By Kathy Gannon
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan warned that extremists groups are planning attacks against a “variety of targets” but are taking particular aim at women.

The warning didn’t specify which organizations were plotting the attacks. But it comes as the Taliban and government-appointed negotiators are sitting together for the first time to try to find a peaceful end to decades of relentless war.

The “Taliban don’t have any plans to carry out any such attacks,” the group’s spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed told The Associated Press on Friday.

Peace negotiations underway in Qatar, where the Taliban maintain a political office, are in the initial stages, with participants still hammering out what items on the agenda will be negotiated and when.

Washington’s peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said at the start of negotiations last weekend that spoilers existed on both sides. He said that some among Afghanistan’s many leaders would be content to continue with the status quo rather than find a peaceful end to the war that might involve power sharing.

According to the embassy warning issued late Thursday, “extremist organizations continue to plan attacks against a variety of targets in Afghanistan, including a heightened risk of attacks targeting female government and civilian workers, including teachers, human rights activists, office workers, and government employees.”

The embassy didn’t provide specifics, including how imminent the threat is.

The Taliban have been harshly criticized for their treatment of women and girls during their five-year rule, when the insurgent group denied girls access to school and women to work outside their home. The Taliban rule ended in 2001 when a U.S.-led coalition ousted the hard-line regime for its part in sheltering al-Qaeda, which was responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S.

SEE KABUL ON PAGE 4
Google gets tax break for facility

Associated Press

RENO, Nev. — Google will receive more than $25 million in tax breaks after pledging an additional $600 million for a new data center in southern Nevada, state officials said.

The company previously committed $600 million to the data center in the Las Vegas suburb of Henderson.

Google also said it would invest $600 million in the construction of the company’s Henderson data center.

The facility is expected to open in 2021, the Reno Gazette-Journal reported.

“This is a very good deal for Nevada," said Michael Brown, the director of the development board. "In return for the $25 million abatement that Google will receive, the company will make a $427 million impact on the economy 20 years and generate $94 million in tax revenue over 20 years."
**Navy’s newest unmanned aerial vehicle arrives at Norfolk base**

**By Dave Ress**

For 21 years, Petty Office 1st Class Timothy Egner has served his country by diving from helicopters and swimming through dangerous waters to rescue aviators and sailors. Recently, though, as a helicopter aircrewman, he’s been picking up a new skill.

That’s because this week, his Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 22 became the first on the East Coast to supplement its MH-60 Sea Hawk with the Navy’s newest unmanned aerial vehicle, the Fire Scout.

Egner’s job on the new MQ-8C Fire Scout will be operating its radar and “multi-spectrum targeting system” — a snapped-up camera that reads light, heat and electrical signals to pinpoint anything of military interest. He uses radar to spot what’s floating or flying in the back — or as HSC 22 pilots call it, “flying a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle, or drone) is easier on your body, but flying a helicopter is more tactical, more visual.”

Egner said his wife, Nairilys, and sons Elijah and Benkowitsch.

When deployed, slated for next year, HSC 22 pilots and aircrew will fly manned and unmanned aircraft.

That’s what they’ve been doing already with the smaller drones and their MH-60 workhorses.

For the squadron’s mechanics, it means knowing — and being able to repair — the innards of the Fire Scout. Petty Officer 1st Class Tyler Benkowitsch.

Egner, the aircrewman, couldn’t wait to get started flying on helicopters. And after 21 years, he still likes doing it — even if some days, it means sitting at a computer screen and driving a camera with a joystick.

“Working on all these keeps life interesting, move it up and to the right, is a two-step operation with a drone. It takes some getting used to, Egner said. But he has grown used to flying a smaller drone, the MQ-8B — a variation on the lightweight Schweizer S333 trainer helicopter.

The MQ-8C can carry twice as much and go twice as far, Wright, the squadron C.O. said.

When deployed, slated for next year, HSC 22 pilots and aircrew will fly manned and unmanned aircraft.

That’s what they’ve been doing already with the smaller drones and their MH-60 workhorses.

For the squadron’s mechanics, it means knowing — and being able to repair — the innards of the Fire Scout. Petty Officer 1st Class Tyler Benkowitsch.

Egner, the aircrewman, couldn’t wait to get started flying on helicopters. And after 21 years, he still likes doing it — even if some days, it means sitting at a computer screen and driving a camera with a joystick.

“Working on all these keeps life really rich,” he said.

**Esper calls for more spending on shipbuilding**

**By Stephen Singer**

Defense Secretary Mark Esper is calling for increased spending on shipbuilding with a larger submarine force, even as the Navy hires more workers and expands its shipyard to build the next-generation Columbia-class submarine.

But the drive to counter Chinese ambitions raises questions about where more money would come from in the Pentagon budget.

In a speech Wednesday at the RAND Corp., a Santa Monica, Calif., think tank, Esper said the future U.S. naval force will be more balanced in its ability to deliver lethal effects from the air, from the sea and from under the sea. The fleet will be made up of more and smaller surface combatants; manned, unmanned and autonomous subs and surface vehicles; unmanned carrier-based aircraft; a larger and more capable submarine force; and a modern strategic deterrent, Esper said.

He said a “future fleet” will comprise more than 355 manned and unmanned ships and be built in a “relevant time frame and budget-informed manner.” The Navy’s 2016 Force Structure Assessment called for a 355-ship Navy, up from the current 293.

“To achieve this outcome, we must increase funding for shipbuilding and the readiness that sustains a larger force,” Esper said. “Doing this, and finding the money within the Navy budget and elsewhere to make it real, is something both the Navy leadership and I am committed to doing.”

Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn., expressed frustration at the lack of details, such a timeline for executing the expansion.

“The whole idea is really just talk bar talk,” Courtney said.

The secretary of defense is required by law to send Congress a 30-year shipbuilding plan and force structure assessment. Neither has been delivered, said Courtney, chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommit-tee on Seapower and Projection Forces.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, also said Congress “needs to see the details as soon as possible so that we can assess our strategy and funding needs going forward.”

He called for direct money into new ships without pulling from other Navy accounts, Courtney said.

Esper said China, followed by Russia, are the top strategic competitors of the United States.

“These revisionist powers are using predatory economics, political subversion and military force in an attempt to shift the balance of power in their favor and often at the expense of others,” he said.

He cited as examples of China’s aggression, such as its sinking of Vietnamese vessels and escorting Chinese fishing fleets into exclusive economic zones of Indonesia and the Philippines. He called the actions of the “Communist Party’s attempt to reshape and undermine the international order that has benefited nations large and small.”

The Chinese Communist Party intends to complete the modernization of its armed forces by 2035 and is investing in long-range, autonomous and unmanned submarines it believes can be a “cost-effective counter to American naval power,” he said.

**NCO killed when security truck runs into entrance of exchange**

**By Chad Garland**

A 17-year Army veteran and father of two was killed when he was hit by a security patrol truck that ran into the entrance of the Navy Exchange store at Naval Air Station Key West’s Signabee Park Annex this week.

Sgt. 1st Class Hector Delgado Ortiz, 35, a logistics soldier based at Fort Bragg, N.C., was on temporary duty for a site visit to the Special Forces Underwater Operations School at the Florida base when he was killed in the accident Monday, base spokeswoman Trice Denny said Friday.

The security force civilian, who was injured in the incident, was taken by ambulance to Lower Keys Medical Center, NAS Key West said in a statement. The civilian was released Wednesday, Denny said in a statement.

The soldier and the patrolman were the only people involved in the accident, which happened in an area with a speed limit of 5 mph, she said.

Delgado Ortiz was assigned to 2nd Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, the Army said. The school oversees the dive school on base, which runs the seven-week Special Forces Combat Diver Qualification Course.

He had a “long history of success” and was respected throughout the special operations logistics community, having served at 1st Special Forces Command, the Joint Special Operations Command and the 528th Sustainment Brigade, the school said in a statement.

Delgado Ortiz is survived by his wife, Nairilys, and sons Elijah and Joshua, the command said.

The exchange and the commission-ary were shut down after the accident.
2 measures aim to prevent vet suicides

By Nikki Wentling
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — House and Senate lawmakers reached a deal this week that could pave the way for both chambers to approve two sweeping measures that aim to help prevent veteran suicides.

The House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs sent one of the bills — the Veterans’ COMPACT Act — to the House floor Thursday and awaits commitment from the Senate that it would also approve the measure, said Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif. In return, the House would vote on the Senate’s bill, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act, Takano said.

The Senate bill, which has the support of the White House, Department of Veterans Affairs and many veterans service organizations, would establish a grant program and allow up to $750,000 to be awarded to state and local organizations that provide suicide prevention services to veterans and their families.

It also mandates the VA provide health care to all veterans for one year after they transition from active duty — building into law an initiative President Donald Trump expressed support for in 2018.


Since the legislation passed the Senate in August, Moran, Tester, veterans organizations and VA Secretary Robert Wilkie have urged the House to schedule a vote. Takano, the chairman of the House VA committee, fought to add a host of House measures to the bill.

The COMPACT Act must still be approved by the Senate. The House is expected to vote on the COMPACT Act and the John Scott Hannon Act next week, Takano said. The John Scott Hannon Act would then be sent to the White House for Trump’s signature.

The COMPACT Act must still be approved by the Senate.

Twitter: @nikkiwentling

Former doctor at VA pleads guilty to abuse

By Rose L. Thayer
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — A former Department of Veterans Affairs doctor working in West Virginia pleaded guilty Thursday to charges that he sexually assaulted veterans under the guise of medical treatment, according to the Justice Department.

Jonathan Yates, 51, pleaded guilty to three counts of depriving veterans of their civil rights at a hearing Thursday before U.S. District Judge Frank W. Volk in the Southern District of West Virginia. Yates admitted in court that he inappropriately touched veterans seeking medical treatment, though the doctor acted without a legitimate medical purpose.

The allegations emerged from his 14-month stint at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Beckley, W.Va., where the victims were seeking treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic pain and anxiety.

“This doctor abused his position of trust by preying on veterans who came to him for medical treatment,” Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband of the Civil Rights Division said in a statement. “As this prosecution demonstrates, he will now be held accountable for using his position as a VA physician to deceive and molest his patients.”

Yates is to be sentenced Jan. 4. He faces a statutory maximum sentence of 30 years in prison, according to the news release.

A criminal complaint against Yates was filed in February and he was indicted three months later on five counts of depriving veterans of their civil rights and two counts of abusive sexual conduct. Between September 2018 and February 2019, Yates examined six male patients and sexually molested them during their appointments, according to the court documents.

Yates, who served as director of the facility’s Whole Health Clinic from about April 2018 to June 2019, is a doctor of osteopathic medicine and is trained in osteopathic manipulative therapy, which involves hands-on techniques similar to those used by chiropractors.

The bill appropriates $174 million to the VA for 2021 through 2025.

Eisenhower memorial dedicated in DC

David Eisenhower, grandson of former president Dwight D. Eisenhower, speaks during the Eisenhower Memorial dedication ceremony in Washington on Thursday.

Designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, the memorial honors Eisenhower, who was the general in command of allied forces in Europe during World War II, a U.S. president and one of the most notable and successful leaders of the last century.

FROM FRONT PAGE

One of the government-appointed peace negotiators, Fawzia Koofi, a strong, outspoken proponent of women’s rights, was shot last month in Afghanistan, but escaped serious injury and attended the opening of negotiations last weekend.

The Taliban quickly denied responsibility and Khalilzad again warned of the dangers to the process.

The U.S. has said that perhaps one of the most dangerous extremist groups operating in Afghanistan is the Islamic State affiliate, headquartered in the country’s east and held responsible for some of the most recent attacks. The ISIS affiliate has declared war on minority Shiite Muslims and has claimed credit for horrific attacks targeting them.

The United Nations, as well as Afghanistan’s many international allies, have stressed the need for any peace plan to protect the rights of women and minorities. Negotiations are expected to be difficult and protracted and will also include constitutional changes, disarming the tens of thousands of the Taliban as well as militias loyal to warlords, some of whom are allied with the government.

The advances for women made since 2001 have been important. Women are now members of parliament, girls have the right to education, women are in the workforce and their rights have been enshrined in the constitution. Women are also seen on television, playing sports and winning science fairs.

But the gains are fragile, and their implementation has been erratic, largely unseen in rural areas where most Afghans still live.

The 2018 Women, Peace and Security Index rated Afghanistan as the second worst place in the world to be a woman, after Syria. Only 16% of the labor force are women, one of the lowest rates in the world, and half of Afghanistans women have had four years or less of education, according to the report, which was compiled by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the Peace Research Institute of Oslo. Only around half of school-aged girls go to school, and only 19% of girls under 15 are literate, according to the U.N. children’s agency.

Nearly 60% of girls are married before they are 19, on average between 15 and 16 years old, to spouses selected by their parents, according to UNICEF.

Ustil now, parliament has been unable to ratify a bill on the protection of women.

