

AUTO RACING

William Byron wins rain-delayed Daytona 500
Page 24



MILITARY

Report: Grounded Ospreys may be flying again soon
Page 3



FACES

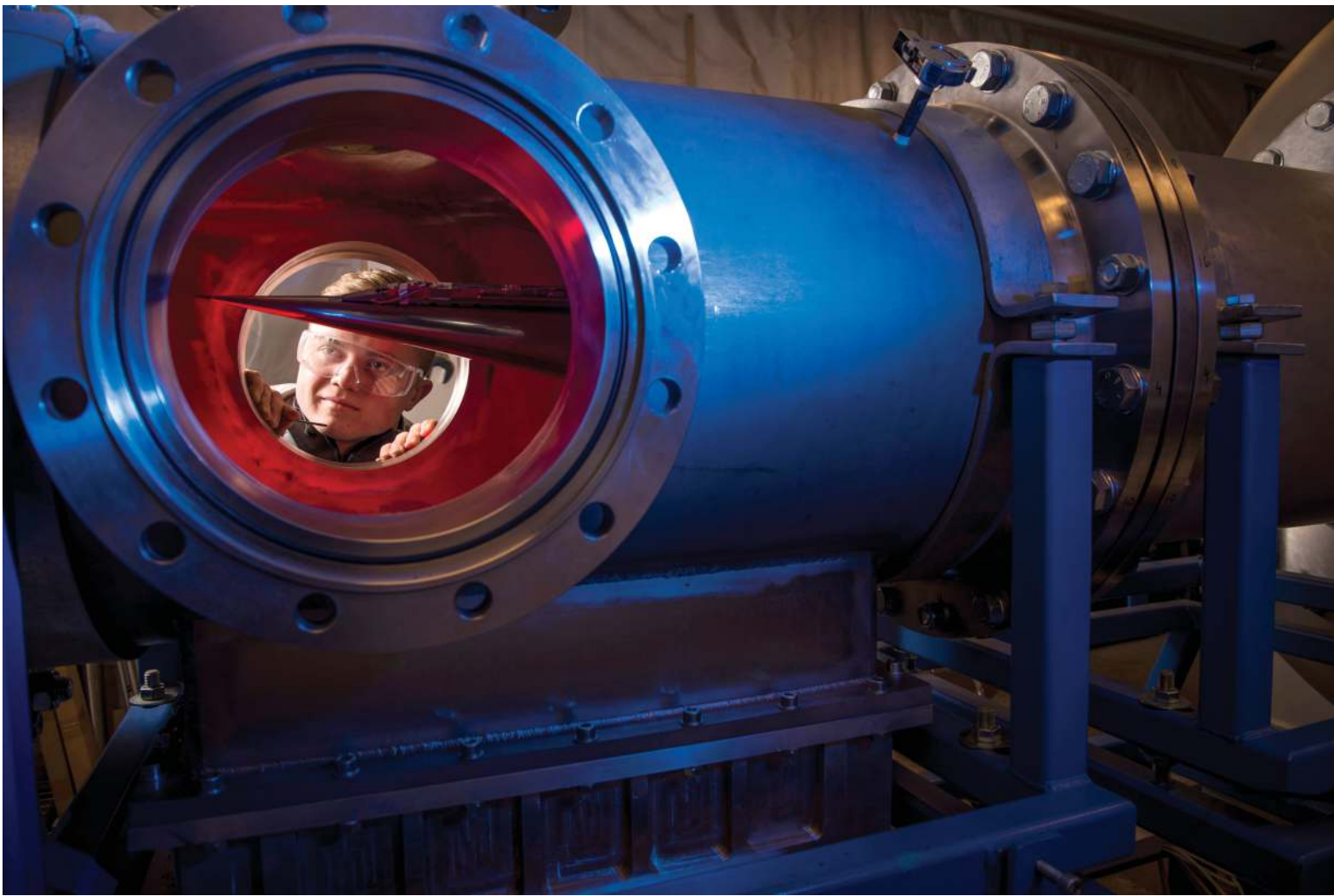
'Will Trent' is back on the case after Hollywood strikes
Page 15

▶ South Korea taps into military hospitals amid medical strike >> Page 4

STARS AND STRIPES

stripes.com

Volume 82 Edition 220 ©SS 2024 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024 平成12年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く) 50¢/Free to Deployed Areas
発行所 星条旗新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥ 50



JOSHUA ARMSTRONG/U.S. Air Force

Tech workers protested involvement in Pentagon projects only a few years ago, but most are now eager to get involved in programs such as this hypersonic missile research conducted by the Air Force Academy's Department of Aeronautics in 2019.

Embracing battlefield tech

BY NITASHA TIKU AND ELIZABETH DWOSKIN
The Washington Post

Hundreds of bright young technologists were in California last weekend for a two-day hackathon — a quintessential start-up contest in which teams of coders race to build software. But rather than a posh, snack-laden San Francisco office, they worked in a cavernous 6,000 square-foot warehouse in El Segundo, a refinery town southwest of Los Angeles.

How Silicon Valley learned to love America, drones and glory

And instead of building mobile apps or AI chatbots, competitors hacked together surveillance tools, electronic warfare systems, or drone countermeasures for the front lines in Ukraine — battlefield technology driving a funding frenzy among tech investors. “[Build] hard tech for the defense of the West,” a hackathon

judge wrote on X, encouraging applicants. “Defense, Drones. Gundo,” an organizer wrote, using the city’s nickname to promote the event.

Until recently, tech workers have bristled at applying the fast and nimble start-up ethos to fashion deadly weapons. When Google signed a Pentagon contract to de-

velop AI to target drone strikes, thousands petitioned its CEO in 2018 to cancel it. Such protests spread during the Trump administration, with workers railing against plans to sell augmented-reality headsets to U.S. troops and facial recognition tools to immigration officials at the Southern border.

But after a decade of pushing a utopian vision of the future, tech’s most optimistic pitch is a return to America’s past. Connecting the

SEE TECH ON PAGE 5

Houthis resilient amid US airstrikes

BY JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Despite a month of U.S.-led airstrikes, Yemen’s Iran-backed Houthi rebels remain capable of launching significant attacks — just this week, they seriously damaged a ship in a crucial strait and apparently downed an American drone worth tens of millions of dollars.

The continued assaults by the Houthis on shipping through the crucial Red Sea corridor — the Bab el-Mandeb Strait — against the backdrop of Israel’s war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip underscore the challenges in trying to stop the guerrilla-style attacks that have seen them hold onto Yemen’s capital and much of the war-ravaged country’s north since 2014.

Meanwhile, the campaign has boosted the rebels’ standing in the Arab world, despite their own human rights abuses in a yearslong stalemated war with several of America’s allies in the region. And the longer their attacks go on, analysts warn the greater the risk that disruptions to international shipping will begin to weigh down on the global economy.

On Monday, both the Houthis and Western officials acknowledged one of the most-serious attacks on shipping launched by the rebels. The Houthis targeted the Belize-flagged bulk carrier Rubymar with two anti-ship ballistic missiles, one of which struck the vessel, the U.S. military’s Central Command said.

The Rubymar, which already had reported problems with its

SEE RESILIENT ON PAGE 6

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Capital One to buy Discover in \$35 billion deal

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Capital One Financial said it will buy Discover Financial Services for \$35 billion, in a deal that would bring together two of the nation's credit card companies as well as potentially shake up the payments industry, which is largely dominated by Visa and Mastercard.

Under the terms of the all-stock transaction, Discover Financial shareholders will receive Capital One shares valued at nearly \$140. That's a significant premium to

the \$110.49 that Discover shares closed on Friday.

The deal marries two of the largest credit card companies that aren't banks first, like JPMorgan Chase and Citigroup, with the notable exception of American Express. It also brings together two companies whose customers are largely similar: often Americans who are looking for cash back or modest travel rewards, compared to the premium credit cards dominated by AmEx, Citi and Chase.

"This marketplace that's dom-

inated by the big players is going to shrink a little bit more now," said Matt Schulz, chief credit card analyst at LendingTree.

It also will give Discover's payment network a major credit card partner in a way that could make the payment network a major competitor once again. It's unclear whether Capitol One will adopt the Discover payment system or may set up a payment network that allows parallel use of Discover and a second payment network like Visa.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		Commercial rates	
Euro costs (Feb. 21)	\$1.05	Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound (Feb. 21)	\$1.23	Britain (Pound)	1.2650
Japanese yen (Feb. 21)	146.00	Canada (Dollar)	1.3514
South Korean won (Feb. 21)	1304.00	China (Yuan)	7.1917
		Denmark (Krone)	6.8834
		Egypt (Pound)	30.9406
		Euro	0.9235
		Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8214
		Hungary (Forint)	358.29
		Israel (Shekel)	3.6713
		Japan (Yen)	149.84
		Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3078
		Norway (Krone)	10.4573
		Philippines (Peso)	55.95
		Poland (Zloty)	3.99
		Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7506
		Singapore (Dollar)	1.3431
		South Korea (Won)	1333.33
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8798		
Thailand (Baht)	35.98		
Turkey (NewLira)	30.9095		

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

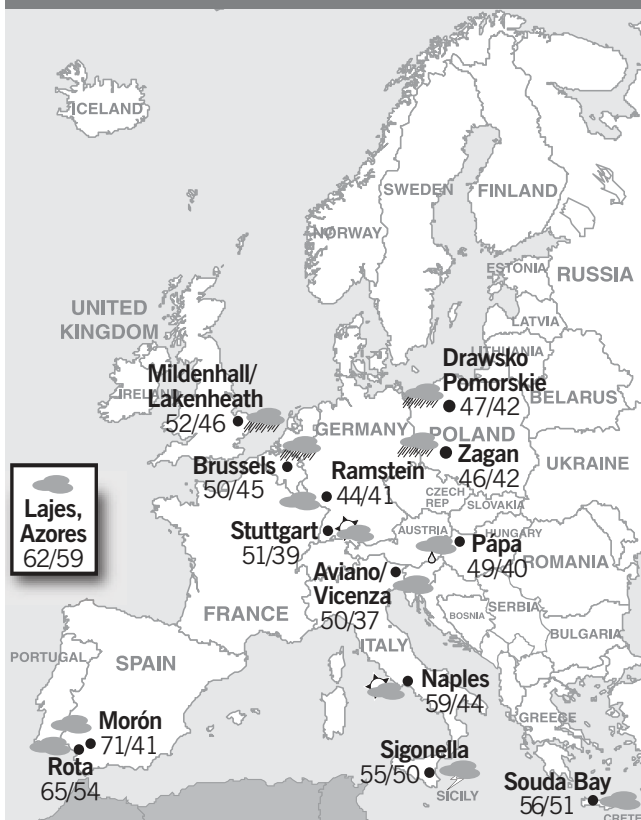
INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	8.50
Interest Rates Discount rate	6.00
Federal funds market rate	5.33
3-month bill	5.38
30-year bond	4.44

WEATHER OUTLOOK

WEDNESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



WEDNESDAY IN EUROPE



THURSDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

TODAY IN STRIPES

- American Roundup 14
- Classified 13
- Comics 17
- Crossword 17
- Faces 15
- Opinion 16
- Sports 18-24

STARS AND STRIPES

However you read us, wherever you need us.

Mobile • Online • Print

EUROPE

ADVERTISING
 CustomerService@stripes.com | +49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
 DSN: 314.583.9111

MIDDLE EAST

ADVERTISING
 CustomerService@stripes.com | +49 (0) 0631.3615.9111
 DSN: 314.583.9111

PACIFIC

ADVERTISING
 PacificAdvertising@stripes.com | +81 (42) 552.2511
 DSN: 315.227.7310

Round-the-world news for America's military.

Stripes.com supplies constant updates, on news of interest — including reports from our overseas military bases in Europe, Pacific, Southwest Asia and the Mideast, and coverage of the Pentagon and Capitol Hill.

Also available on mobile apps for Android and iOS.

STARS AND STRIPES

Mobile • Online • Print

MILITARY

Report says Ospreys may fly again soon

Aircraft were grounded after November crash

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The U.S. military's fleet of Osprey tiltrotor aircraft, grounded since December after a fatal crash off the Japanese coast, could be flying again within weeks, according to a media report citing unnamed military officials.

A CV-22B Osprey from Yokota's 21st Special Operations Squadron went down Nov. 29 during a routine training mission off Yakushima, an island in southern Japan.

Investigators probing the crash, which killed eight airmen, are looking at a possible mishap involving the aircraft's propeller rotor gearbox, the officials said in a Tuesday report by NBC News.

Preliminary findings determined the crash was likely the result of equipment failure, not pilot error, Stars and Stripes previously reported.



A CV-22B Osprey arrives at Yokota Air Base, Japan, in 2018.

Stars and Stripes

ly reported.

Twenty service members, including those killed in the Japan crash, have died in Osprey mishaps the past two years.

Four Marines perished March

18, 2022, in a Norway accident attributed to pilot error.

Three months later, another five Marines died in a Southern California crash that investigators blamed on a hard clutch en-

gagement associated with the gearbox.

Three Marines died and five were injured Aug. 27 in Australia in a crash still under investigation.

The Osprey grounding could have lasted as long as a year but the aircraft could fly again soon, possibly within weeks, according to the officials quoted by NBC.

Air Force Special Operations Command did not immediately respond to phone calls early Tuesday seeking comment.

Four hundred Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps Ospreys have been grounded since Dec. 6 in the wake of November's crash. Japan also grounded its fleet of 14 Ospreys.

The Osprey is a fast-moving airframe that can take off like a helicopter and then tilt its engines and propellers to fly like an airplane.

The tiltrotor stand-down is one of the largest military aircraft groundings in terms of affecting three services' flight operations, but it's not the longest.

When the Osprey was still in development, two crashes in 2000 killed 23 Marines and led the Corps to ground the program for nearly 18 months.

robson.seth@stripes.com
@SethRobson1

USS Halsey heads to India for exercise

By **ALEX WILSON**
Stars and Stripes

A U.S. guided-missile destroyer joined Japanese and Australian warships for weekend drills before heading to India for a separate, five-day exercise, according to the Navy.

The USS Halsey, Japanese destroyer JS Sazanami and the Australian frigate HMAS Warramunga trained together Saturday and Sunday in the Bay of Bengal, which borders Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, the U.S. 7th Fleet said in a news release Monday.

The brief exercise included ship maneuvers, communications drills and information-sharing aimed at improving the "collective ability of the three nations to maintain maritime security and readiness to respond to any regional contingency," according to the release.

After the exercise concluded, the Halsey relocated Monday to Visakhapatnam, India, to join the Milan exercise, 7th Fleet said in a separate news release that day.

That training, led by the Indian navy, includes more than 50 par-



ISMAEL MARTINEZ/U.S. Navy

The guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey, seen here last month in the Pacific Ocean, took part in a two-day exercise in the Bay of Bengal before heading to India on Monday.

ticipating countries with sea and harbor phases scheduled to run until Feb. 27, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Luka Bakic told Stars and Stripes by email Tuesday.

The sea phase includes ship maneuvers, air-defense drills, communications drills, gunnery exercises, war scenarios and "high-end tactical training," according to 7th Fleet.

The Halsey will be the only U.S. ship participating, Bakic said in a follow-up message.

The destroyer's presence near India follows weeks of Navy activity in the South China and Philippine Seas.

The guided-missile destroyer USS John Finn on Friday joined the Sazanami and the Japanese guided-missile destroyer JS Shimakaze for a similar exercise in the South China Sea, Bakic said.

That exercise came just a week after the littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords teamed up with the Philippine patrol vessel BRP Gregorio Del Pilar for their own drills Feb. 9 in the South China Sea.

A day earlier, the John Finn and Gabrielle Giffords joined the Sazanami and Warramunga for two days of training in the South China Sea.

Despite the frequency and proximity of the various exercises, 7th Fleet has repeatedly said that they're not related.

"Nearly all of our maritime activities on a day-to-day basis are conducted in concert with allies and partners," Bakic said. "We are focused on ensuring that we maintain the capabilities to deter, defend, and, if necessary, defeat aggression."

AFRICOM investigating Somali militants' claim that US killed hostages

By **JOHN VANDIVER**
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — U.S. Africa Command said Tuesday that it is investigating claims that two Cuban hostages were killed in an airstrike last week in Somalia that was aimed at the al-Shabab militant group.

The strike occurred Thursday near Jilib, in the south of the country, AFRICOM said in a statement, adding that it was aware of the reports.

"We do not have further information at this time about these reports, but we do take all claims of civilian casualties seriously," the statement said. "The command will continue to assess the results of this operation and will provide additional information as available."

The AFRICOM message came in response to a Saturday statement by al-Shabab saying that two Cuban doctors it took hostage in 2019, Assel Herrera and Landy Rodriguez, had been killed instantly in the strike.

The doctors were abducted nearly five years ago during an operation in Kenya, where they were working.

Al-Shabab, the largest recognized terrorist organization in

Africa, has been at war with Somalia's weak national government for two decades. The organization has a track record of taking civilians and foreign workers hostage.

In January, the group captured multiple people when a helicopter contracted by the United Nations was forced to land in al-Shabab territory after mechanical problems.

Over the years, the U.S. has stepped up its support for Somalia, where American special operations troops train government forces. The command also routinely carries out air strikes against al-Shabab targets.

Still, al-Shabab has proved resistant to international efforts against it.

In 2023, Somalia experienced a 22% increase in deaths stemming from Islamic militant violence, reaching a record high of 7,643, the African Center for Strategic Studies reported in its annual assessment of violence on the continent.

