to be part of the backbone of the American economy for decades to come.”

The threat of a shutdown had put Biden in a delicate spot politically. The Democratic president believes unions built the middle class, but he also knew a rail worker strike could damage the economy ahead of the midterms, when majorities in both chambers of



CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/AP

An Amtrak passenger train departs Chicago in the early evening headed south Wednesday, in Chicago.

Congress, key governorships and scores of important state offices will be up for grabs.

That left him in an awkward position on Wednesday. He flew to Detroit, a stalwart of the labor movement, to espouse the virtues of unionization, while members of his administration went all-out to keep talks going in Washington between the railroads and unionized workers.

As the administration was trying to forge peace, United Auto Workers Local 598 member Ryan

Buchalski introduced Biden at the Detroit auto show on Wednesday as “the most union- and labor-friendly president in American history” and someone who was “kickin’ ass for the working class.” Buchalski harked back to the pivotal sitdown strikes by autoworkers in the 1930s.

In the speech that followed, Biden recognized that he wouldn’t be in the White House without the support of unions such as the UAW and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, saying auto-

workers “brung me to the dance.”

But without a deal among the 12 unions in talks back in Washington, Biden also knew that a stoppage might have begun as early as Friday that could halt shipments of food and fuel at a cost of \$2 billion a day.

By 5:05 a.m. Thursday, it was clear that the hard work across the government, unions and railway companies had paid off as Biden announced the deal, calling it “an important win for our economy and the American people.”

R. Kelly convicted of child porn, enticing young girls for sex

Associated Press

CHICAGO — A federal jury in Chicago convicted R. Kelly on Wednesday of producing child pornography and enticing girls for sex after a monthlong trial in his hometown, delivering another legal blow to the Grammy Award winning singer who was once one of the world’s biggest R&B stars.

Prosecutors won convictions on six of the 13 counts against him, with many of the convictions carrying long mandatory sentences. But the government lost the marquee count — that Kelly and his then-business manager successfully rigged his state child pornography trial in 2008.

Both of his co-defendants, including longtime business manager Derrel McDavid — who had told jurors that testimony from four Kelly accusers had led him to change his mind about Kelly’s believability — were acquitted of all charges.

The trial was, in ways, a do-over of Kelly’s 2008 child pornography trial, with a key video critical to both. Kelly, who shed tears of joy

when jurors acquitted him in 2008, gave a thumbs-up sign to spectators after Wednesday’s verdict but otherwise showed little emotion.

Before Kelly was returned to federal lockup, McDavid hugged Kelly, who rose from poverty on Chicago’s South Side to become a superstar.

Asked by reporters later outside court how Kelly felt after the verdict, his lead attorney, Jennifer Bonjean, said: “Mr. Kelly is used to bad news.”

“He’s still got many fights to fight,” she said. “But what he did say is that he had a sense of relief that this particular case was in the past now.”

The verdict comes months after a federal judge in New York sentenced Kelly to 30 years in prison in June for racketeering and sex trafficking. Based on that sentence, the 55-year-old won’t be eligible for release until he is around 80.

And two sexual misconduct trials still await Kelly — one in Minnesota and one in state court



R. Kelly

in Chicago.

After deliberating for 11 hours over two days, jurors convicted Kelly of three counts each of producing child pornography and enticement, while acquitting him of obstruction of justice, one count of production of child porn and three counts of receiving child porn.

Among the charges McDavid was acquitted of was conspiring with Kelly to rig the 2008 trial. Milton Brown, the other co-defendant, was acquitted of receiving child pornography.

Chicago-based U.S. Attorney John Lausch expressed satisfaction with the verdict. He told reporters that, when you add up the potential punishments on the six guilty counts, Kelly was staring at least 10 years and up to 90 in prison.

Officials probing if blast at Northeastern staged

Associated Press

BOSTON — Federal officials are examining whether the employee who reported an explosion at Northeastern University may have lied to investigators and staged the incident, law enforcement officials said Wednesday.

Investigators identified inconsistencies in the employee’s statement and became skeptical because his injuries did not match wounds typically consistent with an explosion, said one official.

The officials could not discuss details of the investigation publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The Northeastern staff member said late Tuesday the hard plastic case exploded on the campus in Boston, causing minor injuries, according to authorities.

In an interview with The Boston Globe, the employee denied staging the explosion, calling the event “very traumatic.”

“I did not stage this ... No way, shape or form ... they need to catch the guy that did this,” he told the newspaper. He didn’t immediately respond to an email Wednesday from The Associated Press.

The case contained a rambling note that railed against virtual re-

ality and also referenced Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, a law enforcement official said. No explosive materials were found and they do not believe the package was sent through the U.S. Postal Service, the official said.

The official described the case as a “Pelican-style” case. Pelican is a company that makes hard cases designed to protect sensitive equipment.

A spokesperson for the FBI office in Boston declined to comment Wednesday, saying the investigation is “still very active and fluid.”

The campus opened normally for classes and other activities Wednesday. Counseling and other support services were made available for students, faculty and staff.

The package delivered to Holmes Hall detonated just after 7 p.m. Tuesday when a staff member opened it, the university had said in a statement. The staff member, a 45-year-old man, was taken to the hospital with minor injuries to his hand, police said. No name was made public.

Boston’s bomb squad neutralized a second package near the city’s Museum of Fine Arts, which is near Northeastern’s campus.

NATION

Iranian citizens charged in broad hacking scheme

BY ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department said Wednesday that three Iranian citizens have been charged in the United States with ransomware attacks that targeted power companies, local governments and small businesses and nonprofits, including a domestic violence shelter.

The charges accuse the hacking suspects of targeting hundreds of entities in the U.S. and around the world, encrypting and stealing data from victim networks, and threatening to release it publicly or leave it encrypted unless exorbitant ransom payments were made. In some cases, the victims made those payments, the department said.

The Biden administration has tried to go after hackers who have held U.S. targets essentially hostage, often sanctioned or sheltered by adversaries. The threat gained particular prominence in May 2021 when a Russia-based hacker group was accused of conducting a ransomware attack on Georgia-based Colonial Pipeline, which disrupted gas supplies along the East Coast.

Iran-based hackers have also been a focus over the last year, with the FBI thwarting a planned cyberattack on a children's hospital in Boston that was to have been carried out by hackers sponsored by the Iranian government.

"The cyber threat facing our nation is growing more dangerous and complex every day," FBI Director Christopher Wray said in a statement accompanying the indictment unsealed Wednesday. "Today's announcement makes

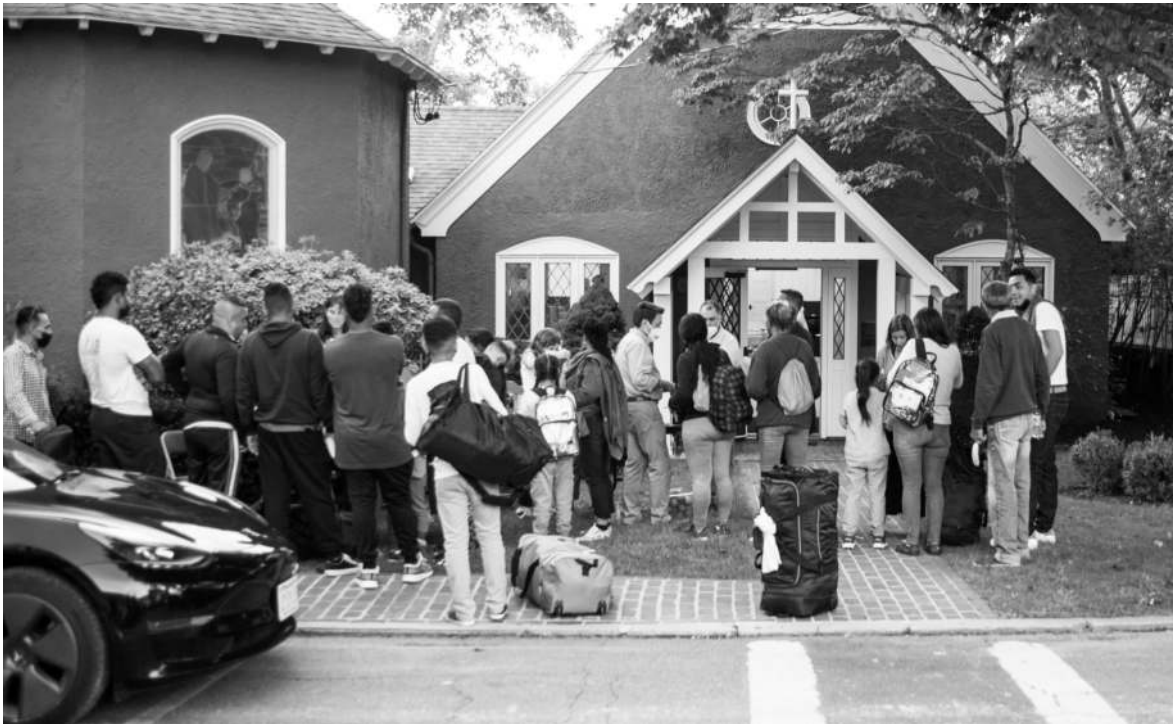
clear the threat is both local and global. It's one we can't ignore and it's one we can't fight on our own, either."

The hackers named in Wednesday's indictment are not believed to have been working on behalf of the Iranian government but instead for their own financial gain, and some of the victims were even in Iran, according to a senior Justice Department official who briefed reporters on the case on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the department.

But the official said the activity, even if not directed by the Iranian government, exists because the regime permits hackers to largely operate with impunity.

In a related action Wednesday, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control sanctioned 10 individuals and two entities affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps who it says have been involved in malicious cyber activities, including ransomware. The Treasury Department identified the three defendants in the Justice Department case as employees of technology firms it says is affiliated with the Revolutionary Guard.

John Hultquist, vice president for threat intelligence at the cybersecurity firm Mandiant, said his team has been tracking the Iranian actors for some time and assessed they are contractors for the Revolutionary Guard who have been moonlighting as criminal hackers. He said they are especially dangerous because "any access they gain could be served up for espionage or disruptive purposes."



PHOTOS BY RAY EWING, VINEYARD GAZETTE/AP

Immigrants gather with their belongings outside St. Andrews Episcopal Church on Wednesday in Edgartown, Mass., on Martha's Vineyard.

Florida's DeSantis flies 2 planes of immigrants to Martha's Vineyard

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Wednesday flew two planes of immigrants to Martha's Vineyard, escalating a tactic by Republican governors to draw attention to what they consider to be the Biden administration's failed border policies.

Flights to the upscale island enclave in Massachusetts were part of an effort to "transport illegal immigrants to sanctuary destinations," said Taryn Fenske, DeSantis' communications director.

While DeSantis' office didn't elaborate on their legal status, many migrants who cross the border illegally from Mexico are temporarily shielded from deportation after being freed by U.S. authorities to pursue asylum in immigration court — as allowed under U.S. law and international treaty — or released on humanitarian parole.

Massachusetts' Gov. Charlie Baker, a Republican, said he was in touch with local officials and that short-term shelter was being provided.

State Rep. Dylan Fernandes, who represents Martha's Vineyard, tweeted: "Our island jumped into action putting together 50 beds, giving everyone a good meal, providing a play area for the children, making sure people have the healthcare and support they need. We are a community that comes together to support immigrants."

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott began busing thousands of



A woman holds a child as they are fed outside St. Andrews Episcopal Church.

migrants to Washington in April and recently added New York and Chicago as destinations. Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey has been busing migrants to Washington since May. Passengers must sign waivers that the free trips are voluntary.

DeSantis, who is mentioned as potential presidential candidate, appears to be taking the strategy to a new level by using planes and choosing Martha's Vineyard, whose harbor towns that are home to about 15,000 people are far less prepared than New York or Washington for large influxes of migrants.

Fewer Americans apply for jobless benefits again last week

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell again last week to a four-month low even as the Federal Reserve continues its aggressive interest rate cuts to bring inflation under control.

Applications for jobless aid for the week ending Sept. 10 fell by 5,000 to 213,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. That's the fewest since late May.

First-time applications generally reflect layoffs.

The four-week average for claims, which offsets some of the

weekly volatility, fell by 8,000 to 224,000.

The number of Americans collecting traditional unemployment benefits inched up by 2,000 for the week that ended Sept. 3, to 1.4 million.

Hiring in the U.S. in 2022 has been remarkably strong even in the midst of rising interest rates and weak economic growth. The Federal Reserve has aggressively raised interest rates in an effort to bring down inflation, which generally also slows job growth.

Earlier this month, the Labor Department reported that em-

ployers added still-strong 315,000 jobs in August, though less than the average 487,000 a month over the past year. The unemployment rate ticked up to 3.7%, its highest level since February, but for a healthy reason: Hundreds of thousands of people returned to the job market, and some didn't find work right away, so the government's count of unemployed people rose.

The U.S. economy has been a mixed bag this year. Economic growth has declined in the first half of 2022, which, by some informal definitions, signals a recession.

But businesses remain desper-

ate to find workers, posting more than 11 million job openings in July, meaning there are almost two job vacancies for every unemployed American.

Inflation continues to be the biggest obstacle for a healthy U.S. economy. The rise in consumer prices slowed modestly the past couple months, largely due to falling gas prices. But overall, prices for food and other essentials remain elevated enough that the Federal Reserve has indicated it will keep raising its benchmark interest rate until prices come back down to normal levels.

Most economists expect the Fed to raise its benchmark borrowing rate by three-quarters of a point when it meets next week.

The Fed has already raised its short-term interest rate four times this year and Chairman Jerome Powell has said that the central bank will likely need to keep interest rates high enough to slow the economy "for some time" in order to tame the worst inflation in 40 years. Powell has acknowledged the increases will hurt U.S. households and businesses, but also said the pain would be worse if inflation remained at current levels.

NATION

Progress seen against wildfire in California

Associated Press
FORESTHILL, Calif. — Firefighters prevented flames from entering a Northern California mountain town and reported major progress Thursday against the week-old blaze that's become the largest in the state so far this year. Conditions at the Mosquito Fire about 110 miles northeast of San Francisco were "looking a whole heck of a lot better," according to fire spokesman Scott McLean. Crews on the ground built up containment lines while water-dropping helicopters knocked down hotspots after the fire roared back to life on Tuesday, burning an unknown number of structures near Foresthill.

Evacuation orders remained for some 11,000 residents because of the unpredictable nature of the winds, McLean said. The Mosquito Fire was 20% contained after destroying at least 64 homes and other buildings. In Southern California, dogs aided the hunt for a person missing in a heavily damaged area of the San Bernardino Mountains where thunderstorms unleashed rocks, trees and earth that washed away cars, buried homes and affected 3,000 residents in two remote communities.