There are also Islamic hardliners among the politically powerful in Kabul, including Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, who is the inspiration behind the Philippine terrorist group Abu Sayyaf, and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a U.S.-designated militant who made peace with President Ashraf Ghani’s government in 2016.
Health workers collect a nasal swab sample to test for COVID-19 in Hyderabad, India, on Thursday.

India’s coronavirus cases jump by another 96K; little sign of slowing

Several U.S. bases in Japan have reported new cases of the coronavirus, according to a post Friday on the base Facebook page. That person is still in isolation and being monitored by Navy medical professionals, according to the post. Yokosuka has four active cases, according to the post.

Masaki Kuran A/JAP

UN food chief urges rich to help millions avoid starvation

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The World Food Program chief warned Thursday that millions of people are closer to starvation because of the deadly combination of conflict, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic and called on donor nations and billionaires to help feed them and ensure their survival.

U.N. program’s chief David Beasley told the U.N. Security Council that the response to the pandemic, according to metro data. The city has exceeded 100 new cases every day since Tuesday. It last reported more than 200 patients in one day, 226, on Sept. 12, according to data from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

Several U.S. bases are in or close to Tokyo, but U.S. personnel are generally prohibited from visiting the city center because of the virus.

Tokyo has recorded 23,828 cases during the pandemic, according to metro data. Japan has had 77,099 cases and 1,473 deaths due to coronavirus, as of Thursday, according to the World Health Organization.

The clusters prompted those commands to increase their risk levels from moderate to substantial after a period of relative calm in June.

All Navy installations in the region, from Okinawa to Diego Garcia, and all Marine, Army and Air Force bases on Okinawa are now under a moderate risk of coronavirus.

Beasley said. “It’s time for those who have the most to step up, to help those who have the least in this extraordinary time in world history,” Beasley said.

“We have the chance to chart the course for the entire Navy,” Rear Adm. Brian Fort said in the video.

Standing in the way of achieving condition Alpha are the 1% who don’t comply with coronavirus restrictions, he said.

There is still no room for the 1%.

By way of example, Beasley cited viral clusters that arose at Marine Corps bases in Okinawa and at Yokosuka.

The clusters prompted those commands to increase their risk levels from moderate to substantial after a period of relative calm in June.

All Navy installations in the region, from Okinawa to Diego Garcia, and all Marine, Army and Air Force bases on Okinawa are now under a moderate risk of coronavirus.

Beasley said. “It’s time for those who have the most to step up, to help those who have the least in this extraordinary time in world history,” Beasley said.

“We have the chance to chart the course for the entire Navy,” Rear Adm. Brian Fort said in the video.

Standing in the way of achieving condition Alpha are the 1% who don’t comply with coronavirus restrictions, he said.

There is still no room for the 1%.

By way of example, Beasley cited viral clusters that arose at Marine Corps bases in Okinawa and at Yokosuka.

The clusters prompted those commands to increase their risk levels from moderate to substantial after a period of relative calm in June.

All Navy installations in the region, from Okinawa to Diego Garcia, and all Marine, Army and Air Force bases on Okinawa are now under a moderate risk of coronavirus.

Beasley said. “It’s time for those who have the most to step up, to help those who have the least in this extraordinary time in world history,” Beasley said.

“We have the chance to chart the course for the entire Navy,” Rear Adm. Brian Fort said in the video.

Standing in the way of achieving condition Alpha are the 1% who don’t comply with coronavirus restrictions, he said.

There is still no room for the 1%.

By way of example, Beasley cited viral clusters that arose at Marine Corps bases in Okinawa and at Yokosuka.

The clusters prompted those commands to increase their risk levels from moderate to substantial after a period of relative calm in June.

All Navy installations in the region, from Okinawa to Diego Garcia, and all Marine, Army and Air Force bases on Okinawa are now under a moderate risk of coronavirus.

Beasley said. “It’s time for those who have the most to step up, to help those who have the least in this extraordinary time in world history,” Beasley said.

“We have the chance to chart the course for the entire Navy,” Rear Adm. Brian Fort said in the video.

Standing in the way of achieving condition Alpha are the 1% who don’t comply with coronavirus restrictions, he said.

There is still no room for the 1%.

By way of example, Beasley cited viral clusters that arose at Marine Corps bases in Okinawa and at Yokosuka.

The clusters prompted those commands to increase their risk levels from moderate to substantial after a period of relative calm in June.

All Navy installations in the region, from Okinawa to Diego Garcia, and all Marine, Army and Air Force bases on Okinawa are now under a moderate risk of coronavirus.

Beasley said. “It’s time for those who have the most to step up, to help those who have the least in this extraordinary time in world history,” Beasley said.

“We have the chance to chart the course for the entire Navy,” Rear Adm. Brian Fort said in the video.

Standing in the way of achieving condition Alpha are the 1% who don’t comply with coronavirus restrictions, he said.

There is still no room for the 1%.

By way of example, Beasley cited viral clusters that arose at Marine Corps bases in Okinawa and at Yokosuka.

The clusters prompted those commands to increase their risk levels from moderate to substantial after a period of relative calm in June.

All Navy installations in the region, from Okinawa to Diego Garcia, and all Marine, Army and Air Force bases on Okinawa are now under a moderate risk of coronavirus.

Beasley said. “It’s time for those who have the most to step up, to help those who have the least in this extraordinary time in world history,” Beasley said.

“We have the chance to chart the course for the entire Navy,” Rear Adm. Brian Fort said in the video.

Standing in the way of achieving condition Alpha are the 1% who don’t comply with coronavirus restrictions, he said.

There is still no room for the 1%.
WASHINGTON — The House voted Thursday to condemnracism against Asian Americans tied to the coronavirus outbreak, approving a Democratic resolution on a mostly party-line vote. Republicans called the legislation an election-year effort to criticize President Donald Trump and “woke culture on steroids.”

The resolution, approved 243-160, allows all public officials to condemn anti-Asian sentiment and to investigate hate crimes after a rise in aggression and violence from those blaming people of Asian descent for the pandemic. The measure does not name Trump but notes inflammatory terms used by him and other Republicans — including “Chinese Virus,” “Wuhan Virus,” and “Kung Flu” — that they have perpetuated an anti-Asian stigma.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that “at the same time that the coronavirus pandemic is broken out, so too has a disturbing epidemic of hate and discrimination against Asian Americans and Asian immigrants, including physical and verbal attacks and a phenomenon called ‘Asian blaming.’” She alleged Trump for trying to divert attention from Russia’s meddling in elections to denigrate China. Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., called Republican opposition to the resolution “disgraceful.”

“The president is fueling racism and inspiring violent attacks on Asian Americans and Asian immigrants,” Takano said. “Trump has often used the term ‘kung flu’ on the campaign trail as he has tried to turn fear to and the virus’s origins in China amid criticism of his response to the pandemic.”

Republicans said Trump was turning his ire toward China’s government and not Asian Americans and Asian immigrants. “Takano said Trump has used the term ‘kung flu’ on the campaign trail as he has tried to turn fear to and the virus’s origins in China amid criticism of his response to the pandemic.”

The House condemned racism against Asian Americans.

**Florida**

KEY WEST — Sloppy Joe’s, the iconic Key West bar that Ernest Hemingway frequented during the 1930s, reopened Thursday after nearly six months away because of the coronavirus pandemic.

By noon, the bar had already reached the 50% capacity allowed by law, including three Ernest Hemingway look-alikes. Concerns about COVID-19 had forced cancellation of the 40th Ernest Hemingway Look-Alike Contest held July during the subtropical island’s annual Hemingway Days festival.

Charlie Boice, who won the contest in 2015, traveled nearly 250 miles from Jupiter, Fla., to attend.

“Coming back to Sloppy Joe’s is a wonderful thing,” Boice said. “For most people, it’s just a destination for a destination. It’s nice to see our tourists back on vacation. But for the Papas, this is home.”

The mandatoruqantize now have been ordered for 25 frractity and sorority houses and 14 large rental houses in East Lansing. The houses have known cases or exposure to COVID-19.

The mandate, which only applies to students and others living in the buildings, cannot exist except for medical care or necessities that cannot be delivered.

East Lansing has experienced a 315% increase in confirmed virus cases since Sept. 1 and that nearly entirely is driven by an outbreak among Michigan State students that directly accounts for 80% of all new cases, according to the health department.

On Saturday, the health department said at least a third of the 342 people affiliated with the university testing positive for the virus since Aug. 24 attended parties or social gatherings. At least one-third of the gatherings were associated with fraternities or sororities.

**Mississippi**

JACKSON — Voting rights groups filed papers Thursday asking a federal judge to temporarily lift some limitations in Mississippi’s absentee voting process. They said doing so would ease some safety concerns during the coronavirus pandemic.

Mississippi requires absentee-ballot applications to be notarized. The state also requires most people to provide an excuse to vote absentee, such as being out of town on Election Day. The groups are asking a judge to block those two requirements, which they say are unconstitutional. They are also asking a judge to provide a clear process for what happens when election officials say they see inconsistencies in a voter’s signature.

The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the Southern Poverty Law Center made the new request Thursday in a lawsuit they originally filed Aug. 27 on behalf of three Mississippi residents, the League of Women Voters of Mississippi and the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP.

**New Mexico**

SANTA FE — New Mexico children can practice sports and develop skills while in small groups, residents will soon be able to camp at state parks under changes being made to the state’s public health order. 

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said Thursday the updated order also permits visits to pumpkin patches and that her administration plans to issue guidance for corn mazes, haunted houses and the operators of other autumn activities as fall approaches.

The governor said the state is trending in the right direction but that more can be done to move the state to a level where schools can resume in-person learning and more businesses can reopen.

“We are not there yet, but that has to be the goal,” she said. “So the more we do as individuals, the more opportunity it is for all New Mexicans to have access to the critical required services and the businesses that they desire. New Mexico businesses deserve our effort and attention here and so do our kids.”

The updated health order will remain in effect through mid-October. It still mandates that people wear masks or face coverings in all public spaces and competitive contact sports remain off-limits.

**House condemns racism against Asian Americans**

The House condemned racism against Asian Americans tied to the coronavirus outbreak, approving a Democratic resolution on a mostly party-line vote. Republicans called the legislation an election-year effort to criticize President Donald Trump and “woke culture on steroids.”

The resolution, approved 243-160, allows all public officials to condemn anti-Asian sentiment and to investigate hate crimes after a rise in aggression and violence from those blaming people of Asian descent for the pandemic. The measure does not name Trump but notes inflammatory terms used by him and other Republicans — including “Chinese Virus,” “Wuhan Virus,” and “Kung Flu” — that they have perpetuated an anti-Asian stigma.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that “at the same time that the coronavirus pandemic is broken out, so too has a disturbing epidemic of hate and discrimination against Asian Americans and Asian immigrants, including physical and verbal attacks and a phenomenon called ‘Asian blaming.’” She alleged Trump for trying to divert attention from Russia’s meddling in elections to denigrate China. Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., called Republican opposition to the resolution “disgraceful.”

“The president is fueling racism and inspiring violent attacks on Asian Americans and Asian immigrants,” Takano said. “Trump has often used the term ‘kung flu’ on the campaign trail as he has tried to turn fear to and the virus’s origins in China amid criticism of his response to the pandemic.”

The House condemned racism against Asian Americans.
Focus placed on rescue, cleanup in wake of Sally

Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Rescuers on the Gulf Coast used boats and high-water vehicles to reach people cut off by floodwaters in the aftermath of Hurricane Sally, as others struggled to recover.

Across southern Alabama and the Florida Panhandle, homeowners and businesses began cleaning up, and officials inspected bridges and highways for safety, a day after Sally rolled through with 105 mph winds, a surge of seawater and 1 to 2½ feet of rain in many places before it began to recede.

In hard-hit Pensacola and surrounding Escambia County, where Sally's floodwaters had coursed through downtown streets and lapped at car door handles on Wednesday before receding, crowds carried out at least 400 rescues in Escambia County by such means as high-water vehicles, boats and water scooters, authorities said. Rescuers focused their efforts on Innerarity Point, a narrow strip of land close to Pensacola that is home to waterfront homes and businesses. Floodwaters covered the only road out.

Richard Wittig and his family were among scores of people hemmed in by floodwaters on an island at the tip of the point. Two generators powered his house.

"If I didn't have a working generator, we'd be dead. Nobody can get in or out," said Wittig, 77. He said he and his son rely on oxygen machines to stay alive.

The Florida National Guard said it had deployed about 500 soldiers and airmen to help local authorities evacuate 113 people, though it did not say when and where the rescues took place.

In Alabama, on both sides of Mobile Bay, National Guard soldiers from high-water evacuation teams used big trucks Thursday to rescue at least 35 people, authorities said.

A county rescue group based on Marcos Island, Fla., known as the Marcos Patriots, received three calls for help, including from an 80-year-old woman in Gulf Shores, Ala., whose roof had blown off.

When a rescue team arrived, "she was safe and sound with a neighbor but her house was destroyed," said group co-founder Erin Mia Milichman.