That tally represents a tripling of the number since 2020, the report said.

vandiver.john@stripes.com
@john_vandiver

PACIFIC

S. Korea taps into military hospitals amid medical strike

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Twelve South Korean military hospitals opened their doors to civilian patients with urgent medical needs Tuesday as thousands of interns and resident physicians in the country resigned in protest of a government proposal to increase medical school enrollments.

None of the listed hospitals are on U.S. military bases; however, the strike could affect U.S. civilians who are encouraged to seek off-base health care so that military doctors can prioritize active-duty troops and their families.

Armed Forces Daejeon Hospital in Daejeon city, roughly 80 miles south of Seoul, and the Navy Pohang Hospital in Pohang city, about 160 miles south of the capital, were among the facilities admitting emergency patients, according to a list provided by the Ministry of National Defense on Tuesday.

The process for admitting civilian patients into the military hospitals was streamlined and medical staff made “necessary preparations” to care for them, Defense Ministry spokesman Jeon Ha Gyu told reporters at a news briefing Tuesday.

The openings come as 6,415 resident physicians from 100 hospitals submitted resignations to pro-

test the plan to increase enrollment quotas to accommodate 2,000 additional students starting next year.

Of those who resigned, 1,630 walked off the job, according to a Ministry of Health and Welfare news release Tuesday.

Interns and resident physicians argued they were not consulted about the proposal, which they say will reduce the quality of education and may prompt frivolous medical services, according to a report from the Korean Medical Association on Monday.

Park Min-soo, second vice minister of health and welfare, said Tuesday he had “serious concern and deep regret” for the disruptions in medical treatment.

“The government will do its best to operate an emergency treatment response system to minimize damage to patients,” Park told reporters at a briefing. “It can never be justified to leave the patient’s side to oppose a policy.”

South Korean medical schools in the 1980s had more students enrolled than they have now, and the country is in urgent need of more doctors, Park said.

He said 25 surgeries had been canceled in the country due to the lack of medical staff as of Monday.

choi.david@stripes.com
@choibboy

Police arrest Marine in assault at Okinawa club

By HANA KUSUMOTO
AND KELLY AGEЕ
Stars and Stripes

Japanese police arrested an Okinawa-based Marine over the weekend on suspicion of assaulting a nightclub employee.

Pfc. Julio Mendoza Jr., 19, of the 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group at Camp Kinser, was taken into custody Sunday, a police spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone Tuesday.

Mendoza, according to police, hit a club employee in Naha at 3:52 a.m. after the club staff tried to force him to leave, the spokesman said.

Mendoza entered a club staff room and assaulted the employee, the spokesman said. Other workers detained the Marine and handed him over to the police.

Mendoza told police he was drunk and doesn’t remember what happened, according to the spokesman.

The case has been sent to the prosecutors. Mendoza was released from custody on Monday, the spokesman said.

“The Marine Corps is fully cooperating with Japanese law enforcement on this matter,” Capt. Brett Vannier, a spokesman for 3rd Marine Logistics Group, told Stars and Stripes by email Tuesday. “The allegations against the Marine are not in keeping with Marine Corps standards and do not reflect the deep value we have for the community and our longstanding relationship.”

agee.kelly@stripes.com
@KellyA_Stripes
kusumoto.hana@stripes.com
@HanaKusumoto



COLBY A. MOTHERSHEAD/U.S. Navy

The Royal Australian Navy Hobart-class destroyer HMAS Brisbane transits alongside the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Rafael Peralta during a personnel transfer evolution.

Australia plans naval expansion as tensions mount within region

By MICHAEL HEATH
AND BEN WESTCOTT
Bloomberg News

SYDNEY — Australia plans to more than double the size of its naval combat fleet while scaling back the number of troubled BAE Systems Plc Hunter-Class frigates it builds, in a drive to meet the challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.

The government will increase warship funding in the May budget by \$7.3 billion over the next decade, Defense Minister Richard Marles said Tuesday. The aim is to provide a larger and more lethal fleet that complements conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

Under the plan, released at the HMAS Kuttubul base in Sydney, the Navy will have 26 warships by the mid-to-late 2040s from the current 11, making it the country’s “largest fleet since the end of the Second World War,” according to Marles, who is also deputy prime minister. It will comprise:

- Three upgraded Hobart class destroyers.
- Six Hunter class frigates versus the previous nine.
- 11 new general purpose frigates that will progressively re-

place the six remaining Anzac class frigates.

■ Six new large operationally crewed surface vessels.

Australia, an open, trading island nation flanked by the Pacific and Indian Oceans, relies on secure sea lanes to move goods in and out of the country. The overhaul reflects an increasingly contested region amid China’s growing power.

The current fleet is the oldest the Navy has ever operated and the program released Tuesday called for immediate action to boost its air-defense, long-range strike, presence and anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

Tuesday’s announcement has been almost a year in the making. In April 2023, the center-left Labor government revealed the findings of a review into the military that found the defense forces were “not fully fit for purpose.”

As part of the government’s response to those findings, Marles announced a “short, sharp review” of Australia’s surface fleet led by former U.S. Adm. William H. Hilarides. It was his findings and the government’s view of them that was announced Tuesday.

The Hunter Frigates developed by BAE Systems were a particular focus, with Australian Broadcasting Corp. reporting that repeated delays and design problems with the vessels had pushed delivery of the first ship into the 2030s.

Nuclear submarines

Simultaneously, Australia is working with the U.S. and U.K. to build and equip a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines for Canberra to field, potentially as early as the 2030s, as part of the AUKUS agreement signed in 2021.

The 2023 defense review had recommended a greater emphasis on domestic manufacturing and Marles reinforced that the plan involved a continuous shipbuilding program through the decades ahead.

South Australia and Western Australia will be the centerpieces of vessel construction, with the latter focused on the Henderson Naval precinct.

Western Australia, including the capital, Perth, is an important political battleground for the Labor government, which currently holds power with a majority of just two seats in the lower house of Parliament.

Okinawa student held by Japanese police for unauthorized entry into Marine base

By HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

Japanese police arrested a university student detained by U.S. authorities after he drove onto a U.S. military base on Okinawa last week, according to an Okinawa Police spokesman.

The Japanese student drove onto Camp Foster around 1:22 p.m. Thursday, the police spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone Tuesday.

The unidentified male student, 19, of Okinawa city, entered Gate

3, and was detained by U.S. military personnel, the spokesman said. Some Japanese government spokespeople may speak to the media only on condition of anonymity.

Okinawa police officers took the student to a police station, where he was questioned and officially arrested at 10:07 p.m. on suspicion of violating the status of forces agreement between Japan and the United States by entering the base without approval, the spokesman said.

The Marine Corps did not immediately respond to phone and email queries requesting more information Tuesday.

Police are investigating the reason he entered the base, the spokesman said. Other details were unavailable.

Police forwarded the case to the Naha prosecutors office on Friday, the spokesman said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Kelly Agee contributed to this report.
kusumoto.hana@stripes.com
@HanaKusumoto

MILITARY

Tech: US investing billions into cutting-edge defense tools

FROM PAGE 1

world is out. Rearming the arsenal of democracy is in.

Between 2021 and 2023, investors funneled \$108 billion into defense tech companies building a range of cutting-edge tools, including hypersonic missiles, performance-enhancing wearables and satellite surveillance systems, according to the data firm PitchBook, which predicts the defense tech market will surge to \$184.7 billion by 2027.

Skepticism against defense work has faded for younger generations raised on the tumult of foreign wars, a financial crisis and the rising threat of China, said hackathon organizer Rasmus Dey Meyer, a 20-year-old junior at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

In the world's fragile state, Dey Meyer said, "It's a lot more socially acceptable to be unabashedly patriotic in the national interest."

To some among this new crop of tech workers and start-up founders, defense contracting is a higher calling to extend American ideals into the next century. This group of (mostly) men believes in hard work, real innovation, and family values. They're eager to accelerate progress for America. And a growing number of investors can't wait to back them.

At least three dozen funds are dedicated to the market, according to the Defense Investor Network, investing in newly-coined sectors such as defense tech, deep tech, hard tech, and space tech. Most have militaristic branding like Andreessen Horowitz's American Dynamism fund, General Catalyst's Global Resilience fund, and Shield Capital's "frontier technologies" fund, which boasts the motto: "Mission Matters." On Wednesday, the prominent start-up incubator Y Combinator announced a new fund dedicated to defense, space, and robotics.

This public embrace of nationalism marks a massive shift in Silicon Valley, where values have long been out of step with the rest of the country, Founders Fund partner Trae Stephens said.

The firm's founder, Peter Thiel, told Stephens in 2014 to locate companies building technology to protect American interests that could be sold to the Department of Defense. In three years, Stephens, who Thiel had recruited from the CIA-backed data mining start-up Palantir, says he only found one company.

Now there are dozens, including at least seven "unicorns" valued at more than \$1 billion.

Lobbying budgets have likewise expanded, from VC firms along with companies like Anduril, which Stephens co-founded, Shield AI, and Skydio.

This cultural shift has been



RYAN RAMSAMMY/U.S. Marines

A U.S. Marine with 2d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 2d Marine Division, operates an RQ-20 Puma during a 2022 exercise at Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue, N.C.

spurred by a growing unease in tech circles, as economic and geopolitical threats collide. Rising interest rates, fragility in the global supply chain and China's rapid militarization have led to fears that the United States, and perhaps the industry itself, is vulnerable.

"Russia invaded Ukraine and reminded us why defense technology is not merely something to debate in theory," Katherine Boyle, a partner at Andreessen Horowitz, said in a November speech at the Defense Venture Summit. "History had begun again, and we understood we were entering a new, violent age."

Ukraine's ramped-up use of drones prompted the Pentagon to make its notoriously arduous procurement process more hospitable to tech start-ups, launching initiatives like federally guaranteed loans for investors to fund technology deemed critical to national security, improvements that arrived as capital for venture funds was drying up.

As the bubble deflated and start-up valuations shrank, "Everyone panicked," said Michael Dempsey, managing partner of the venture firm Compound. Some developers wondered if they had wasted their time shuffling around software. This period of searching and self-doubt presented an opening for venture firms to declare defense tech the next big thing. Even now, he said, investors lack conviction about where to focus: "It's like, is it crypto? Is it climate? Is it AI? Is it American dy-



SALWAN GEORGES/The Washington Post

A Border Patrol agent walks by an Autonomous Surveillance Tower, the new CBP camera tower made by Anduril, next to a border wall near Sunland Park, N.M.

namism?"

Amid layoffs in tech, the latter has grown appealing. In a Morning Consult survey of 441 tech workers last March, 34% said they are more likely than they were a year ago to apply their skills to military projects and 48% support their employer considering defense contracts involving battle-

field technologies.

"When everything is up and to the right, you don't have to do the hardest thing to make money," said Stephens. "But it's not the money printer moment anymore."

Some in the tech field reject the previous tech era, in particular the protests against Project Maven,

Google's work to target Pentagon drones. This worker dissent ultimately benefited America's adversaries, former Google researcher Guillaume Verdon said in a recent podcast interview with Joe Lonsdale, a Palantir co-founder and tech investor.

"What I saw with my own eyes was cultural subversion within Big Tech," Verdon said.

The issue has led him to help create a philosophy called effective accelerationism or e/acc, which advocates supercharging technological progress through unbridled capitalism. The mantra has become popular in the defense tech world, where some adopt the e/acc moniker, occasionally replacing the "e" with an American flag emoji.

Others in the field see their work as preventing conflict. "The neoconservative warmongers of the past is not something I endorse," said Augustus Doricko, the 23-year-old founder of Rainmaker, a start-up that aims to alleviate water scarcity by "seeding" clouds with minerals. "Defense is good, but war is still bad."

Kat Hendrickson eschewed Big Tech jobs after finishing a Ph.D. in mechanical and aerospace engineering in 2022. She wanted to see her research tackle real problems in conflict zones.

Still, Hendrickson, a technical director working on fleets of autonomous drones at EpiSci, a Po- way, Calif.-based start-up, said the word "patriotism" makes her freeze up, especially as it has become "really co-opted by the far right," she said.

While the war in Ukraine made it easier to explain her job to friends and family, the war in Gaza stirred a lot of internal debate, Hendrickson said.

"Looking at Ukraine, a front line of troops — those are your targets," Hendrickson said. "If you're looking at Gaza from an Israeli perspective, you're bombing a city. It's just totally different."

She and her team discuss safeguards they can put in place if their products are later resold and abused, intentionally or not. "I always tell my team that I hope we're all a little bit uncomfortable."

Meanwhile, Dey Meyer and his hackathon co-organizers are focused on building the pipeline of young talent. Their organization, Apollo Defense, aims to funnel undergraduates toward creating their own defense tech start-ups or working for one.

"This deep sense of uncertainty about the future [that young people have] can be molded," Dey Meyer said. "We have agency in shaping that future. And the way that we shape that future is by building the best possible arsenal to make sure that war never happens."

MILITARY

Resilient: Expert says Houthis may escalate if no Gaza cease-fire met

FROM PAGE 1

propulsion back in November, apparently became inoperable, forcing her crew to abandon the vessel.

The Rubymar attack marked one of a few direct, serious hits by the Houthi rebels on shipping. In late January, another direct hit set a Marshall Islands-flagged tanker ablaze for hours.

Meanwhile, the Houthis early Tuesday released footage of what they described as a surface-to-air missile bringing down a U.S. MQ-9 Reaper drone off the coast of Hodeida, a Yemeni port city they hold on the Red Sea. The footage included a video of men dragging pieces of debris from the water onto a beach.

Images of the debris, which included writing in English and what seemed to be electrical equipment, appeared to correspond to known pieces of the Reaper, usually used in attack missions and surveillance flights. Central Command and the U.S. Air Force's Mideast arm have not responded to questions from the AP over the apparent downing.

In November, the Pentagon acknowledged the loss of an MQ-9, also shot down by the rebels over the Red Sea.

Since the Houthis seized the country's north and its capital of Sanaa in 2014, the U.S. military has lost at least four drones to shootdowns by the rebels — in 2017, 2019 and this year.

Meanwhile, the Houthis claimed an attack on the Sea Champion, a Greek-flagged, U.S.-owned bulk carrier bound for Aden, Yemen, carrying grain from Argentina.

The rebels separately claimed an attack on the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier Navis Fortuna, a ship that had been broadcasting its destination as Italy with an "all Chinese" crew to avoid being targeted. Private security firm Ambrey reported that the vessel

sustained minor damage in a drone attack.

The U.S. shot down 10 bomb-carrying Houthi drones, as well as a cruise missile heading toward the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Laboon over the last day, Central Command said Tuesday. The U.S. military also conducted strikes targeting a Houthi surface-to-air missile launcher and a drone prior to its launch.

The Houthis acknowledged the drone attacks and claimed other assaults not immediately acknowledged by the West.

Since November, the rebels have repeatedly targeted ships in the Red Sea and surrounding waters over Israel's war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip. They have frequently targeted vessels with tenuous or no clear links to Israel, imperiling shipping in a key route for trade among Asia, the Mideast and Europe. Those vessels have included at least one with cargo for Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor.

The European Union has launched its own campaign to protect shipping, with member France saying on Tuesday that it shot down two Houthi drones overnight in the Red Sea.

So far, no U.S. sailor or pilot has been wounded by the Houthis since America launched its airstrikes targeting the rebels in January. However, the U.S. continues to lose drones worth tens of millions of dollars and fire million-dollar cruise missiles to counter the Houthis, who are using far cheaper weapons that experts believe largely have been supplied by Iran.

Based on U.S. military statements, American and allied forces have destroyed at least 73 missiles of different types before they were launched, as well as 17 drones, 13 bomb-laden drone boats and one underwater explosive drone over their monthlong campaign, according to an AP tally. Those fig-



PHOTOS BY OSAMAH ABDULRAHMAN/AP

Houthi supporters attend a rally against the U.S.-led airstrikes on Yemen and in support of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Yemen, in Sanaa, Yemen, on Feb. 9.



Houthi supporters attend another rally against the U.S.-led strikes against Yemen and in the support of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, in Sanaa, Yemen, on Friday.

ures don't include the initial Jan. 11 joint U.S.-U.K. strikes that began the campaign. The American military also has shot down dozens of missiles and drones already airborne since November.

The Houthis haven't offered much information regarding their losses, though they've acknowledged at least 22 of their fighters have been killed in the American-

led strikes. Insurgent forces including the Houthis and allied tribes in Yemen number around 20,000 fighters, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies. They can operate in small units away from military bases, making targeting them more difficult.

The Houthis may view the costs as balanced by their sudden fame

within an Arab world enraged by the killing of women and civilians by Israel in Gaza.

In the past, others — including the late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden — have used the Palestinians' plight to justify their "actions and garner support," wrote Fatima Abo Alasrar, a scholar at the Washington-based Middle East Institute.

"It legitimizes the Houthis' actions in the eyes of those who sympathize with the Palestinian cause, distracts from the more immediate issues associated with the Yemen conflict and the failures of Houthi governance, and potentially broadens the base of their support beyond Yemen's borders," Alasrar added.

If the Houthi attacks continue, it could force the U.S. to intensify and widen its counterattacks across an already volatile Mideast.

"Without a cease-fire in Gaza, the Houthis could be tempted to further escalate against U.S. interests in the Red Sea and in the region," wrote Eleonora Ardemagni, a fellow at the Italian Institute for International Political Studies.

For Washington, "deterrence options" are getting narrower, she added.