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NATION

Schools are going back online in disasters

By BROOKE SCHULTZ

Associated Press

When a water crisis forced schools back online in Jackson, Miss., fifth-grade teacher Ryan Johnson saw reminders everywhere of pandemic times.

Two and a half years after schools switched to remote learning for COVID-19, he once again logged into online learning to see kids lying in bed at home while tuning in for his classes.

This time, Johnson also had to assist his young daughter, who was stuck at home trying to keep up with second grade. She asked repeatedly when she could go back to school.

The stint in remote learning was short-lived for the 20,000-student school system in Jackson. But it highlighted an alarming reality: Schools are relying on online classes when communities face their most trying times — disasters like wildfires, storms or a lack of water. And experts say it's not a sustainable solution.

When Jackson's troubled water system left the city with dry taps and unflushable toilets for several days, school went online for a week. Enough water pressure was restored last week for children to go back in person, but the city remains under its seventh week of a boil-water advisory.

Still, online learning compounded the disruption for children and teachers. Families waited in lines for hours to get water to drink or wash. Back at home, children slogged through internet classes, often with the whole family in the house once again.

Johnson said he did his best to juggle it all and keep his students engaged, drawing on his extended experience from the pandemic, but it was far from perfect.

"You try to look at the glass half full as much as possible," he said.

There was a time, early in the



ROGELIO V. SOLIS/AP

Ryan Johnson, a fifth-grade teacher at Pecan Park Elementary School, checks to see what homework his daughter, Rylei, is bringing home as they prepare to leave Johnson's classroom Tuesday in Jackson, Miss.

pandemic, when hopes were high for remote learning. It made snow days obsolete, and some schools experimented with online learning in place of substitute teachers. The potential seemed endless.

But remote learning's shortcomings have become more clear. The shift to remote learning for COVID-19 left many students behind where they should be academically and added to strains on their mental health.

At the same time, it led to increased access to technology and skills that make remote instruction doable on a large scale — an impossibility just four years ago.

In 2018, two hurricanes — Florence and Michael — struck the same regions in North Carolina,

causing schools to close. Some students were out of school for weeks. There were attempts at remote learning, but many lacked access to laptops and other technology. Most schools tried to redistribute students to other in-person facilities, said Gary Henry, dean of the University of Delaware's College of Education and Human Development, who has been part of a long-term research effort studying the impact.

Now, Henry thinks districts will reach first for remote learning. In the short term — a few weeks, perhaps — he thinks it could be a way to keep students on track, but the pandemic showed it's not a sustainable model.

"I think it will be an automatic response in most places to short-

term disruptions in schooling," he said. "It's going to be the first reaction, whereas, back during the hurricanes, it was: Where can we get these students in another physical location where they can resume their school experience? Now I think it's going to be: How can we get organized to provide remote learning?"

Schools in Mora, N.M., switched to remote learning last April when the town was evacuated due to a wildfire.

It was a rocky start, Superintendent Marvin MacAuley said. Some of the displaced students and teachers were in evacuation centers, without access to their technology. As time went on, people were able to access computers or tablets and the internet.

In mid-August, students went back to school, in person, for the first time since the fire. The year started with an emphasis on social-emotional learning, to address the difficulties students have faced. Even with social workers reaching out, MacAuley said it was difficult gauging how students were doing during remote learning.

"When there's a lot of stuff that has happened, it's better to have the kids in person so you can see how they are, take note of their behaviors and provide the support to them," he said.

In Cresskill, N.J., after Hurricane Ida hit in 2021, the building housing the high school and middle school was left underwater. The school system had no choice but to start the school year virtually.

"That's rough," Superintendent Michael Burke said. "That's rough for kids for mental health issues. It's rough for kids for socialization. And it's hard for parents who have to arrange for someone to be home. You know, and that's the most frustrating part, is that it came on the heels of COVID. And people were at a breaking point."

Eventually, Cresskill offered hybrid learning, working with a local church, utilizing its 14 classrooms. Later, in February, the school moved into a neighboring town's church building, which allowed students to go back every day.

Sarah Barrs' daughter, who is now a seventh grader, was scheduled to go to orientation the week the storm decimated the school. She said some considered remote learning an adequate solution because they had done it before out of necessity.

"It's not school," she said. "It's a last resort and it shouldn't be a crutch that we rely on for school."

Buttigieg awards grant to dismantle racially divisive highway

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A long-delayed plan to dismantle Interstate 375, a 1-mile depressed freeway in Detroit that was built by demolishing Black neighborhoods 60 years ago, was a big winner of federal money Thursday, the first Biden administration grant awarded to tear down a racially divisive roadway.

The \$104.6 million is among \$1.5 billion in transportation grants handed out to 26 projects nationwide thanks to increased funding from the 2021 bipartisan infrastructure law.

It allows Michigan to move forward on its \$270 million effort to transform the stretch in Detroit into a street-level boulevard, re-

connecting surrounding neighborhoods and adding amenities, such as bike lanes. Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, two of the city's predominantly African American neighborhoods, were razed as part of the 1950s creation of an interstate highway system, displacing 100,000 Black residents and erecting a decades-long barrier between the downtown and communities to the east.

Hailed by city and state leaders as helping rectify a past racial wrong, the federal money represents a key first step that advocacy groups say will inspire dozens of citizen-led efforts underway in other cities to dismantle highways. Still, advocates cautioned that Michigan's plan to build a six-



Buttigieg

lane city boulevard risks simply replacing one busy roadway with another. Long-time Black residents, meanwhile, say they will be priced out of the city by new business development and shiny condo buildings that promise direct links to downtown.

After years of planning dating back to 2013, the highway removal is now estimated to begin as soon as 2025, two years earlier than expected, with construction finished by 2028.

"This stretch of I-375 cuts like a gash through the neighborhood,

one of many examples I have seen in communities across the country where a piece of infrastructure has become a barrier," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg told The Associated Press. He was joining Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan later Thursday in Detroit to highlight the grant.

"With these funds, we're now partnering with the state and the community to transform it into a road that will connect rather than divide," Buttigieg said.

Other winners Thursday of the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America, or INFRA, grants include \$32.5 million for Flagstaff, Ariz., to build pedestrian underpasses to reconnect lower-income

neighborhoods isolated by a 1-mile segment of railroad to downtown; \$100 million to Clear Creek County, Colo., for upgrades to 8 miles of the I-70 Mountain Corridor, including electric vehicle charging stations; \$110 million to New York to expand refrigerated warehouse space at its Hunts Point food distribution center; and \$70 million to improve rail track in Chicago.

Detroit's project would create a slower-speed boulevard that aims to improve safety by removing a steep curve and adding LED lighting, while removing 15 old bridges and two stormwater runoff pump stations and building out wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes and pedestrian crossings.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Rabies alert issued after raccoon taken into bar

ND MADDOCK — A woman walked into a North Dakota bar carrying a raccoon, leading health officials to warn those who had contact with the animal about possible rabies exposure.

Bartender Cindy Smith said she was serving drinks at the Maddock Bar last week when a local resident brought in the animal during happy hour. There were about 10 people in the saloon at the time, she said.

Smith said she immediately asked the woman to leave but instead she took the raccoon around the bar to show another customer. The woman eventually departed with the animal after about five minutes.

“We finally got her out with it, and that’s all that happened,” Smith told The Bismarck Tribune. “It never left her arms one time, and there was absolutely no biting.”

In an alert issued Tuesday, North Dakota’s Health and Human Services Department is asking anyone who may have been bitten or had contact with the raccoon’s saliva to seek medical care.

Update may have revealed Medicaid recipients’ info

TN NASHVILLE — Personal information for about 1,700 Medicaid recipients in Tennessee may have been disclosed during an update to a computer system, officials said.

The update may have led to a limited number of people from one household to be able to view some information about individuals in another household that included some of the same people, a statement from TennCare said. The breach happened when a new application listed the name of a person who was already in another household, the statement said.

TennCare quickly determined the scope of the breach, addressed the issue and notified those impacted.

County votes to drop Lee, Jackson highway names

VA FAIRFAX — Fairfax County’s Board of Supervisors has voted to change the name of two major highways recognizing Confederate generals.

The 9-1 vote Tuesday would change the name of Lee Highway in the county to Route 29 and Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway to Route 50. The route numbers have already been linked to the highways for many years.

A county task force recommended the changes, even though a majority of people in an unscientific survey conducted by the task force supported keeping the names in place.

The county estimates the cost of the name change at \$2.9 million, including \$1.5 million for affected property owners to deal with the cost of renaming.

The proposal now goes to the



WILFREDO LEE/AP

A special bond

Bone marrow donor Brandon Folkes, 24, of New York, and transplant recipient Olivia Moesley, 21, of Norwalk, Conn., form the shape of a heart as they pose for photos after having met for the first time, on Wednesday, during a ceremony recognizing the Gift of Life Marrow Registry, at Miami Beach City Hall in Miami Beach, Fla. Moesley had sickle cell anemia and received a bone marrow transplant in June 2021.

state’s Commonwealth Transportation Board for consideration.

The Lee and Jackson names recognize Confederate Gens. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.

Mom who drove into girls fights with guard at hearing

NV LAS VEGAS — A mother who was sentenced Monday to probation and mental health treatment for intentionally striking two schoolgirls with her SUV near a Las Vegas-area high school pleaded guilty Tuesday to misdemeanor battery for scuffling with a jail guard while in custody.

Fatima Maria Mitchell, 36, remains jailed pending sentencing Sept. 19 for the August incident at the Clark County Detention Center. Her sentence is expected to be folded in with three years on probation and treatment at a residential behavioral health center in the crash case, said Connor Sapphire, her deputy public defender.

Mitchell pleaded guilty in June to felony reckless driving after initially being charged with attempted murder in the March 28 crash near Basic High School in Henderson. Police said her Chevrolet Tahoe struck a tree, a concrete sign and the two girls, who were treated at a hospital for broken bones.

Police and prosecutors alleged that Mitchell deliberately drove toward the girls after they fought with her daughter; brawls that day re-

sulted in citations for four other students and a separate arrest of a parent.

Officials: Boy, 11, charged with arson in store fire

MD HAMPSTEAD — An 11-year-old boy was charged with arson in a fire that destroyed a Maryland dollar store this month, state fire investigators announced Monday.

The fire broke out at a Dollar General in Hampstead on Sept. 3 and the boy was identified last week, the state fire marshal’s office said. It took more than an hour to control the blaze and no injuries were reported.

The boy was charged with first-degree arson and released to his parent’s custody, officials said. Charges will be referred to the Department of Juvenile Services. His name won’t be released because of his age.

Bingo, Nerf among Toy Hall of Fame finalists

NY ROCHESTER — Voting opened Wednesday on which toys should go into the National Toy Hall of Fame this year. The class of 2022 finalists are: bingo, Breyer Horses, Catan, Lite-Brite, Nerf Toys, Masters of the Universe, piñata, Phase 10, Pound Puppies, Rack-O, Spirograph, and the top.

“These 12 toys span the history of

play. The top is as old as civilization itself and bingo has been played in some form for hundreds of years,” said Christopher Bensch, vice president for collections at The Strong museum in Rochester, where the hall of fame is housed.

The public is invited to vote online through Sept. 21. The three toys that receive the most public votes will make up a single “Player’s Choice” ballot. That ballot will be counted alongside those turned in by a national selection committee. The inductees will be announced Nov. 10.

5 doctors plead guilty in pain pill scheme

WV CHARLESTON — Five doctors pleaded guilty in a pain pill prescription scheme involving clinics in West Virginia and Virginia, federal prosecutors said Monday.

The scheme was tied to the Hope Clinic and involved prescribing oxycodone and other controlled substances that weren’t for legitimate medical purposes from 2010 to 2015. Some prescriptions provided up to seven pills per day, and several Hope locations averaged 65 or more daily customers during a 10-hour workday with only one practitioner working, prosecutors said in a news release.

Hope Clinic had offices in Beckley, Beaver and Charleston, W.Va.,

and in Wytheville, Va.

Four of the physicians — William Earley, 66, of North Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Brian Gullett, 45, of Clarks-ville, Pa.; Roswell Tempest Lowry, 88, of Effland, N.C.; and Vernon Stanley, 79, of Fayetteville, W.Va. — each pleaded guilty in federal court in Charleston to a felony count of aiding and abetting obtaining a controlled substance by fraud, the statement said. Mark Clarkson, 64, of Princeton, W.Va., pleaded guilty to five misdemeanor counts of aiding and abetting the misbranding of a drug involved in interstate commerce, the statement said.

About 100 firearms stolen from 2 businesses

MI DEARBORN HEIGHTS — About 100 firearms have been stolen during weekend break-ins at two suburban Detroit businesses.

Vehicles were used early Sunday and again around midnight Monday to burst through the front of a pawn shop in Dearborn Heights. Nearly 50 guns were taken from that shop, police said.

Early Sunday, another 50 or so long guns and pistols were taken from a Westland gun shop after a stolen vehicle was used to smash through the entrance.

No arrests have been made in any of the break-ins.

FACES



Allison Russell wins Americana Award for debut, ‘Outside Child’

By Kristin M. Hall
Associated Press

Canadian singer-songwriter Allison Russell won album of the year for her debut solo record, “Outside Child,” while bluegrass guitarist Billy Strings won artist of the year at the Americana Honors and Awards.

Russell, whose starkly beautiful album touches on abuse she suffered as a child and her survival, thanked her friends, family and fellow nominees in a tearful speech and said that after spending her early years in foster care, she found her family in music. “Music saved me; music saves me every day,” Russell said.

Hosted by the duo The Milk Carton Kids, the annual awards show held Wednesday night at Nashville’s Ryman Auditorium celebrated the oft-misunderstood genre that mixes country, gospel, rock, folk, roots and blues. In addition to the winners, this year’s show gave out lifetime achievement awards to Don Williams, the gentle giant of country music; singer-actor Chris Isaak; and pioneering duo the Indigo Girls.

Sierra Ferrell won for emerging artist of the year. Six-time Grammy winner Brandi Carlile won song of the year for “Right On Time,” which she wrote with her bandmates Phil and Tim Hanseroth and producer Dave Cobb.

Multi-instrumentalist Larissa Maestro won instrumentalist of the year and talked about other artists of color who had been nominated in that category in previous years and opened the door for her.

“I didn’t see people who looked like me for a lot of years,” she said. “This is really really exciting.”

Husband and wife duo War and Treaty, made up of Tanya and Michael Trotter, won duo/group of the year.

Another lifetime honoree was Al Bell, a music executive, record promoter and label owner who helped turn Memphis label Stax Records into a powerhouse, pushing the careers of artists like Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett, Isaac Hayes and the Staple Sisters. He wrote the hit “I’ll Take You There,” for the Staple Sisters and later went to work at Motown Records with Berry Gordy.