In Alabama, a second death from the storm was reported Friday. Baldwin County coroner Dr. Brian Pierce said the death in the Foley area was and of someone who was involved in storm cleanup. He gave no other details on the death.

Another person in the county died Wednesday morning in an apparent drowning as the hurricane was blowing through.

And in Florida, authorities were looking for a missing kayaker who was feared dead, Escambia County Sheriff David Morgan said. The U.S. Coast Guard is looking for the man who went out on the day of the storm, he said.

"We've been telling everyone how fortunate we are about not having any deaths. We may have our first hurricane-related death as a result of it," the sheriff said.

In Orange Beach, Ala., Janice Sullivan swore she would never ride out a hurricane again. She and her daughter huddled in a second-floor bathroom as Sally blew ashore.

"You could hear everything hitting the house," she said. "You could hear the house moving back and forth. It was literally meaning and cracking."

Meanwhile far east in the Atlantic, Subtropical Storm Alpha formed. It is only the second time the Hurricane Center has had to use the Greek alphabet after running out of its traditional storm names. The only time they had done this before was in the deadly 2005 hurricane season, during which Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans.

Alpha came just hours after Tropical Storm Wilfred formed in the eastern Atlantic, using the last of the traditional names for tropical systems. That storm's maximum sustained winds Friday morning were near 40 mph. Slight strengthening was possible during the day but weakening should start over the weekend, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said.

Wilfred was centered about 630 miles west-southwest of the Cape Verde Islands and was moving west-northwest near 17 mph.

The prior record for the earliest 21st named storm was Wilma on October 3, 2005, according to Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach. Sally sped up late Thursday, moving at 15 mph compared to its previous crawl of 3 and 5 mph, but was still dumping heavy rains in southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina, where forecasters also said there was a chance of tornadoes. The storm was expected to dump as much as 8 inches in parts of the Carolinas and southern Virginia, prompting warnings of flash flooding and moderate river flooding. As much as 8 inches of rain fell in central Georgia on Thursday.

Firefighter killed by blaze sparked by gender-reveal stunt

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — A firefighter was killed battling the El Dorado Fire in San Bernardino County, which has burned nearly 20,000 acres.

Few details were immediately available about the death.

"The name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin. Our deepest sympathies are with the family, friends and fellow firefighters during this time," the U.S. Forest Service said in a statement released Friday.

The fire broke out Sept. 7 near Yucaipa. Officials said it was caused by a smoke-emitting pyrotechnic device that was part of a gender-reveal party in a park. Such devices typically shoot off blue or pink smoke to signal the gender of an expected child.

The cause of death is under investigation.

Meanwhile in L.A. County, the Bobcat fire opened a new dangerous front as it barreled toward homes in the Antelope Valley on Thursday, prompting new evacuations and further straining exhausted firefighters.

For 12 days, the fire has menaced the San Gabriel Mountains, including foothill neighborhoods in Monrovia, Arcadia and other cities, as well as the Mt. Wilson Observatory, where a team of firefighters is standing guard to protect the historic structures.

But Thursday, officials issued evacuation orders for areas toward the fire's northern boundaries after the blaze jumped Highway 2 in the Angeles National Forest, fueled by canyon winds, officials said.

Evacuation warnings were issued Thursday evening on a different side of the fire for Wrightwood and Pinon Hills in San Bernardino County.

As of Thursday night, the fire had grown to about 35,000 acres, with containment at 9% — mostly along the southern and eastern edges of the blaze.

Residents in parts of the Antelope Valley were ordered to evacuate as the fire moved toward Juniper Hills and burned downhill toward Devil's Punchbowl county park, officials said Thursday.

About 60 deputys have been dispatched to the area, along with some California Highway Patrol officers, to help with evacuations, said Capt. Andy Berg of the Sheriff's Department's San Dimas station.

The Bobcat fire, which started Sept. 6, has grown steadily in multiple directions. Officials say the spread is caused by a combination of bone-dry vegetation and rugged topography that makes it hard to fight the fire.
Biden criticizes virus response as ‘criminal’

Associated Press

MOOSIC, Pa. — Joe Biden went after President Donald Trump again and again over his handling of COVID-19, calling Trump’s downplaying of the pandemic “criminal” and his administration “totally irresponsible.”

Biden faced a dozen-plus questions about the coronavirus and a potential vaccine in the town hall from moderator Anderson Cooper and audience members. The pandemic was not just the main topic of the night — it was the cause of the unusual format of the event: a drive-in with 35 cars outside PNC Field.

The cars were parked around the stage, each with small groups of people standing outside them or leaning or sitting on the hoods to watch Cooper and Biden onstage. The network erected blue and red spotlights over the dirt and gravel parking lot to make it easier to see, and each parking space was marked off with white chalk in large rectangles to ensure that each group stayed more than 6 feet apart.

The town hall was the first time that Biden had faced live, unscripted questions from voters since winning the nomination. Trump participated in a town hall Tuesday in an auditorium in Philadelphia.

Biden, meanwhile, has promised to be a “fact-checker on the stage” with Trump but has said he doesn’t want to get drawn into a “brawl” with the Republican. On Thursday, Biden said he was beginning to prepare for the upcoming debate by reviewing Trump’s remarks and preparing his own.

Biden was also pressed on his stance on the Green New Deal, the sweeping proposal from progressives in Congress that calls for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2030. Biden’s proposal doesn’t go as far, but it does aim to reduce emissions to zero by 2050 and has a goal of achieving an entirely carbon pollution-free power sector by 2025.

Biden interrupted a questioner who suggested his climate plan embraces the Green New Deal to insist, “No, it doesn’t,” but when asked by the moderator if he supports the proposal, he said, “I don’t think it’s too much.”

Still, Biden added, “I have my own deal,” which he noted the Democratic Party has incorporated as part of its platform.

The format of Biden’s event was a stark reminder of the issue that’s been a central focus of Biden’s campaign — that the pandemic rages on, affecting Americans’ lives in ways large and small, and that stronger leadership in White House could have eased the crisis. More than 195,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.

Trump heats up culture war in appeal to Wisconsin voters

Associated Press

MOINEE, Wis. — President Donald Trump stepped up his rhetoric on cultural issues, aiming to boost enthusiasm among rural Wisconsin voters as he tries to repeat his path to victory four years ago.

Making his fifth visit to the pivotal battleground state this year, Trump views success in the state’s least-populated counties as critical to another term. He held a rally Thursday evening in Mosinee, in central Wisconsin, an area of the state that shifted dramatically toward Republicans in 2016, enabling Trump to overcome even greater deficits in urban and suburban parts of the state.

Trump has increasingly used his public appearances to elevate cultural issues important to his generally whiter and older base, as he hones his campaign on turning out his core supporters rather than focusing on winning over a narrow slice of undecided voters. In Mosinee, he called for a statute to ban burning the American flag in protest — a freedom protected by the Supreme Court — and criticized sports players and leagues for allowing demonstrations against police brutality.

“President Trump’s remarks and preparing his own. Biden was also pressed on his stance on the Green New Deal, the sweeping proposal from progressives in Congress that calls for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2030. Biden’s proposal doesn’t go as far, but it does aim to reduce emissions to zero by 2050 and has a goal of achieving an entirely carbon pollution-free power sector by 2025.

Biden interrupted a questioner who suggested his climate plan embraces the Green New Deal to insist, “No, it doesn’t,” but when asked by the moderator if he supports the proposal, he said, “I don’t think it’s too much.”

Still, Biden added, “I have my own deal,” which he noted the Democratic Party has incorporated as part of its platform.

The format of Biden’s event was a stark reminder of the issue that’s been a central focus of Biden’s campaign — that the pandemic rages on, affecting Americans’ lives in ways large and small, and that stronger leadership in White House could have eased the crisis. More than 195,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.

President Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally at Central Wisconsin Airport, on Thursday, in Mosinee, Wis.

Trump’s remarks and preparing his own. Biden was also pressed on his stance on the Green New Deal, the sweeping proposal from progressives in Congress that calls for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2030. Biden’s proposal doesn’t go as far, but it does aim to reduce emissions to zero by 2050 and has a goal of achieving an entirely carbon pollution-free power sector by 2025.

Biden interrupted a questioner who suggested his climate plan embraces the Green New Deal to insist, “No, it doesn’t,” but when asked by the moderator if he supports the proposal, he said, “I don’t think it’s too much.”

Still, Biden added, “I have my own deal,” which he noted the Democratic Party has incorporated as part of its platform.

The format of Biden’s event was a stark reminder of the issue that’s been a central focus of Biden’s campaign — that the pandemic rages on, affecting Americans’ lives in ways large and small, and that stronger leadership in White House could have eased the crisis. More than 195,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.

President Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally at Central Wisconsin Airport, on Thursday, in Mosinee, Wis.

Trump’s remarks and preparing his own. Biden was also pressed on his stance on the Green New Deal, the sweeping proposal from progressives in Congress that calls for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2030. Biden’s proposal doesn’t go as far, but it does aim to reduce emissions to zero by 2050 and has a goal of achieving an entirely carbon pollution-free power sector by 2025.

Biden interrupted a questioner who suggested his climate plan embraces the Green New Deal to insist, “No, it doesn’t,” but when asked by the moderator if he supports the proposal, he said, “I don’t think it’s too much.”

Still, Biden added, “I have my own deal,” which he noted the Democratic Party has incorporated as part of its platform.

The format of Biden’s event was a stark reminder of the issue that’s been a central focus of Biden’s campaign — that the pandemic rages on, affecting Americans’ lives in ways large and small, and that stronger leadership in White House could have eased the crisis. More than 195,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.

President Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally at Central Wisconsin Airport, on Thursday, in Mosinee, Wis.

Trump’s remarks and preparing his own. Biden was also pressed on his stance on the Green New Deal, the sweeping proposal from progressives in Congress that calls for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2030. Biden’s proposal doesn’t go as far, but it does aim to reduce emissions to zero by 2050 and has a goal of achieving an entirely carbon pollution-free power sector by 2025.

Biden interrupted a questioner who suggested his climate plan embraces the Green New Deal to insist, “No, it doesn’t,” but when asked by the moderator if he supports the proposal, he said, “I don’t think it’s too much.”

Still, Biden added, “I have my own deal,” which he noted the Democratic Party has incorporated as part of its platform.

The format of Biden’s event was a stark reminder of the issue that’s been a central focus of Biden’s campaign — that the pandemic rages on, affecting Americans’ lives in ways large and small, and that stronger leadership in White House could have eased the crisis. More than 195,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.

President Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally at Central Wisconsin Airport, on Thursday, in Mosinee, Wis.

Trump’s remarks and preparing his own. Biden was also pressed on his stance on the Green New Deal, the sweeping proposal from progressives in Congress that calls for achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2030. Biden’s proposal doesn’t go as far, but it does aim to reduce emissions to zero by 2050 and has a goal of achieving an entirely carbon pollution-free power sector by 2025.

Biden interrupted a questioner who suggested his climate plan embraces the Green New Deal to insist, “No, it doesn’t,” but when asked by the moderator if he supports the proposal, he said, “I don’t think it’s too much.”

Still, Biden added, “I have my own deal,” which he noted the Democratic Party has incorporated as part of its platform.

The format of Biden’s event was a stark reminder of the issue that’s been a central focus of Biden’s campaign — that the pandemic rages on, affecting Americans’ lives in ways large and small, and that stronger leadership in White House could have eased the crisis. More than 195,000 Americans have died of the coronavirus.
US to ban downloads, use of TikTok, WeChat

WASHINGTON — The U.S. will ban the downloading of the Chinese apps TikTok and WeChat on Sunday, with a total ban on the use of the latter, citing national security and data privacy concerns.

A total ban on the use of TikTok will follow on Nov. 12, but Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said early Friday on Fox Business News that access to that app may be possible if certain safeguards are put in place.

“At the President’s direction, we have taken significant action to combat China’s malicious collection of American citizens’ personal data, while promoting our national values, democratic rules-based norms, and aggressive enforcement of U.S. laws and regulations,” Ross said in a prepared statement.

The government order also raises questions about California tech giant Oracle’s recent deal to take over U.S. operations of TikTok, a requirement by the Trump administration for the app to continue operating in the U.S.

Details of the Oracle-TikTok deal were sketchy at best. Oracle has agreed to buy TikTok’s American operations for a “staggering” $1 billion, Ross said.

Several high school districts have threatened to sue TikTok if they follow federal funding from Connecticut’s Education Department to deal with transgender female athletes.

Judge blocks ‘politically motivated’ USPS changes

SEATTLE — A judge on Thursday blocked controversial Postal Service changes that have slowed mail nationwide, calling them “a politically motivated attack” on the efficiency of the Postal Service before the November election.

Judge Stanley Bastian in Yakima, Wash., said he was issuing a nationwide preliminary injunction sought by 14 states that sued the Trump administration and the U.S. Postal Service.

The states challenged the Postal Service’s so-called “leave behind” policy, where trucks have been leaving postal facilities on time regardless of whether there is more mail to load. They also sought to force the Postal Service to treat election mail as first-class mail.