General takes lead of Marine Corps' largest fighting force

BY ERIKA I. RITCHIE

The Orange County Register

Lt. Gen. Michael S. Cederholm, selected almost 11 months ago to take over the Marines' largest warfighting unit, finally took the helm at California's Camp Pendleton, calling the I Marine Expeditionary Force "America's hammer."

"We come to fight, and we come to win," Cederholm said during the long-delayed change of com-

mand ceremony held Friday. "I'm excited to get after it and get into the attack."

Cederholm, who previously served at the Pentagon as the Marine Corps' deputy commandant for aviation, is taking over the command of the nearly 44,000 Marines and sailors from Lt. Gen. Bradford J. Gering, who had assumed the duties in August when a stall in the Senate confirmation process for general officers kept

Cederholm from taking his job.

Cederholm had been nominated for the post by President Joe Biden in March. At least 300 senior military officers within the Department of Defense were impacted by the delay, with some only now taking their new jobs at bases across the nation and beyond.

Before leading the I Marine Expeditionary Force, Gering led the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing at Mira-

mar, one of the force's 11 subordinate units. The posting in August to Camp Pendleton delayed his promotion to lieutenant general and his orders to take over as deputy commandant of aviation.

Friday's ceremony included a moment of silence for five Marines — known as the Flying Tigers from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361 — who were killed when their CH-53 Super Stallion crashed on Feb. 6 in East-

ern San Diego County.

Senior military leaders at the ceremony included Gen. Christopher J. Mahoney, assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, and Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro.

There were also city officials from towns bordering the base and representatives from support groups in Southern California that have adopted battalions within the I Marine Expeditionary Force.

NATION

Biden heads to California to rev up fundraising

Campaign has \$130M for likely Trump rematch

BY AAMER MADHANI
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden heads to California on Tuesday looking to soak up more cash for his reelection bid during a three-day swing through the state.

Going into the trip, Biden's campaign and the Democratic National Committee announced Tuesday that they had collected \$42 million in contributions during January from 422,000 donors. Biden ended January with \$130 million in cash on hand. Campaign officials said that is the highest total amassed by any Democratic candidate at this point in the cycle.

Biden campaign manager Julie Chavez Rodriguez called the haul "an indisputable show of strength to start the election year."

"While Team Biden-Harris continues to build on its fundraising machine, Republicans are divided — either spending money fighting Donald Trump, or spending money in support of Donald Trump's extreme and losing agenda," she said.

The campaign will need to keep fundraising for what is expected to be a hotly contested and expensive battle with former President Trump, who has emerged as the GOP's likely nominee.



ANDREW HARNIK/AP

President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden arrive at the White House on Monday, after returning from Rehoboth Beach, Del. This week's trip to Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area will mark Biden's third visit to California in just over two months for political events.

This week's trip to Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area will mark Biden's third visit to California in just over two months for political events. He's trying to make up for lost time after largely avoiding the Democratic donor stronghold during last year's strikes by the Writers Guild of America and SAG-AFTRA.

Biden heads first to Los Angeles, where he will take part in a fundraiser. He'll also make campaign stops in San Francisco and Los Altos Hills this week and de-

liver a policy speech near Los Angeles on Wednesday.

Biden made a quick visit to Los Angeles earlier this month for a meeting with supporters in the city's upscale Bel Air neighborhood. He and first lady Jill Biden also spent a weekend in December in the Los Angeles area for campaign events.

The first lady is traveling Tuesday to Guilford, Conn., to hold a campaign fundraiser on behalf of her husband.

While the Bidens will be pursu-

ing deep-pocketed donors this week, the campaign points to the number of smaller donations it has raised as an encouraging sign for the president.

The campaign says 97% of the 3 million donations it has received thus far were under \$200 each. Biden has also received pledges from 158,000 "sustaining donors" who have committed to donating on a monthly basis — more than double the amount Biden had at this point in the 2020 cycle.

Those totals include donations

to Biden's political operation and to a network of joint fundraising arrangements with the national and state Democratic parties. Biden's 2020 campaign raised over \$1 billion, and could need even more in a likely Trump rematch.

"This haul will go directly to reaching the voters who will decide this election," said Biden campaign senior communications adviser TJ Ducklo.

Biden in recent days has seized on comments by Trump that call into question the U.S. commitment to defend NATO allies from attack as "dangerous" and "un-American." Trump earlier this month said he once warned that he would allow Russia to do whatever it wants to NATO member nations that are "delinquent" in devoting 2% of their gross domestic product to defense.

The Biden campaign launched digital ads last week in three battleground states — Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania — criticizing Trump for his threat to NATO countries. Biden has also railed against House Republicans for blocking a \$95 billion foreign aid bill that includes \$60 billion in funding for Ukraine's war with Russia.

"The idea that we're going to walk away from Ukraine, the idea that we're going to let NATO begin to split is totally against the interests of the United States of America and it is against our word we've given ... all the way back to Eisenhower," Biden told reporters Sunday.

Rep. Tlaib endorses protest vote against Biden in Michigan

BY MELISSA NANN BURKE
The Detroit News

DETROIT — U.S. Rep. Rashida Tlaib is endorsing the campaign urging fellow Michigan Democrats to vote "uncommitted" in the Feb. 27 presidential primary in protest of President Joe Biden's policy in Gaza.

In a video posted to social media Saturday, Tlaib said it's important to not just march against the "genocide" in Gaza but to form a voting bloc to effect change.

"Something that is a bullhorn to say enough is enough. We don't want a country that supports wars and bombs and destruction. We want to support life. We want to stand up for every single life killed in Gaza," Tlaib said.

"This is the way you can raise our voices, to make us even more visible. Right now, we feel completely neglected — neglected and just unseen by our government. If you want us to be louder, then come here and vote uncommitted."

Tlaib was standing outside the Ford Civic Center in Dearborn,

which is an early voting center for next Tuesday's presidential primary.

Tlaib, a three-term congresswoman, is the first member of Congress in Michigan and the highest-profile official to date to get behind the Listen to Michigan campaign, which aims to pressure Biden into overhauling his approach to the war between Israel and Hamas.

The Arab American and Muslim activists leading the effort hope to show Biden that Michigan Democrats who oppose the administration's approach in Gaza control what could be Biden's margin of victory for a second term. They point to former President Donald Trump winning the state by about 10,700 votes in 2016 and Biden winning it by about 154,000 in 2020.

Listen to Michigan's campaign manager is Tlaib's younger sister, Layla Elabed, who said volunteers for the effort made 150,000 phone calls in its first week. They also planned phone banks through the weekend in Dearborn and a 3 p.m. rally Tuesday at the University of

Michigan's campus in Ann Arbor.

The campaign also announced its first ad buy Friday, which was described as six figures for a mailer distributed in the Metro Detroit region and a digital ad on YouTube.

Thirty-two state and local officials, including state lawmakers, have pledged to vote "uncommitted" on Democratic primary ballots, as well as former Rep. Andy Levin, D-Mich.

Richard Czuba, a pollster with the Lansing-based Glengariff Group, said an uncommitted vote of 20% would register as dissenters "showing up" to protest Biden and anything 30% or higher would signal to the president that he's got major problems with his base.

The Biden White House last week sent a delegation of high-level officials to Dearborn who met with Arab American and Muslim leaders there. At least one of the officials expressed "missteps" in the administration's response to the war in Gaza.

Tlaib, a Democrat from Detroit, has been an outspoken critic of the



MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., left, and Rep. Cori Bush, D-Mo., come out of Tlaib's office to meet with activists from the group CodePink as they advocate for Gaza on Capitol Hill, on Thursday.

Biden administration's steadfast support of Israel's far-right government and policies toward the Palestinian people. She has sponsored a measure in Congress calling for a cease-fire and was censured by House colleagues last fall for her anti-Israel rhetoric.

The Detroit DSA (Democratic

Socialists of America) also endorsed the Listen To Michigan campaign recently.

The 13th Congressional District Democratic Party — Tlaib's former district — on Saturday endorsed Biden for president, district chairman Jonathan Kinloch said.

NATION

GOP contenders for Senate seek Trump approval

Not in Pennsylvania and it's awkward

By **MARC LEVY**
Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Since he became the single biggest force in Republican politics nearly a decade ago, Donald Trump has figured prominently in U.S. Senate races, using his massive public platform and loyal base of support to shape which GOP incumbents run for reelection and which contenders get nominated.

This year, with control of the U.S. Senate on the line, would-be nominees in the Senate battlegrounds of Arizona, Montana, Michigan, Nevada and Ohio are endorsing Trump in the GOP presidential primary, campaigning for him or otherwise seeking his approval.

But that's not happening in Pennsylvania, where an awkward dance between likely partners at the top of the ticket seems all but certain to continue until the music stops in November.

There, the likely Republican nominee, David McCormick, and Trump seem to be ignoring each other. Theirs is a complicated re-

lationship that Democrats say is fraught with danger for McCormick and pollsters say makes his uphill climb against an entrenched incumbent steeper.

"It's a fascinating relationship to observe," said Christopher Borick, director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in Allentown. "They're not a natural fit in terms of their policy positions, their rhetorical styles and, of course, given Trump's support of one of McCormick's opponents in 2022, there is a history. And how do you navigate that becomes the question."

McCormick — a wealthy hedge fund CEO and onetime senior official in President George W. Bush's administration — has no major primary opposition, is popular with party brass and doesn't need Trump's fundraising help.

But he is trying to knock off Democratic U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, the son of a former governor and the best-known political name in Pennsylvania.

For Democrats, Pennsylvania is



DAVID DERMER/AP

David McCormick, a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania, prepares to enter his campaign bus after a campaign stop in Erie, Pa., on Saturday.

a must-win if they are to somehow hang on to Senate control and help President Joe Biden remain in the White House. Biden's unpopularity — even in Pennsylvania, where Biden was born, roots for Philadelphia sports teams and campaigns often — rivals Trump's, and the presidential race will weigh heavily on both McCormick and Casey, one of Biden's strongest allies in Congress.

For McCormick, there's the additional baggage of Trump's unpopularity with the moderate voters McCormick wants to win over — not to mention the tongue-lashings Trump administered as he worked to defeat McCormick in

Pennsylvania's hotly contested 2022 primary for U.S. Senate.

McCormick — like others in the seven-way GOP primary to succeed retiring Republican Sen. Pat Toomey — had sought Trump's endorsement. According to McCormick's telling of it, Trump told McCormick during their meeting at Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida that to win the primary McCormick would need to say the 2020 election was stolen.

McCormick said he refused. Three days later, Trump endorsed Dr. Mehmet Oz and then savaged McCormick repeatedly.

Still, McCormick's allies say he

hasn't harbored hard feelings, and he hasn't since criticized Trump for that episode — or anything else, really.

But Trump has not walked back his previous comments — and that could hang over McCormick.

McCormick declined an interview request, and Trump's campaign aides didn't respond to messages. But the pall between them is hard to miss.

McCormick has said he hadn't believed he needed Trump's endorsement to win in 2022, as long as Trump wasn't attacking him, and acknowledged the necessity of convincing moderate voters to back him.

Trump's gold sneakers sold out, but sneakerheads not buying

By **EMILY BLOCH**

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Through a sea of boos (and some cheers) Donald Trump announced his inaugural venture into the sneaker world at Philadelphia's Sneaker Con. The Saturday launch marked the first time a former U.S. president has unveiled a sneaker line — and some say that's for good reason.

The metallic gold high-tops — priced at \$400 and limited to 1,000 pairs — sold out within the day. But sneakerheads say they aren't the ones purchasing them.

Online, the shoes were quickly mocked for their slightly off resemblance to Nike Air Force 1s and Jordan 1s.

"Scammer 1s," Alvin Blanco at Hip-Hop Wired called them in a viral tweet. "Those the January 6s" another post said, referencing the 2021 attack in which Trump supporters stormed the Capitol as Joe Biden's presidential victory was being certified. Their official title is the "Never Surrender Gold Hi-Tops."



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP

Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump attends Sneaker Con Philadelphia, an event popular among sneaker collectors, in Philadelphia, on Saturday.

In Philadelphia, the response to the sneakers themselves was tepid at best and hateful at worst. At Sneaker Con, Trump said of the audible boos and groans, "there's a lot of emotion in this room."

"Philadelphians would literally boo god," local author Kim Kelly said in response to a video circu-

lating of the exchange. "[I don't know] why he thought this would go well for him."

Within the sneaker community, the announcement by the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination has raised eyebrows for both aesthetic and political reasons. What place does a

politician have at a sneaker conference geared toward streetwear, collecting and re-selling rare shoes?

Jeneene Bailey-Allen of Southwest Philly, the founder of ASGNMT, a community for women sneakerheads and women's streetwear, was at Sneaker Con when Trump announced his new line, though not in the room.

"I have to say, I'm not a fan," she said. "Personally, I find them gaudy and wouldn't even touch them if they were free."

Bailey-Allen said she was disappointed that Sneaker Con brought politics into the event space.

"[It's a] community where we typically share a commonality regardless of other noise," she said. "It felt distasteful, thoughtless, and insensitive to those who support the event and help it reach the points it has."

"Sneaker Con's mission is to support and promote sneaker culture through our worldwide live events and digital platforms," organizers said in a statement post-

ed on Instagram.

"We are thankful and appreciative of the sneaker community, and recognize individuals who generate awareness and authentic sneaker related engagement towards our community."

Sneaker Con organizers did not respond to a request for further comment on Trump's appearance as of publication time.

As for the sneaker itself? "I'd rather not acknowledge it exists," Bailey-Allen said.

Others around Philly, like well-known suburban TikTok star Alex Pearlman, compared Trump's gold shoes to spray-painted sneakers at the Mummers parade.

There's a cologne too. And a perfume. In addition to the \$399 high tops, the Get Trump Sneaker page has two low-top athletic style sneakers — the T-Red Wave and the POTUS 45 — priced at \$199 each. There's also a cologne and perfume, each called Victory47 both priced at \$99. Everything besides the gold high-tops is still available for purchase.

NATION

Problems with food waste recycling pile up

Massive California effort has trouble achieving goals

By AMY TAXIN
Associated Press

CHULA VISTA, Calif. — Two years after California launched an effort to keep organic waste out of landfills, the state is so far behind on getting food recycling programs up and running that it's widely accepted next year's ambitious waste-reduction targets won't be met.

Over time, food scraps and other organic materials like yard waste emit methane, a gas more potent and damaging in the short-term than carbon emissions from fossil fuels. California's goal is to keep that waste from piling up in landfills, instead turning it into compost or biogas.

Everything from banana peels and used coffee grounds to yard waste and soiled paper products like pizza boxes counts as organic waste. Households and businesses are now supposed to sort that material into a different bin.

But it has been hard to change people's behavior in such a short period of time and cities were delayed setting up contracts to haul organic waste due to the pandemic. In Southern California, the nation's largest facility to convert food waste into biogas has filed for bankruptcy because it's not getting enough of the organic material.

"We're way behind on implementation," said Coby Skye, the recently retired deputy director for environmental services at Los

Angeles County Public Works. "In America, for better or worse, we want convenience, and it's very difficult to spend a lot of time and effort educating people about separation."

Meanwhile, some communities that ramped up collection now have more compost than they know what to do with, a sign that more challenges are yet to come as the nation's most populous state plows ahead with its recycling plans.

Only a handful of states mandate organics recycling, and none are running a program as large as California's, which seeks to slash by 75% the amount of organic waste it sends to landfills by 2025 from 2014 levels.

Reaching that goal within a year would be a stretch, experts said.

About three-quarters of communities are currently collecting organic waste from homes, said Rachel Machi Wagoner, CalRecycle's director. While some places are lagging, her aim isn't to punish them but to help them get started, adding that every bit helps the state move toward its goal of reducing emissions.

"My goal is about figuring out where the challenges are and getting us as quickly as possible to success," she said.

"I don't know when we will reach our 75% goal, but we will reach it," she added.

CalRecycle hasn't tallied data yet on how much organic waste

was diverted from landfills in 2023. Jurisdictions reported diverting 11.2 million tons of organics at the end of 2022, up from 9.9 million tons the prior year, Wagoner said.

Some challenges include getting residents on board with sorting their trash into a third bin and knowing what goes where. Others concern what to do with the nutrient-rich compost once it's been created from collected grass clippings, tree branches and food scraps.

At Otay Landfill near the Mexican border, workers pick through heaps of branches and leaves to pull out plastic bits before the material is placed under tarps. The site processes 200 tons of organic waste daily and hopes to double that amount as more cities ramp up collection, said Gabe Gonzales, the landfill's operations manager.

Once the compost is made, California's law requires cities to use much of it. But many say they don't have enough space to lay it all out.

Chula Vista, a San Diego County city of 275,000 people, is supposed to use 14,000 tons of compost a year but uses a few thousand at best, said Manuel Medrano, the city's environmental services manager. Some is doled out in free compost giveaways for residents, while heaps of the material are stored in a fenced area of a local park.

"To transport it is really expensive, to spread it is really expensive," Medrano said. "We're no-



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

Republic Services operator George Maya removes plastic debris from yard, garden and landscape waste at the Otay Landfill in Chula Vista, Calif., last month. The site processes 200 tons of organic waste daily.

where near meeting that requirement."

Communities with more open space might fare better. Cody Cain, head of marketing and sales for compost-maker Agromin, said his company has developed a plan to link cities struggling to meet these requirements with farmers who need the material for their soil.

"We basically are matchmakers. Call us the 'Tinder' of compost, and we'll bring the farmer together with the city," Cain said.