Russell

A technicolor horror

Director, actor discuss ‘Pearl,’ a simultaneously filmed prequel to independent slasher movie ‘X’

By Lindsey Bahr
Associated Press

Ti West had a wild idea. It was year one of the pandemic and his 1970s-set slasher “X” was one of the few films allowed to go into production thanks to the low COVID-19 numbers in New Zealand. He’d been talking to his star Mia Goth — who in “X” plays dual roles of a young porn star, Maxine, and a murderous older woman, Pearl — and had a thought: What if they just made two movies while they were there?

The idea isn’t an uncommon one for a major franchise based on known intellectual property, but for an independent horror that hadn’t shot a single frame, it was bold, to say the least. It wouldn’t be a sequel either, but a prequel about Pearl in her youth.

“I’m like, well, they’re never going to go for THAT,” West said last week at the Venice Film Festival. To his immense surprise, however, production company A24 did.

The result, “Pearl,” which had its premiere in Venice and opens in theaters Friday, drops in on its title character as a teen in 1918. She dreams of being in the movies but is tethered to her family’s Texas farm,

with her strict, German mother and ailing father, until she gets a morsel of hope in an upcoming audition for a dance company.

“I just had this interest in making, for lack of a better term, a children’s movie that has a more demented adult story to it,” West said, seated beside Goth on the Lido.

Goth, in a stylish and severe black corset ensemble, looks worlds away from the wide-eyed farmgirl with a pitchfork and a dream she portrays in “Pearl.”

The film is a candy-colored ode to technicolor classics of Hollywood’s Golden Age, from “The Wizard of Oz” to “Singin’ in the Rain” but with carnage and blood. Touchstones ranged from Disney cartoons to Max Ophuls.

Goth got a co-credit as a screenwriter, which was a new experience for the “Suspiria” and “High Life” actor.

“To me, [Pearl] was just someone who was very ambitious and was likely just at the wrong place in the wrong time,” Goth said. “I think had she had better opportunities presented to her, life would have turned out very differently.”

Working on the script ultimately helped her feel more connected to the words on the



VIANNEY LE CAER, INVISION/AP

Mia Goth, left, and director Ti West promote the film “Pearl” on Sept. 4 at the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy.

page, which came in handy for the big finale: An emotional seven-minute monologue from Pearl that West wanted to shoot in one take.

“That was our last day of shooting,” Goth said. “It was a lot of pressure ... I didn’t want to mess up or to stumble over my lines. And I never went to drama school.”

But she needn’t have worried. They did it a few times and were finished before lunch, which is almost unheard of for 12 pages of script.

The world of “X” and “Pearl” is expanding even further. This week, A24 announced that there would be a third film, a finale, called “MaXXXine” set in 1985.

“We catch up with Maxine after ‘X,’” West teased. “I have to be a little tight-lipped after that.”

‘LA is just a dangerous place’: Ice-T says local rappers don’t wear jewelry

From wire reports

Ice-T has a word of advice for any rappers visiting LA: This city is no place to show off your bling.

His comment came in the wake of the robbery this week in South Los Angeles that left Philadelphia rapper PnB Rock dead Monday afternoon.

“People are still hitting me up about my comments about LA Gang culture,” the actor-rapper tweeted Wednesday morning. “If you NOTICE, LA rappers don’t wear a lotta Jewelry... Me, Snoop, Cube, Dre, Game, Kendrick.. The list goes on.. It’s not cause we’re broke. LA is just a dangerous place, rapper or not. Why test the streets.”

The gunman who killed 30-year-old PnB Rock at a Roscoe’s House of Chicken ‘N Waffles restaurant demanded jewelry and other valuables before getting into a struggle with the rapper and opening fire, Los Angeles Police Chief Michel Moore said Tuesday.

The brazen robbery happened soon after the performer’s

girlfriend location-tagged him in an Instagram post — since deleted — as being at the restaurant. Police are investigating whether that is what sparked the attack.

Rock’s attorney Dawn Florio told the Los Angeles Times on Monday that she had advised her client when she started working with him to be careful about what he posted on social media. “You cannot tell people where you’re going to be,” she said.

Lovato says ‘this next tour’ will be the last

Is Demi Lovato hanging up her touring shoes? The singer announced Tuesday in a since-deleted social media post that she was sick and that “this next tour” would be her last.

“I’m so ... sick I can’t get out of bed,” the 30-year-old wrote in her Instagram stories over a series of photos looking out a window. “I can’t do this anymore. This next tour will be my last. I love and thank you guys.”

Lovato — who just wrapped the seven-date, four-country

South American leg of her Holy Fvck Tour — appeared to be referring to the upcoming North American leg of the tour, which kicks off Sept. 22 near Sacramento, Calif.

Ryan Reynolds encouraging colonoscopies

Ryan Reynolds is spreading the gospel of colonoscopies after he had polyps removed during a preventive screening.

Together with pal Rob McElhenney, the “Deadpool” actor underwent the procedure and shared the results in a new video from Lead from Behind, which raises awareness for colon cancer.

“Part of being this age is getting a colonoscopy. It’s a simple step that could literally, and I mean literally, save your life,” said Reynolds, 45, in the video, also made in association with the Colorectal Cancer Alliance.

“It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia” star McElhenney said his doctor told him that he had three small polyps removed during his procedure.



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OPINION

DeSantis is the only Republican who can beat Trump

By HENRY OLSEN
Special to The Washington Post
New Hampshire's Republican primary on Tuesday confirmed the trend we have seen all year: the narrow dominance of populist, MAGA elements within the GOP. That demonstrates that only one Republican could deny Donald Trump the party's 2024 presidential nomination: Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Granite State voters had a variety of options to choose from, with strong, establishment-backed conservatives running in races for the state's Senate seat and both House seats. In all three cases, Republicans chose the Trumpiest candidate. None had the former president's blessing, but all nonetheless carried his implicit imprimatur as they faithfully imitated his angry style and embraced his views on issues from immigration to election denialism. The verdict, as disappointing as it is to the party establishment, merely echoes similar decisions by voters across the nation.

At first blush, this might be depressing for Republicans who think it's time to move on from Trump. It doesn't seem to matter if the person backed by the old guard can spend millions of her own dollars, as Arizona's gubernatorial hopeful Karrin Taylor Robson did. Prior statewide office doesn't seem to help, as former Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch discovered in her bid for governor. Even prior service in the Trump administration doesn't automatically confer the MAGA mantle, as New Hampshire congressional candidate Matt Mowers found Tuesday night. Not every ultra-Trumpy candidate has won, but enough have that the party's drift is unmistakable.

Still, this does not mean Trump's renomination is assured. The party's voters seem willing to entertain someone else, so long as that person has a similar populist emphasis and pugnacious style. That's what recent data from the Republican polling firm Echelon Insights suggests. Echelon's August poll found that despite sky-high approval ratings, only 65% of GOP and GOP-leaning voters want Trump to run again. Trump's support drops the deeper one digs. Only 59% say they would definitely or probably back Trump in a primary if he did run, and he would win only 46% in a contested primary that included DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence. In fact, 44% say they would vote for DeSantis, Pence or one of two noted Trump critics, Rep. Liz Cheney and Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan. That's effectively a tie, before any of Trump's potential opponents have even started to campaign against him.

That might confound experts if they haven't been following the intra-GOP factions closely. Party voters now say 48 to 41 that they are likelier to be "party-first Republicans" than "Trump-first Republicans." Party-first Republicans hold much more negative views of Trump than the other cohort, and they are even more likely to oppose him in a hypothetical matchup. Trump gets 77% of Trump-first Republicans' support in a hypothetical race with DeSantis and others, but only 30% among party-firsters. And 57% of party-firsters already oppose Trump's renomination.

This is encouraging news that shows the GOP might not be solely loyal to the "mayor of Mar-a-Lago." The data also show why DeSantis is likely the only person who can dethrone

Trump. DeSantis is the only potential opponent who has substantial support from both the "party-first" and "Trump-first" wings of the party (he receives 13% of Trump-firsters and 33% of party-firsters). His strength with Trump-first Republicans becomes more obvious after removing Trump from the mix entirely. DeSantis receives 41% in a 2024 field without Trump, leading his closest competitors by 30 points. He does about as well among Trump-firsters (47%) as with party-firsters (41%). Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, by contrast, does much better with Trumpists, while Pence breaks double digits only with party-firsters. Eleven percent of party-firsters prefer Cheney, Hogan, Utah Sen. Mitt Romney or former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley; only 2% of Trump-firsters agree.

It's not hard to figure out why DeSantis has such credibility among the Trumpy set. His pugnacious style in responding to media criticism endears him to those who want a fighter. His willingness to talk about culture war topics such as critical race theory or "woke corporations" is music to the ears of many populists. And his other positions — pro-life, pro-tax cut, traditional foreign policy views — make party-firsters like him, too.

Republicans revere the American Founding and surely recall the Revolutionary War adage: United we stand, divided we fall. DeSantis' unique ability to unite the party's warring wings points a way to end the GOP civil war and take the fight home to the Democrats.

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

For most Christians, God's hand on America is a comfort

By GARY ABERNATHY
The Washington Post
I grew up attending a small country church where, every Sunday morning, the 75 or so regular attendees heard Bible-based sermons with a heavy emphasis on the danger of veering from the straight and narrow and landing in eternal damnation in a fiery hell. It was fun.

Occasionally woven into the dogma were reminders of the Christian underpinnings of the United States — complete with spiritually based quotes from the Founding Fathers asking God's guidance and blessings on the new nation. In the 1960s and early '70s, such teachings were markedly apolitical. There were no rantings or ravings declaring one political party good or evil. There was simply a comforting belief that we lived in a nation formed and guided by God, and no one need lift a finger to ensure that situation. It simply was.

But in the wake of Roe v. Wade and other perceived attacks on that Old-Time Religion by an increasingly liberal world, Christianity had by the 1980s become politically weaponized, with "Christian soldiers" mostly aligning with the GOP. That war rages today.

Looking back, politicizing conservative Christianity was a mistake, even if well-intentioned. It's natural for Christianity to exist in a state of tension within an inclusive democracy. Consider Jesus' Great Commission to "go and make disciples of all nations," which includes, of course, this nation. By Scripture, Christians are not encouraged to just live and let live. But our Constitution says otherwise.

Walking that tightrope is a challenge. For instance, Christians often struggle with how much to be involved with, or live apart from,

the world. As parents, do you run for school board or try in other ways to influence the public school system? Or do you retreat within your walls and home-school your children? Either choice is ripe for criticism. But at the end of the day, the Christian belief that this short life is a mere prelude to the eternal one makes spending so much effort on influencing our temporal governments seem odd.

What will not change is the sincere belief held by millions of Christians (and others) that the United States has a special spiritual purpose. Such a purpose as carried out by Black churches and ministers during the civil rights era of the 1950s and '60s is regarded as crucial to the movement's success. But when defined today as "Christian nationalism," church involvement in political affairs is said to be dangerous. For many white Republicans, who are typically identified as the movement's drivers, the recent focus on Christian nationalism is the latest way to call their very existence a threat, close on the heels of accusations of racism, fascism and being "MAGA Republicans," defined in changing ways but always negatively, by President Joe Biden.

Consider an onslaught of similar headlines in recent weeks: the Daily Beast, Aug. 14, "I'm a Cradle Catholic. I Don't Want Christian Nationalism in My Church"; Rolling Stone, Sept. 1, "Meet the Apostle of Right-Wing Christian Nationalism"; The Washington Post, Sept. 1, "Americans are growing more accepting of Christian nationalism"; PBS, Sept. 7, "Former Trump adviser Michael Flynn 'at the center' of new movement based on conspiracies and Christian nationalism." Gathering no moss, Rolling Stone followed up last week with video that showed the Pennsylvania GOP's candi-

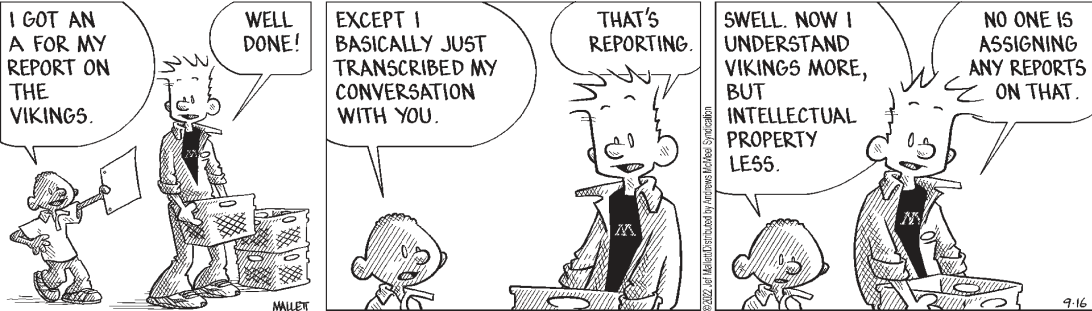
date for governor, Doug Mastriano, praying a week before the incursion at the U.S. Capitol that national leaders would "on the sixth of January ... rise up with boldness," along with other supplications deemed troubling. The self-identification of Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., as a Christian nationalist also bothers critics. But what is asked in prayer or otherwise invoked of heaven should never disturb anyone. God often answers, "No."

An individual's personal belief system, whether based on religion or other guiding principles, informs their political actions. That will never change. But because Christianity is and will long be the predominant religion in the United States, it is important that Christians constantly remind themselves not to impose their beliefs on others by weight of law or strength of numbers.

But whether in times of war or natural disaster, from 9/11 to the disturbing Capitol incursion on Jan. 6, 2021, the belief that God has his hand on our nation is a reassuring thought for millions of Americans — not a weapon to incite "violent and undemocratic strains," as the authors of an analysis in The Washington Post suggested. When discussing Christian nationalism, nuance is in short supply. It's one thing to hold the misguided belief that Christianity should have a government-sanctioned presence in society. It's quite another to be comforted by the thought that the U.S. plays a special role in God's plan. As for the latter, believers should reassure themselves that God's will for America will be fulfilled — with no legislative assistance required.

Gary Abernathy, a contributing columnist for The Washington Post, is a freelance writer based in the Cincinnati region.