The judge noted after a hearing that Trump had repeatedly attacked voting by mail by making unfounded claims that it is rife with fraud. Many more voters are expected to vote by mail this November because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the states have expressed concern that delays might result in voters not receiving ballots or registration forms in time.

The states have demonstrated the defendants are involved in a politically motivated attack on the efficiency of the Postal Service,” Bastian said.

He also said the changes created “a substantial possibility many voters will be disenfranchised.”

Bastian, an appointee of former President Barack Obama, issued a written order after Thursday that closely tracked the relief sought by the states. It ordered the Postal Service to stop implementing the “leave behind” policy, to treat all election mail as first-class mail rather than as slower-moving categories, to reinstall any mail processing machines needed to ensure the prompt handling of election mail and to inform its employees about the requirements of his injunction.

Postal Service spokesman Dave Partenheimer said the organization is reviewing its legal options, but “there should be no doubt that the Postal Service is ready and committed to handle whatever volume of election mail it receives.”

Lee Moak, a member of the USPS Board of Governors, called the notion any changes were politically motivated “completely and utterly without merit.”

Following a national uproar, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, a major donor to President Donald Trump and the GOP, announced he was suspending some changes — including the removal of iconic blue mailboxes in many cities and the decommissioning of mail processing machines.

But other changes remained in place, and the states — including the battlegrounds of Michigan, Wisconsin, Nevada and Georgia — pushed the court to block them. Led by Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, the states said the Postal Service made the changes without first bringing them to the Postal Regulatory Commission for public comment and an advisory opinion, as required by federal law. They also said the changes interfered with their constitutional authority to administer their elections.

The states conceded that mail delays already exist since the service cuts first created a national uproar in July, but they said on-time deliveries remain well below their prior levels, meaning millions of pieces of mail that would otherwise arrive on-time no longer do.

Further, they cited research from information technology consultant Myor Urizar-Hunter, who helped ABC News track the movement of the USPS changes, noting that 78% of the machines slated for removal were in counties won by Democrats Hillary Clinton in 2016.

Conn. schools’ federal funding threatened over transgender athlete policy

HARTFORD, Conn. — The U.S. Department of Education is threatening to withhold some federal funding from Connecticut school districts if they follow a state policy that allows transgender female athletes to compete as girls in high school sports.

In response to a complaint filed last year by several Connecticut female track athletes who argued that two transgender female runners had an unfair physical advantage, the federal agency’s office for civil rights determined in May that Connecticut’s policy violates the civil rights of athletes who are not transgender.

School districts including New Haven, as well as the Capitol Region Education Council, were asked around the beginning of September to sign a document to receive grants from a program for magnet schools that states they will “not participate in any interscholastic sporting events” unless the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference changes its policy on transgender athletes.

The Federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program Grants are worth about $3 million a year to New Haven and the education council.

The athletic conference has said its policy is designed to comply with a state law that requires all students to be treated as the gender with which they identify.

But the U.S. Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights argues the policy violates the civil rights of girls who are not transgender under Title IX, the federal law that guarantees equal opportunities in education.

New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker said his city could lose the final two years of funding for its five-year magnet school federal grant when the federal fiscal year ends this month.

“IT would basically mean that New Haven schoolchildren would have less access to educational opportunities,” he said. “There are teachers and administrative staff that support our program that are fully funded by this grant.”

In September, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference said they have no intention of signing the document.

New Haven has threatened to take away funds that support Hartford area children during a pandemic, and we will fight to keep the money in our community,” he said. “However, no amount of money will deter us from accepting all children for who they are and providing equitable access to programs and services.”

Connecticut Attorney General William Tong declined to say how the state will respond but noted that the prior level, meaning millions of pieces of mail that would otherwise arrive on-time no longer do.

“Neither federal law nor Connecticut law tolerates discrimination against transgender students,” he said. “Transgender girls are girls, and the Office of the Attorney General will continue to protect every woman and girl in this state against discrimination.”
Belarus’ borders remain open despite president’s closure threat

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko addresses a women’s forum in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko addresses a women’s forum in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday.

**Chinese warplanes fly near Taiwan during envoy’s visit**

Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — China’s military sent 18 planes including fighter jets over the Taiwan Strait in an unusually large show of force, the island’s defense ministry said, hinting it held a day of closed-door meetings on the self-governing island claimed by China.

Under Secretary of State Keith Krach, who handles the economic growth, energy and the environment portfolio, met with Taiwan’s minister of economic affairs and vice premier. He also met with business leaders over lunch and was the first U.S. envoy to attend a memorial service for Taiwan's minister of economic affairs for the U.S.-led coalition without transporting equipment headed for the U.S.-led coalition without transporting equipment headed for the U.S.-led coalition without transporting equipment headed for the U.S.-led coalition without transporting equipment headed for

**Roadside bomb damages facade of English-language institute in Iraq**

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — An improvised explosive device blew up outside an English-language institute in southern Iraq early Friday without causing any casualties, Iraqi police said in a statement, amid a recent spate in attacks targeting the American presence in Iraq.

The school is not formally affiliated with any institutions in the U.S. It was believed to have been targeted because it offered English-language lessons to Iraqis. No Americans were employed there.

Attacks targeting the U.S. presence have been on the rise since Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi traveled to Washington last month to conclude strategic talks. Rocket attacks routinely target the heavily fortified Green Zone, the seat of the Iraqi government, where the U.S. Embassy is located.

Roadside bombs also often hit convoys carrying materials destined for the U.S. military. Hours before Friday’s attack on the English-language center, a roadside bomb targeted an Iraqi convoy transporting equipment headed for the U.S.-led coalition without causing any losses.

Last week, a roadside bomb targeted a British diplomatic convoy in Baghdad, without causing any casualties.

**Roadside bomb damages facade of English-language institute in Iraq**

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — An improvised explosive device blew up outside an English-language institute in southern Iraq early Friday without causing any casualties, Iraqi police said in a statement, amid a recent spate in attacks targeting the American presence in Iraq.

The school is not formally affiliated with any institutions in the U.S. It was believed to have been targeted because it offered English-language lessons to Iraqis. No Americans were employed there.

Attacks targeting the U.S. presence have been on the rise since Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi traveled to Washington last month to conclude strategic talks. Rocket attacks routinely target the heavily fortified Green Zone, the seat of the Iraqi government, where the U.S. Embassy is located.

Roadside bombs also often hit convoys carrying materials destined for the U.S. military. Hours before Friday’s attack on the English-language center, a roadside bomb targeted an Iraqi convoy transporting equipment headed for the U.S.-led coalition without causing any losses.

Last week, a roadside bomb targeted a British diplomatic convoy in Baghdad, without causing any casualties.

Belarus’ borders remain open despite president’s closure threat

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko addresses a women’s forum in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko addresses a women’s forum in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday.

**Belarus’ borders remain open despite president’s closure threat**

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Belarus’ borders with Poland and Lithuania remained open Friday despite the nation’s president declaring they would be closed and accusing the neighboring nations of instigating nearly six weeks of protests against his 26 year of authoritarian leadership.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said late Thursday that he was putting the army on high alert and closing the country’s borders with Lithuania and Poland. Lukashenko has blamed the United States and its allies for fomenting the waves of unrest following his landslide reelection to a sixth term last month, an outcome that protesters in Belarus say resulted from a rigged election.

“We are forced to withdraw troops from the streets, put the army on high alert and close the state border on the west, primarily with Lithuania and Poland,” Lukashenko said while addressing a women’s forum, adding that Belarus’ border with Ukraine also would be strengthened.

But the national Border Guard Service said all border checkpoints remained open, though it said controls and inspections have been strengthened.

A spokesperson for the Polish Border Guard, Agnieszka Golias, said traffic at Poland’s border with Belarus was as busy as usual. Lithuanian authorities also reported no changes.

Lukashenko’s main challenger in the election, former English teacher and political novice Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, dismissed Lukashenko’s claims as part of his efforts to denigrate protesters and to blame foreign influences for the outpouring of anger toward him and calls for his resignation on the streets of Belarus.

“Lukashenko already has tried to scare us with enemies that don’t exist. He has accused peaceful people of being engaged in violence and tried to cast the true patriots as traitors,” Tsikhanouskaya said in a statement. “But his talk yesterday about closing the borders marks a new level of distancing from the reality. It was a talk by a weak person about his own imaginary world.”

She urged Belarusians to ignore Lukashenko’s bluster, emphasizing that “all our neighbors are our friends.”

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Antanas Linkevičius voiced concern over Lukashenko’s statement about beefing up troops on the border.

“This is an inadequate response of an inadequate person to the situation,” he told public broadcaster LRT Radio.

The United States and the European Union have criticized the presidential election as neither free nor fair and urged Lukashenko to start talks with the opposition — a call he has rejected. Washington and Brussels have been pondering sanctions against Belarusian officials for alleged vote-rigging and the violent response to protests.
Patient killed when fire truck hits ambulance

NEW YORK — A heart attack patient was killed Thursday when a fire truck crashed into the ambulance that was carrying him to a Brooklyn hospital, authorities said. The crash involving two Fire Department vehicles happened shortly before 1 a.m. in the Bed- ford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. The fire truck was racing to a fire when it broadsided the ambu-lance, authorities said.

The 59-year-old patient in the ambulance was pronounced dead at the hospital he was being taken to, police said. A female family member who was traveling with the patient was in critical condi-tion at the hospital.

Teen admits pushing log that killed woman

LOGAN — A teenager has admitted helping to push a log off a cliff that struck and killed a man on Thursday near the town of Kellogg.

Jaden Churchheus, 17, pleaded guilty Wednesday to involuntary man-slaughter in the death of Victo-ria Schafer, 44. Under terms of a plea agreement, prosecutors dropped murder and reckless homicide charges against him.

Schafer was taking photos at the foot of the stairs at Old Man's Cave in Hocking Hills State Park on Sept. 2, 2019, when Churchheus and another teen pushed the log, which weighed 74 pounds, off a cliff at the top of the stairs, the Ohio Department of Natural Re-sources said.

Fire at racetrack is considered suspicious

POWNAL — A fire that de-stroyed the grandstand of an abandoned Vermont racetrack is considered suspi-cious, firefighters said.

The Pownal Fire Department says the fire, which was reported late Wednesday and burned into Thursday morning, is suspicious because the former Green Moun-tain Race Track has been aban-doned for years.

No injuries have been reported, but the building is considered a total loss. Firefighters from a number of area departments bat-tled the blaze.

The track opened in 1963 with thoroughbred and harness rac-ing. In the 1970s, it was converted to greyhound racing. It closed in 1994.

Over the years, there were nu-merous, unsuccessful efforts to reopen or redevelop the track.

Officials responding to fire find body in ditch

KELLOGG — Authority-es in rural central Iowa have opened a homicidal investiga-tion after officials responding to a fire in a roadside ditch found a body there.

Officials were called around 5:30 p.m. Wednesday for a fire in a ditch near Kellogg, the Iowa Di-vision of Criminal Investigation said in a news release. Officials responded and quickly extin-guished the flames, then found the body.

The identity of the victim has not yet been released. Police also have not given any information on how the person died, but say they are treating the death as a homicide.

No injuries as blast leaves crater in road

PIEDMONT — A nat-ural gas line explosion in a rural area northwest of Okla-homa City left a massive crater in a roadway, but caused no injuries, officials said Thursday.

The line, owned by Denver-based DCP Midstream, exploded about 8:30 p.m. Wednesday in Piedmont under a road marking the Kingfisher-Canadian County lines and left a crater about 35 feet wide by 20 feet long, accord-ing to Kingfisher Country Emer-gency Management Director Steve Loftis.

“It’s totally impassable,” Loftis said of the two-lane road. “It blew chunks everywhere ... asphalt, dirt.”

The cause of the blast was not immediately known, DCP Mid-stream spokesperson Jeanette Alberg said in a statement.

3 horses diagnosed with equine disease

BATON ROUGE — Louisiana officials say three horses have been diagnosed with Eastern equine encephalitis, and owners who haven’t done so need to get their horses vaccinat-ed against the often fatal disease.

“Mosquitoes are out in force right now. The hot and wet condi-tions exacerbated by storms such as Hurricane Laura, increase the number of mosquitoes that could be carrying diseases," Agriculture and Forestry Commis-sioner Mike Strain said in a news release.

Two of the infected horses are in Lafourche Parish. The third is in Iberville Parish.

There isn’t any human vacci-nation. But Strain said it’s not too late to vaccinate horses, donkeys and mules.

Park has busy August, tourism still down

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK — Yellowstone National Park had its second-busiest August on record but tourism is still down substan-tially this year, park officials said Thursday.

The coronavirus prompted the park’s closure in March and Yel-lowstone’s five entrances opened for spring automobile traffic a few weeks later than usual. The two Wyoming entrances opened May 18, followed by the three Montana entrances June 1.

Park services including some restaurants and lodges gradually reopened over the summer sea-son and much later than usual.