Heidi Sanborn, founding direc-

tor of the environmental National Stewardship Action Council, said she supports the state's law but wants more done to keep plastics out of compost and to develop alternative energy solutions. Some of California's challenges stem from the fact the state is trying to build a system on a scale the country hasn't seen, she said.

"We're trying to fix incredibly tough problems. We're not going to find the perfect solution out of the gate," she said.

But, Sanborn added, "we're on our way."

Man who killed 3 first responders wasn't allowed to have guns

By JOHN HANNA
Associated Press

A man who killed himself after fatally shooting two police officers and a firefighter in a wooded Minneapolis-area neighborhood wasn't legally allowed to have guns after a previous assault conviction and was entangled in a yearslong dispute over the custody and financial support of his three oldest children, court records show.

Authorities on Monday identified Shannon Gooden, 38, as the man who opened fire on police in the affluent suburb of Burnsville after they responded to a domestic disturbance call early Sunday. The unidentified caller reported that Gooden had barricaded himself in his home with family members, including seven children aged 2 to 15.

Authorities said Gooden killed Officers Paul Elmstrand and Matthew Ruge, both 27, and Adam Finseth, 40, a firefighter and paramedic who was assigned to the city's SWAT team. Another officer, Sgt. Adam Medicott, was shot and wounded.



CRAIG LASSIG, (ST. PAUL, MINN.) PIONEER PRESS/AP

Eden Prairie, Minn., police officers pause next to memorials in front of the Burnsville Police Department in Burnsville, Minn., on Monday. Two police officers and a firefighter were killed early Sunday during a standoff by a heavily armed man who shot at police from a home.

Gooden was found dead inside the home hours later; authorities said Tuesday he shot himself in the head.

Gooden's standoff with police came only two days before a scheduled district court hearing over his ongoing legal disputes with the

mother of his three oldest children. The attorney representing Gooden in that dispute, Robert Manson, did not return a telephone message seeking comment. There was no answer Monday evening at a phone listing for a woman described in court records as Gooden's girl-

friend.

Court records show the state barred Gooden from possessing guns after he pleaded guilty in 2008 to second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon. Prosecutors said he threw rocks and pulled a knife on a man in a Burnsville shopping mall parking lot.

Authorities have not provided details about Sunday's call that led police to Gooden's home.

Court records suggest he cared for seven children — the three oldest by one woman, two more with another and that woman's two children from a previous relationship.

Court records also show his disputes over the parenting of his oldest three children had grown increasingly contentious. He accused their mother, Noemi Torres, of neglect and she called him "controlling" and accused him of abusing her and the children.

Torres told KARE-TV that their three kids, 12- and 15-year-old boys and a 14-year-old daughter, were in the house during the standoff. She said that her daughter told Torres

that Gooden put earmuffs on her before he started shooting, and that she wasn't scared until he asked, "Do you want to come with me?" meaning die with him.

Torres also told KARE-TV that Gooden had previously said he'd shoot police if she called 911 on him.

"I'm going to have a standoff," Torres quoted him as saying, according to brief interview excerpts KARE-TV posted on social media. "I'm going to kill everybody."

Prosecutors had opposed Gooden's effort to restore his right to possess guns after the 2007 incident, in which they said Gooden followed a young woman and a cousin from a mall to a parking lot and threatened to slash their tires. Gooden ran at the woman's brother with a knife, but a security guard disarmed him, so Gooden threw rocks at the brother before speeding away in his own vehicle, prosecutors said.

When he petitioned a court unsuccessfully in 2020 to have his gun rights restored, he and his attorney said he had matured and that he regretted his past poor decisions.

SCIENCE

Lab-grown diamonds cloudy on sustainability

BY ISABELLA O'MALLEY

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The muted sounds of hammering and sanding drift down to the first floor of Bario Neal, a jewelry store in Philadelphia, where rustic artwork that mimics nature hangs on warmly-lit walls.

Waiting for one of those rings is Haley Farlow, a 28-year-old second grade teacher who has been designing her three-stone engagement ring with her boyfriend. They care about price and also don't want jewelry that takes a toll on the Earth, or exploits people in mining. So they're planning on buying diamonds grown in a laboratory.

"Most of my friends all have lab-grown. And I think it just fits our lifestyle and, you know, the economy and what we're living through," said Farlow.

In the U.S., lab-grown diamond sales jumped 16% in 2023 from 2022, according to Edahn Golan, an industry analyst. They cost a fraction of the stones formed naturally underground.

Social media posts show millennials and Generation Zs proudly explaining the purchase of their lab-grown diamonds for sustainability and ethical reasons. But how sustainable they are is questionable, since making a diamond requires an enormous amount of energy and many major manufacturers are not transparent about their operations.

Farlow said the choice of lab-grown makes her ring "more special and fulfilling" because the materials are sourced from reputable companies. All of the lab diamonds at Bario Neal are either made with renewable energy or have the emissions that go into making them countered with carbon credits, which pay for activities like planting trees, which capture carbon.

But that's not the norm for lab-grown diamonds.

Many companies are based in India, where about 75% of electricity comes from burning coal.



Ajit Solanki/AP

A man looks at a polished lab-grown diamond at Greenlab Diamonds, in Surat, India, on Feb. 5. Diamonds, whether lab grown or natural, are chemically identical and entirely made out of carbon.

They use words like "sustainable" and "environmentally-friendly" on their websites, but don't post their environmental impact reports and aren't certified by third parties. Cupid Diamonds, for example, says on its website that it produces diamonds in "an environmentally friendly manner," but did not respond to questions about what makes its diamonds sustainable. Solar energy is rapidly expanding in India and there are some companies, such as Greenlab Diamonds, that utilize renewables in their manufacturing processes.

China is the other major diamond manufacturing country. Henan Huanghe Whirlwind, Zhuhai Zhong Na Diamond, HeNan LiLiang Diamond, Starsgem Co. and Ningbo Crysdiam are among the largest producers. None returned requests for comment nor post details about where it gets its electricity. More than half of Chi-

na's electricity came from coal in 2023.

In the United States, one company, VRAI, whose parent company is Diamond Foundry, operates what it says is a zero-emissions foundry in Wenatchee, Wash., running on hydropower from the Columbia River. Martin Roscheisen, CEO and founder of Diamond Foundry, said via email the power VRAI uses to grow a diamond is "about one tenth of the energy required for mining."

But Paul Zimnisky, a diamond industry expert, said companies that are transparent about their supply chain and use renewable energy like this "represent a very small portion of production."

"It seems like there are a lot of companies that are riding on this coattail that it's an environmentally-friendly product when they aren't really doing anything that's environmentally friendly," said Zimnisky.

How it's done

Lab diamonds are often made over several weeks, subjecting carbon to high pressure and high temperature that mimic natural conditions that form diamonds beneath the Earth's surface.

The technology has been around since the 1950s, but the diamonds produced were mostly used in industries like stone cutting, mining and dentistry tools.

Over time the laboratories, or foundries, have gotten better at growing stones with minimal flaws. Production costs have dropped as technology improves.

That means diamond growers can manufacture as many stones as they want and choose their size and quality, which is causing prices to fall rapidly. Natural diamonds take billions of years to form and are difficult to find, making their price more stable.

Diamonds, whether lab-grown

or natural, are chemically identical and entirely made out of carbon. But experts can distinguish between the two, using lasers to pinpoint telltale signs in atomic structure. The Gemological Institute of America grades millions of diamonds annually.

Marketing competition

With lower prices for lab-grown and young people increasingly preferring them, the new diamonds have cut into the market share for natural stones. Globally, lab-grown diamonds are now 5-6% of the market and the traditional industry is not taking it sitting down. The marketing battle is on.

The mined diamond industry and some analysts warn lab-grown diamonds won't hold value over time.

"Five to ten years into the future, I think there's going to be very few customers that are willing to spend thousands of dollars for a lab diamond. I think almost all of it's going to sell in the \$100 price point or even below," said Zimnisky. He predicts that natural diamonds will continue to sell in the thousands and tens of thousands of dollars for engagement rings.

Some cultures view engagement rings as investments and choose natural diamonds for their value over the long term. That's particularly true in China and India, Zimnisky said. It's also still true in more rural areas of the United States, while lab-grown diamonds have taken off more in the cities.

Paying thousands of dollars for something that drops most of its value in just a few years can leave the buyer feeling cheated, which Golan said is an element that is currently working against the lab-grown sector.

"When you buy a natural diamond, there's a story that it is three billion years in the making by Mother Earth. This wondrous creation of nature ... you cannot tell that story with a lab-grown," said Golan.

Astronomers have discovered what may be the brightest object in the universe

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Astronomers have discovered what may be the brightest object in the universe, a quasar with a black hole at its heart growing so fast that it swallows the equivalent of a sun a day.

The record-breaking quasar shines 500 trillion times brighter than our sun. The black hole powering this distant quasar is more than 17 billion times more immense than our sun, an Australian-led team reported Monday in the journal Na-

ture Astronomy.

While the quasar resembles a mere dot in images, scientists envision a ferocious place.

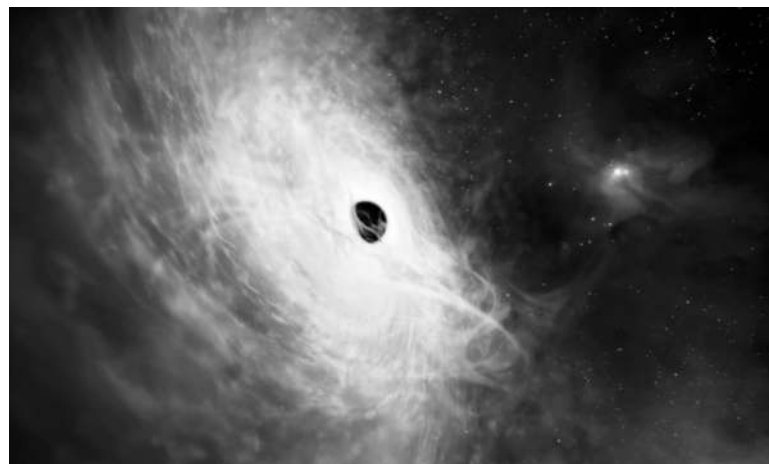
The rotating disk around the quasar's black hole — the luminous swirling gas and other matter from gobbled-up stars — is like a cosmic hurricane.

"This quasar is the most violent place that we know in the universe," lead author Christian Wolf of Australian National University said in an email.

The European Southern Observ-

atory spotted the object, J0529-4351, during a 1980 sky survey, but it was thought to be a star. It was not identified as a quasar — the extremely active and luminous core of a galaxy — until last year. Observations by telescopes in Australia and Chile's Atacama Desert clinched it.

"The exciting thing about this quasar is that it was hiding in plain sight and was misclassified as a star previously," Yale University's Priyamvada Natarajan, who was not involved in the study, said in an email.



M. Kornmesser, ESO/AP

This illustration provided by the European Southern Observatory depicts the record-breaking quasar J059-4351, the bright core of a distant galaxy that is powered by a supermassive black hole.

WAR IN UKRAINE

Zelenskyy: Aid delays making life 'very difficult'

Kremlin forces capture strategic city as war's two-year anniversary approaches

By HANNA ARHIROVA
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Delays in weapons deliveries from Western allies to Ukraine are opening a door for Russian battlefield advances, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says, making the fight "very difficult" along parts of the front line where the Kremlin's forces captured a strategic city last weekend ahead of the war's two-year anniversary.

Zelenskyy and other officials have often expressed frustration at the slowness of promised aid deliveries, especially since signs of war fatigue have emerged. European countries are struggling to find enough stocks to send to Kyiv, and U.S. help worth \$60 billion is stalled over political differences. That appears to be playing into the hands of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Even so, more help is heading Ukraine's way, as Sweden announced Tuesday its biggest aid package so far and Canada said it was expediting the delivery of more than 800 drones.

Zelenskyy, in his daily video address late Monday, said Russia has built up troops at some points along the 930-mile front line, apparently aiming to pounce on any perceived defensive weaknesses.

"They (the Russians) are taking advantage of delays in aid to Ukraine," he said after visiting the

command post in the area of Kupiansk, in the northeastern Khariv region, on Monday.

He said Ukrainian troops keenly felt a shortage of artillery, air defense systems and long-range weapons.

Ukrainian forces withdrew from the strategic eastern city of Avdiivka at the weekend, where they had battled a fierce Russian assault for four months despite being heavily outnumbered and outgunned.

But Oleksiy Danilov, head of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, said that while the situation on the battlefield is hard, especially due to a lack of ammunition, the situation on the eastern front is not catastrophic.

"We fight and will continue to fight," he told news outlet Ukrainska Pravda. "We have only one request to our partners: to help with weapons, with ammunition, and with air defense."

He claimed that Russia racked up heavy losses of troops and equipment in the fight for bombed-out Avdiivka. His claim could not be independently verified. Analysts predicted a lull in Russian attacks in the Avdiivka area. The Kremlin's forces will require time to "rest and refit," the U.K. Ministry of Defense said in an assessment Tuesday. The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank, also expected an



IRYNA RYBAKOVA/AP

A Ukrainian soldier takes his position near Klishchiivka in the Donetsk region, Ukraine, on Friday.

"operational pause" by Russia in the area.

Zelenskyy said talks with foreign partners are focusing on how to "resume and extend" support.

Sweden, which is poised to join NATO, said Tuesday it will donate military aid to Ukraine worth \$681 million. That includes 30 boats, some of which are fast and powerful military assault craft, and underwater weapons.

The deal also includes artillery ammunition, Leopard tanks, shoulder-borne anti-aircraft defense systems, anti-tank missiles, grenade launchers, hand grenades and medical transport vehicles, as well as underwater

drones and diving equipment.

"By supporting Ukraine, we are also investing in our own security," Defense Minister Pal Jonson told a news conference in Stockholm. "If Russia were to win this terrible war, we would have significantly greater security problems than we have today."

The Canadian government said Monday it will dispatch more than 800 drones to Ukraine starting as early as this spring. They are part of a previously announced \$370 million in military help for Ukraine.

Ukraine last year received \$42.5 billion from foreign partners, of which \$11.6 billion was in

non-repayable grant aid, Ukraine's Ministry of Finance said Tuesday.

The grant assistance was provided by the U.S., Japan, Norway, Germany, Spain, Finland, Switzerland, Ireland, Belgium, and Iceland, it said. The U.S. provided the biggest amount of non-repayable grant aid, with \$11 billion.

Long-term concessional financing amounted to \$30.9 billion, which included loans from the European Union (\$19.5 billion), the International Monetary Fund (\$4.5 billion), Japan (\$3.4 billion), Canada (\$1.8 billion), the U.K. (\$1 billion), the World Bank (\$660 million) and Spain (\$50 million).

Stalled US aid for Ukraine underscores GOP's shift on Russia

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI
Associated Press

At about 2 a.m. last Tuesday, Republican Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin stood on the Senate floor and explained why he opposed sending more aid to help Ukraine fend off the invasion launched in 2022 by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"I don't like this reality," Johnson said. "Vladimir Putin is an evil war criminal." But he quickly added: "Vladimir Putin will not lose this war."

That argument — that the Russian president cannot be stopped so there's no point in using American taxpayer dollars against him — marks a new stage in the Republican Party's growing acceptance of Russian expansionism in the age of Donald Trump.

The GOP has been softening its stance on Russia ever since Trump won the 2016 election following Russian hacking of his Democratic opponents. There are several reasons for the shift. Among them, Putin is holding



Mike Johnson

himself out as an international champion of conservative Christian values and the GOP is growing increasingly skeptical of overseas entanglements. Then there's Trump's personal embrace of the Russian leader.

Now the GOP's ambivalence on Russia has stalled additional aid to Ukraine at a pivotal time in the war.

The Senate last week passed a foreign aid package that included \$61 billion for Ukraine on a 70-29 vote, but Johnson was one of a majority of the Republicans to vote against the bill after their late-night stand to block it. In the Republican-controlled House, Speaker Mike Johnson said his chamber will not be "rushed" to pass the measure, even as Ukraine's military warns of dire shortages of ammunition and artillery.

Many Republicans are openly frustrated that their colleagues don't see the benefits of helping Ukraine. Putin and his allies have banked on democracies wearying of aiding Kyiv, and Putin's GOP critics warn that NATO countries in eastern Europe could become targets of an emboldened Russia that believes the U.S. won't counter it.

"Putin is losing," Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina said on the floor before Johnson's speech. "This is not a stalemate." Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky was one of 22 Republican senators to back the package, while 26 opposed it.

The divide within the party was on stark display Friday with the prison death of Russian opposition figure and anti-corruption advocate Alexei Navalny, which President Joe Biden and other world leaders blamed on Putin. Trump notably stood aside from that chorus Monday in his first public comment on the matter

that referred to Navalny by name.

Offering no sympathy or attempt to affix blame, Trump posted on Truth Social that the "sudden death of Alexei Navalny has made me more and more aware of what is happening in our Country. It is a slow, steady progression, with CROOKED, Radical Left Politicians, Prosecutors, and Judges leading us down a path to destruction."

Nikki Haley, his Republican presidential primary rival, said Monday that Trump is "siding with a thug" in his embrace of Putin.

Tillis responded to Navalny's death by saying in a post, "History will not be kind to those in America who make apologies for Putin and praise Russian autocracy."

Johnson, the House speaker, issued a statement calling Putin a "vicious dictator" and pledging that he "will be met with united opposition," but he did not offer any way forward for passing the

aid to Ukraine.

Within the Republican Party, skeptics of confronting Russia seem to be gaining ground.