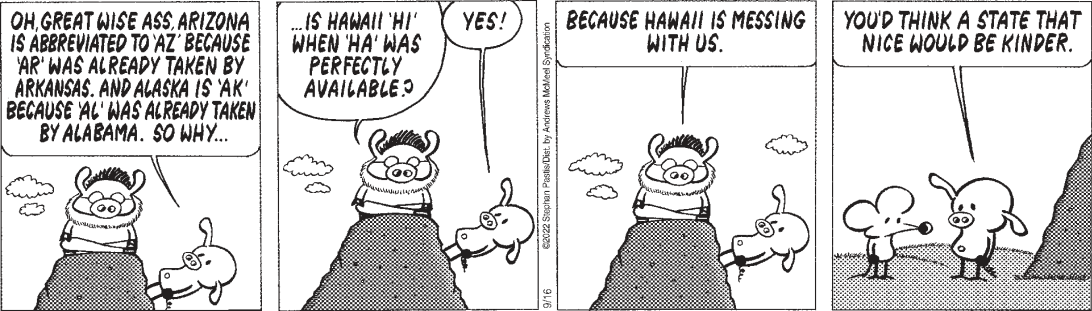
Frazz



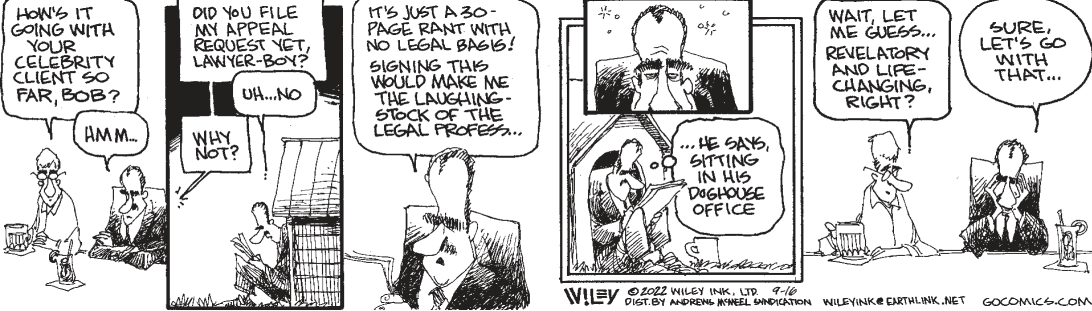
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



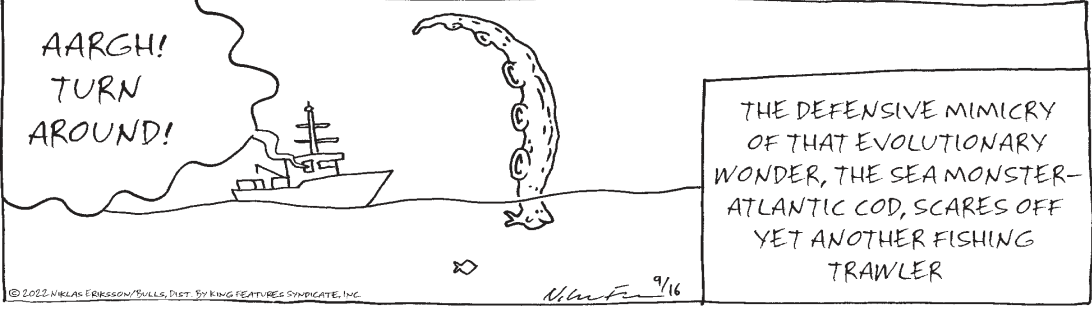
Non Sequitur



Candorville



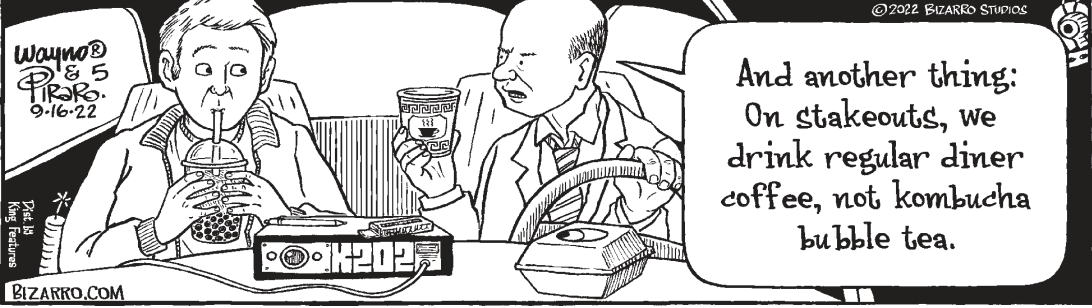
Carpe Diem



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
				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		

- ACROSS
- 57 "Way cool!"
- 58 Vegas opener?
- 25 Toronto's prov.
- 26 Links org.
- 28 Have lunch
- 30 Actress Joanne
- 31 Sound of relief
- 32 FDR project
- 33 Seminary subj.
- 36 Tools
- with teeth
- 37 Whale variety
- 40 Activist
- Chavez
- 42 Coral island
- 43 Skin care
- brand
- 44 "Endymion"
- poet
- 45 Spanish ayes
- 46 Pencil filler
- 48 Utter
- 49 Glass of
- public radio
- 50 Cacophony
- 51 Still, in verse
- DOWN
- 1 Checker
- moves
- 2 Tennis great
- Agassi
- 3 — nova
- 4 Med. plan
- options
- 5 Papa
- Hemingway
- 6 — -miss
- 7 Tank filler
- 8 Gore and Green
- 9 Floral necklace
- 10 Guided
- 11 Compass dir.
- 17 Corn cover
- 21 Marble cake
- pattern
- 23 Bed boards
- 24 — chi

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

9-16 CRYPTOQUIP

X U C M R B W H X B W H F G J

P R N X F H C G G S R J X M B C Z O F

S R Z G F - W Z C H M I R C I S F G , J S F M

X J H C G U X B P F W X M G J C O F G .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THIS MATTER IS SO PERSONAL THAT I HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD MY DEAREST PALS. IT'S NO BUDDY'S BUSINESS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals W

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE FOOTBALL
<div>Schedule</div> <div>Friday's games</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>Merrimack (1-1) at Harvard (0-0)</div> <div>SOUTH</div> <div>Florida St. (2-0) at Louisville (1-1)</div> <div>FAR WEST</div> <div>Air Force (2-0) at Wyoming (2-1)</div> <div>Saturday's games</div> <div>EAST</div> <div>Villanova (2-0) at Army (0-2)</div> <div>Richmond (1-1) at Lehigh (1-1)</div> <div>Sacred Heart (1-1) at Morgan St. (0-2)</div> <div>Purdue (1-1) at Syracuse (2-0)</div> <div>Bryant (0-2) at Brown (0-0)</div> <div>Colgate (1-1) at Penn (0-0)</div> <div>Towson (2-0) at West Virginia (0-2)</div> <div>Georgetown (1-1) at Monmouth (NJ) (0-2)</div> <div>Delaware (2-0) at Rhode Island (2-0)</div> <div>Albany (NY) (0-2) at Fordham (2-0)</div> <div>Valparaiso (1-1) at Dartmouth (0-0)</div> <div>Rutgers (2-0) at Temple (1-1)</div> <div>Yale (0-0) at Holy Cross (2-0)</div> <div>Va. Lynchburg (0-1) at Delaware St. (1-1)</div> <div>Howard (0-3) vs. Morehouse (0-0) at East Rutherford, N.J.</div> <div>William & Mary (2-0) at Lafayette (1-1)</div> <div>Stony Brook (0-1) at Umass (0-2)</div> <div>St. Francis (Pa.) (0-2) at Wagner (0-2)</div> <div>Columbia (0-0) at Marist (0-1)</div> <div>NC Central (2-0) at New Hampshire (2-0)</div> <div>SMU (2-0) at Maryland (2-0)</div> <div>Maine (0-2) at Boston College (0-2)</div> <div>SOUTH</div> <div>Wofford (0-2) at Virginia Tech (1-1)</div> <div>Youngstown St. (2-0) at Kentucky (2-0)</div> <div>Georgia (2-0) at South Carolina (1-1)</div> <div>Princeton (0-0) at Stetson (2-0)</div> <div>Buffalo (0-2) at Coastal Carolina (2-0)</div> <div>Cornell (0-0) at VMI (1-1)</div> <div>Grambling St. (1-1) at Jackson St. (2-0)</div> <div>Old Dominion (1-1) at Virginia (1-1)</div> <div>Hampton (2-0) at Norfolk St. (0-2)</div> <div>Austin Peay (2-1) at Alabama A&M (0-2)</div> <div>Georgia Southern (2-0) at UAB (1-1)</div> <div>Presbyterian (1-1) at W. Carolina (1-1)</div> <div>Troy (1-1) at Appalachian St. (1-1)</div> <div>Penn St. (2-0) at Auburn (2-0)</div> <div>Mississippi (2-0) at Georgia Tech (1-1)</div> <div>Louisiana-Monroe (1-1) at Alabama (2-0)</div> <div>Liberty (1-0) at Wake Forest (2-0)</div> <div>Gardner-Webb (1-1) at Elon (1-1)</div> <div>Charleston Southern (0-2) at E. Kentucky (1-1)</div> <div>Kentucky Christian (0-0) at Morehead St. (0-2)</div> <div>Mississippi St. (2-0) at LSU (1-1)</div> <div>Campbell (1-1) at East Carolina (1-1)</div> <div>NC A&T (0-2) at Duke (2-0)</div> <div>The Citadel (1-1) at Mercer (1-1)</div> <div>North Alabama (1-1) at Chattanooga (2-0)</div> <div>Akron (1-1) at Tennessee (2-0)</div> <div>St. Andrews (0-0) at Davidson (1-1)</div> <div>Samford (1-1) at Tennessee Tech (1-1)</div> <div>Northwestern St. (0-2) at Southern Miss. (0-1)</div> <div>CSSU (0-2) at SE Louisiana (0-2)</div> <div>Arkansas St. (1-1) at Memphis (1-1)</div> <div>Texas Tech (2-0) at NC State (2-0)</div> <div>Charlotte (0-3) at Georgia St. (0-2)</div> <div>Tennessee St. (0-2) at Middle Tennessee (1-1)</div> <div>Delta St. (0-0) at MVSU (0-2)</div> <div>Furman (1-1) at ETSU (1-1)</div> <div>UCF (1-1) at FAU (2-1)</div> <div>South Florida (1-1) at Florida (1-1)</div> <div>Louisiana Tech (1-1) at Clemson (2-0)</div> <div>Alcorn St. (0-2) at McNeese St. (0-2)</div> <div>MIDWEST</div> <div>Uconn (1-2) at Michigan (2-0)</div> <div>Miami (Ohio) (1-1) at Cincinnati (1-1)</div> <div>Oklahoma (2-0) at Nebraska (1-2)</div> <div>Abilene Christian (2-0) at Missouri (1-1)</div> <div>LIU Brooklyn (0-0) at Kent St. (0-2)</div> <div>W. Kentucky (2-0) at Indiana (2-0)</div> <div>S. Illinois (0-2) at Northwestern (1-1)</div> <div>Montana (2-0) at Indiana St. (1-1)</div> <div>Kentucky St. (0-0) at Dayton (1-1)</div> <div>Bucknell (0-2) at Cent. Michigan (0-2)</div> <div>Murray St. (0-2) at Ball St. (0-2)</div> <div>Ohio (1-1) at Iowa St. (2-0)</div> <div>Cal Poly (1-1) at South Dakota (0-2)</div> <div>California (2-0) at Notre Dame (0-2)</div> <div>Nicholls (0-2) at SE Missouri (1-1)</div> <div>Tulane (2-0) at Kansas St. (2-0)</div> <div>Colorado (0-2) at Minnesota (2-0)</div> <div>New Mexico St. (0-3) at Wisconsin (1-1)</div> <div>Vanderbilt (2-1) at N. Illinois (1-1)</div> <div>S. Utah (1-1) at W. Illinois (0-2)</div> <div>Marshall (2-0) at Bowling Green (0-2)</div> <div>Sacramento St. (1-0) at N. Iowa (0-2)</div> <div>Keiser (0-0) at Lindenwood (Mo.) (1-0)</div> <div>Butler (2-0) at S. Dakota St. (1-1)</div> <div>Toledo (2-0) at Ohio St. (2-0)</div> <div>E. Illinois (0-2) at Illinois St. (1-1)</div> <div>Nevada (2-1) at Iowa (1-1)</div> <div>Pittsburgh (1-1) at W. Michigan (1-1)</div> <div>SOUTHWEST</div> <div>Texas State (1-1) at Baylor (1-1)</div> <div>Kansas (2-0) at Houston (1-1)</div> <div>Texas Southern (0-2) vs. Southern U. (1-1) at Arlington, Texas</div> <div>Jacksonville St. (3-0) at Tulsa (1-1)</div> <div>E. New Mexico (0-0) at Tarleton St. (1-1)</div> <div>N. Colorado (0-2) at Lamar (0-2)</div> <div>Incarinate Word (2-0) at Prairie View (1-1)</div> <div>Missouri St. (2-0) at Arkansas (2-0)</div> <div>Texas A&M Commerce (1-1) at Sam Houston St. (0-2)</div> <div>Ark.-Pine Bluff (2-0) at Oklahoma St. (2-0)</div> <div>Louisiana-Lafayette (2-0) at Rice (1-1)</div> <div>UTSA (1-1) at Texas (1-1)</div> <div>Miami (2-0) at Texas A&M (1-1)</div> <div>FAR WEST</div> <div>South Alabama (2-0) at UCLA (2-0)</div> <div>Cent. Arkansas (0-2) at Idaho St. (0-2)</div> <div>North Texas (2-1) at UNLV (1-1)</div> <div>Drake (0-2) at Idaho (0-2)</div> <div>BYU (2-0) at Oregon (1-1)</div> <div>UT Martin (1-1) at Boise St. (1-1)</div> <div>North Dakota (1-1) at N. Arizona (1-1)</div> <div>Colorado St. (0-2) at Washington St. (2-0)</div> <div>Michigan St. (2-0) at Washington (2-0)</div> <div>Oregon St. (2-0) vs. Montana St. (2-0) at Portland, Ore.</div> <div>Utah Tech (1-1) at Weber St. (2-0)</div> <div>UTEP (1-2) at New Mexico (1-1)</div> <div>San Diego (1-1) at UC Davis (0-2)</div> <div>San Diego St. (1-1) at Utah (1-1)</div> <div>Fresno St. (1-1) at Southern Cal (2-0)</div> <div>N. Dakota St. (2-0) at Arizona (1-1)</div> <div>E. Michigan (1-1) at Arizona St. (1-1)</div> <div>Duquesne (1-2) at Hawaii (0-3)</div>