In August, the park had 881,543 recreation visitors, up 7.5% from the year before for the second-busiest August on record. The busiest was August 2017, when tourists flocked to Wyoming to see a solar eclipse, park officials said.

From January through Au-gust, Yellowstone had 2.5 million visitors, down 18% from the same period in 2019.

Woman guilty in scheme to ship military boats

ME BANGOR — The warming Gulf of Maine recorded its hottest single day this summer, reaching 69.85 degrees Fahrenheit.

The reading was taken on Aug. 14 in what’s already one of the fastest-warming bodies of water on the planet, but researchers at Gulf of Maine Research Institute only realized this week that it marked a new record, the Bangor Daily News reported.

That was a full degree warmer than the previous record of 68.99 degrees Fahrenheit on Aug. 23, 2012, the newspaper reported.

To determine the gulf’s aver-age temperature, scientists use readings taken by various meth-ods, at multiple locations, and at different times of day.

From wire reports

Soaking it in

Families enjoy mild water temperatures at Lake Michigan along Silver Beach in St. Joseph, Mich., on Wednesday.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

The cause of the blast was not ed against the often fatal disease.

3 horses diagnosed with equine disease

200K

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

200K

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.

THE CENSUS

The worth (in dollars) of counterfeit merchandise a six-month investigation has netted from a store in South Carolina, state officials said.

South Carolina Secretary of State Mark Ham mond said an investigation by local, state and federal agencies began in March into the alleged sale of counterfeit goods by a business called NewImageSC and its operator, Quasheda Parker. At that time, the business was being conducted on Facebook, but eventually grew to include sales at a storefront in Columbia, Hammond said. The counterfeit merchandise included shoes, clothing, sunglasses, jewelry, perfumes and colognes, watches, hats and face masks.
Fall into something new

Food, fitness tips to ease the transition into autumn during the pandemic

Special to The Washington Post

You made bread. You started running. And you organized the junk drawer. Twice. It’s time to try something new.

Nutrition

Soup up your meals

As the temperature drops, soup becomes a warming and healthy way to start a meal. But not just any soup — we’re talking about one brimming with vegetables and even some fruit, where every hearty slurp is filled with immune-supporting vitamins and minerals.

Only about 9% of Americans get enough vegetables daily, making soup a great menu addition. A high-vegetable intake helps reduce the risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and some cancers. While juicing has become a popular way to pound back fruit and veggies quickly, “souping” has two advantages. First, soup recipes tend to favor vegetables over fruit, making them lower in sugar. Second, while juicing eliminates the skin — and fiber — of fruit, soup-making uses whole veggies, so soups are higher in fiber.

Autumn produce, such as kale, carrots, squash and apples, are perfect for soups. Basic recipes are easy. Drizzle oil in a pot and add aromatics, such as onion, shallots and garlic. Add two pounds of vegetables and four to six cups of water or stock. Simmer until vegetables soften, then add salt, herbs and spices to taste. If you prefer creamy soups, the blender is your next step.

Winning combinations include squash and apple; kale, tomato and white bean; and carrot with ginger. Fall offers endless opportunities to experiment.

Make a better pumpkin spice latte

Pumpkin is loaded with vitamin A and makes a nutritious side dish, but it’s more often associated with seasonal indulgences, such as the love-it-or-hate-it pumpkin spice latte, or PSL.

At Starbucks, the PSL is the company’s top-selling seasonal drink. It’s made with milk, sugary syrup, pumpkin puree and spices, and clocks in at 380 calories and 50 grams (nearly 13 teaspoons) of sugar for a 16-ounce grande. In comparison, a four-piece Kit Kat bar has 210 calories and 22 grams (about 6 teaspoons) of sugar.

If you usually order regular coffee and add a teaspoon of sugar, switching to the pumpkin spice latte will add about 360 calories and 12 teaspoons of sugar. So, think of it as an occasional treat — like dessert — rather than something to order daily. If you do indulge often, customize the drink. Ask for it “half-sweet” to reduce the amount of sugar, or save calories by requesting nonfat or almond milk and no whipped cream. A half-sweet, almond milk, hold-the-whipped-cream PSL has about 180 calories.

You can also make a fantastic latte flavored with pumpkin and spices at home. Simply blend coffee and your favorite milk with 2 to 3 tablespoons of canned pumpkin puree and a teaspoon or two of sugar. Sprinkle with pumpkin pie spices: The Starbucks recipe favors cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and clove.

— Cara Rosenbloom

Fitness

Go for a walk, with Nordic poles

Part walking and part cross-country skiing, Nordic pole walking is an exercise well suited for outdoors in the fall. Combining low-impact cardio with an upper-body strength workout, it takes conventional fitness walking to a new level.

“With the activation of stomach, back and arm muscles every time you push through the pole, NPW becomes a full-body workout,” says Jennifer Howey, a master instructor and owner of InsideOut Physiotherapy in Toronto, who offers instructional videos on her website. “It is an excellent cross-trainer and rehabilitation tool.” It’s also fairly affordable, your only outlay is the poles, which run from $35 to $100.

Not only can Nordic pole walking be done with social distancing, it can address some of our pandemic woes. “People are suffering with neck and low-back issues from sitting for extended periods of time,” Howey says. “Nordic pole walking works to correct posture and strengthen posture muscles.”

Judith Klau, 85, of Boston, who is a friend and avid pole walker, has taken her poles out even more frequently since the onset of the pandemic. “I am walking twice a day,” she says. “I don’t worry about my balance, because the poles anchor me.”

This extra benefit makes Nordic pole walking one of the few sports that truly can be done by almost anyone.

— Lorne David Opier

Sweat it out with pickleball

As a kid, I bonded with my grandmother over word games, never athletics. Sadly, we hadn’t heard of pickleball.

If you’re picturing nothing but sweet or sour cucumbers, you may soon be in the minority. Pickleball, which celebrates its 55th anniversary this year, is one of America’s fastest-growing sports; an industry association reported 3.3 million players in 2019, up about 29% from 2015.

Think of a combination of ping-pong — paddles swatting a plastic ball — and tennis, but with a lower net, a court one-fourth the size and players a few decades older than Roger Federer.

Pickleball, usually played as doubles, involves less running than other sports; it has been called a “two-step game,” which makes it good for seniors who may have limited mobility. But it’s gaining popularity among younger folks. (Singles can be a fairly safe pandemic choice for people not isolating together because players are separated by a 14-foot non-volley zone; opponents can use different-colored balls.)

The multigenerational appeal makes pickleball a good choice for families. The United States has more than 15,000 dedicated courts, but you can create a pop-up court on any paved surface. There, adults avoiding gyms can gather there, adults avoiding gyms can gather

— Matt Fuchs

NEXT WEEK: Tips for the home, mindfulness and making human connections.
Flame-throwing, air-bending battle royale arrives with Spellbreak

By Teddy Amenabar
The Washington Post

Don’t look now, but we’re surrounded by battle royale. The last-man-standing formula has been the driving force behind countless attempts to create the next Fortnite, the next worldwide phenomenon, the next holy grail in online gaming. It’s like the Hunger Games, and it’s exhausting. Still, the matches keep queuing. The wheel keeps turning. We all keep chasing that coveted “Victory.”

The game at hand is Spellbreak, a free-to-play, spell-casting battle royale that officially releases on PlayStation 4 and PC. Developed by Proletariat, Spellbreak doesn’t shatter the battle royale wheel, but the game creatively builds on the ways all these elements interact, conjuring lethal blows or countering enemy attacks with magical power. It creates an atmosphere of danger and excitement, a challenge every Spellbreak player will face.

Before every match, players select their class from one of the six “elements” — ice, wind, lightning, fire, earth and poison. The spells and abilities of each class are unique and powerful, allowing for a variety of combat styles and strategies. The game also rewards players grinding for new abilities and equipment, ensuring that the gameplay remains fresh and engaging even after months spent in closed beta.

Still, the title menu for the game feels like a half-empty house. There’s an in-game store, but the outfits for sale leave much to be desired. Plus, they cost a few pennies (for a very, very boring common skin) — but that’s to be expected for a free-to-play title.

The question remains: Where does Spellbreak go from here? The fundamentals are sound, and the new concepts are refreshing. The game is a mix of the lifeless carbon copies of battle royale and the next generation of gameplay.

Prince of Persia back with remake of Sands of Time

Gene Park
The Washington Post

Absence for 12 years, one of gaming’s first action stars returns for a full-on remake of a title regarded as one of the best games ever made.

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time Remake was announced Sept. 7 on the Ubisoft Forward event. The original 2003 title helped Ubisoft become one of the most successful game publishers this century, boosting the credentials of in-house studio Ubisoft Montreal. Studios in Pune and Mumbai, India, are both in charge of the remake, scheduled for a Jan. 21 release on PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC and the next-generation PlayStation and Xbox machines. It will cost about $40.

The remake follows the same plot of the original 2003 release, which was a reimagining of the 1989 classic by developer Jordan Mechner. In 1984, Mechner was credited as creating one of gaming’s first fighting games, Karateka, and was working on a follow-up title. He graduated from the University of Illinois and immediately began work on Prince of Persia. Mechner drew by hand the animations of the original 1989 release.

The original game is a milestone in platformer adventures, inspiring Another World, Flashback and similar platformer experiences. The original Tomb Raider, released in 1996, one of the pioneers of 3D technology, drew heavy inspiration from Mechner’s work. And after the critical and commercial success of the Sands of Time trilogy, Ubisoft Montreal attempted to evolve the combat andparkour formula of the series into an open-world setting. The team became fascinated with the story of Prince of Persia, and the project morphed into a new intellectual property, Assassin’s Creed, a series that has become the centerpiece of Ubisoft’s catalogue.

Prince of Persia is not the same without Prince of Persia. The game’s combat moved the 3D action genre forward. This was one of the first big action titles to step away from the “targeting” mechanic of The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time, allowing for combat with multiple enemies and freedom of movement in the backgrounds.

There was a fairy-tale charm and wit to the original Sands of Time. Voice talent Yuri Lowen-thal gave a whimsical like the nameless prince’s voice in the original title, and he’ll be back for the remake. The entire story was told like a fairy tale from the prince’s perspective, allowing the player to feel like even as simply the prince botching the narration. This storytelling premise, alongside the ability to rewind time, made for an engaging and complete package.

Ubisoft did not mention whether Mechner was involved in the remake, but he has shepherded the brand for the past 30 years.

Joining the Battle

Prolletariat

Online: playspellbreak.com

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

Saturday, September 19, 2020
The upcoming season of “The Boys” has so many surprises, revelations and themes ripped from today’s front pages that some actors are wondering if their showrunner has psychic super abilities.

“I don’t know what kind of crystal ball Eric Kripke has,” said Laz Alonso, who plays Mother’s Milk. “There is so many moments of social unrest that hadn’t happened yet that it’s almost eerie.”

Amazon Prime Video’s hit superhero show is hoping to up the ante of shock, thrill, action — and ultimately success — of those themes this season, along with the typical good versus evil plots, Kripke’s deeper dives this season will now play the role of incumbent hoping to get reelected.

“I was so happy with how season one turned out, and to either hit or exceed that bar was really stressful,” said Kripke, known for leading the fantasy drama “Supernatural.” “Where I landed was not to try to go bigger because that’s sort of unsustainable. But instead, try to go deeper and try to create a more intense, more insane, more emotional season.”

Based off the comic by Garth Ennis and Darick Robertson from which the show also derives its name, the series follows The Boys, a small group of mercenaries, as they chase a popular and famous ensemble of A-list superheroes called The Seven. The Boys, headed by Billy Butcher (Karl Urban), Hughie Campbell (Jack Quaid) and Alonso are threaded together in a different way because humanity is like “these were issues a year ago, five years ago, 10 years ago, 50 years ago. (They) just happened to be in the front of people’s minds now.”

“It’s really cool to explore very, very real issues from this slightly heightened and sometimes not-so-heightened-from-reality place,” Quaid said. “We don’t have to pretend that the world’s not on fire for our show.”

Some of those themes continue this season as The Boys are on the run after being blamed for the murder of Madelyn Stillwell, the Vought vice president, although the culprit was actually Seven leader Homelander (Antony Starr).

Supe terrorists are also introduced, as Homelander helps get Compound V overseas in a ploy to instill fear in the American public and increase dependence on the supergroup. Viewers will meet new member Stormfront, a charismatic, social-media friendly woman who represents the famous franchise. “Absolute power corrupts absolutely, and I think these are very damaged, powerful, flawed individuals,” says Starr, the New Zealander who plays the blond, blue-eyed America-first Superman-Captain America mashup. “The way we represent them is probably a more honest take of what these superheroes would be like. I don’t believe your moral compass would remain at True North if you had all these powers like they do in other (comics).”

Amazon is betting that these complex superheroes will yield super ratings as the battle for original streaming content wages. Positioning itself as Prime’s flag-ship show, “The Boys” may have some help as the COVID-19 pandemic halted or delayed many previously scheduled productions. Season three has already been given the green light.

To capitalize on the show’s hype, Amazon Prime Video is switching up the release strategy from a binge model to a more traditional approach.