"Nearly every Republican Senator under the age of 55 voted NO on this America Last bill," Missouri Sen. Eric Schmitt, elected in 2022, posted on the social media site X after the vote last week. "15 out of 17 elected since 2018 voted NO. Things are changing just not fast enough."

Those who oppose additional Ukraine aid bristle at charges that they are doing Putin's handiwork. They contend they are taking a hard-headed look at whether it's worth spending money to help the country.

"If you oppose a blank check to another country, I guess that makes you a Russian," Alabama Sen. Tommy Tuberville said on the Senate floor, after posting that conservative commentator Tucker Carlson's recent controversial interview of Putin shows that "Russia wants peace" in contrast to "DC warmongers."

WORLD

Hungary says it's ready to approve Sweden's NATO bid

Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary—A vote in Hungary's parliament on ratifying Sweden's bid to join NATO could come as early as Monday, according to a senior member of the country's governing Fidesz party. It would bring an end to more than 18 months of delays by the nationalist government that have frustrated Hungary's allies. In a letter Tuesday to the speak-

er of the parliament, the head of the Fidesz caucus, Mate Kocsis, requested that a vote be scheduled for the opening day of the spring session, which begins on Monday. Kocsis wrote that Fidesz, which has repeatedly blocked a vote on the matter, will opt to support Sweden's bid to join the trans-Atlantic military alliance. Hungary is the only one of NATO's 31 existing members not to

have ratified Sweden's bid. The Hungarian government faces mounting pressure to act after delaying the move for more than 1 1/2-years since admitting a new country to the military alliance requires unanimous approval. On Sunday, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators visited Hungary and announced they would submit a joint resolution to Congress con-

demning alleged democratic backsliding in the country and urging Prime Minister Viktor Orban to move forward on approving Sweden's accession as soon as possible. Sen. Chris Murphy, a Democrat from Connecticut, said in Budapest on Sunday that members of the Hungarian government and Fidesz had refused to meet with the delegation.

"It's good news that our dispute with Sweden is nearing a conclusion," he said. "We are moving towards ratifying Sweden's accession to NATO at the beginning of the spring session of Parliament." Reacting to the news of the vote, Sweden's Defense Minister, Pal Jonson said in Stockholm that Sweden "naturally welcome this." "It is of course very welcome," Jonson said.

WikiLeaks founder Assange faces last chance to avoid US extradition

Associated Press

LONDON — Julian Assange's lawyers began their final U.K. legal challenge Tuesday to stop the WikiLeaks founder from being sent to the United States to face spying charges, arguing that his actions had exposed serious criminal acts by U.S. authorities and that he could face a "flagrant denial of justice" if he is extradited. Assange himself was not in

court. Judge Victoria Sharp said he was granted permission to come from Belmarsh Prison, where he has been held for five years, but had chosen not to attend. Assange's lead lawyer, Edward Fitzgerald, said the 52-year-old Australian was unwell but did not elaborate on his health. Assange has been fighting extradition for more than a decade, including seven years in self-exile

in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and the last five years in the high-security prison on the outskirts of the British capital. Hundreds of supporters holding "Free Julian Assange" signs and chanting "there is only one decision — no extradition" held a noisy protest outside the neo-Gothic High Court in London, where Assange's attorneys are asking judges to grant a new appeal hearing.



KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/AP

A demonstrator holds a Julian Assange mask outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London, on Tuesday.

STARS AND STRIPES SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market

Transportation 944

VEHICLE SHIPPING SERVICES

- International Shipping
- Import & Export
- Inland trucking (U.S. & Europe)
- Door to door pick-up/delivery service
- Customs clearance
- All Risk Marine Insurance
- Auto Insurance (Germany only)

For Further Information Please Contact

GERMANY	UNITED KINGDOM	U.S.A
Phone: +49-(0)6134-2592730	+44-(0)1638-515714	+1-972-602-1670 Ext. 1701
Toll-free: 0800-CARSHIP (Germany only)		+1-800-264-8167 (US only)
E-Mail: info@transglobal-logistics.de	enquiries@carshipuk.co.uk	info@tgal.us
WEB: www.transglobal-logistics.de	www.carshipuk.co.uk	www.tgal.us

For 2nd POV Shipments - Offices / Agencies near Military Installations

Are you in the picture?

Reading Stars and Stripes gives you a better handle on issues that affect you most.

No one covers the bases the way we do.

STARS AND STRIPES

Transportation 944

Ship Cars and Containers to and from the USA

OPENING HOURS: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon - Fri
 800-522-6274 or 800-WSA-SHIP (972-7447)
 For a free rate request, please email: info@worldwide-ship.de
 Visit our Website: www.worldwide-ship.de

Off Duty? Amuse Yourself!

Concert, events, TV, movies, music, video games, celebrity antics...

Get entertained with...

STARS AND STRIPES

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police chief crashes into car while avoiding gunfire

NM ALBUQUERQUE — The police chief in New Mexico's most populous city crashed his car into another vehicle after he attempted to avoid gunfire while on his way to a Saturday morning press conference.

The Albuquerque Journal reported that Albuquerque Police Department Chief Harold Medina and his wife, who was in the truck with him, were not injured, but the driver of the classic Mustang that he crashed into was taken to the hospital with serious injuries.

Department spokesperson Gilbert Gallegos told the Associated Press that Medina had pulled his vehicle over by a homeless encampment that was blocking a sidewalk, which the department has recently enforced. He called for officers to look at the encampment before a fight broke out between two people, with one person pulling a gun.

The person with the gun shot at the other person, who ran in the direction of Medina's truck, Gallegos said. The department is still looking for the shooter.

2 people arrested after children's remains found

CO PUEBLO — Two people have been arrested on charges of murder and abuse of a corpse after the discovery of a girl's body encased in concrete and a boy's remains in a suitcase in Colorado, according to police and public jail records.

The City of Pueblo Police Department announced the arrest of Corena Rose Minjarez, 36, on Friday, and county jail records show the second suspect, Jesus Dominguez, 35, was also in custody as of Sunday.

Police found the girl's remains in a metal container filled with concrete in a storage unit last month, according to authorities. The unit was being cleared out after the rent wasn't paid. As part of the investigation, police began searching for two children last seen in the summer of 2018, Jesus Dominguez Jr. and Yessenia Dominguez.

The children hadn't been reported missing, according to the police department's news release.

Then the investigation led police to a vehicle owned by Minjarez in a scrap yard, where they found a boy's remains in a suitcase in the trunk of the car, police said. By Feb. 15, DNA testing showed the remains belonged to the two missing children.

Earthquake outside small city among several in area

TX FALLS CITY — An earthquake of 4.7 magnitude that struck early Saturday morning near a small Texas city, one of several that have occurred in the area in recent days, could be felt dozens of miles away, including in San Antonio.



BECKY BOHRER/AP

Journey of ice

People walk on a frozen Mendenhall Lake with Mendenhall Glacier in the background Sunday in Juneau, Alaska. The glacier is a popular attraction and accessible by crossing the frozen lake when the conditions are right during the winter, but the U.S. Forest Service cautions that lake ice can vary in thickness and that the face of the glacier is prone to calving year-round.

There were no immediate reports of major damage or injuries from the earthquake at 12:32 a.m. that was centered about 2 miles southeast of Falls City, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Falls City, which has a population of about 500 people, is about 45 miles southeast of San Antonio.

About 10 minutes earlier, the area had a 4.4 magnitude earthquake, the U.S. Geological Survey said. There have been several earthquakes in the area in recent days and about 30 in the area over the past three weeks, but all the others have been lower in magnitude.

Governor signs his new legislative maps into law

WI MADISON — Wisconsin Democratic Gov. Tony Evers signed new legislative district maps into law on Monday that he proposed and that the Republicans who control the Legislature passed to avoid having the liberal-controlled state Supreme Court draw the lines.

Democrats hailed the signing as a major political victory in the swing state where the Legislature has been firmly under Republican control for more than a decade, even as Democrats have won 14 of the past 17 statewide elections.

Democrats are almost certain to gain seats in the state Assembly and state Senate under the new maps, which will be in place for the November election. Republicans have been operating since 2011 under maps they drew that were recognized as among the most gerrymandered in the country.

Convicted killer who fled in custody 4 days later

AZ PHOENIX — A convicted murderer who fled from a halfway house in the Phoenix metro area is back in custody, authorities said.

Officials with the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation & Reentry said Daniel Cahill was arrested Saturday afternoon by the department's fugitive apprehension unit in partnership with the U.S. Marshals Service.

They said Cahill was booked into the Arizona State Prison Complex-Phoenix on a violation of community supervision.

Cahill was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison in April 1980 for the stabbing death of a 39-year-old Tempe woman in December 1979.

Airports to make tens of millions in improvements

MA BOSTON — Three of the biggest airports in New England are slated to make improvements to control towers, gates and mechanical systems under a nearly \$1 billion federal plan to strengthen the nation's air travel infrastructure.

The largest of the New England grants is going to Logan International Airport in Boston. The airport will receive \$12 million toward a two-phase project to expand and renovate an existing traffic control

tower, the Federal Aviation Administration said in documents.

Bradley International Airport near Hartford, Conn., will receive \$5.4 million to pay for improvements associated with terminal expansion and renovation, the FAA said. Portland International Jetport in Maine is set to receive \$10.4 million to install new passenger boarding bridges and make other improvements, the agency said.

Home of Powell, 'Shoebus' politician, may soon be sold

IL SPRINGFIELD — Paul Powell, the southern Illinois political powerhouse who died and left behind \$800,000 in cash in the notorious "Shoebus Scandal," used to say, "The only thing worse than a defeated politician is a broke one."

For more than half a century, a Powell-established \$250,000 trust sustained his legacy, for better or worse. But the account that maintained his birthplace as a museum will soon run dry. The fate of the home in Vienna, a town of 1,300 about 140 miles southeast of St. Louis, is uncertain, but it likely will be sold.

For decades it has been home, according to Powell's wishes, to the Johnson County Genealogical and Historical Society, which has the home looking as it did during the political giant's time in office, with memorabilia cluttering the walls.

The upkeep runs about \$5,000 annually, while last year the society's income was \$4,300, said board member Gary Hacker, 85, whose

parents were schoolmates of Powell and mowed his lawn as a teenager in the early 1950s.

"We're probably going to be putting it on the market for sale," Hacker said. "The historical society will relocate."

Archdiocese denounces trans activist's funeral

NY NEW YORK — The funeral of a renowned transgender activist in a New York cathedral elicited a denunciation of the event by a senior church official, who called the mass a scandal within one of the preeminent houses of worship in U.S. Catholicism.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York condemned the funeral of Cecilia Gentili, which was held in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan and drew a large audience Thursday.

Gentili was known as a leading advocate for other transgender people, as well as sex workers and people with HIV. A post on her Instagram account announced her death on Feb. 6 at age 52.

In a written statement released Saturday, the Rev. Enrique Salvo, pastor of Saint Patrick's, thanked people he said had informed the church that they "share our outrage over the scandalous behavior" at the funeral.

The cathedral held a Mass of Reparation following the funeral at the direction of Cardinal Timothy Dolan, archbishop of New York, Salvo said.

FACES

'Will Trent' back on the case after strikes

Ramón Rodríguez is happy to return for Season 2 after delay

By RODNEY HO

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Solving a crime in broadcast TV land isn't difficult. Finding a hit show that can last several seasons in broadcast TV land is only getting harder.

ABC believes it could have a "Blue Bloods" or "Chicago PD" with "Will Trent," a police drama that returned for its second season Tuesday night. (The series also streams the next day on Hulu.)

The procedural, based on a series of bestselling books by Atlanta author Karin Slaughter, is shot in Atlanta and set in the city. The first 13 episodes drew an average of about 10 million viewers after 35 days of viewing via ABC and Hulu, and the show got a quick second-season renewal before the first season finale last spring.

Ramón Rodríguez, who plays Trent, said he is happy to be back to work after a monthslong delay courtesy of the writers and actors strikes last year.

"Everyone is really charged and excited," Rodríguez said during a recent Zoom call. "It was great to see everyone again. It felt like seeing your old classmates. We're in our sophomore year!"

His character, raised in a foster home and now a super effective agent for the Georgia Bureau of



ABC/TNS

Ramón Rodríguez stars as the title detective in ABC's police procedural "Will Trent."

Investigations, apprehended a serial killer at the end of Season 1. Played by Greg Germann ("Ally McBeal"), the criminal had almost killed his closest childhood friend and gritty Atlanta Police Department homicide detective Angie Polaski, portrayed by Erika Christensen ("Parenthood").

He also learned the fate of his mother, who died when he was born, and was told his boss Amanda Wagner (Sonja Sohn) saved

him from death as a baby. Unfortunately, as a single woman in the 1980s, Amanda was unable to adopt Will but she quietly made up for it by nurturing him as a detective when he became an adult.

"There's some fun unlayering that we're going to get to do and explore," Rodríguez said. "Will has some hints of where he came from. He knows he has a crazy uncle. He has some connecting points. We gravitate toward this

point of identity. He doesn't know much about himself. He's picking up these breadcrumbs about his life and trying to put together the puzzle: 'Who am I? Where did I come from?'"

Rodríguez takes none of this success for granted given his own struggles in Hollywood after nabbing major roles in TV shows like ABC's "Day Break" (2007) and Fox's "Gang Related" (2014) that didn't last.

"They don't give away second seasons for nothing," Rodríguez said. "We are trying our best to create something compelling and captivating at a time when people have a lot of options, maybe too many options. We give you emotional journeys and an interesting crime that may tie into a character's own story. We add a layer of humor and we have a chihuahua."

Trent's sweet emotional support animal is Betty the chihuahua who he adopted in Season 1. The dog, who actually answers to Bluebell, does not have a real-life stunt double. "During rehearsals, we'll use a stuffed animal that sits on the mark until she's ready to do her thing," he said. "She is wonderful. I missed her, too!"

The complicated Angie/Will dynamic doesn't get any easier in Season 2. "These two have been through so much together that only they know," he said. "They know each other's darkest secrets. They sometimes mix it up romantically and that might not be the best thing, but they can always count on each other."

Slaughter, who is working on her 12th Will Trent book, said during a separate interview that she has seen the first three episodes of Season 2 and is happy with how they are maintaining the spirit of what she writes.

"They're able to capture that balance of humor and bad things happening," she said. "At the end of the day, it's about the good guys figuring out how to stop the bad guys."

New this week: 'Priscilla,' a trio of ABC shows, more 'Walking Dead'

Associated Press

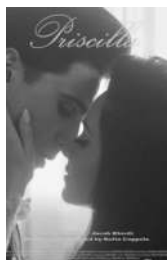
Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Movies

■ It missed out on Oscar nominations, but Andrew Haigh's "All of Us Strangers" was one of the best films of 2023. The film, which debuts on Hulu on Thursday, stars Andrew Scott as a writer working on an autobiographical script, work that transports him back to his childhood home where he finds his long dead parents (Claire Foy, Jamie Bell) as they once were. At the same time, a romance with a neighbor (Paul Mescal) evolves.

■ Another near-miss with the Oscars, Sofia Coppola's "Priscilla," hits Max on Friday. Coppola's dreamy, textured tale of Priscilla Presley's surreal romance with Elvis produced two of last year's most memorably breakthrough performances in Cailee Spaeny and Jacob Elordi.

■ Two notable veterans of last



"Priscilla," a take on the romance of Priscilla and Elvis Presley, comes to Max on Friday.

year's Oscar race, both from A24, arrive this week on Netflix. "Everything Everywhere All at Once," Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert's multiverse romp arrives Friday, almost exactly a year after its improbable Academy Awards sweep. Also hitting Netflix, on Saturday, is the 2023 best animated-nominee "Marcel the Shell with Shoes On." Jenny Slate and Dean Fleischer Camp's whimsical stop-motion animated film about a one-inch-tall seashell with a big heart and an endearing fondness for Lesley Stahl.

— AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

Television

■ If you already miss the "Puppy Bowl," Dolly Parton has you covered. The country music icon is

hosting the two-hour variety special "Dolly Parton's Pet Gala" on Wednesday on CBS. It will feature the latest in doggy fashion and performances of Parton classics, including "9 to 5," "I Will Always Love You," "Puppy Love" and "Jolene," with Parton and country hit-makers Lainey Wilson, Carly Pearce, Chris Janson and KC of KC and the Sunshine Band performing.

■ A trio of popular ABC shows returned Tuesday after eight months due to the Hollywood strikes. "Will Trent," based on books by Karin Slaughter, stars Ramón Rodríguez as an agent with the Georgia Bureau of Investigations. Nathan Fillion leads the police procedural "The Rookie," and Freddie Highmore returns for the seventh and final season of the hospital drama "The Good Doctor" where he plays a surgeon with autism. Episodes also stream on Hulu.

■ Fifteen years after the popular Nickelodeon animated series "Avatar: The Last Airbender" went off the air, the story has gotten

the live-action treatment by Netflix. This new "Last Airbender" stars Gordon Cormier as Aang, a 12-year-old boy with the fate of the world on his shoulders. The series premieres Thursday.

■ Andrew Lincoln and Danai Gurira return to "The Walking Dead" universe in their own spin-off, "The Walking Dead: The Ones Who Live." The six-episode series follows their star-crossed characters, Rick and Michonne, as they fight to find their way back to one another after years of separation. Scott Gimple, the chief content officer for "The Walking Dead" franchise, created the series with Lincoln and Gurira. New characters are also played by Terry O'Quinn, Lesley-Ann Brandt and Aaron Bachelor. The show, which premieres Sunday on AMC and AMC+, comes to AFN-Spectrum on March 1.