PRO FOOTBALL						
NFL						
AMERICAN CONFERENCE						
East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	1	0	0	1.000	31	10
Miami	1	0	0	1.000	20	7
N.Y. Jets	0	1	0	.000	9	24
New England	0	1	0	.000	7	20
South						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	0	0	1	.500	20	20
Indianapolis	0	0	1	.500	20	20
Jacksonville	0	1	0	.000	22	28
Tennessee	0	1	0	.000	20	21
North						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	1	0	0	1.000	24	9
Cleveland	1	0	0	1.000	26	24
Pittsburgh	1	0	0	1.000	23	20
Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000	20	23
West						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	1	0	0	1.000	44	21
L.A. Chargers	1	0	0	1.000	24	19
Denver	0	1	0	.000	16	17
Las Vegas	0	1	0	.000	19	24
NATIONAL CONFERENCE						
East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	1	0	0	1.000	21	20
Philadelphia	1	0	0	1.000	38	35
Washington	1	0	0	1.000	28	22
Dallas	0	1	0	.000	3	19
South						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	1	0	0	1.000	27	26
Tampa Bay	1	0	0	1.000	19	3
Atlanta	0	1	0	.000	26	27
Carolina	0	1	0	.000	24	26
North						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Chicago	1	0	0	1.000	19	10
Minnesota	1	0	0	1.000	23	7
Detroit	0	1	0	.000	35	38
Green Bay	0	1	0	.000	7	23
West						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Seattle	1	0	0	1.000	17	16
Arizona	0	1	0	.000	21	44
L.A. Rams	0	1	0	.000	10	31
San Francisco	0	1	0	.000	10	19
Thursday's game						
L.A. Chargers at Kansas City						
Sunday's games						
Carolina at N.Y. Giants						
Indianapolis at Jacksonville						
Miami at Baltimore						
N.Y. Jets at Cleveland						
New England at Pittsburgh						
Tampa Bay at New Orleans						
Washington at Detroit						
Atlanta at L.A. Rams						
Seattle at San Francisco						
Arizona at Las Vegas						
Cincinnati at Dallas						
Houston at Denver						
Chicago at Green Bay						
Monday's games						
Tennessee at Buffalo						
Minnesota at Philadelphia						
Thursday, Sept. 22						
Pittsburgh at Cleveland						

NFL injury report

NEW YORK — The National Football League injury report, as provided by the league (OUT: Player will not play; DOUBTFUL: Player is unlikely to play; QUESTIONABLE: Player is not certain to play; DNP: did not practice; LIMITED: limited participation; FULL: Full participation):

Sunday

ARIZONA CARDINALS at LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — ARIZONA: DNP: OT Kelvin Beachum (non injury related-rest), TE Zach Ertz (calf), C Rodney Hudson (rest), WR Andy Isabella (back), WR Rondale Moore (hamstring), DB Jalen Thompson (toe), DE J.J. Watt (calf), LIMITED: CB Trayvon Mullen (toe), G Justin Pugh (neck), CB Marco Wilson (ankle). **LAS VEGAS:** DNP: RB Brandon Bolden (hamstring), C Andre James (concussion), S Tre'von Moehrig (hip), LB Denzel Perryman (ankle). FULL: CB Nate Hobbs (back).

ATLANTA FALCONS at LOS ANGELES RAMS — ATLANTA: DNP: RB Damien Williams (rib). FULL: WR Drake London (knee). **LOS ANGELES RAMS:** DNP: C Brian Allen (knee), WR Van Jefferson (knee), T Joe Noteboom (knee), LS Matthew Orzech (calf). LIMITED: OLB Leonard Floyd (knee).

CAROLINA PANTHERS at NEW YORK GIANTS — CAROLINA: DNP: DE Marquis Haynes (hip), RB Christian McCaffrey (NIR-resting player). LIMITED: LB Franke Luvu (shoulder), T Taylor Moton (knee), LB Grandon Smith (thigh). **NEW YORK GIANTS:** DNP: DB Nick McCloud (hamstring), DB Aaron Robinson (appendicitis), WR Wan'Dale Robinson (knee). LIMITED: OL Jon Feliciano (lower leg), DE Azeez Ojulari (calf), DB Jason Pinnock (shoulder), Kayvon Thibodeaux (knee). FULL: DB Dan Belton (clavicle).

CHICAGO BEARS at GREEN BAY PACKERS — CHICAGO: LIMITED: WR Velus Jones (hamstring), T Riley Reiff (shoulder). **GREEN BAY:** DNP: G Jon Runyan (concussion). LIMITED: T David Bakhtiari (knee), G Elgton Jenkins (knee), WR Allen Lazard (ankle). FULL: C Jake Hanson (shoulder), CB Keisean Nixon (shoulder), LB Quay Walker (shoulder).

CINCINNATI BENGALS at DALLAS COWBOYS — CINCINNATI: DNP: WR Trent Taylor (hamstring), DT Josh Tupou (shin). LIMITED: TE Devin Asiasi (quadripec), WR Tee Higgins (concussion). Full: G Alex Cappa (knee), CB Tre Flowers (ankle), DE Trey Hendrickson (back), TE Hayden Hurst (groin), G Cordell Volson (hip). **DALLAS:** DNP: DE Tarell Basham (thigh), S Jayron Kearse (knee), G Connor McGovern (ankle), QB Dak Prescott (right thumb).

HOUSTON TEXANS at DENVER BRONCOS — HOUSTON: DNP: C Justin Britt (NIR-personal matter), DT Maliek Collins (knee), DE Jerry Hughes (NIR-resting player). LIMITED: DE Rasheem Green (thigh), TE Brevin Jordan (ankle), CB Isaac Yiadom (abdomen). **DENVER:** DNP: LB Randy Gregory (shoulder/knee), WR K.J. Hamler (knee/hip), LB Josey Jewell (calf), C Quinn Meinerz (hamstring), DE DeShawn Williams (back). LIMITED: DB K'Waun Williams (wrist). FULL: T Billy Turner (knee).

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS at JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — INDIANAPOLIS: DNP: DT DeForest Buckner (hip), WR Alec Pierce (concussion). LIMITED: CB Kenny Moore (hip), WR Michael Pittman (quadripec). FULL: LB Shaquille Leonard (back). **JACKSONVILLE:** No injuries to report.

MIAMI DOLPHINS at BALTIMORE RAVENS — MIAMI: DNP: RB Salvon Ahmed (heel), T Terron Armstead (toe/NIR-resting player), TE Cethan Carter (concussion), LB Melvin Ingram (NIR-resting player), OL Austin Jackson (ankle), WR Cedrick Wilson Jr. (toe). LIMITED: TE Tanner Conner (knee), S Eric Rowe (pectoral). FULL: T Greg Little (ankle). **BALTIMORE:** DNP: DE Calais Campbell (NIR-resting player), OLB Justin Houston (NIR-resting player), FB Patrick Ricard (calf). LIMITED: DT Travis Jones (knee), CB Marcus Peters (knee), WR James Proche II (groin), T Ronnie Stanley (ankle), DB Brandon Stephens (quadripec). FULL: RB J.K. Dobbins (knee).

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS at PITTSBURGH STEELERS — NEW ENGLAND: DNP: LB Ja'Whaun (toe). LIMITED: S Joshua Bledsoe (groin), S Adrian Phillips (ribs), G Cole Strong (shoulder), CB Shaun Wade (ankle), RB Pierre Strong Jr. (shoulder). FULL: QB Mac Jones (back). **PITTSBURGH:** DNP: LB T.J. Watt (pectoral). LIMITED: OL Mason Cole (ankle), RB Najee Harris (foot), CB Levi Wallace (ankle). FULL: LB Rob Spillane (eye).

NEW YORK JETS at CLEVELAND BROWNS — NEW YORK JETS: DNP: T George Fant (knee), DE John Franklin-Myers (toe), S Jordan Whitehead (ankle). LIMITED: WR Braxton Berrios (heel), P Braden Mann (back), QB Zach Wilson (knee). **CLEVELAND:** DNP: WR Amari Cooper (NIR-resting player), WR Mike Woods (illness). LIMITED: T Jack Conklin (knee). FULL: T Christopher Hubbard (elbow), DE Isaiah Thomas (hand).

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS at SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — SEATTLE: DNP: G Gabe Jackson (nir-rest), S Jamal Adams (knee), CB Artie Burns (groin), DE Shelby Harris (back), S Quandre Diggs (knee). FULL: T Jake Curhan (elbow), G Damien Lewis (knee/ankle), RB Kenneth Walker III (hernia), LB Cody Barton (hip), S Ryan Neal (ankle), LB Uchenna Nwosu (ankle), CB Tariq Woolen (Neck). **SAN FRANCISCO:** DNP: OL Daniel Brunskill (hamstring), TE George Kittle (groin), T Trent Williams (nir-rest). LIMITED: LB Dre Greenlaw (elbow).

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS at NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — TAMPA BAY: DNP: QB Thom Brady (NIR-resting player), WR Russell Gage (hamstring), WR Chris Godwin (hamstring), WR Julio Jones (knee), CB Zyon McCollum (hamstring), T Donovan Smith (elbow). LIMITED: WR Mike Evans (calf), RB WR Mike Evans (calf), RB Leonard Fournette (hamstring), WR Breshad Perriman (knee), T Tristan Wirfs (abdomen). **NEW ORLEANS:** DNP: CB Paulson Adebbo (ankle). LIMITED: RB Mark Ingram (ankle), DE Cameron Jordan (hip), RB Alvin Kamara (rib), S Marcus Maye (ankle), WR Tre'Quan Smith (shoulder), CB Alontae Taylor (hip), T Calvin Throckmorton (illness), RB Dwayne Washington (hamstring), QB Jameis Winston (back), T Landon Young (hip).

WASHINGTON COMMANDERS at DETROIT LIONS — WASHINGTON: DNP: G Wes Schweitzer (hamstring). LIMITED: DT Jonathan Allen (groin), S Kamren Curl (thumb), LB Jamin Davis (not injury related - personal matter), G Trai Turner (quadripec). FULL: TE Cole Turner (hamstring). **DETROIT:** DNP: DE Michael Brockers (knee), T Taylor Decker (calf), G Tommy Kraemer (back), C Frank Ragnow (groin, foot), RB D'Andre Swift (ankle). LIMITED: G Jonah Jackson (finger), S Ifeatu Melifonwu (hamstring). FULL: LB Julian Okwara (hamstring).

PRO SOCCER						
MLS						
EASTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	18	4	9	63	68	22
CF Montréal	17	9	5	56	58	49
New York	14	9	8	50	47	37
NYCFC	13	11	7	46	51	39
Orlando City	12	12	6	42	36	46
Cincinnati	10	8	12	42	54	49
Columbus	9	7	14	41	40	35
Inter Miami CF	11	13	6	39	38	50
Atlanta	10	12	9	39	46	50
New England	9	11	11	38	44	47
Charlotte FC	11	17	2	35	35	46
Chicago	9	14	8	35	33	42
Toronto FC	9	15	7	34	49	57
D.C. United	7	18	6	27	32	62
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
LAFC	19	8	4	61	61	35
Austin FC	16	9	6	54	63	45
FC Dallas	13	8	10	49	45	34
Nashville	12	9	10	46	49	38
Minnesota	13	12	6	45	45	45
Portland	11	8	12	45	50	47
Real Salt Lake	11	10	10	43	38	41
LA Galaxy	11	12	7	40	47	46
Seattle	12	15	3	39	43	40
Colorado	10	12	9	39	43	52
Vancouver	10	14	7	37	36	54
Sporting KC	9	15	7	34	36	51
Houston	9	16	6	33	39	49
San Jose	7	14	9	30	45	63
Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.						

Tuesday, Sept. 13

CF Montréal 3, Chicago 2

Miami 2, Columbus 1

Los Angeles FC 1, Minnesota 1, tie

Sporting Kansas City 3, D.C. United 0

Houston 3, New England 1

Wednesday's games

Atlanta 1, Orlando City 0

Austin FC 3, Real Salt Lake 0

Colorado 2, San Jose 1

Vancouver 3, LA Galaxy 0

Saturday's games

New York at New York City FC

Philadelphia at Atlanta

CF Montréal at New England

Toronto FC at Orlando City

Charlotte FC at Chicago

Minnesota at Sporting Kansas City

Nashville at Austin FC

Cincinnati at Real Salt Lake

Seattle at Vancouver

FC Dallas at San Jose

Colorado at LA Galaxy

Sunday's games

Portland at Columbus

Miami at D.C. United

Houston at Los Angeles FC

Saturday, Sep. 24

LA Galaxy at San Jose

	NWSL					
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	9	5	5	32	25	27
San Diego	9	6	4	31	29	19
Portland	8	3	7	31	39	20
Houston	8	5	6	30	32	24
Chicago	8	5	6	30	32	24
OL Reign	7	4	7	28	24	18
Angel City	7	6	5	26	20	20
North Carolina	7	7	4	25	39	31
Orlando	5	7	6	21	20	35
Washington	2	6	10	16	22	26
Louisville	2	8	8	14	17	31
Gotham FC	4	14	0	12	13	37
Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.						