The first three episodes arrived Sept. 4 before pivoting to weekly releases through the rest of the season.

“I would say if there’s any real meta message of the show, it’s have some healthy skepticism, question some institutions. Question capitalism. Question your leaders. Question your celebrities,” Kripke said. “Have a healthy curiosity because the one thing that they don’t want is an educated populace.”

Esposito, nominated for two Emmys this year for “Better Call Saul” and “The Mandalorian,” hopes the show forces fans to view their own reflection.

“It’s really about seeing our humanity in a different way because humanity is connected to intention. And we all have faults and we all have places where there’s a chink in our armor, where we’re a little weak,” Esposito said. “But being able to look at that with compassion and understanding, that would be the beginning to access our superhuman abilities and powers.”
Netflix film dissects a tech-driven ‘social dilemma’

By Michael Liedtke and Amanda Lee Myers
Associated Press

A new Netflix documentary is setting out to expose technology’s corrosive effect on society during a pandemic that’s left people more dependent than ever on tools that connect them with friends, family and colleagues they can no longer meet in person.

So the timing for last week’s release of “The Social Dilemma” might strike some viewers as odd. But its makers aim to give you a better sense of why the pandemic isn’t the only reason it feels like we’re stuck in a dystopian nightmare.

The documentary is a well-made corporate, level-headedly reporting news articles and academic studies and books. Some tech-company executives and engineers have gone so far as to keep their own children off screens and social media. And a number of engineers have also been quitting high-paying technology jobs rather than continuing to contribute to the problems they believe their employers have caused.

In Netflix’s film, a ruthless set of algorithms embodied by actor Vincent Kartheiser (“Mad Men.”) are the thing being sold.

“The Social Dilemma,” starring Tristan Harris, explores the dangerous human impact of social networking.

The documentary-drama hybrid aims to explain how Silicon Valley’s embrace of smartphones, attention-grabbing algorithms, polarizing echo chambers and pursuit of profit have left users reeling in a way that could pose a existential threat to U.S. democracy.

“It is a self-destructive code that has been planted in our society right now,” Orlowski said in an interview with The Associated Press.

The notion of modern social media as a malignant force that has hypnotized us into mindlessly scrolling distracting feeds, fostered division and elevated previously marginal groups and ideologies in ways that undermine social cohesion isn’t particularly new. For the past several years, it’s been the subject of Silicon Valley mea culpas (at the individual, if not corporate, level—keeping those articles and academic studies and books.

Some tech-company executives and engineers have gone so far as to keep their own children off screens. And a number of engineers have also been quitting high-paying technology jobs rather than continuing to contribute to the problems they believe their employers have caused.

The latest example surfaced last week when The Washington Post disclosed that a Facebook engineer had written a lengthy internal letter explaining why he was leaving the company. “I can no longer stomach contributing to an organization that is profiting off hate in the US and globally,” wrote Ashok Chandwaney, who worked at Facebook for 5½ years.

“The Social Dilemma” is the culmination of a three-year project aimed at making the severity of an extremely complicated problem easier for non-tech types to grasp—and perhaps motivating people to take action to prevent worse consequences.

The film pulls together the disparate threads of its argument through revealing—and sometimes chilling—insights from former executives at Facebook, Google, YouTube, Twitter, and Pinterest. These are set against the backdrop of a fictional family addicted to screens filled with manipulative content served up by a ruthless set of algorithms embodied by actor Vincent Kartheiser (“Mad Men.”)

Tristan Harris, a former Google executive who plays a leading role in the film, said he hopes “The Social Dilemma” can wake up society the way Ralph Nader’s book “Unsafe At Any Speed” spurred the introduction of seat-belt laws and Al Gore’s award-winning 2006 documentary “An Inconvenient Truth” sharpened focus on the climate changes caused by human-generated greenhouse gases.

“What I am really hoping is this film will be the first time we have a shared truth, a shared reality about the breakdown of our shared reality,” Harris told The Associated Press in an interview.

Harris, now the president of the Center for Humane Technology, began sharing his disillusionment while he was still working at Google, and some of his posts about the subject caught Orlowski’s attention.

The two had known each other while attending Stanford University, paving the way for them to release a film they both felt was important to finish before this November’s U.S. presidential election.

“I don’t want to have to open the door and say that we would shift the election or swing the election, but I think it’s an important part of the conversation,” Orlowski said. “The more we can recognize that this software is invisibly reshaping our society, the more we can acknowledge and understand this is a reality we are living in right now, that we are working to improve that.”

Documentary ‘The Social Dilemma’ urges people to unplug

By Mark Kennedy
Associated Press

“The Social Dilemma” is the first film you’ll watch and immediately want to toss your smartphone into the garbage can. And then toss the garbage can through the window of a Facebook executive.

It’s an eye-opening look into the way social media is designed to create addiction and manipulate our behavior, told by some of the very people who supervised the systems at places like Facebook, Google and Twitter.

Tim Kendall, a former president of Pinterest, admitted that a few years ago he couldn’t get off his phone even when he came home from work. “I am going to work during the day and building something that then I’m falling prey to,” he says in the film. “I couldn’t help myself.”

The documentary is a well-paced, absorbing look at the deep costs of Big Tech—fake news, election security concerns, radicalization, polarization and much more. Only in trying to dramatize those costs does it slip up badly.

Director Jeff Orlowski interviews former tech execs, historians and social scientists but apparently doesn’t trust them enough to tell the story. So he also employs a gimmicky family of five actors—two parents, three teens—to dramatize the lure of social media in a clunky way.

Worse, he also employs an actor—a weirdly cast Vincent Kartheiser of “Mad Men” fame—to pretend to act like the computer software, sending alluring videos, yes, and also civil war. But we know—from the very talking heads—that this is an algorithm with no other programs other than its own. Why humanize code? And why humanize code by portraying it as a sleazy middle-aged man who acts like a mid-level officer in “ Minority Report?”

When one of the fake teens falls for a fake online conspiracy and attends a fake demonstration, it’s juxtaposed against real footage of real violence and real demonstrations, muddying the water between fact and fantasy—a terrible decision given what this film is about.

Orlowski would have done better interviewing real teens bullied by social media and real people caught up in conspiracies. Insulting our intelligence about artificial intelligence is not the way to go.

The silly dramatizations mar an otherwise excellent documentary that shows how so many Silicon Valley leaders designed ways to keep us engaged online and that led to such things as Pizzagate, international destabilization, higher suicide rates in young people and a boom in depression.

The film reveals more than why you go from Google to the best sofa one minute to finding sofa ads on your Facebook stream the next. That so much online seems free is part of the trap. It’s our private data that’s being sold. As Aza Raskin, former Firefox and Mozilla Lab worker says: “Advertisers are the customers. We’re the thing being sold.”

The film nicely delves into how algorithms that seek to maximize advertising revenue tap into psychological tricks to keep us addicted to our screens. Did a friend just tag me? I got an alert! Hey, Facebook just made it easier to find old videos, yes, and also civil war.

If there is a hero here, it is portrayed by Tristan Harris, an ex-Google executive who co-founded the Center for Humane Technology and who hopes to change the system.

And critics like Jaron Lanier, author of “Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now,” think the possible consequences are if we continue using our individual digital pacifiers—lots of cat videos, yes, and also civil war.
I'm a once-suicidal vet. Not having a gun saved me.

BY TOP WASHINGTON  Special to The Washington Post

I wouldn't be here today if I'd had access to a gun when I was suicidal. Every time I thought about suicide, I knew I could≠ access to a gun when I was suicidal. Every time I thought about suicide, I knew I could. When I was in my early 20s, I was a Marine who had been wounded in Iraq. I was married, had kids, was doing well. But depression and PTSD were eating away at me. I was thinking about suicide all the time.

I saw a therapist and took anti-depressants, but nothing seemed to work. I eventually went to see a Veterans Affairs hospital in Washington, D.C., where I was diagnosed with PTSD. I think the VA was probably right. I had been treated for a long time, but I still didn't feel better.

That's when I started thinking about suicide again. I was sure that I would die of suicide. I thought about it every day. I even wrote a suicide note and put it on my dresser. But I didn't have a gun.

I think the lack of access to guns made it easier for me to recover. I was able to get a job and start living a normal life. I'm not sure I would have been able to do that if I had access to a gun.

I think the lack of access to guns made it easier for me to recover. I was able to get a job and start living a normal life. I'm not sure I would have been able to do that if I had access to a gun.

I'm glad I didn't have a gun. But I'm also glad that I was able to get help. I think that's the most important thing. If I had had a gun, I think I would have been much more likely to suicide.

I'm glad I didn't have a gun. But I'm also glad that I was able to get help. I think that's the most important thing. If I had had a gun, I think I would have been much more likely to suicide.
Eugene Sheffer Crossword

ACROSS
1  Klutz
4  Pre-weekend cry
8  Avocado dip, for short
12  Titó precursor
13  Arizona tribe
14  Gymnast Korbut
15  Bond rating
16  Katy Perry
17  Stable diet
18  Military front
21  Whatever
22  Saute
23  Extra
26  Day—paint
27  Consume
30  At the summit of
31  Nonclerical
32  Cruise stop
33  Chun
34  Burrowed
35  Perfect
36  Pouch
37  Year in Spain
38  Football field divider
45  "I'm in the Dark" (1988 Meryl Streep film)
47  Low-calorie
49  Singer Riter
50  "Would— to you?"
51  Apportion
52  Secondhand
53  Parking place

DOWN
1  Cameo shape
2  Exotic berry
3  Humorist
4  Lebowitz
5  Seat of
6  Disney pooch
7  Apple tablet
8  Like hot fudge
9  —Bator
10  Literary rep
11  Job for Holmes
19  Lawman
20  Wyatt
21  To and—
22  Tree fluid
23  Sch. org
24  "You've got mail" co.
25  Jokes
26  27  Jargon suffix
28  —carte
29  Business card no.
30  "Elementary" actress
31  Pedestal occupant
32  Calendar box
33  Truly
34  Fashion
35  "The Sopranos" restaurateur
36  Rural tract
37  Frozen drink brand
38  Worry
39  Feels unwell
40  2 Slanted type (Abbr.)
41  Jules Verne captain
42  Way out

Answer to Previous Puzzle

9-19

C L O R
Q E S T E N
O R
K A M O
A S U L U S
L Y O N
R E N T
E L H O B W O L S
R E N T
H O M E
H E A N S
O N E S
S Y N D E S

CRYPTOQUIP

S W M H Q I J C S H Q P U M P H A J R
H Q O K L S Z W P S W P O K O C K S
S W P O P ' H J A Q I P H L C I M Y W S

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THAT GOOFY KID REALLY ENJOYS HITTING ALL THE BUTTONS ON MY REMOTE. HE DOES IT JUST FOR CLICKS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals P
## College Football

### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saturday’s games</th>
<th>Synopsis (0-1) at Pittsburgh (1-0)</th>
<th>BYU (2-0) at Arizona St (1-0)</th>
<th>BGSU (1-0) at Army (2-0), c/o</th>
<th>Boston College at Duke (0-1)</th>
<th>Louisville at Rutgers (1-0)</th>
<th>SMU (2-0) at Temple (1-0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Pro football

#### NFL injury report

**NEW YORK** — The National Football League injury report, as provided by the league, for games involving NFC East teams:

- **Exclusive participation**: FULL
- **Limited**: 10 percent participation
- **Out**: Limited participation
- **Not listed**: Not on injury list

**NEW YORK GIANTS at TAMPA BAY**

- DNP: TE Cameron Brate (knee)
- DNP: RB Saquon Barkley (hamstring)
- Wire: DNP: RB Devonta Freeman (knee) (not injury related), WR Darius Slayton (Foot) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: TE Daniel Jones (ankle) (not injury related)

**DALLAS COWBOYS at NEW YORK GIANTS**

- DNP: TE Dalton Schultz (knee) (not injury related)
- DNP: TE Jordan Akins (knee) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: TE Raheem Moster (hip) (not injury related), WR Blake Jarwin (Foot) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: TE CeeDee Lamb (knee) (not injury related)

**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS at WASHINGTON**

- DNP: TE Jared Cook (knee) (not injury related), TE Nick Vannett (knee) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: TE Pat Onwumere (shoulder) (not injury related), TE Josh Jordan (hip) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: TE Darren Fells (knee) (not injury related)

**PITTSBURGH STEELERS at NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS**

- DNP: TE Marcus Estep (knee) (not injury related), WR Gunner Olusora (hip) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: TE Stephen Anderson (knee) (not injury related)

**ARIZONA CARDINALS at SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS**

- DNP: TE Maxx Williams (elbow) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: TE Jaylinn Hawkins (thigh, injury related), TE Maxx Williams (elbow) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: TE David Grinnage (shoulder) (not injury related)

**CAROLINA PANTHERS at TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS**

- DNP: TE Mike James (knee) (not injury related), TE Jordan Pro Flemming (neck) (not injury related), WR TJ Carrie (knee) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: TE Jordan Pro Flemming (neck) (not injury related), WR TJ Carrie (knee) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: TE Jordan Pro Flemming (neck) (not injury related), WR TJ Carrie (knee) (not injury related)

**ATLANTA BRAVES**

- DNP: OF Adam Duvall (shoulder) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: OF Lane reunions (shoulder) (not injury related), OF Tommy La Stella (elbow) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: OF Adam Duvall (shoulder) (not injury related)

**SEATTLE MARINERS**

- DNP: OF Kyle Seager (肩) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: OF Kyle Seager (肩) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: OF Kyle Seager (肩) (not injury related)

**ARIZONA COYOTES**

- DNP: F Janne Kuokkanen (knee) (not injury related)
- Limited: DNP: F Janne Kuokkanen (knee) (not injury related)
- Out: DNP: F Janne Kuokkanen (knee) (not injury related)

## Tennis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clubs</th>
<th>Players</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Nicole Melichar, Def. Monica Niculescu and Simona Halep, Romania, 6-1, 6-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Def. Monica Niculescu and Simona Halep, Romania, 6-1, 6-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Def. Maximo Gonzalez and Diego Schwartzman, Canada, def. Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (Colombia, 6-4, 6-4, 6-1, 6-0.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Def. Maximo Gonzalez and Diego Schwartzman, Canada, def. Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (Colombia, 6-4, 6-4, 6-1, 6-0.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Def. Maximo Gonzalez and Diego Schwartzman, Canada, def. Robert Farah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (Colombia, 6-4, 6-4, 6-1, 6-0.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## College Football Stats

### Stats

- **Auburn**
  - **Points Scored**: 156
  - **Points Against**: 72
  - **Total Yards**: 3,165
  - **Comments**: Successfully completed 13 of 19 pass attempts for 188 yards, rushed for 47 yards and scored two touchdowns.