— Alicia Rancilio

Music

■ MGMT is ready to midwife their 10-track "Loss of Life," which the band says had a "relatively

painless birth after a lengthy gestation period." The psychedelic, synth-pop duo of Andrew VanWyngarden and Ben Goldwasser joke that "Musically speaking, we are running at around 20% adult contemporary." Christine and the Queens appear on the song "Dancing in Babylon" — the first-ever feature on an MGMT album. "Loss of Life," the follow-up to 2018's "Little Dark Age," has spun off the singled "Nothing To Declare," "Bubblemum Dog" and "Mother Nature." It lands Friday.

■ Goth-pop singer Allie X is putting it all on the line with "Girl With No Face," her first self-produced album. The classically trained pop artist from Toronto has released a trio of tracks from the new collection, including "Black Eye," an off-kilter, retro electro-banger with a video she directed and the lyrics, "The world goes round / Makes me dizzy but I hold my ground / When I get nauseous I just gag it down." The album drops Friday.

— AP Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

STARS AND STRIPES.

Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher

Laura Law, Chief Operating Officer

Lt. Col. Katie R. Fidler, Europe commander

John Rodriguez, Europe chief of staff

Lt. Col. Marci Hoffman, Pacific commander

Michael Ryan, Pacific chief of staff

EDITORIAL

Robert H. Reid, Editor in Chief
reid.robert@stripes.comSean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stripes.comAnn Pinson, Digital Managing Editor
pinson.ann@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erik Slaviv, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
slaviv.erik@stripes.com

+49(0)631.3615.9350; DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com

+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380; DSN (315)227.7380

Washington

Joseph Cacchioli, Washington Bureau Chief
cacchioli.joseph@stripes.com

(+1)(202)886-0033

Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

David Schultz, District Manager
schultz.david@stripes.com

xsscirculation@stripes.com

+49(0)152.5672.5036; DSN (314)583-9111

Europe

Carlo Aquino, Circulation Manager
aquino.carlo@stripes.com

memberservices@stripes.com

+49(0)631.3615.9136; DSN (314)583.9136

Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stripes.com

+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

CONTACT US

Washington

tel: (+1)202.886.0003

633 3rd St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20001-3050

Reader letters

letters@stripes.com

Additional contacts

stripes.com/contactus

OMBUDSMAN

Jacqueline Smith

The Stars and Stripes ombudsman protects the free flow of news and information, reporting any attempts by the military or other authorities to undermine the newspaper's independence. The ombudsman also responds to concerns and questions from readers, and monitors coverage for fairness, accuracy, timeliness and balance. The ombudsman welcomes comments from readers, and can be contacted by email at ombudsman@stripes.com, or by phone at 202.886.0003.

Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published week-days (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96301-5002. This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered as the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations where overseas DOD personnel are located.

The appearance of advertising in this publication does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or Stars and Stripes of the products or services advertised. Products or services advertised shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

© Stars and Stripes 2024

stripes.com

OPINION

It's time to ask if patriotism has lost its way

BY SOLOMON D. STEVENS

Tribune News Service

Patriotism is love of country, and it can be a very positive force. All countries benefit when their people feel a sense of belonging and believe in their country's goodness. But as our nation becomes more polarized and patriotism is used by some as a litmus test to judge and quickly condemn others, it makes sense to step back and ask ourselves: Has patriotism today lost its way?

Let's start with the basics. We learn from Socrates in the "Republic" (and it is confirmed by our experience) that no country is just, altogether good. It's just a fact that human beings cannot create perfection. Perhaps we can imagine what a just country would be, but we cannot make it happen. Our reason is flawed. We are all influenced by passion and prejudice. We can do our best, and sometimes we can do very well, but we are limited in what we can accomplish.

This means that our love of country should always be tempered by our knowledge that what we love is flawed. And this means that we should never love our country unconditionally. That is why it makes no sense to say, "My Country, Right or Wrong," or "Love it or Leave it!" In fact, I believe that our love is strengthened when we acknowledge our country's flaws and when we remain open to the need that every country has for change and improvement.

When we close our eyes to the fact that our country is flawed, patriotism can turn nasty. It

can become defensive and angry. It can lead to the desire to strike out at, to harm, those who dare to question our vision of the country. This can turn what should be a healthy patriotism into a toxic force.

Abraham Lincoln taught us in the Gettysburg Address that our country was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Liberty and equality. America was founded on these two lofty principles, which all Americans can be proud of. But at the same time, liberty and equality were not extended to all. Our Founders proclaimed beautiful goals, but they did not, could not, put those principles fully into practice. Our history is one of constant struggle — sometimes forward and sometimes backward — of a debate between principle and practice.

We have no reason to walk around feeling ashamed of our flawed history. There is no reason for us to hate ourselves for being human. But at the same time, we dishonor the great principles upon which our country was founded by ignoring or denying those flaws, which have harmed many and continue to do so.

In other words, a healthy patriotism includes acknowledging the limitations of the country we love. In fact, our love of country can be even stronger when we combine it with a constant desire to challenge the country to live up to its principles.

Think of what we value in good friends. Isn't it true that our best friends are the ones who tell us when we have done something wrong?

None of us wants our friends to tell us how wonderful we are, even when it isn't true. And when we are being self-destructive, don't we want our friends to call us out to tell us to change? We want honesty from our friends. Patriotism at its best is the same. It thrives when it is challenged because the challenges offer opportunities for improvement.

True patriots ought to welcome those who protest particular political leaders (either Joe Biden or Donald Trump), a particular party (either Democrats or Republicans), or a particular policy (border wall or no border wall). We should welcome those who "take a knee" when our national anthem is playing. They aren't saying they hate America; they are reminding us of who we are. Healthy patriotism includes disagreement and protest.

In two years, we will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence, which first proclaimed the principles of liberty and equality as the foundation of our country. Will we be closer to or further away from our dream of realizing those principles then? We need patriots today who will challenge us to live up to those principles and call us out when we stray from them.

My father taught me to do all things in moderation. He was a wise man, and I am grateful for this lesson. Moderation is good when it comes to food, drink and even patriotism. Everything can be overdone.

Solomon D. Stevens is the author of "Religion, Politics, and the Law" (co-authored with Peter Schotten) and "Challenges to Peace in the Middle East." He wrote this for InsideSources.com.

Why Biden's dishwasher regulations are a dirty joke

BY GEORGE F. WILL

The Washington Post

Industrial policy — government planning the billions of variables generated by hundreds of millions of people making economic choices — provides something there is never enough of: comic relief. And when industrial policy mates with climate policy, there is surplus merriment.

Topics for another day are the difficulties of electric vehicles, which supposedly will ameliorate global boiling — if they can be coaxed into functioning during something that evidently was left out of the planners' plans: winter. Instead, today consider another of the Biden administration's aspirations: planet-friendly dishwashers.

The Energy Department's busy beavers, with their unsleeping search for reasons to boss us around for our own good, decided that dishwashers use too much water and energy, there presumably being a shortage of the former and a stigma attached to using the latter. So, in 2012 the department issued regulations so annoying to consumers, the Trump administration relaxed them. That was sufficient reason for the Biden administration, *on its first day*, to order a reversal of the reversal.

This issue was catnip for the admirable Competitive Enterprise Institute, which was founded 40 years ago to be a nuisance to government that makes a nuisance of itself. CEI's prodding in 2018 produced the Energy Department's 2020 ruling permitting dishwashers that were better (for the reasons, read on) at washing dishes than were machines that complied with the 2012 regulations.

Responding to the Biden administration's reinstatement of those regulations, a slew of states sued the Energy Department, asserting standing to sue because they buy dishwashers

and are injured by being prevented from buying a product precluded by a regulation. This dispute reached the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit, which, in its Jan. 8 ruling, swatted away what it tartly called the department's "government-always-wins" argument for denying the states' standing: Because the Energy Department's regulations prevented manufacturers from producing never-made machines, the states cannot prove that anyone would actually have purchased them.

Then the court termed the rule repealing the 2020 rule "arbitrary and capricious." It noted:

"DOE stated that its energy conservation program must promote 'water conservation' and regulate 'water use.' But it is unclear how or why DOE thinks it has *any* statutory authority to regulate 'water use' in dishwashers and washing machines." The pertinent statute authorizes regulating energy use "or" water use. "So it seems obvious that the statute gave DOE power to regulate energy use for energy-using appliances" such as dishwashers, or "water use for non-energy-using appliances," such as shower heads.

So, the court said, not only has the Energy Department acted in excess of statutory authority, the record contains "ample evidence" that the department's new rules *reduced* efficiency in *both* energy and water use because "purportedly 'energy efficient' appliances do not work." People "may use more energy and more water to preclean, reclean, or handwash their stuff before, after, or in lieu of using DOE-regulated appliances."

Says who? Says the Energy Department, citing commentators reporting that "many consumers end up running their dishwasher multiple times to get dishes clean." The court

said the department "appeared to agree that the frustratingly slow pace of modern dishwashers caused consumer substitution away from dishwashers and toward handwashing." And: "DOE itself estimated in 2011 that handwashing consumes 350% more water and 140% more energy than machine washing."

The court: "What did DOE say in response? Basically nothing: It acknowledged the concern and moved on." But: "It's a well-worn principle of arbitrary-and-capricious review that an administrative agency 'must examine the relevant data and articulate a satisfactory explanation for its action including a rational connection between the facts found and the choice made.'"

Imagine how many government undertakings — in industrial policy, climate policy and elsewhere — might perish if held to the reasonable requirement of connecting facts and choices in non-arbitrary, non-capricious ways.

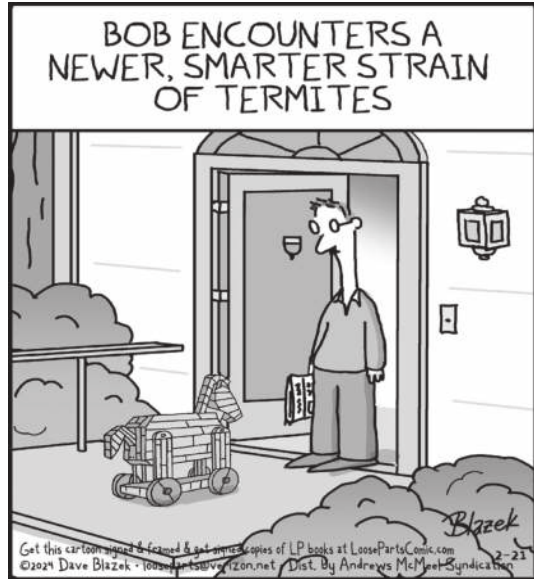
The Washington Examiner's Jon Miltimore, noting the probability that many people respond to low-flow shower heads by taking longer showers, recalls the "Seinfeld" episode in which Jerry, Newman and Kramer are distraught and disheveled because they cannot get properly cleaned using the government's preferred shower heads. Kramer ("There's no pressure; I can't get the shampoo out of my hair!") solves the problem by buying on the black market a shower head made before the ascendancy of the climate scolds.

The Energy Department, whose Loan Programs Office has dispensed hundreds of millions of disappearing dollars in bad investments, has a lengthening menu of mischief. The implementing regulations are produced by people who went to law school to be qualified to write such annoyances. Amazing.

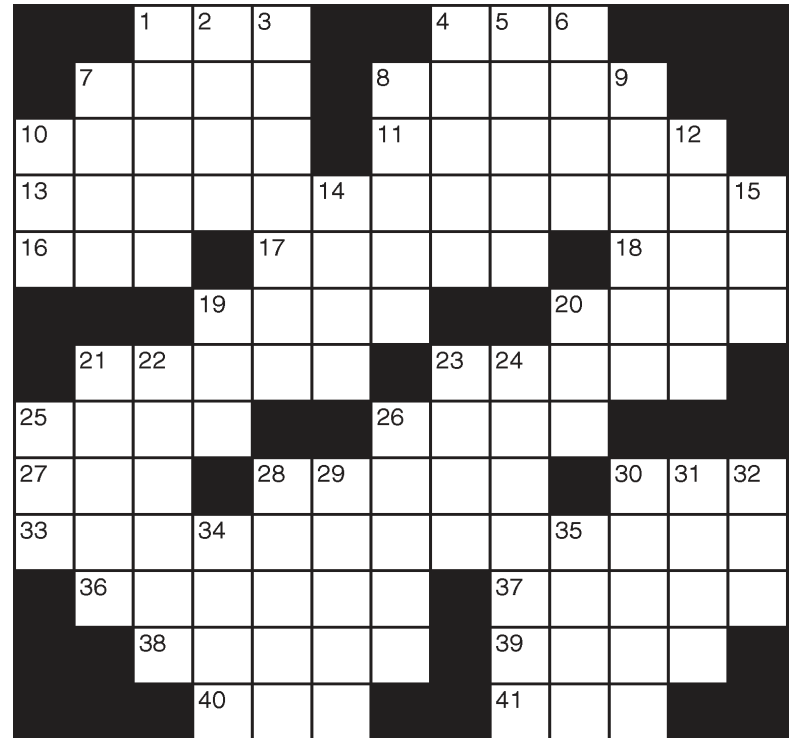
Bizarro



Loose Parts



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Clothing protector
- 4 NASCAR advertiser
- 7 Chianti, for one (away from)
- 8 Backed
- 10 Category
- 11 Body art
- 13 Super-helpful
- 166 on a phone
- 17 Soprano Fleming
- 18 Belfry critter
- 19 Sand formation
- 20 — -Seltzer
- 21 Planet circlers
- 23 Jason's wife
- 25 Diplomacy
- 26 Turns sharply
- 27 Gallery display
- 28 Conductor Solti
- 30 Cover
- 33 Pecorino Romano, for one
- 36 Willow
- 37 Scholastic hurdles
- 38 Leers at
- 39 Church section
- 40 Lith., once

41 Homer's cry

14 Sawbucks

15 JFK info

19 Speck

20 Billboards

21 Shopping centers

22 Book size

23 Artist Chagall

24 Brainiac

25 — chi

26 Regions

28 Fish organs

29 Chow hound

30 Tether

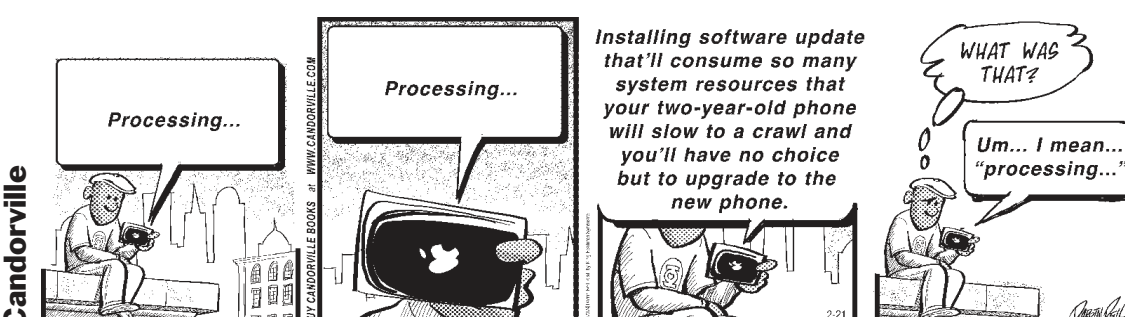
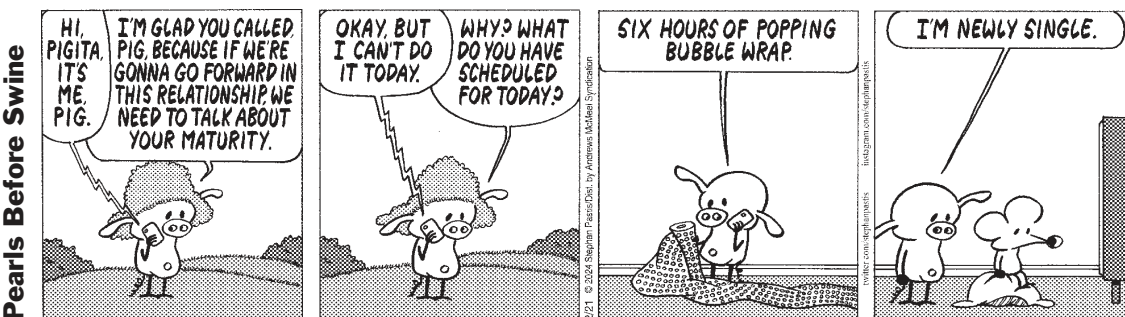
31 "Woe —!"

32 — Moines

34 Piano supports

35 Big fair, for short

Answer to Previous Puzzle



CRYPTOQUIP

2-21

OT PMC FZCLW XSVUWL
YZMYTL LWVO PC NSLP ZCSAEW
YXCSP PRBCSERCSP PRW VYT
OYIUAE FBCAT NCIWL.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I THINK THE LAST SINGER IN THAT BIG TALENT SHOW WAS A BANGKOK RESIDENT, SO IT ENDED IN A THAI.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals J

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Men's AP Top 25

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, and total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking:

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. UConn (62)	24-2	1550	1
2. Houston	22-3	1473	3
3. Purdue	23-3	1414	2
4. Arizona	20-5	1373	5
5. Tennessee	19-6	1230	8
6. Iowa St.	20-5	1160	10
7. Marquette	19-6	1144	4
8. Duke	20-5	1116	9
9. Kansas	20-6	1065	6
10. North Carolina	20-6	1044	7
11. Baylor	19-6	959	12
12. Illinois	19-6	853	14
13. Alabama	18-7	803	15
14. Auburn	20-6	690	13
15. Creighton	19-7	612	17
16. Dayton	21-4	584	16
17. Kentucky	18-7	540	22
18. Saint Mary's	21-6	486	18
19. San Diego St.	20-6	374	—
20. South Carolina	21-5	346	11
21. Washington St.	20-6	215	—
22. Colorado St.	20-6	171	—
23. Texas Tech	18-7	135	—
24. Florida	18-7	124	—
25. BYU	18-7	123	19

Others receiving votes: Virginia 103, Gonzaga 99, Wisconsin 88, Michigan St. 64, TCU 54, South Florida 45, New Mexico 27, FAU 27, Utah St. 22, Grand Canyon 16, Nevada 11, Pittsburgh 4, Clemson 3, Appalachian St 1, McNeese St. 1, Drake 1.