Wednesday's games

North Carolina 1, Angel City 0

Chicago 4, Kansas City 0

Friday's game

Orlando at Louisville

Saturday's games

Gotham FC at Washington

OL Reign at North Carolina

Houston at Chicago

Angel City at San Diego

Sunday's games

Portland at Kansas City

Wednesday, Sept. 21

OL Reign at Gotham FC

North Carolina at Orlando

Louisville at Portland

Washington at Angel City

Saturday, Sept. 24

Gotham FC at North Carolina

OL Reign at Houston

Sunday, Sept. 25

Chicago at Portland

Washington at Kansas City

San Diego at Orlando

Louisville at Angel City

DEALS
<div>Wednesday's transactions</div> <div>BASEBALL</div> <div>Major League Baseball</div> <div>MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION — Named Harry Marino assistant general counsel.</div> <div>American League</div> <div>BOSTON RED SOX — Traded 3B Nicholas Northcut to Cincinnati in exchange for a player to be named later. Activated INF Yu Chang. Designated RHP Jeurys Familia for assignment. Sent RF Jaylin Davis outright to Worcester (IL).</div> <div>LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Placed SS Andrew Velazquez on the 10-day IL. Recalled 2B Michael Stefanik from Salt Lake (PCL).</div> <div>NEW YORK YANKEES — Transferred the rehab assignment of LHP Zack Britton from Somerset (EL) to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL).</div> <div>OAKLAND ATHLETICS — Reinstated OF Skye Bolt from the 10-day IL and sent him outright to Las Vegas (PCL). Sent RHP Domingo Tapia and OF Luis Barrera outright to Las Vegas.</div> <div>TAMPA BAY RAYS — Optioned RHP Yonny Chirinos to Durham (IL).</div> <div>TEXAS RANGERS — Sent RHP Kohei Arihara outright to Round Rock (PCL).</div> <div>TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Optioned RHP Mitch White to Buffalo (IL).</div> <div>National League</div> <div>CHICAGO CUBS — Placed OF Rafael Ortega on the 60-day IL. Selected the contract of OF Jared Young from Iowa (IL).</div> <div>CINCINNATI REDS — Released RHP T.J. Zeuch. Reinstated RHP Justin Dunn from the 15-day IL. Sent RHP Graham Ashcraft to Chattanooga (SL) on a rehab assignment. Optioned RHP Raynel Espinal to Louisville (IL). Returned RHP Kyle Dowdy to Louisville.</div> <div>LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Recalled RHP Michael Grove from Oklahoma City (PCL). Optioned RHP Andre Jackson to Oklahoma City.</div> <div>NEW YORK METS — Sent RHP Max Scherzer on a rehab assignment to Syracuse (IL).</div> <div>PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Claimed RHP Tayler Scott off waivers from San Diego. Recalled LHP Kent Emanuel from Lehigh Valley (IL).</div> <div>PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Returned RHP Luis Ortiz to Indianapolis (IL).</div> <div>BASKETBALL</div> <div>National Basketball Association</div> <div>SACRAMENTO KINGS — Signed F KZ Okpala.</div> <div>FOOTBALL</div> <div>National Football League</div> <div>ARIZONA CARDINALS — Signed WRs Jeff Cotton Jr. and JaVonta Payton and OL Koda Martin to the practice squad. Placed WR Victor Bolden Jr. and OL Rashaad Coward on the practice squad injured reserve.</div> <div>BALTIMORE RAVENS — Signed CB T.J. Carrie to the practice squad. Placed CB Kyle Fuller and OT Ja'Wuan James on injured reserve. Promoted OLB Steven Means from the practice squad to the active roster.</div> <div>BUFFALO BILLS — Signed DT Prince Emili to the practice squad. Released WR Tanner Gentry from the practice squad.</div> <div>CHICAGO BEARS — Signed OL Michael Schofield III. Placed OL Alex Leatherwood on the non-football injury (NFI) list.</div> <div>CLEVELAND BROWNS — Re-signed CB Herb Miller to the practice squad.</div> <div>DENVER BRONCOS — Placed S Justin Simmons on injured reserve. Promoted CB Essang Bassey from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed S Anthony Harris to the practice squad.</div> <div>DETROIT LIONS — Promoted RB Justin Jackson from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed OL Kayode Awosika. Re0-signed T Darrin Paulo to the practice squad.</div> <div>GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed S Mike Brown to the practice squad.</div> <div>INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed Ks Chase McLaughlin and Lucas Havrisik to the practice squad. Released G Arlington Hambrick from the practice squad.</div> <div>LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Promoted WR Keelan Cole from the practice squad to the active roster. Placed WR D.J. Turner on injured reserve. Signed C Billy Price and CB Nickell Robey-Coleman to the practice squad.</div> <div>LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Signed DL Breiden Fehoko to the practice squad.</div> <div>LOS ANGELES RAMS — Promoted G Jeremiah Kolone from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed G Oday Aboushi to the practice squad.</div> <div>MIAMI DOLPHINS — Signed OT Brandon Shell to the practice squad.</div> <div>MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Signed OLB Chris Garrett to the practice squad.</div> <div>NEW YORK JETS — Promoted S Will Parks from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed CB Jimmy Moreland and P/K Ty Long to the practice squad. Released WR Diontae Spencer from the practice squad.</div> <div>SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Placed DE Jordan Willis on injured reserve. Promoted DE Kemoko Turay form the practice squad to the active roster. Signed RB Marlon Mack, WRs Willie Snead and Kary Vincent to the practice squad.</div> <div>SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Promoted LS Carson Tinker and LB Tanner Muse from the practice squad to the active roster. Placed LS Tyler Ott on injured reserve. Signed S Scott Nelson to the practice squad.</div> <div>TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS — Signed TE David Wells to the practice squad. Released TE J.J. Howland from the practice squad.</div> <div>HOCKEY</div> <div>National Hockey League</div> <div>NASHVILLE PREDATORS — Named Sebastian Bordeleau skills coach, Nathan Gerbe forward development coach, Brett Carson and Ronda Engelhardt North American amateur scouts, Jason Nordby assistant strength & conditioning coach, Michael Bingham equipment coordinator and Jon Sherman hockey operations coordinator and analyst.</div> <div>OTTAWA SENATORS — Signed C Tyler Motte to a one-year contract.</div>

MLB

ROUNDUP

Rodríguez a 25/25 rookie, helps Mariners top Padres

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Julio Rodríguez hit the fourth leadoff home run of his rookie season, Eugenio Suárez and Carlos Santana both went deep, and the Seattle Mariners beat the San Diego Padres 6-1 on Wednesday.

Seattle rebounded quickly from being shut out for the first time in nearly three months and split the brief two-game set. Rodríguez hit the first pitch thrown by Padres starter Mike Clevinger (5-7) for his 26th home run.

Rodríguez later nabbed his 25th stolen base, making him the third rookie in league history to have at least 25 steals and 25 homers in their first season. But unlike Chris Young in 2007 and Mike Trout in 2012, Rodríguez reached the 25/25 plateau in his debut season. Both Young and Trout reached the majors late in the previous season, but were still considered rookies.

Seattle kept pace with Toronto and gained a game on Tampa Bay in the crowded race for the top AL wild card. The Padres hold the third and final NL wild-card slot.

Luis Castillo (7-5) threw six shutout innings, scattering four hits and striking out nine.

Blue Jays 5, Rays 1: Vladimir Guerrero Jr. hit his 100th home run at age 23, and host Toronto beat Tampa Bay to ensure winning a rare five-game series against a wild-card rival.

Toronto (81-62) has won three of four from the Rays (79-63), who dropped one game behind Seattle (80-62) heading into Thursday's series finale. Those teams are in the three AL wild-card positions for the expanded playoffs, with Baltimore (75-67) four games behind the Rays.

Guerrero homered off Drew Rasmussen (10-5) in the first inning, his 28th home run this season.

Yankees 5, Red Sox 3: Aaron Judge didn't homer and Gleyber Torres only sorta did to send AL East-leading New York past host Boston, completing a two-game sweep.

Judge went 1-for-4 with a walk. He singled in the fifth after Aaron Hicks reached on an error, putting runners on first and second.

Torres lined a single to right, and Alex Verdugo's throw to the plate was too late to get Hicks. Catcher Connor Wong thought he had Torres making too big of a turn and fired the ball to first but it sailed wide and into the outfield.

Judge came around to score, and Torres beat Verdugo's second throw home for the three-run, Little League homer that gave New York a 3-0 lead. Torres had three hits, and Nestor Cortes (10-4) took a shutout into the fifth to give the Yankees their fourth straight win and eighth in 10 games.

Guardians 5, Angels 3: José Ramírez hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the eighth inning, and host Cleveland beat Los Angeles for its sixth consecutive victory.

Oscar Gonzalez and Andrés Giménez each had three hits as the AL Central leaders (76-65) moved 11 games over .500 for the first time since September 2020.

Cubs 6, Mets 3: David Peterson got only one out and the slumping New York Mets fell behind early as visiting Chicago completed a three-game sweep.

The NL East leaders lost their fifth consecutive home game and dropped to 5-7 in a 16-game stretch against Washington, Pittsburgh,

Miami and the Cubs — all more than 20 games under .500 this season.

Giants 4, Braves 1: Austin Wynn's drove in three runs, Carlos Rodón struck out eight in five dominant innings before leaving with a blister and host San Francisco slowed Atlanta to win the series.

Atlanta lost two of three to the sub-.500 Giants, who have won four of five.

Rockies 3, White Sox 0: Colorado starter Kyle Freeland out-pitched Dylan Cease and put a dent in host Chicago's push for a playoff spot.

The White Sox fell four games behind AL Central-leading Cleveland with 19 remaining. Chicago travels to Cleveland for a makeup game Thursday, and the teams return to Chicago for a three-game series starting Sept. 20.

Freeland (9-9) frustrated a Chicago lineup that was 0-for-10 with runners in scoring position. He worked around seven hits and three walks, striking out five in 6⅓ innings.

Twins 4, Royals 0: Sonny Gray cruised through seven sharp innings and host Minnesota, despite losing AL batting leader Luis Arraez to an early injury, blanked Kansas City.

Gary Sánchez had a two-run double and Carlos Correa a couple of hits for the Twins, five games behind AL Central-leading Cleveland with 21 remaining.

Astros 2, Tigers 1: Cristian Javier allowed two hits in six shutout innings, and visiting Houston beat Detroit for a seven-game season sweep.

Javier (9-9) struck out eight and walked none. He retired 13 in a row before Riley Greene's two-out sin-



STEPHEN BRASHEAR/AP

The Mariners' Julio Rodriguez rounds the bases after hitting a solo home run against the Padres during the first inning on Wednesday.

gle in the sixth.

Pirates 10, Reds 4: Rodolfo Castro hit a three-run homer and an RBI single, and visiting Pittsburgh finished a four-game sweep of Cincinnati.

Pirates rookie Oneil Cruz connected for a two-run drive, helping last-place Pittsburgh to its first four-game winning streak since mid-July. Ke'Bryan Hayes had three of the Pirates' 12 hits.

Phillies 6, Marlins 1: J.T. Realmuto homered twice against his former team, Bryce Harper also went deep and visiting Philadelphia downed Miami.

Philadelphia holds the second NL wild-card spot by 2½ games after third-place San Diego lost earlier at Seattle.

Orioles 6, Nationals 2: Gunnar Henderson drove in four runs, Jorge Mateo homered and visiting Baltimore beat Washington to com-

plete a two-game sweep.

Baltimore pulled within four games of Tampa Bay for the third and final AL wild card. The Orioles begin a three-game series Friday at wild-card leader Toronto — and trail the Blue Jays by 5½ games.

Athletics 8, Rangers 7: Stephen Vogt's routine grounder with two outs in the ninth inning glanced off shortstop Corey Seager's glove, scoring the go-ahead run as visiting Oakland rallied past Texas.

Diamondbacks 5, Dodgers 3 (10): Late-inning defensive replacement Sergio Alcántara hit a three-run homer with two outs in the 10th to lift host Arizona over Los Angeles.

Alcántara's fifth homer of the season came off closer Craig Kimbrel. The Diamondbacks snapped a 10-game losing streak against the Dodgers and avoided a three-game sweep.

Minor leaguers form union in stunningly quick fashion

BY RONALD BLUM

Associated Press

NEW YORK — More than 5,500 minor league baseball players formed a union on Wednesday, completing a lightning-fast organization campaign that launched just 17 days earlier in an effort to boost annual salaries as low as \$10,400.

Martin Scheinman, the sport's independent arbitrator, notified Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association that a majority of the 5,567 players in the minor league bargaining unit had signed union authorization cards since the drive started Aug. 28. He did not provide the sides a specific number.

"This historic achievement re-

quired the right group of players at the right moment to succeed," union head Tony Clark said in a statement. "Minor leaguers have courageously seized that moment, and we look forward to improving their terms and conditions of employment through the process of good faith collective bargaining."

MLB had agreed Saturday that it would voluntarily accept a union if there was majority support and would not force players to petition the National Labor Relations Board to hold a representation election.

"Major League Baseball has a long history of bargaining in good faith with unions, including those representing minor and major

league umpires, and major league players," the league said in a statement. "Based on the authorization cards gathered, MLB has voluntarily and promptly recognized the MLBPA as the representatives of minor league players. We are hopeful that a timely and fair collective bargaining agreement will be reached."

Minor leaguers form a separate bargaining unit within the MLBPA, which negotiated its first collective bargaining agreement for big leaguers in 1968 but had until now been uninterested in representing players with minor league deals. Approximately 1,200 major leaguers are covered by the big league agreement, and their aver-

age salary has risen from \$19,000 in 1967 to more than \$4 million this year.

Minor leaguers are expected to choose player representatives who will lead them in bargaining during the offseason. Bruce Meyer, who headed negotiations last winter for a major league agreement, will lead the minor league negotiations, and Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem will be the point man for management. Meyer was promoted to deputy executive director in July.

MLB raised weekly minimum salaries for minor leaguers in 2021 to \$400 at rookie and short-season levels, \$500 at Class A, \$600 at Double-A and \$700 at Triple-A. For

players with major league contracts on option to the minors, the minimum is \$57,200 per season for a first big league contract and \$114,100 for later big league contracts.

In addition, MLB this year began requiring teams to provide housing for most minor leaguers.

"In a multibillion-dollar industry, there is no excuse to pay these players below the poverty line," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said in a statement. "By joining together to use their collective voice at the bargaining table, the minor leaguers will be able to advocate for a union contract that will ensure a future with the good pay and benefits they deserve."

MLB

Scoreboard

American League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	87	56	.608	—
Toronto	81	62	.566	6
Tampa Bay	79	63	.556	7½
Baltimore	75	67	.528	11½
Boston	69	74	.483	18
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	76	65	.539	—
Chicago	73	70	.510	4
Minnesota	71	70	.504	5
Kansas City	57	86	.399	20
Detroit	54	89	.378	23
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	93	50	.650	—
Seattle	80	62	.563	12½
Texas	62	81	.434	31
Los Angeles	61	82	.427	32
Oakland	52	91	.364	41
National League				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	89	55	.618	—
Atlanta	88	55	.615	½
Philadelphia	80	62	.563	8
Miami	58	85	.406	30½
Washington	49	94	.343	39½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
St. Louis	84	59	.587	—
Milwaukee	76	67	.531	8
Chicago	61	82	.427	23
Cincinnati	56	86	.394	27½
Pittsburgh	55	88	.385	29
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Los Angeles	98	44	.690	—
San Diego	78	65	.545	20½
San Francisco	69	74	.483	29½
Arizona	67	75	.472	31
Colorado	62	81	.434	36½
x-clinched division				
Wednesday's games				
Cleveland 5, L.A. Angels 3 Houston 2, Detroit 1 Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 1 N.Y. Yankees 5, Boston 3 Minnesota 4, Kansas City 0 Oakland 8, Texas 7 Pittsburgh 10, Cincinnati 4 Colorado 3, Chicago White Sox 0 San Francisco 4, Atlanta 1 Seattle 6, San Diego 1 Philadelphia 6, Miami 1 Baltimore 6, Washington 2 Chicago Cubs 6, N.Y. Mets 3 St. Louis 4, Milwaukee 1 Arizona 5, L.A. Dodgers 3, 10 innings				
Thursday's games				
Chicago White Sox at Cleveland Tampa Bay at Toronto Oakland at Houston Kansas City at Minnesota Philadelphia at Miami Pittsburgh at N.Y. Mets Cincinnati at St. Louis San Diego at Arizona				
Friday's games				
Baltimore (Voth 5-2) at Toronto (TBD) Chicago White Sox (Giolito 10-9) at Detroit (Manning 2-2) Kansas City (Heasley 3-8) at Boston (Wacha 11-1) Minnesota (TBD) at Cleveland (McKenzie 10-11) Texas (Pérez 11-6) at Tampa Bay (Kluber 10-8) Oakland (Martinez 4-4) at Houston (Verlander 16-3) Seattle (Ray 12-9) at L.A. Angels (Lorenzen 6-6) Colorado (Márguez 8-10) at Chicago Cubs (Stroman 3-7) Miami (Luzardo 3-7) at Washington (Espino 0-7) Pittsburgh (Keller 5-10) at N.Y. Mets (Walker 11-4) Philadelphia (Suárez 9-5) at Atlanta (Fried 13-6) N.Y. Yankees (Montas 5-12) at Milwaukee (Houser 6-9) Cincinnati (Dunn 1-3) at St. Louis (Flaherty 0-1) San Diego (Snell 6-9) at Arizona (Bumgarner 6-14) L.A. Dodgers (May 1-2) at San Francisco (Webb 13-8)				
Saturday's games				
Minnesota at Cleveland (2) Baltimore at Toronto Kansas City at Boston Chicago White Sox at Detroit Texas at Tampa Bay Oakland at Houston Seattle at L.A. Angels Cincinnati at St. Louis (2) Colorado at Chicago Cubs Miami at Washington N.Y. Yankees at Milwaukee Pittsburgh at N.Y. Mets Philadelphia at Atlanta San Diego at Arizona L.A. Dodgers at San Francisco				

Wainwright, Molina make history

Cardinals battery starts together for 325th time

By STEVE OVERBEY
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — The cheers began for Adam Wainwright and Yadier Molina as they walked in from the bullpen before the game, the St. Louis fans standing to salute them for all they’d accomplished together.