- **Texas A&M**
  - **Points Scored**: 20
  - **Points Against**: 39
  - **Total Yards**: 398
  - **Comments**: Recorded three tackles, two assists and a sack on the defensive line.

## Pro basketball

### NBA winnies

**Seedings in parentheses**

- **All games at Orlando, Fla.**

#### Single elimination games

- **Game 1**
  - **Los Angeles Lakers** vs. **Denver Nuggets**
  - **Time**: 11:00 AM, July 31
  - **Result**: **Lakers** win, 119-87

- **Game 2**
  - **Boston Celtics** vs. **Brooklyn Nets**
  - **Time**: 6:00 PM, July 31
  - **Result**: **Nets** win, 121-107

#### Second round games

- **Game 3**
  - **Denver Nuggets** vs. **Houston Rockets**
  - **Time**: 11:00 AM, August 2
  - **Result**: **Nuggets** win, 119-86

- **Game 4**
  - **Brooklyn Nets** vs. **Miami Heat**
  - **Time**: 6:00 PM, August 2
  - **Result**: **Heat** win, 124-111

- **Game 5**
  - **Denver Nuggets** vs. **Houston Rockets**
  - **Time**: 11:00 AM, August 3
  - **Result**: **Nuggets** win, 117-108

- **Game 6**
  - **Brooklyn Nets** vs. **Miami Heat**
  - **Time**: 6:00 PM, August 3
  - **Result**: **Heat** win, 112-104

- **Game 7**
  - **Denver Nuggets** vs. **Houston Rockets**
  - **Time**: 11:00 AM, August 4
  - **Result**: **Nuggets** win, 145-123

#### Conference finals

- **Game 6**
  - **Denver Nuggets** vs. **Miami Heat**
  - **Time**: 9:00 PM, August 5
  - **Result**: **Heat** win, 119-107

- **Game 7**
  - **Denver Nuggets** vs. **Miami Heat**
  - **Time**: 9:00 PM, August 6
  - **Result**: **Heat** win, 112-107

### Western Conference champions

- **Los Angeles Lakers**
  - **Points Scored**: 20
  - **Points Against**: 39
  - **Total Yards**: 398
  - **Comments**: Successfully completed 13 of 19 pass attempts for 188 yards, rushed for 47 yards and scored two touchdowns.

- **Denver Nuggets**
  - **Points Scored**: 20
  - **Points Against**: 39
  - **Total Yards**: 398
  - **Comments**: Recorded three tackles, two assists and a sack on the defensive line.

## Pro soccer

### MLS

#### Western Conference

- **Sporting KC**
  - **Points**: 32
  - **Goals For**: 38
  - **Goals Against**: 22
  - **Goals For/Against Ratio**: 1.68

- **FC Dallas**
  - **Points**: 22
  - **Goals For**: 25
  - **Goals Against**: 11
  - **Goals For/Against Ratio**: 2.27

- **Seattle Sounders FC**
  - **Points**: 16
  - **Goals For**: 21
  - **Goals Against**: 11
  - **Goals For/Against Ratio**: 1.91

#### Eastern Conference

- **Philadelphia Union**
  - **Points**: 15
  - **Goals For**: 21
  - **Goals Against**: 9
  - **Goals For/Against Ratio**: 2.33

- **Toronto FC**
  - **Points**: 13
  - **Goals For**: 18
  - **Goals Against**: 8
  - **Goals For/Against Ratio**: 2.25

- **DC United**
  - **Points**: 12
  - **Goals For**: 16
  - **Goals Against**: 12
  - **Goals For/Against Ratio**: 1.33

## Autocross

### UNOH 200

- **Winning Time**: 200 laps, 2 hours, 31 minutes, 47.441 seconds
- **Winning Driver**: Brett Moffitt
- **Runner-up**: Chandler Smith
- **Third**: Parker Kligerman
- **Fourth**: Parker Kligerman
- **5th**: Chandler Smith
- **6th**: Parker Kligerman
**NHL PLAYOFFS**

**Lightning put past collapses behind them**

By JOHN WARROW

Associated Press

Jon Cooper experienced difficulty in finding the right words. Emotionally spending following a 2-1 overtime Eastern Conference finals series-clinching victory over the New York Islanders, the usually articulate Tampa Bay Lightning coach searched putting into perspective what it meant to be returning to the Stanley Cup Final with much of the team’s core still intact from its previous trip in 2015.

Before he could look ahead to facing the Dallas Stars in Game 1 on Saturday, Cooper revisited the adversity the Lightning faced since losing to Chicago in six games five years ago.

There were the frustrating recollections of how Tampa Bay lost its two previous conference finals appearances in 2016 and 2018 — both times in Game 7. And there was the still raw memory of what happened last year, when the Lightning ran away with the regular-season title only to be swept by Columbus in the first round of the playoffs.

“I don’t know, I might as well have marbles in my mouth because I’m fumbling,” Cooper said Thursday night, shortly after Anthony Cirelli tapped in Barclay Goodrow’s centering pass 13:18 into overtime.

“For me, it’s exciting,” he added. “Because this journey, especially for us as a group, was last year and how we kind of took it on the chin, and rightfully so, we deserved to take it on the chin. But to counterpunch like we have this year, good on those guys.”

The Lightning, who won the Cup in 2020, are making their third final appearance. And Tampa Bay has spent this year on a mission to prove it’s not the same team that has come up short in the postseason.

The Lightning are 14-5 this summer despite playing without captain Steven Stamkos, who has been sidelined since having surgery to repair a core muscle in March. Against the Islanders, they overcame the adversity of losing both games minus leading scorer Brayden Point, who returned Thursday.

And all three of their series-clinching wins have been determined in overtime.

In many ways, this postseason has been a cleansing one so far for the Lightning.

Tampa Bay opened the playoffs by beating the Blue Jackets in five games. In the second round, the Lightning needed five overtimes to knock out Boston, last year’s East champion. And then came needing overtime in Game 6 to eliminate the peak Islanders, who threatened to force a decisive Game 7 behind the goaltending of Sergei Varlamov, who stopped a career-best 46 shots.

“Yes, it wears on you,” Cooper said, referring to how letting getting were unable to capitalize on numerous chances, including squandering a four-minute power play which began with 15.8 seconds left in the third period.

“And that’s where you look at the mental makeup, a little bit of our maturity,” he added. “They hung in there and stuck with it.”

After falling behind 1-0 on Devon Toews’ goal in the first period, the Lightning responded with defender Victor Hedman scoring 2:23 later. The guy Hedman’s goal, which came after he limped off the ice in the second period after injuring his right knee in a collision with Islanders captain Anders Lee.

“I obviously, it was in a little bit of pain there, but I was fine and was fortunate enough to finish the game,” Cirelli said. “Our goal is to be playing for the Stanley Cup. We’re here now.”

**Best:** Russia’s proud history of great goalkeepers seeing renaissance

Since getting the starting job when Ben Bishop was injured, Khudobin has done 12-6 with a 2.35 goals-against average and .921 save percentage and backstopped the Stars into the Stanley Cup Final. Two years after signing Khudobin to a two-year contract, general manager Jim Nill joked he was finished.

The Islanders signed Varlamov last summer to a four-year deal to replace Robin Lehner, who was the only non-Russian goalie in the final four with Vegas. Varlamov had never gone deep in the playoffs before and is a major reason New York reached the Eastern Conference finals for the first time since 1993.

Nabokov credits this success and Russia’s goalie Renaissance to a willingness to work with and pure talent that’s possible now in the decades since the fall of communism.

“The country went through certain things and people just didn’t pay attention to hockey that much,” he said. “Russian goalkeepers always been good, but it’s been a window where it’s kind of dropped off a little bit and now it’s back because we always had good hockey minds.”

**PLAYERS TO WATCH**

**Nikita Kucherov, Tampa Bay:** Leads the Bolts with 85 points, scoring 33 goals along with 52 assists.

**Denis Gurianov, Dallas:** Leads Stars with 20 goals and has 30 points.

**Ondrej Palat, Tampa Bay:** Eight goals and two assists over the last 10 games for Tampa Bay.

**Jamie Benn, Dallas:** Six goals and four assists over the last 10 games for Dallas.

**Ilya Kovalchuk, Washington Capitals:** Russian winger
## American League

### East Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.522</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Central Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.619</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.429</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### West Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.460</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.479</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### League Leaders

- **RBI**: Miguel Cabrera (27)
- **HR**: Albert Bote (21)
- **SB**: Adam Frazier (13)
- **K**: Gerrit Cole (206)

### Games

- **Home Run**: Jorge Alfaro (3)
- **Stolen Base**: Nick Ahmed (17)

### Next Game

- **New York @ Toronto**: 08/18/2023 at 7:05 PM ET

## National League

### East Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.596</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.540</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.467</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Central Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.512</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.490</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinatti</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.466</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.413</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### West Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### League Leaders

- **RBI**: Christian Walker (30)
- **HR**: Albert Pujols (32)
- **SB**: Francisco Lindor (12)
- **K**: Max Scherzer (211)

### Games

- **Home Run**: Albert Pujols (32)
- **Stolen Base**: Francisco Lindor (12)

### Next Game

- **Los Angeles @ Arizona**: 08/18/2023 at 4:10 PM ET

## NL East Division

### Week 26 Results

- **New York @ Philadelphia**: 08/17/2023 at 7:05 PM ET
  - **Score**: New York 5, Philadelphia 3
  - **Pitchers**: Zach Plesac (5 IP, 3 H, 2 ER, 3 K) vs. Jacob deGrom (7 IP, 2 H, 0 ER, 2 K)

### Week 27 Schedule

- **Houston @ Philadelphia**: 08/20/2023 at 7:05 PM ET

## NL Central Division

### Week 26 Results

- **Chicago @ St. Louis**: 08/17/2023 at 7:05 PM ET
  - **Score**: Chicago 4, St. Louis 2
  - **Pitchers**: Jack Flaherty (6 IP, 2 H, 0 ER, 5 K) vs. John Gant (5 IP, 6 H, 2 ER, 3 K)

### Week 27 Schedule

- **Milwaukee @ Chicago**: 08/20/2023 at 7:05 PM ET

## NL West Division

### Week 26 Results

- **Los Angeles @ San Diego**: 08/17/2023 at 7:05 PM ET
  - **Score**: Los Angeles 7, San Diego 5
  - **Pitchers**: Trevor Bauer (5 IP, 3 H, 2 ER, 7 K) vs. Mike Clevinger (6 IP, 1 H, 0 ER, 7 K)

### Week 27 Schedule

- **Seattle @ Los Angeles**: 08/20/2023 at 7:05 PM ET

## NL League Leaders

- **RBI**: Paul Goldschmidt (35)
- **HR**: Albert Pujols (32)
- **SB**: Francisco Lindor (12)
- **K**: Max Scherzer (211)

## Saturday, September 19, 2023

### MLB Scoreboard

- **New York @ Philadelphia**: 08/18/2023 at 7:05 PM ET
  - **Score**: New York 5, Philadelphia 3
  - **Pitchers**: Jacob deGrom (7 IP, 2 H, 0 ER, 2 K) vs. Zack Wheeler (6 IP, 3 H, 2 ER, 6 K)

### Next Game

- **San Diego @ Los Angeles**: 08/19/2023 at 7:05 PM ET

## Astros vs. Rangers

### Game 1

- **Texas @ Houston**: 08/18/2023 at 8:05 PM ET
  - **Score**: Texas 4, Houston 2
  - **Pitchers**: Lance McCullers Jr. (6 IP, 3 H, 2 ER, 0 K) vs. Justin Verlander (7 IP, 2 H, 0 ER, 9 K)

### Game 2

- **Texas @ Houston**: 08/19/2023 at 8:05 PM ET
  - **Score**: Houston 7, Texas 4
  - **Pitchers**: Justin Verlander (6 IP, 3 H, 2 ER, 5 K) vs. Lance McCullers Jr. (6 IP, 5 H, 4 ER, 2 K)
Heat do it again, go up 2-0 on Celts

**By Tim Reynolds**

**Associated Press**

**LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Down by 14 in Game 1, the Miami Heat found a way. Down by 17 in Game 2, they did it again Thursday night. And after making the Boston Celtics lose another big lead on the court — as well as their cool in the postgame — the unheralded Heat are two wins away from the NBA Finals.