Men's USA Today Top 25

The USA Today Sports Top 25 men's basketball poll, with first-place votes received in parenthesis, team's records, total points based on 25 for first place through one point for 25th and ranking in last week's poll:

	Record	Pts	Pvs
1. Connecticut (32)	24-2	800	1
2. Houston	22-3	764	3
3. Purdue	23-3	715	2
4. Arizona	20-5	710	6
5. Tennessee	19-6	641	9
6. Iowa State	20-5	607	10
7. Duke	20-5	580	8
8. Marquette	19-6	553	4
9. North Carolina	20-6	546	5
10. Kansas	20-6	538	7
11. Baylor	19-6	508	13
12. Illinois	19-6	431	14
13. Alabama	18-7	417	15
14. Auburn	20-6	335	12
15. Creighton	19-7	329	16
16. Dayton	21-4	300	18
17. Kentucky	18-7	291	20
18. Saint Mary's	21-6	251	19
19. San Diego State	20-6	185	—
20. South Carolina	21-5	180	11
21. Brigham Young	18-7	105	17
22. Washington State	20-6	97	—
23. Texas Tech	18-7	71	—
24. Colorado State	20-6	65	25
25. TCU	18-7	64	—

Dropped out: No. 21 Oklahoma (18-8); No. 21 Wisconsin (17-9); No. 23 Virginia (20-6); No. 24 Indiana State (22-5).

Others receiving votes: Gonzaga (20-6) 61; Virginia (20-6) 59; Florida (18-7) 40; South Florida (19-5) 35; Utah State (21-5) 24; Grand Canyon (24-2) 23; Michigan State (17-9) 23; Wisconsin (17-9) 16; Clemson (17-8) 12; Florida Atlantic (20-6) 9; Oklahoma (18-8) 9; Nevada (20-6) 4; Boise State (17-8) 1, James Madison (24-3) 1.

Monday's men's scores

EAST	
Colgate 67, Lafayette 62	
Delaware St. 80, Morgan St. 58	
Md.-Eastern Shore 75, Coppin St. 67	
SC State 75, Howard 68	
SOUTH	
Alabama A&M 75, Ark.-Pine Bluff 67	
Alabama St. 61, MVSU 46	
Alcorn St. 79, Florida A&M 68	
Coll. of Charleston 65, William & Mary 57	
Jackson St. 61, Bethune-Cookman 60	
Lamar 77, SE Louisiana 72, OT	
Nicholls 89, New Orleans 77	
Norfolk St. 80, NC Central 74	
Virginia Tech 75, Virginia 41	
SOUTHWEST	
Grambling St. 83, Prairie View 74	
Houston 73, Iowa St. 65	
Texas 62, Kansas St. 56	
Texas A&M Commerce 76, Incarnate Word 72, OT	
Texas A&M-CC 72, Northwestern St. 61	
Texas Southern 68, Southern U. 56	
FAR WEST	
Chicago St. 93, Indiana-Northwest 70	

Men's AP Top 25 schedule

Wednesday's games
No. 7 Marquette (19-6) vs. DePaul (3-22)
No. 8 Duke (20-5) at Miami (15-11)

No. 12 Illinois (19-6) at Penn St. (12-14)
No. 13 Alabama (18-7) vs. No. 24 Florida (18-7)
No. 16 Dayton (21-4) at George Mason (17-8)
No. 17 Kentucky (18-7) at LSU (13-12)
No. 22 Colorado St. (20-6) at New Mexico (20-6)

Thursday's games

No. 3 Purdue (23-3) vs. Rutgers (14-11)
No. 4 Arizona (20-5) vs. No. 21 Washington St. (20-6)

Saturday's games

No. 1 UConn (24-2) vs. Villanova (14-11)
No. 2 Houston (22-3) at No. 11 Baylor (19-6)
No. 4 Arizona (20-5) vs. Washington (14-12)
No. 5 Tennessee (19-6) vs. Texas A&M (15-10)
No. 6 Iowa St. (20-5) vs. West Virginia (8-17)
No. 8 Duke (20-5) at Wake Forest (16-9)
No. 9 Kansas (20-6) vs. Texas (16-9)
No. 10 North Carolina (20-6) at Virginia (20-6)
No. 12 Illinois (19-6) vs. Iowa (15-11)
No. 13 Alabama (18-7) at No. 17 Kentucky (18-7)
No. 14 Auburn (20-6) at Georgia (14-11)
No. 18 Saint Mary's (Cal.) (21-6) vs. San Diego (16-12)
No. 19 San Diego St. (20-6) at Fresno St. (11-15)
No. 20 South Carolina (21-5) at Mississippi (19-6)
No. 21 Washington St. (20-6) at Arizona St. (13-13)
No. 22 Colorado St. (20-6) at UNLV (14-10)
No. 23 Texas Tech (18-7) at UCF (13-11)
No. 24 Florida (18-7) vs. Vanderbilt (7-18)
No. 25 BYU (18-7) at Kansas St. (15-10)

Women's AP Top 25

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' women's college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, and total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking:

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. South Carolina (35)	25-0	875	1
2. Ohio St.	22-3	824	2
3. Stanford	23-3	804	3
4. Iowa	23-3	742	4
5. Texas	24-3	730	5
6. NC State	23-3	714	6
7. Southern Cal	20-4	654	10
8. Virginia Tech	22-4	593	12
9. Oregon St.	21-4	554	11
10. Kansas St	22-4	520	7
11. Colorado	20-5	519	8
12. UCLA	20-5	497	9
13. LSU	21-4	465	13
14. Indiana	21-3	446	14
15. UConn	22-5	423	15
16. Gonzaga	26-2	326	17
17. Syracuse	22-4	272	19
18. Utah	19-7	246	22
19. Notre Dame	18-6	242	16
20. Louisville	21-6	228	18
21. Creighton	21-3	201	20
22. West Virginia	22-3	172	24
23. Oklahoma	18-7	94	23
24. Baylor	19-6	88	21
25. Princeton	20-3	66	25

Others receiving votes: UNLV 41, Fairfield 28, North Carolina 4, Saint Joseph's 4, Mississippi St. 2, Tennessee 1.

Monday's women's scores

EAST	
Md.-Eastern Shore 73, Coppin St. 51	
Temple 69, Tulane 52	
UConn 73, Creighton 53	
SOUTH	
Alabama A&M 67, Ark.-Pine Bluff 59	
Alcorn St. 64, Florida A&M 49	
Howard 69, SC State 51	
Jackson St. 52, Bethune-Cookman 39	
MVSU 67, Alabama St. 59	
Norfolk St. 72, NC Central 44	
Notre Dame 70, Duke 62	
MIDWEST	
Illinois 86, Indiana 66	
SOUTHWEST	
Grambling St. 64, Prairie View 55	
LSU 81, Texas A&M 58	
Southern U. 68, Texas Southern 52	

Women's AP Top 25 schedule

Wednesday's games
No. 5 Texas (24-3) vs. Texas Tech (16-11)
No. 10 Kansas St. (22-4) vs. No. 22 West Virginia (22-3)
No. 24 Baylor (19-6) vs. Kansas (15-10)
Thursday's games
No. 1 South Carolina (25-0) vs. Alabama (20-7)
No. 2 Ohio St. (22-3) at Penn St. (16-10)
No. 4 Iowa (23-3) at No. 14 Indiana (21-3)
No. 6 NC State (23-3) at North Carolina (17-9)
No. 12 UCLA (20-5) vs. No. 18 Utah (19-7)
No. 13 LSU (21-4) vs. Auburn (16-9)
No. 16 Gonzaga (26-2) vs. San Francisco (11-14)
No. 17 Syracuse (22-4) vs. Duke (16-8)
No. 19 Notre Dame (18-6) vs. Clemson (11-15)
No. 20 Louisville (21-6) at Georgia Tech (15-12)
Friday's games
No. 3 Stanford (23-3) vs. Arizona (14-12)
No. 7 Southern Cal (20-4) vs. No. 11 Colorado (20-5)
No. 9 Oregon St. (21-4) at Washington St. (16-11)

TENNIS

Rio Open

Monday
At Jockey Club Brasileiro
Rio de Janeiro
Purse: \$2,100,230
Surface: Red clay
Men's Singles
Round of 32

Marcelo Tomas Barrios Vera, Chile, def. Gustavo Heide, Brazil, 7-5, 6-3.
Francisco Cerundolo (4), Argentina, def. Francisco Comesana, Argentina, 6-1, 1-6, 6-2.
Albert Ramos-Vinolas, Spain, def. Juan Pablo Varillas, Peru, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5.
Cameron Norrie (2), Britain, def. Hugo Dellien, Bolivia, 6-3, 6-2.
Jaume Munar, Spain, def. Sebastian Ofner (8), Austria, 6-3, 6-1.
Laslo Djere (6), Serbia, def. Bernabe Zapata Miralles, Spain, 6-3, 6-1.
Thiago Seyboth Wild, Brazil, def. Alejandro Tabilo, Chile, 2-6, 6-4, 6-4.

Los Cabos Open

Monday
At Solaz Resort & Spa Los Cabos
Los Cabos, Mexico
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Men's Singles
Round of 32

Daniel Evans, Britain, def. Roman Safiullin (5), Russia, 6-2, 6-4.
Alex Michelsen, United States, def. Constant Lestienne, France, 6-3, 7-6 (3).
Max Purcell (7), Australia, def. Matteo Arnaldi, Italy, 6-4, 4-6, 6-4.
Aleksandar Kovacevic, United States, def. Brandon Holt, United States, 6-1, 6-4.
Thanasi Kokkinakis, Australia, def. Jack Draper, Britain, 4-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Dubai Duty Free Championships

Monday
At Aviation Club Tennis Centre
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Purse: \$3,211,715
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Women's Singles
Round of 64

Leylah Annie Fernandez, Canada, def. Bernarda Pera, United States, 6-3, 6-2.
Victoria Azarenka, Belarus, def. Arantxa Rus, Netherlands, 6-2, 6-4.
Petra Martic, Croatia, def. Caroline Dolehide, United States, 6-4, 7-6 (4).
Karolina Pliskova, Czech Republic, def. Zhang Shuai, China, 6-3, 7-5.
Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, Russia, def. Marie Bouzkova, Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-3.
Anastasia Potapova, Russia, def. Zhu Lin, China, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4.
Jelena Ostapenko (9), Latvia, def. Wang Xiyu, China, 5-7, 6-2, 6-3.
Veronika Kudermetova (13), Russia, def. Dayana Yastremska, Ukraine, 6-0, 1-6, 6-0.
Liudmila Samsonova (12), Russia, def. Viktoriya Tomova, Bulgaria, 7-6 (2), 6-3.
Lulu Sun, Switzerland, def. Paula Badosa, Spain, 6-4, ret.
Elena Svitolina (15), Ukraine, def. Anhelina Kalinina, Ukraine, 6-3, 7-6 (7).
Lucia Bronzetti, Italy, def. Daria Kasatkina (10), Russia, 7-6 (5), 4-6, 7-5.

PRO HOCKEY

PWHL

	W	L	OW	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Minnesota	5	2	2	2	21	26	23
Montreal	4	2	3	2	20	24	23
Toronto	5	5	1	0	17	26	27
New York	2	4	3	1	13	24	22
Ottawa	3	3	0	4	13	24	23
Boston	2	4	2	2	12	23	29

Teams awarded three (3) points for a regulation win, two (2) points for an overtime or shootout win, one (1) point for an overtime or shootout loss, and zero (0) points for a regulation time loss.

Sunday, Feb. 18

Montreal 2, Minnesota 1
Monday's game
Ottawa 4, Boston 2
Wednesday's games
Ottawa at Boston
Montreal at New York
Friday's game
New York at Toronto
Saturday's game
Ottawa at Montreal

AP SPORTLIGHT

Feb. 21

1952 — Dick Button performs the first triple jump in a figure skating competition.
1953 — In college basketball's longest game, Niagara beats Siena 88-81 in six overtimes.
1960 — Philadelphia Warriors rookie Wilt Chamberlain sets an NBA record with his fourth 50-point game of the season, scoring 58 in a 129-122 victory over the New York Knicks.
1970 — Bobby Hull scores two goals, including the 500th of his career, in the Chicago Blackhawks' 4-2 win over the New York Rangers.
1970 — Pete Maravich of LSU scores 64 points in a 121-105 loss to Kentucky. Dan Issel scores 51 for the Wildcats.
1976 — New York's Red Holzman becomes the second NBA coach, after Red Auerbach, to win 500 games with a 102-98 victory over New Orleans.
1992 — Kristi Yamaguchi wins America's first Olympic gold medal in women's figure skating since 1976. Midori Ito of Japan takes the silver and Nancy Kerrigan of the United States wins bronze.

AUTO RACING

United Rentals 300

NASCAR Xfinity Series
Monday
At Daytona International Speedway
Daytona Beach, Fla.
Lap length: 2.50 miles
(Start position in parentheses)

1. (2) Austin Hill, Chevrolet, 120 laps, 59 points.
2. (14) Sheldon Creed, Toyota, 120, 48.
3. (9) Parker Retzlaff, Chevrolet, 120, 34.
4. (29) Jordan Anderson, Chevrolet, 120, 33.
5. (19) Chandler Smith, Toyota, 120, 32.
6. (11) Riley Herbst, Ford, 120, 35.
7. (8) John H. Nemechek, Toyota, 120, 0.
8. (6) Justin Allgaier, Chevrolet, 120, 34.
9. (22) Brandon Jones, Chevrolet, 120, 29.
10. (3) AJ Allmendinger, Chevrolet, 120, 32.
11. (36) Ryan Ellis, Chevrolet, 120, 26.
12. (5) Shane Van Gisbergen, Chevrolet, 120, 25.
13. (17) Cole Custer, Ford, 120, 31.
14. (34) Blaine Perkins, Ford, 120, 23.
15. (38) BJ McLeod, Chevrolet, 120, 22.
16. (23) Garrett Smithley, Chevrolet, 120, 21.
17. (13) Patrick Emerling, Ford, 120, 20.
18. (30) Natalie Decker, Chevrolet, 120, 19.
19. (33) Brennan Poole, Chevrolet, 120, 18.
20. (1) Jesse Love, Chevrolet, 120, 27.
21. (20) Ryan Truex, Toyota, 120, 22.
22. (31) Ryan Sieg, Ford, 120, 21.
23. (12) Sammy Smith, Chevrolet, 119, 23.
24. (10) Anthony Alfredo, Chevrolet, 118, 20.
25. (4) Parker Kligerman, Chevrolet, 118, 20.
26. (16) Jeb Burton, Chevrolet, 118, 17.
27. (26) Daniel Dye, Chevrolet, 117, 0.
28. (32) Sage Karam, Toyota, accident, 111, 9.
29. (7) Jeremy Clements, Chevrolet, dvp, 109, 8.
30. (24) Leland Honeyman, Chevrolet, accident, 102, 7.
31. (35) Dawson Cram, Chevrolet, accident, 51, 6.
32. (27) Josh Bilicki, Chevrolet, accident, 51, 5.
33. (37) Frankie Muniz, Ford, dvp, 37, 4.
34. (21) Josh Williams, Chevrolet, dvp, 37, 3.
35. (18) Daniel Suárez, Chevrolet, accident, 23, 0.
36. (15) Sam Mayer, Chevrolet, accident, 22, 1.
37. (28) Hailie Deegan, Ford, accident, 22, 1.
38. (25) Kyle Weatherman, Chevrolet, accident, 22, 1.

Race statistics

Average speed of race winner: 108.119 mph.
Time of race: 2 hours, 46 minutes, 29 seconds.

Margin of victory: 0.591 seconds.
Caution flags: 9 for 44 laps.
Lead changes: 19 among 14 drivers.

Lap leaders: J.Love 0-32; A.Allmendinger 33-35; J.Allgaier 36-42; C.Custer 43-48; J.Burton 49-56; A.Hill 57-58; S.Creed 59; A.Hill 60-63; J.Love 64-65; S.Smith 66-70; R.Herbst 71-73; S.Smith 74; R.Herbst 75-79; S.Creed 80; N.Decker 81-87; R.Ellis 88-98; R.Sieg 99-110; C.Smith 111; J.Anderson 112-117; A.Hill 118-120

Leaders summary (driver, times led, laps led): J.Love, 2 times for 34 laps; R.Sieg, 1 time for 12 laps; R.Ellis, 1 time for 11 laps; A.Hill, 3 times for 9 laps; R.Herbst, 2 times for 8 laps; J.Burton, 1 time for 8 laps; J.Allgaier, 1 time for 7 laps; N.Decker, 1 time for 7 laps; J.Anderson, 1 time for 6 laps; C.Custer, 1 time for 6 laps; S.Smith, 2 times for 6 laps; A.Allmendinger, 1 time for 3 laps; S.Creed, 2 times for 2 laps; C.Smith, 1 time for 1 lap.