After the final out of a 4-1 victory over Milwaukee on Wednesday night, it was time for the Cardinals to shower the record-making duo with a clubhouse celebration.

Wainwright and Molina started together for the 325th time, the most by a battery in major league history. The duo eclipsed the regular-season mark of 324 held by the Detroit Tigers pair of Mickey Lolich and Bill Freehan from 1963-1975.

“Great feeling to be on top of that list,” Molina said. “And doing it with Waino, a great human being, it’s just amazing.”

Added Wainwright: “I don’t think anyone will break that record.”

Towels with the No. 325 were given out to fans as they entered Busch Stadium, and the ovations and tributes kept coming.

“The crowd was so awesome, making me get constant chills and tearing up,” Wainwright said.

“Usually when I get to the dugout after warming up, I’m very



Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina, left, and pitcher Adam Wainwright walk in from the bullpen after warming up before Wednesday's game against the Milwaukee Brewers in St. Louis.

laser-focused on my approach to the first batter,” he said. “But they were playing a video on the board and I thought, ‘you know, they’re probably not going to play any more cool videos while I’m pitching that I can really take in.’ So, I might as well enjoy it for a minute.”

Brewers leadoff man Christian Yelich got into the moment, too. The Milwaukee star stood absolutely still and made no attempt to

swing at Wainwright’s first pitch, a called strike.

“They deserve that moment of respect,” Yelich said. “It was cool to see history.”

The ball was taken out of play, then Wainwright and Molina went to work at extending the Cardinals’ lead in the NL Central.

Wainwright and Molina made their first start together on April 6, 2007, in Houston. Wainwright recorded a 4-2 win in that game — the

first of his 213 victories with Molina behind the plate.

The 40-year-old Molina, a perennial Glove Glover, has indicated he will retire at the end of this season. The 41-year-old Wainwright has yet to make a decision on his future.

Wainwright (11-9) gave up just one run in five innings despite allowing eight hits and walking two. He struck out three in a 98-pitch stint.

Number: Judge has likely already locked up the AL MVP

FROM PAGE 24
ing that. And in the context of this season and in this era, that’s really something. And he certainly should have in any reasonable person’s mind put the most valuable argument for this year to bed.”

With his black matte Chandler model maple bat, Judge is hitting .310 with 123 RBIs — 12 more than anyone else.

Until the 1990s, baseball’s great debate was whether Maris’ 1961 season should count as the record because he played more games.

Ruth’s 60 in 1927 stood as the standard for 34 years. Maris’ mark lasted 37 until Mark McGwire hit 70 in 1998, part of an apparently juiced jolt that saw Sammy Sosa hit 66. McGwire followed with 65 the next year as Sosa hit 63. Power peaked in 2001, when Barry Bonds hit a previously unfathomable 73 and Sosa 64.

“Personally, I think that those records are tainted, and therefore I’m rooting very much for Judge,” former baseball Commissioner Fay Vincent said. “I think he’s absolutely clean. I don’t think there’s

any performance-enhancing drug involvement or taint with Judge. And so I think one of the reasons his performance is so illuminating and so compelling is that it’s totally clean.”

Since drug testing with penalties started in 2004, the highest total has been Giancarlo Stanton’s 59 for Miami in 2017.

“Fans, writers, Hall of Fame voters, all those groups that matter are going to make their own judgments about how his accomplishments should be weighed against other players who may have been disclosed as using performance-enhancing drugs,” current Commissioner Rob Manfred said. “They’re going to place appropriate weight on those performances. I have found Judge’s performance to be as compelling and captivating as any as I’ve ever seen.”

Maris’ legitimacy was debated because the American League schedule increased to 162 games in 1961 following expansion. With Maris at 35 homers, then-Commissioner Ford Frick decided that

July 17 that if anyone topped Ruth in more than 154 games “there would have to be some distinctive mark in the record books to show that Babe Ruth’s record was set under a 154-game schedule.”

That “distinctive mark” became known as an “asterisk” and it remained until Sept. 4, 1991, when a committee on statistical accuracy chaired by Vincent voted unanimously to recognize Maris as the record-holder.

At 30, Judge has an impeccable reputation in an era during which each player is tested for performance-enhancing drugs during spring training and is subject to random tests during the season and offseason.

McGwire admitted in 2010 he used steroids while breaking Maris’ record. Bonds and Sosa maintain they never knowingly used banned substances.

“Nobody thought that when Hank Aaron hit 715 that he was a better home run hitter than Babe Ruth, but he had surpassed Ruth’s record. No one thinks that Pete Rose in his time was a better hitter

than Ty Cobb, but he passed Cobb’s record — authentically,” Costas said. “People put the steroid stuff in a different category because it’s obvious, it’s a cluster of half a decade that this stuff happens. And it isn’t just the three of them. You’ve got other guys hitting 50 homers or guys hitting 45 homers who previously hit 18. Everyone understands that, at least everyone who pays attention. And so if Judge winds up hitting 65, that’s different than McGwire or Sosa hitting 65.”

Changes in the sport mean players faced different conditions. Ruth started in the dead ball era, Maris played at the dawn of expansion, Judge faces pitchers throwing harder than ever before.

“It’s a dead end, it seems to me, to keep comparing eras,” Will said. “Ruth didn’t play against African-Americans. Ruth didn’t play night games and have transcontinental travel and all the rest. Judge is a lot bigger, then pitchers are a lot bigger. ... You judge people against what they do against their peers.”

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Herd rising

Marshall basks in storybook victory over Notre Dame, its 2nd against Top 10 team

By JOHN RABY
Associated Press

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. — The path to one of Marshall's greatest victories was forged through scooping up transfer portal talent, magic tricks, and a second-year coach's belief that a Sun Belt Conference team can be as good as any opponent, especially a storied giant like Notre Dame.

Fifteen games into his Marshall career, coach Charles Huff's Thundering Herd became the talk of college football with Saturday's 26-21 win over the 20½-point favorite Fighting Irish.

Droves of fans, some of them crying, greeted Marshall's team bus upon its return to campus in Huntington on Saturday night. Huff responded to 350 text messages. New Marshall President Brad Smith, a former CEO of software company Intuit, was congratulated by executives from across Silicon Valley.

It was Marshall's second victory over a Top 10 team. The other also came on the road, in 2013 against No. 6 Kansas State.

Gone was Notre Dame's streak of 80 weeks in The Associated Press poll and 42 consecutive wins over unranked opponents.

"Phenomenal weekend," Huff said. "Not only for our football team and our players, but for the state of West Virginia and this community, and everybody that bleeds green. I think it also gives



SHOLTEN SINGER, THE HERALD-DISPATCH/AP

Head coach Charles Huff, in his second year at Marshall, teaches his players to stay even-keeled against all opponents.

college football its shot, a boost, of energy. I think this is what college football is all about."

And it's still going. The local newspaper, The Herald-Dispatch, is busy selling reprints of Sunday's front page containing a photo with the headline, "Shocker in South Bend."

After a visit Monday from Gov. Jim Justice, a Marshall graduate, it was time to go back to work.

"We've obviously got to move on," quarterback Henry Colomby said. "But it's awesome to be able to reflect on what we did. Our community's still buzzing about it and I think it's going to be like that for a while, when you have a big win like that in school history. So I think it's awesome."

On Tuesday, there was more



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Marshall defensive lineman Owen Porter celebrates after a 26-21 victory over then-No. 8 Notre Dame on Saturday in South Bend, Ind. Marshall's only previous win over a Top 10 team was in 2013 at K-State.

electricity when running back Rasheen Ali returned to Marshall's practice. One of the nation's top freshmen a year ago when he rushed for 1,400 yards, Ali went on an undisclosed personal leave of absence from the team prior to the season.

It's uncertain whether Ali will play when Marshall (2-0) travels to Bowling Green (0-2) on Saturday. When he does, it will add to the load of concerns for opposing defenses. His replacement, Khalan Laborn, is ninth in the FBS with 265 yards, nearly matching his entire production when he was at Florida State.

Other transfers who have paid immediate dividends include Colomby, who played at Texas Tech

the past two years and is leading the nation in completion percentage at 85.1%.

Huff is in his first head coaching job and he's the first Black head football coach at Marshall. To know Huff is to understand that when he's not in business mode on the field, he's lighthearted. His laugh and smile are often and infectious. He celebrates great efforts by his players.

Huff was associate head coach and running backs coach under Nick Saban at Alabama. His hiring at Marshall in January 2021 came only a few weeks after the Crimson Tide routed Ohio State for the national championship.

After being hired, Huff visited a Huntington cemetery where a

memorial honors the victims of the worst disaster in U.S. sports history. That gave him an understanding of the community's unwavering commitment and passion for a football program that almost went away when a 1970 plane crash killed 75 players, coaches, supporters and the flight crew.

Huff teaches his players to stay even-keeled and prepare the same way no matter who the opponent. Asked how Marshall can guard against a potential letdown at Bowling Green, Huff's response was direct and simple.

"Is their field 100 yards by 53-and-a-third? Do they have goal posts?" Huff responded. "If they got those two things, we'll be all right."

Purdue opponents finding it difficult to keep up with Jones

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

Purdue receiver Charlie Jones makes it all look so easy.

The smooth transition from Iowa to Purdue, the perfect timing he's established with childhood friend Aidan O'Connell, the crisp routes, the tough catches, even the long, striding runs afterward.

It's taken the sixth-year receiver two weeks to create a home in coach Jeff Brohm's wide-open offense — while making life difficult for defenses.

"It wasn't like we were extremely smart and knowledgeable on the situation," Brohm said Monday, explaining how they wound up getting Jones this summer. "We had watched some quick video of Charlie and his punt returns. He was really good on special teams, but there wasn't a whole lot of video at receiver — a few catches here and there."

Having a chance to catch passes and break tackles was a big reason Jones joined the Boilermakers.



ALEX MARTIN/AP

Purdue WR Charlie Jones leads the Big Ten in receptions, receiving yards and TD catches.

At his previous two college stops, Buffalo and Iowa, he was primarily viewed as a return specialist. Jones' three-year receiving totals: 39 receptions, 718 yards, six touchdown catches.

Two games with the Boilermakers, and with O'Connell as the quarterback, has completely

changed Jones' reputation. He has 21 catches, 286 yards and a career-best four TD receptions in six quarters. Jones already has matched his reception total from all of last season and he's within reach of topping his 2021 total in yards receiving (323) on Saturday at Syracuse.

Jones leads the Big Ten in all three categories as well as yards per game (143.0) and he leads the Football Bowl Subdivision in receptions per game (10.5). He also ranks fourth nationally in receiving yards and is tied for third in TD receptions.

"I came here, obviously, for the offense, and I'm liking what I'm seeing so far, so hopefully get back to it this week and come out next week and execute in all phases," Jones said after scoring three times in Saturday's 56-0 rout of FCS school Indiana State. "Definitely, it was a good move (to transfer)."

Purdue might not have known exactly what it was getting in

Jones. But after losing one consensus All-America receiver, Rondale Moore, to the NFL in 2020 and another, David Bell, last spring, O'Connell convinced Brohm to take a chance on the late-deciding Jones, who entered the transfer portal May 25.

Jones announced he'd picked Purdue in early June.

The timing prevented Jones from participating in Purdue's spring practices and really doing much with his new teammates until summer camp. Yet O'Connell knew what he had in Jones because they played youth football and baseball together in northern Illinois, competed at high schools six miles apart and continued working out during the summers of their college careers.

The reunion couldn't have started any better.

In a season-opening loss to Penn State, O'Connell threw 19 of his 59 passes to Jones, who caught 12 balls for a school-record 153 yards in his Purdue debut. Jones also

caught a TD pass.

"He's a great player. We knew that when we brought him here and I'm very excited he got to show it today, a lot of dynamic play-making abilities," O'Connell said afterward. "It's fun to throw to him. He's a smart player, a good player, plays really hard. We have a lot of guys like that."

Jones quickly stood apart, though.

While the personal connection between O'Connell and Jones almost certainly sped up the acclimation process on and off the field, Jones' new coaches and teammates could envision how Jones would fit in an offense that lost Bell and his expected replacement, Milton Wright, to academic ineligibility.

Jones made an immediate impression.

"The first day of practice I knew Charlie was going to be something special," safety Cam Allen said. "He'll get on your toes quick. I'm glad to have that boy on our team."

TENNIS/NFL

Federer opts to retire at 41

Series of knee operations sidelined 20-time major winner over past year

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
Associated Press

Roger Federer is retiring from professional tennis at age 41 after a series of knee operations, closing a career in which he won 20 Grand Slam titles, finished five seasons ranked No. 1 and helped create a golden era of men’s tennis with rivals Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic.

Federer posted what he called a “bittersweet decision” via social media on Thursday, less than a week after 23-time major champion Serena Williams played what is expected to the last match of her career.

Combined, the exits by two of the greatest athletes in their sport’s history represent a significant turning of the page.

“As many of you know, the past three years have presented me with challenges in the form of injuries and surgeries. I’ve worked hard to return to full competitive form,” Federer wrote on Twitter. “But I also know my body’s capacities and limits, and its message to me lately has been clear.”