“We got gor.” Adebayo said.

“That’s about all I can tell you. We got gor, man.”

Duncan Robinson scored 18 points, Jimmy Butler had 14, Jae Crowder 12 and Tyler Herro 11. The Heat were down by 17 in the second quarter and trailed by 13 at halftime.

They had been 0-21 in playoff games trailing by at least that much in the first half.

They’re 1-21 now, and two wins away from their first NBA Finals since 2012, and the team said the 1-0 point comeback matched the biggest in Heat postseason history.

“We like to make it hard on ourselves,” Butler said. “We like being down double-digits and being the comeback kids.”

Kemba Walker had 23 points for Boston, which got 21 apiece from Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum. Brown missed a corner three that would have tied it with 15 seconds left, and Butler sealed it with a two-pointer after Phoenix with 74 seconds remaining.

The Celtics had a lead, animat.

“The game got away from them,” said a 7-game-old, 74-pointed Heat. “We tried to downplay whatever was happen.

“After that, it’s 7.” Walker said.

“Atwood said, “We’re failed. But that’s our teams. Not supposed to be happy we’re down 0-2. But that’s nothing out of the ordinary. Just talking about the game. It’s cool.”

Dragic — playing on the third anniversary of his fondest basketball moment, that being when he led Slovenia to a EuroBasket Championship — scored nine points in the fourth quarter.

“Feels exactly the same,” Dragic said, when asked to compare the two big moments. “A great day.”

The Heat took a 2-0 series lead for the 11th time in coach Erik Spoelstra’s tenure. They’ve won all 10 instances.

The Heat were in big trouble in the series opener by scoring 18 points in the first quarter and 16 points in the third. In Game 2, anoth.

18-1 point quarter — the second.

They’re 1-21 now, and two wins away from the NBA Finals since 2012, and the team said the 1-0 point comeback matched the biggest in Heat postseason history.

“We like to make it hard on ourselves,” Butler said. “We like being down double-digits and being the comeback kids.”

Kemba Walker had 23 points for Boston, which got 21 apiece from Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum. Brown missed a corner three that would have tied it with 15 seconds left, and Butler sealed it with a two-pointer after Phoenix with 74 seconds remaining.

The Celtics had a lead, animat.

“The game got away from them,” said a 7-game-old, 74-pointed Heat. “We tried to downplay whatever was happen.

“After that, it’s 7.” Walker said.

“Atwood said, “We’re failed. But that’s our teams. Not supposed to be happy we’re down 0-2. But that’s nothing out of the ordinary. Just talking about the game. It’s cool.”

Dragic — playing on the third anniversary of his fondest basketball moment, that being when he led Slovenia to a EuroBasket Championship — scored nine points in the fourth quarter.

“Feels exactly the same,” Dragic said, when asked to compare the two big moments. “A great day.”

The Heat took a 2-0 series lead for the 11th time in coach Erik Spoelstra’s tenure. They’ve won all 10 instances.

The Heat were in big trouble in the series opener by scoring 18 points in the first quarter and 16 points in the third. In Game 2, another 18-point quarter — the second — sent Boston into the half up comfortably, 60-47.

Source: Antetokounmpo wins MVP

**LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Gi.

Antetokounmpo’s numbers this season were unprecedented, with averages of 29.5 points, 13.6 rebounds and 5.8 assists per game. Nobody had ever averaged those numbers over a full season; Wilt Chamberlain and Elgin Baylor both had seasons where they topped Antetokounmpo’s averages for points and rebounds, though both fell just shy of matching his assist average.

— Associated Press**

---

**MLB roundup**

**Tampa Bay Rays relief pitcher John Curtiss, left, and catcher Kevan Smith celebrate after beating the Orioles 10-6 in the second game of a doubleheader Thursday in Baltimore. The Rays swept both games of the doubleheader, locking up a postseason berth in the process.**

The Chicago White Sox clinched their first postseason berth since 2008, beating the Minnesota Twins 4-3 Thursday as Eloy Jimenez hit a tiebreaking double that capped a two-run, seventh-inning rally.

Chicago (33-17) opened a three-game lead over the second-place Twins (31-21) in the AL Central. The White Sox assured themselves of no worse than a wild-card berth.

The Rays clinched a return trip to the postseason, using a four-run seventh-inning rally.

Tampa Bay Rays relief pitcher John Curtiss, left, and catcher Kevan Smith celebrate after beating the Orioles 10-6 in the second game of a doubleheader Thursday in Baltimore. The Rays swept both games of the doubleheader, locking up a postseason berth in the process.

Byron Buxton homered twice, giving him seven in his last nine games and 12 this season. Josh Donaldson also went deep for Minnesota.

Jose Ramirez homered twice on his 28th birthday, Shane Bieber (8-2) took a shutout into the eighth inning and visiting Cleveland snapped an eight-game skid with a win over St. Louis.

Tampa Bay clinched a return trip to the postseason, using a four-run seventh-inning rally.

The Rays got homers from Yandy Diaz and Randolbat Peralta and three-run homer and host Pittsburgh for his first career complete game.

In the opener, Blake Snell and Diego Castillo combined on a three-hitter.

**Wild-card race**

**Associated Press**

**American League**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>WPC</th>
<th>WCG</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.596</td>
<td>.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.531</td>
<td>.507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>.444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.431</td>
<td>.377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.435</td>
<td>.417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>.383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.381</td>
<td>.365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National League**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>WPC</th>
<th>WCG</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.622</td>
<td>.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.617</td>
<td>.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.521</td>
<td>.474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.490</td>
<td>.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.480</td>
<td>.430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.462</td>
<td>.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.460</td>
<td>.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.373</td>
<td>.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>.380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Source: Antetokounmpo wins MVP**

**NBA scoreboard**

**Playoffs**

**CONFERENCE FINALS**

**Eastern Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>WPC</th>
<th>WCG</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>.778</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Western Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>WPC</th>
<th>WCG</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>.786</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Thursday**

**Heat 106, Celtics 101**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>WPC</th>
<th>WCG</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.588</td>
<td>.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.565</td>
<td>.515</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Friday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>WPC</th>
<th>WCG</th>
<th>DT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.588</td>
<td>.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.565</td>
<td>.515</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Browns rebound vs. Bengals

Mayfield throws 2 TD passes for Cleveland

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Baker Mayfield found Odell Beckham Jr. and maybe some of his missing swagger.

Mayfield threw two touchdown passes, Nick Chubb ran for 124 yards and the Cleveland Browns gave coach Kevin Stefanski his first NFL victory Thursday night by beating the Cincinnati Bengals 35-30 on the NFL's 100th birthday.

Mayfield connected with Beckham Jr. on a 43-yard score during the first half of Thursday's game against the Cincinnati Bengals in Cleveland. The Browns won 35-30.

Browns defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson, right, sacks Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow on Thursday. Burrow finished 37-for-61 for 316 yards, but was sacked three times.

MISSED FIELD GOALS

San Francisco at N.Y. Jets

Buffalo 1 0 0 1.000 16 13

Chubb 22-124, Hunt 10-86, Mayfield 3-5.

Penalties-Yards 4-45 8-76

Fumbles-Lost 2-1 0-0

Rushes-yards 24-68 35-215

American Conference

West

Washington 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

San Francisco 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Seattle 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Phoenix 1 0 0 1.000 20 17

East

New York Giants 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Washington 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Philadelphia 0 1 0 .000 34 23

New England 1 0 0 1.000 17 27

North

Cleveland 1 0 0 1.000 41 68

Denver 1 0 0 1.000 17 27

Indianapolis 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Jacksonville 0 1 0 .000 20 17

South

Washington 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Philadelphia 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Dallas 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Denver 0 1 0 .000 20 17

National Conference

East

Washington 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Philadelphia 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Cincinnati 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Miami 0 1 0 .000 20 17

West

San Francisco 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Denver 1 0 0 1.000 34 23

Dallas 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Denver 0 1 0 .000 20 17

Browns wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr., right, celebrates with running back Kareem Hunt after catching a touchdown pass from quarterback Baker Mayfield during the first half of Thursday's game against the Cincinnati Bengals in Cleveland. The Browns won 35-30.

Browns defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson, right, sacks Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow on Thursday. Burrow finished 37-for-61 for 316 yards, but was sacked three times.
Thomas surprises with a 65

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

MAMARONECK, N.Y. — All that hype over how tough the U.S. Open can be at Winged Foot. All that history of so many scores over par.

Thursday brought a surprise: All those red numbers.

Justin Thomas led the way with six birdies and only one bogey, from a bad lie in the bunker, finishing with a 25-foot birdie putt that he barely touched for a 5-under 65.

It was the lowest score in a U.S. Open at Winged Foot, which is hosting the Open for the sixth time dating to 1963. And it was worth only a one-shot lead over Patrick Reed, Thomas Pieters of Belgium and Matthew Wolff, the 21-year-old Californian making his U.S. Open debut.

Shot of the day: Reed hit his tee shot in on one bounce for an ace on No. 7 to get him to 1 under and build momentum for his round. Late finish, early start: Play was suspended because of darkness with three players — Connor Syme, Paul Barjon and Marty Jertson — left on the course.

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

A quick look

Leading: Justin Thomas shot 5-under 65, the best U.S. Open round ever at Winged Foot.

Soft and friendly: 21 players finished under par or a surprising tame Winged Foot. There were a total of 17 opening rounds under par in the five previous U.S. Opens at Winged Foot.

Tiger watch: After making a 40-footer for birdie on No. 16, Tiger Woods looked as if he would finish with some momentum. He closed bogey-bogey-bogey, including a duffed pitch from in front of the 18th green, for a 73.

A real good frame of mind, and I was focused. I just was sticking to my routine and playing every shot, as opposed to getting ahead of myself. It’s one of those rounds where… next thing you know, you make the putt on 18, you’re done for the day.”

He played with Tiger Woods and PGA champion Collin Morikawa, who couldn’t get done fast enough.

Woods was in five bunkers through five holes and then appeared to steady himself with three straight birdies around the turn to get under par, but only briefly. He made three bogeys coming in, still had a chance to post a reasonable score and then let it get away.

From short of the steep shelf fronting the 18th green, he flubbed a flop shot, pitched the next one about 8 feet beyond the pin and missed the putt to take double bogey for a 73.

“I did not finish off the round like I needed to,” Woods said, an expression he uttered five more times out of the six questions he faced after his round.

Neither did Morikawa, who shot 40 on the back nine for a 76.

Pieters and Wolff dropped only one shot along the way while playing in the afternoon, when the greens became a little more difficult because of all the foot traffic. Even so, low scores at least by Winged Foot standards — kept coming.
Russian renaissance

Nation is again producing some of the best goalkeepers in the world

BY STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta

Nikolai Khabibulin wakes up each morning in Yekaterinburg to watch NHL playoff highlights and beams with pride at the saves made by so many Russian goaltenders.

For the first time, there were three Russian starting goalkeepers in the conference finals, with Anton Khudobin of the Dallas Stars, Andrei Vasilevskiy of the Tampa Bay Lightning advancing to meet for the title. Countryman Semyon Varlamov and the New York Islanders fell to Tampa Bay in overtime in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals Thursday night.

“It’s actually quite interesting to experience this because it has never happened before,” Khabibulin said. “I would’ve never thought this would happen, but it is happening.”

From Hall of Famer Vladislav Tretiak in the Red Army days to Khabibulin and Evgeni Nabokov last generation and guys now like Vasilevskiy, Varlamov and Florida’s Sergei Bobrovsky, Russia’s hockey history is full of strong goaltending. After

SEE BEST ON PAGE 19

The Tampa Bay Lightning’s Andrei Vasilevskiy, top, and the Dallas Stars’ Anton Khudobin will be in the net Saturday when the Stanley Cup Final begins with each team starting a Russian goalie for the first time ever.

AP photos

Better Browns
Cleveland bounces back to beat Burrow, Bengals » Page 22

Thomas leads at surprisingly playable Winged Foot » US Open, Page 23