Federer has not competed since Wimbledon in July 2021, and so, in

that sense, his news is not all that surprising.

But he had appeared at an event marking the 100-year anniversary of Centre Court at the All England Club this July and said he hoped to come back to play there “one more time.”

He also had said he would return to tournament action in his home country at the Swiss Indoors in October.

In Thursday’s announcement, Federer said his farewell event will be the Laver Cup in London next week. That is a team event run by his management company.

Federer is married and he and his wife, Mirka — a tennis player, too; they met as athletes at an Olympics — have two sets of twins.

He leaves with a total of 103 tour-level titles on his substantial résumé and 1,251 wins in singles matches, both second only to Jimmy Connors in the Open era, which began in 1968. Federer’s records include being the oldest No. 1 in ATP rankings history — he returned to the top spot at 36 in 2018 — and most consecutive weeks there (his total weeks mark



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/AP

Switzerland’s Roger Federer hits a return to Poland’s Hubert Hurkacz during their men’s singles quarterfinal on July 7, 2021 at Wimbledon. Federer announced Thursday he is retiring from tennis.

was eclipsed by Djokovic).

When Federer won his first Grand Slam title at Wimbledon in 2003, the men’s record for most was held by Pete Sampras, who had won his 14th at the U.S. Open the year before in what turned out to be the last match of the American’s career.

Federer went on to blow way past that, ending up with 20 by winning eight championships at Wimbledon, six at the Australian Open, five at the U.S. Open and one at the French Open. His 2009 trophy at Roland Garros allowed Federer to complete a career Grand Slam.

His serving, forehand, footwork and attacking style will all be remembered. Also unforgettable were his matches against younger rivals Nadal, 36, and Djokovic, 35, who both equalled, then surpassed, Federer’s Slam total and are still winning titles at the sport’s four biggest tournaments. Nadal now leads the count with 22, one ahead of Djokovic.

“I was lucky enough to play so many epic matches that I will never forget,” Federer said in Thursday’s announcement.

Addressing his “competitors on the court” — although not by name — he wrote: “We pushed

each other, and together we took tennis to new levels.”

Federer’s last match anywhere came on July 7, 2021, when he lost at Centre Court in the Wimbledon quarterfinals to Hubert Hurkacz 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-0.

Soon after, Federer had surgery to repair damage to his meniscus and cartilage in his right knee — his third operation on that knee in a span of 1½ years.

“Tennis has treated me more generously than I ever would have dreamt,” Federer said Thursday, “and now I must recognize when it is time to end my competitive career.”

Miami’s blitz still a bad memory for Jackson, Ravens

By **NOAH TRISTER**
Associated Press

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — When Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens faced Miami in November, it was as discombobulated as they looked all season.

The culprit was the Dolphins’ blitz-heavy defensive scheme — and that game is again on Baltimore’s mind as the Ravens prepare to host Miami this weekend.

The Dolphins have a new coach, so they may not defend Jackson exactly the same way, but there’s no denying the effectiveness of their approach last season. Miami won 22-10, becoming the first team in 52 games to hold Baltimore under 14 points. It ended up being the Ravens’ lowest point total of the season.

“They just caught us off guard, really,” Jackson said. “We haven’t really went over defenses doing all-up Zero against us, like just all-up, flat-out Zero. I feel we have an answer for it this year. We watch film, watched a lot of film on those guys, because we don’t want it to happen again.”

**Miami Dolphins (1-0)
at Baltimore Ravens (1-0)**
AFN-Sports2
7 p.m. Sunday CET
2 a.m. Monday JKT

It wasn’t just that Miami blitzed a lot — on 30 of Jackson’s 50 dropbacks, according to Pro Football Focus. The aggressiveness of the Dolphins’ Cover Zero scheme seemed to rattle the Ravens, who weren’t able to make Miami pay with big plays.

Short completions did little to deter the Dolphins from sending extra pass rushers. Jackson, normally such a threat to run because of his elusiveness, was sacked four times and ran for only 39 yards on nine carries. At some point, even he can’t escape if he’s under too much pressure from too many people at once.

Watching Jackson and the Ravens adjust to the blitz could have been a fascinating subplot to the second half of last season, but he didn’t have many chances. Because of injury and illness, he only played two full games out of Balti-



ADAM HUNGER/AP

Quarterback Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens were held under 14 points for the first time in 52 games during last November’s 22-10 loss to the Miami Dolphins.

more’s final eight.

The Ravens did have time during the offseason to work on countering Cover Zero.

“We’d have been negligent if we

hadn’t worked on it,” coach John Harbaugh said. “It’s something we need to get a lot better at, and we studied it the whole offseason. We’ll have a plan for it. Hope it works, because these guys are probably the best in the league at doing it.”

Jackson was sharp in Baltimore’s opener last weekend, throwing three touchdown passes in a 24-9 win over the New York Jets. Those TD strikes were 25 and 17 yards to Devin Duvernay, and 55 yards to Rashod Bateman.

“Maybe the first one to Devin, the fade route, out of the bunch would have a chance against a Zero blitz,” Harbaugh said. “The one to Bateman would not. You wouldn’t have enough time to get that off.”

Injury updates

RB J.K. Dobbins (knee) was a full participant in practice Wednesday. He hasn’t played in more than a season after going down in an exhibition game last year.

FB Patrick Ricard (calf) did not

practice, and CB Marcus Peters (knee), T Ronnie Stanley (ankle), DT Travis Jones (knee), WR James Proche (groin) and DB Brandon Stephens (quad) were limited.

The Ravens put T Ja’Wuan James (Achilles) and CB Kyle Fuller (knee) on injured reserve. They were both injured in the Week 1 road game against the Jets.

Earlier this week, Harbaugh cited the artificial turf the Jets play on as a factor in Fuller’s injury, and he discussed it a bit more Wednesday.

“It was a turf field, it was matted down, it was packed down, it was a little tight,” he said. “Maybe that’s how it’s supposed to be. I don’t know, but that’s what I saw. It was a little tough.”

Focusing elsewhere

Jackson wasn’t about to engage when reporters asked him about talks on a contract extension, which were paused at the start of the season.

“Respectfully, I’m really done talking about it,” he said.

NFL



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

New York Giants running back Saquon Barkley celebrates his touchdown run during the second half against the Tennessee Titans on Sunday. Barkley had 194 yards from scrimmage.

Barkley just wants to keep winning

BY TOM CANAVAN
Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The only thing that seemingly matters to Saquon Barkley entering his fifth season with the New York Giants is winning.

The No. 2 overall pick in the 2018 draft seemingly didn't care he was selected as the NFC Offensive Player of the week after a win over Tennessee, or that he leads the NFL in rushing (164 yards) or total yards from scrimmage (194) after Week 1.

After four straight losing seasons — the Giants have had five in a row — Barkley had the rare feeling of seeing New York edge the Titans 21-20 for his first NFL season-opening win. He scored a touchdown and caught a 2-point shovel pass from Daniel Jones for the game-winning points with 66 seconds to play.

Barkley isn't concentrating on repeating his performance or even bettering it on Sunday when the Giants open at home against the Carolina Panthers.

"I'm just coming into work," Barkley said Wednesday after practice. "That's the only thing I can do. I already went back, watched film, wrote my notes."

Barkley was critical of himself for allowing a ball to be knocked out of his hands after a 33-yard run to the Titans 26 on the game-winning, fourth-quarter drive. The ball went out of bounds at the 11, giving the Giants possession at the point of the fumble.

"That could've hurt us instead of helping us," Barkley said. "I've got to be better in ball security, got to be better in pass pro."

Barkley, who missed almost all

**Carolina Panthers (0-1)
at New York Giants (1-0)**
AFN-Atlantic
7 p.m. Sunday CET
2 a.m. Monday JKT

of the 2020 season with an ACL injury and was limited to 593 yards last season, felt he left yards on the field. His long run last season was 41 yards. He had a 68-yarder against the Titans where he was clocked running nearly 21 mph.

"So that's my focus, just coming in see what I can do better and when the game comes execute the plays that I'm able to execute in," he said. "Every game might not be a 194-yard performance, but whatever I can do to help the team win, that's what I want to be able to do."

There are many who expect the Giants to have another big game on the ground. New York ran for a league-high 238 yards Sunday and the Panthers allowed Cleveland to gain 217 rushing.

Carolina missed 18 tackles overall, resulting in 190 yards after contact in its 26-24 loss to the Browns on a late 58-yard field goal.

Panthers coach Matt Rhule said Barkley looks as good as ever.

Defensive tackle Matt Ioannidis knows Barkley well.

"I have played against him a few times over the years in Washington so I would like to think I know what I'm up against," Ioannidis said. "He's obviously a talented back. And every team has one. So I think this is a good opportunity for our defense to go out there and shut down the run and set the tone for what the next 16 games can look like for us."

Rodgers agrees Packers need RBs more involved

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers said Wednesday that running backs A.J. Dillon and Aaron Jones need to get the ball more than they did in a season-opening defeat at Minnesota.

The reigning MVP suggested the Packers need to stick with the running game more than they did in the 23-7 loss to the Vikings. The Packers finished with 39 pass attempts and 18 carries.

"We maybe reacted to the score a little bit," Rodgers said. "And we were running the ball well, I think we ran it about 6 a clip, so we've just got to stick with the run, make sure we get our attempts where we want them to be because that means one of those guys is touching the ball probably."

Jones and Dillon are Rodgers' top playmakers now that two-time All-Pro receiver Davante Adams is with the Las Vegas Raiders.

Dillon had 10 carries for 45 yards and five catches for 46 yards at Minnesota. Jones had five carries for 49 yards plus three catches for 27 yards. Packers coach Matt LaFleur has emphasized the need to give them more opportunities.

"They're two of our better players. I think everybody recognizes that," LaFleur said. "And they're versatile. You can use them, whoever you want to put in the backfield, whether you put them both in the backfield, whether you put one at receiver, they provide us with some flexibility to do little different things from an offensive perspective."

The Packers must get more punch from their offense after posting their lowest scoring total since the 2021 season opener, which they lost 38-3 to the New Orleans Saints. They host the Chicago Bears (1-0) on Sunday night.

Packers wideouts caught a combined 12 passes for 120 yards at Minnesota. For comparison's sake, Adams caught 10 passes for 141 yards in the Raiders' season-opening 24-19 loss to the Los Angeles Chargers.

The Bears say any offense led by Rodgers remains dangerous even without Adams on the roster. The Packers are 23-5 against the Bears in games their four-time MVP has started. In one of the losses, Rodgers departed with an injury after the opening series.

"Aaron Rodgers is still Aaron Rodgers regardless (of) who he has," Bears defensive end Robert Quinn said. "He's bound to make something happen. I'm not in that locker room, but I'm sure because of his credentials, he tries to bring



ABBIE PARR/AP

Packers running back AJ Dillon, left, celebrates with quarterback Aaron Rodgers after scoring on a 2-yard touchdown run on Sunday.

**Chicago Bears (1-0)
at Green Bay Packers (0-1)**
AFN-Sports
Monday 2:15 a.m. CET
Monday 9:15 a.m. JKT

everyone up to his level regardless of if they're a first-rounder or undrafted. Again, I'm not in that locker room. But I think he's going to bring everyone up to his standards."

The dilemma for Rodgers is how to bring Green Bay's rookie receivers up to that standard.

"We've got to be patient with them," Rodgers said. "The most important thing we're going to be harping on is the preparation and the fundamentals and the little things. The jump happens when you don't become a robot anymore. You understand the 'why' and the 'what' — why are we doing what we're doing and what are we trying to accomplish? And it takes a while for anybody."

Romeo Doubs, the rookie fourth-round pick from Nevada, led Green Bay wideouts with four catches for 37 yards Sunday. Christian Watson, the second-round pick from North Dakota State, had two catches for 34 yards.

Allen Lazard, the Packers' top returning receiver, was limited in practice Wednesday. He missed the Vikings game with an ankle injury.

"Can't predict the future," Lazard said about his chances of playing. "Probably is probably the best answer I could give you."

Green Bay's top options at wide receiver are Lazard, Watson, Doubs and veterans Randall Cobb and Sammy Watkins. Amari Rodgers, the 2021 third-round pick from Clemson, didn't play a single snap on offense against the Vikings.

They Packers need to deal with whatever growing pains Watson and Doubs endure. That means trying to build their confidence as much as possible early on.

"We don't want to put them in a position where there's a high likelihood of maybe not getting it right," Rodgers said. "But we also want to let them, in the moment, feel the pressure and anxiety and the expectation of being in that moment and see how they respond because that's how we're going to know what kind of guys we've got."

Watson got that chance on the Packers' first play from scrimmage Sunday but dropped a likely 75-yard touchdown pass.

"It's a play that I know I can make, and I know I'm going to make a bunch of those down the road," Watson said. "My mentality is on to the next. Obviously next time it comes my way, I'll capitalize on that."

Rodgers is eager to see how well his young receivers capitalize on their chances the next few weeks.

"The most important thing for a jump to happen is not repeat the same mistake twice," Rodgers said. "These guys are going to make a lot of mistakes. The guys who don't repeat the same mistakes are going to get more opportunities."

SPORTS



Federer retires

20-time Grand Slam winner ends career at age 41 » **Tennis, Page 22**

MLB

61 or 73?

As Judge nears HR milestone, debate begins on which number means more

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

To some, Aaron Judge's season has a special sheen because he appears to be Mr. Clean.

They would consider Judge the record-holder if he surpasses Roger Maris' 61 homers, absent the steroids stain sticking to the tainted trio of Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa.

"To me, the holder of the record for home runs in a season is Roger Maris," author George Will said. "There's no hint of suspicion that we're seeing better baseball than better chemistry in the case of Judge. He's clean. He's not doing something that forces other players to jeopardize their health."

Bonds' 73 and other Steroids Era peaks are viewed by critics as phantoms, totals as inflated as the biceps of those bulked-up hitters.

Judge entered Thursday with 57 homers through the New York Yankees' 143 games, leaving 19 games to go. Judge towers over everyone else, and not just because he is 6-foot-7: Kyle Schwarber is second in homers with 37 for Philadelphia.

Judge has hit 23,448 feet of home runs this year — 4.44 miles — with an average distance of 411 feet, according to MLB Statcast.

"Judge is like Secretariat in the Belmont," broadcaster Bob Costas said, thinking back to the Triple Crown-winning 31-length victory in 1973. "He's percentages above everyone else. It's downplayed now — he's hitting .300, so he's a classic great player. The great players have power and average. Well, he's do-

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Cardinals' Wainwright, Molina make history by starting 325th game as battery
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Through 143 games, Yankees slugger Aaron Judge has 57 home runs. That leaves 19 games for him to surpass Roger Maris' 61 homers.

ADAM HUNGER/AP



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