Wins: A.Hill, 1.
Top 16 in points: 1. A.Hill, 59; 2. S.Creed, 48; 3. R.Herbst, 35; 4. P.Retzlaff, 34; 5. J.Allgaier, 34; 6. J.Anderson, 33; 7. C.Smith, 32; 8. A.Allmendinger, 32; 9. C.Custer, 31; 10. B.Jones, 29; 11. J.Love, 27; 12. R.Ellis, 26; 13. S.Van Gisbergen, 25; 14. B.Perkins, 23; 15. S.Smith, 23; 16. B.McLeod, 22.

NASCAR Cup Series schedule-winners

Feb. 3 — x-Busch Light Clash at The Coliseum (Denny Hamlin)
Feb. 19 — Daytona 500, Daytona Beach, Fla. (William Byron)
Feb. 25 — Ambetter Health 400, Hampton, Ga.
March 3 — Pennzoil 400, Las Vegas
March 10 — Shriners Children's 500, Avondale, Ariz.
March 17 — Food City 500, Bristol, Tenn.
March 24 — EchoPark Automotive Grand Prix, Austin, Texas
March 31 — Toyota Owners 400, Richmond, Va.
April 7 — NASCAR Cup Series Race at Martinsville, Ridgeway, Va.
April 14 — Auto EchoPark Automotive 400, Fort Worth, Texas
April 21 — GEICO 500, Talladega, Ala.
April 28 — Würth 400, Dover, Del.
May 5 — AdventHealth 400, Kansas City, Kan.
May 12 — Goodyear 400, Darlington, S.C.
May 19 — x-NASCAR All-Star Open, North Wilkesboro, N.C.
May 19 — NASCAR All-Star Race, North Wilkesboro, N.C.
May 26 — Coca-Cola 600, Concord, N.C.
June 2 — Enjoy Illinois 300 presented by TicketSmarter, Madison, Ill.
June 9 — Toyota / Save Mart 350, Sonoma, Calif.
June 16 — Iowa Corn 350, Powered by Ethanol, Newton, Iowa
June 23 — NASCAR Cup Series Race at New Hampshire, Loudon, N.H.
x-non-points race

PRO SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Atlanta	0	0	0	0	0	0
CF Montréal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charlotte FC	0	0	0	0		

MLS PREVIEW

All eyes are on Messi & Co. at kickoff

Former teammates join star for first full season in Miami; replacement officials, defending champs Crew among storylines

BY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

Messi Mania returns to Major League Soccer as Lionel Messi embarks on his first full season with Inter Miami.

But this year, there's a twist.

Inter Miami signed Luis Suarez in the offseason, reuniting the two close friends. The pair, along with former Barcelona teammates Jordi Alba and Sergio Busquets, have made Miami THE team to watch heading into Major League Soccer's 29th season.

"Inter Miami offered me a nice opportunity to dream of winning the club's first MLS title, to play with big players, who everybody knows, and adapt to my new team and club," Suarez said. "I am motivated by that challenge."

But with Messi, Suarez and the rest of Inter Miami set to open the season at home on Wednesday night against Real Salt Lake, MLS is in the middle of a labor dispute with its referees.

The Professional Referees Organization, which manages MLS referees, announced Saturday that it will lock out match officials after they rejected a proposed collective bargaining agreement just days before the start of the season.

PRO said it had reached a tentative agreement last weekend with the Professional Soccer Referees Association. But the union said nearly 96% of its members voted to reject it.

That means there will likely be replacement refs officiating matches for the foreseeable future.

The lockout casts a shadow on the start of an intriguing MLS year. Messi will have a full season to work his magic. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner arrived in Miami midway through last season, boosting ticket sales, jersey sales and Apple TV (the league's media partner) subscriptions.

He helped Miami to a trophy in the first season of the Leagues Cup tournament with Liga MX. But he couldn't quite make enough difference to push the team into the playoffs after Miami's slow start. Miami finished 9-18-7 last season, in 14th place in the Eastern Conference.

While Miami has the celebrities, the Columbus Crew showed last season they have the skills, winning the MLS Cup final 2-1. The Crew have their own star in Colombian forward Cucho Hernandez, a game changer who was

named the championship game's MVP.

In addition to Suarez, the league welcomed some other big international names in the offseason, including Bundesliga veteran Emil Forsberg, who was signed by the New York Red Bulls, French goalkeeper Hugo Lloris with LAFC, Croatian forward Petar Musa with Dallas, and Belgian forward Hugo Cuyppers with Chicago.

While Suarez is 37 and his knees are giving him more trouble, he still had 27 goals and 17 assists with Brazilian club Gremio last season. He'll play with Messi, Alba and Busquets for the first time since all four were with Barcelona in the 2019-20 season.

"One of the motivations for me coming here was to reunite with them," Suarez said after his first practice in Miami. "But more than anything, we are very ambitious, very professional and we are committed to showing the young talented Inter Miami players that your age doesn't matter, what matters is the commitment you have on and off the field."

Successes

MLS Commissioner Don Garber outlined some of the league's successes in an interview last week with The Associated Press.

Season ticket sales are up 15% this season over the same time last year, overall league sponsorship revenue is up 17% while club revenue is up 15%, and merchandise sales are up 44% over this



Crew forward Cucho Hernández celebrates after Christian Ramirez scored in OT in the Eastern Conference final last season.



REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP

Forwards Lionel Messi, left, and Luis Suarez take a break during a friendly on Feb. 15 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The close friends have been reunited, making Inter Miami the team to watch in MLS this season.

time last year.

Is that the "Messi Effect?" Absolutely. It's a sign that MLS is becoming a significant destination league.

"I think that this will put MLS on a different trajectory that started when Beckham came to MLS and had us part of the global conversation," Garber said about Messi's stint in the league. "And who knows what that's going to look like years from now? But certainly we're in a different position today than we had been, with

Messi in our league."

Young stars

MLS is already a proving ground young international players.

Among the newcomers are Gabriel Pec, a 22-year-old Brazilian with the LA Galaxy, Argentine forward Agustin Ojeda, 19, of NYFC and LAFC's David Martinez, an 18-year-old winger from Venezuela.

Others promising players include center back Tomas Aviles, 20, at Inter Miami, teammate Benjamin Cremaschi, 18, who has a shot at making the U.S. Olympic team, and Real Salt Lake's Fidel Barajas, just 17.

And of course the reigning Young Player of the Year, Atlanta United's Thiago Almada, who was on Argentina's winning 2022 World Cup squad and is just 22.

Looking back

The Columbus Crew won their third overall MLS Cup with the victory over LAFC. FC Cincinnati won the Supporters Shield going away with 69 points, while St. Louis City finished atop the Western Conference in the team's first season.

LAFC's Denis Bouanga won the Golden Boot with 20 goals.

Cincinnati's Luciano Acosta was named the league's Most Valuable Player with 17 goals and 14 assists. He also won Goal of the Year for his clinical right-footed

goal after running through a series of Charlotte FC defenders in a September match.

Looking ahead

This season is slightly unusual compared to recent years in MLS in that there are no expansion teams kicking off in 2024.

Major League Soccer's explosive growth has seen it rise from 19 teams just a decade ago. But don't fret, San Diego FC joins next season as the league's 30th team.

There's also going to be lots of attention on soccer in coming years, which will no doubt boost the league.

This year the United States is hosting the Copa America Tournament for the first time since 2016, and just the second time in the history of the tournament.

The FIFA Club World Cup will be held in the United States next year with an expanded field of 32 teams. The next year the U.S. hosts the World Cup with Mexico and Canada.

"I think we still have so much work to do. To look forward, the next couple of years are going to be the most important years in the history of our league with the eyes of the world again on us with Copa America, the Club World Cup and the FIFA World Cup in '26," Garber said. "We need to continue to work hard, operate almost as a startup and continue to build the fan engagement in our league at all levels."

NHL

ROUNDUP

Wild set team record for goals in win

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Joel Eriksson Ek and Kirill Kaprizov each had hat tricks and tied the franchise record with six points for the Minnesota Wild, who faced a three-goal deficit in the second period before storming back with six unanswered goals in a record-filled 10-7 victory over the NHL-leading Vancouver Canucks on Monday.

“You could feel the way we were engaged in the game that there was no letdown,” Wild coach John Hynes said. “Whether it was 4-1 or 5-2, the mindset was still the same.”

Minnesota’s six scores in a span of 5:45 was the fastest such flurry in the NHL in 25 years, since Washington had six goals in 4:47 in a 10-1 win against Tampa Bay on Feb. 3, 1999.

Eriksson Ek and Kaprizov each had three assists.

Matt Boldy, Mats Zuccarello, Marco Rossi and Jonas Brodin also scored for the Wild, who set franchise goal records for a single game and a single period with seven scores in the third. They also registered their fastest four-goal stretch in team history, all on the power play in a span of 2:17 to take a 6-5 lead early in the third period. Zuccarello scored on a 5-on-3 with 27 seconds left in the second period. The Wild switched goalies at the intermission from Filip Gustavsson to Marc-Andre Fleury and then they let loose as the sloppy and sluggish Canucks squandered a hat trick by J.T. Miller.

Eriksson Ek and Kaprizov each scored on a 5-on-3 sandwiched around a delay-of-game penalty on Miller. Then Eriksson Ek scored again 5-on-4 to make it 6-5 just 1:44 into the third period. Rossi knocked in Jake Lucchini’s shot off his skate at 4:48 and Kaprizov tacked on another one at 5:12 to further the damage done to Canucks backup goalie Casey DeSmith’s statistics.

With Vancouver playing the first half of a back-to-back set of games, coach Rick Tocchet chose to keep primary netminder Thatcher Demko on the bench to rest.

“Even when they went up 7-5, 8-5, we still felt pretty comfortable,” Miller said. “At least our line, we were just in their zone every shift, and I think we felt like we had one of those nights where we could tie it up. Just such a weird game.”

The Canucks (37-14-6) took seven penalties and lost their second straight game. They fell to 28-7-2 when scoring first. Nikita Zadorov and Brock Boeser scored in the third period, cutting the lead to 8-7 with 2:08 to go, before the Wild



MATT KROHN/AP

Minnesota Wild center Joel Eriksson Ek celebrates after scoring a goal past Vancouver Canucks goaltender Casey DeSmith while defenseman Quinn Hughes watches during the first period Monday in St. Paul, Minn.

tacked on two empty-netters.

Bruins 4, Stars 3 (SO): Brad Marchand and Charlie McAvoy scored in the shootout and host Boston snapped a four-game losing streak with a win over Dallas.

Marchand kept Boston’s bid alive in the shootout after Dallas took a 1-0 lead. McAvoy put the Stars in a position where they needed to score, but Jeremy Swayman stopped 8 of 9 shots in the shootout and finished the game with 43 saves.

The win enabled the Bruins to jump past Florida for first place in the Atlantic Division.

Flames 6, Jets 3: Nazem Kadri had two goals and an assist as host Calgary rallied from a two-goal deficit to snap Winnipeg’s three-game winning streak.

Jonathan Huberdeau and Andrew Mangiapane had a goal and an assist and Oliver Kylington and Blake Coleman also scored for Calgary, which snapped a three-game losing streak. Rasmus Andersson had a pair of assists.

Sean Monahan scored all three goals for Winnipeg. Connor Hellebuyck had 28 saves for the Jets.

Hurricanes 6, Blackhawks 3: Martin Necas and Sebastian Aho each had a goal and an assist, and host Carolina held on to beat Chicago.

Michael Bunting, Jesperi Kotkaniemi, Brent Burns and Jordan Martinook also scored for the Hurricanes, who have won three straight and eight of 10. Spencer Martin, claimed off waivers in January, had 14 saves to win his third straight start.

Connor Bedard had a goal and

two assists, and Nick Foligno and Tyler Johnson also scored for the Blackhawks, who lost their 20th straight on the road. Chicago hasn’t won away from home since beating Tampa Bay on Nov. 9. Petr Mrazek stopped 36 shots against his former team.

Golden Knights 4, Sharks 0: Mason Morelli had a goal and an assist in his NHL debut, Logan Thompson had his fourth career shutout and visiting Vegas completed a season sweep against San Jose.

Keegan Kolesar, Michael Amadio and William Karlsson also scored to help the Golden Knights snap a two-game skid. Alec Martinez had three assists.

Thompson made 29 saves for his first shutout since Oct. 28, 2022, against Anaheim.

Maple Leafs 4, Blues 2: Auston Matthews scored his NHL-leading 49th goal of the season and added an assist, and visiting Toronto won its fourth game in a row and swept the two-game series with St. Louis.

Matthews, the top pick in the 2016 NHL Draft, had recorded hat tricks in his two previous games. His go-ahead goal came on a power play in the beginning of the third period. He has scored 14 goals and nine assists on the power play this season.

Matthew Knies also scored and William Nylander scored a short-handed goal for the Maple Leafs. Bobby McMann added an empty net goal. Ilya Samsonov registered 19 saves for Toronto.

Oilers 6, Coyotes 3: Evander Kane scored two of visiting Edmonton’s four goals in the third pe-

riod, Connor McDavid added two assists to extend his NHL lead and the Oilers stretched Arizona’s losing streak to 10 games.

Zach Hyman, Warren Foegele, Leon Draisaitl and Mattias Janmark also scored for Edmonton, and Stuart Skinner had 22 saves. McDavid had assists on the first and last goals, pushing his season total to 62.

Senators 4, Lightning 2: Mathieu Joseph had two goals, Anton Forsberg made 23 saves and visiting Ottawa beat Tampa Bay.

Ottawa, last in the Atlantic Division, handed the Lightning a second consecutive alarming defeat. Tampa Bay was coming off a 9-2 home loss to Florida on Saturday night.

Red Wings 4, Kraken 3 (OT): Ben Chiarot scored 1:06 into overtime, Patrick Kane got his 800th career assist and visiting Detroit beat Seattle.

Chiarot netted the winner from the slot off a backhand pass from Dylan Larkin. It was Chiarot’s fourth goal of the season and first since Dec. 31.

Ducks 4, Sabres 3: Troy Terry scored the go-ahead goal with 64 seconds left in the second period and had two assists, and visiting Anaheim swept the two-game season series with Buffalo.

Frank Vatrano scored twice to increase his season total to a career-best 26 goals, and Mason McTavish added three assists in an outing where the Ducks’ top scoring line combined for three second-period goals. Adam Henrique also scored and John Gibson stopped 34 shots.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division									
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
Boston	56	33	12	11	77	189	150		
Florida	55	36	15	4	76	185	135		
Toronto	54	30	16	8	68	197	170		
Tampa Bay	57	30	22	5	65	195	193		
Detroit	55	29	20	6	64	194	179		
Buffalo	55	24	27	4	52	161	170		
Montreal	55	22	25	8	52	157	198		
Ottawa	52	23	27	2	48	176	186		

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
N.Y. Rangers	55	36	16	3	75	185	156		
Carolina	55	33	17	5	71	187	158		
Philadelphia	56	29	20	7	65	167	165		
New Jersey	54	28	22	4	60	183	185		
N.Y. Islanders	54	22	18	14	58	160	183		
Washington	53	24	21	8	56	131	167		
Pittsburgh	52	24	21	7	55	151	139		
Columbus	53	17	26	10	44	157	197		

Western Conference

Central Division									
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
Dallas	56	34	14	8	76	211	171		
Colorado	56	34	18	4	72	209	181		
Winnipeg	53	33	15	5	71	159	125		
St. Louis	55	29	24	2	60	162	172		
Nashville	55	28	25	2	58	167	179		
Minnesota	55	26	23	6	58	174	183		
Arizona	55	23	28	4	50	160	178		
Chicago	56	15	38	3	33	118	199		

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
Vancouver	57	37	14	6	80	212	156		
Vegas	55	32	17	6	70	177	149		
Edmonton	52	33	18	1	67	187	150		
Los Angeles	53	27	16	10	64	165	145		
Seattle	55	23	21	11	57	152	159		
Calgary	56	26	25	5	57	172	177		
Anaheim	55	20	33	2	42	143	193		
San Jose	55	15	35	5	35	116	211		

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Sunday’s games

N.Y. Rangers 6, N.Y. Islanders 5, OT
Los Angeles 2, Pittsburgh 1
Colorado 4, Arizona 3

Monday’s games

Anaheim 4, Buffalo 3
Toronto 4, St. Louis 2
Boston 4, Dallas 3, SO
Minnesota 10, Vancouver 7
Detroit 4, Seattle 3, OT
Calgary 6, Winnipeg 3
Vegas 4, San Jose 0
Edmonton 6, Arizona 3
Carolina 6, Chicago 3
Ottawa 4, Tampa Bay 2

Tuesday’s games

Dallas at N.Y. Rangers
N.Y. Islanders at Pittsburgh
New Jersey at Washington
Ottawa at Florida
Minnesota at Winnipeg
Vancouver at Colorado
Nashville at Vegas
Columbus at Los Angeles

Wednesday’s games

Buffalo at Montreal
Philadelphia at Chicago
Boston at Edmonton
Columbus at Anaheim
Toronto at Arizona

Thursday’s games

Colorado at Detroit
Dallas at Ottawa
Florida at Carolina
Montreal at Pittsburgh
N.Y. Rangers at New Jersey
Washington at Tampa Bay
N.Y. Islanders at St. Louis
Boston at Calgary
Toronto at Vegas
Vancouver at Seattle
Nashville at Los Angeles

Scoring leaders

Through Monday				
	GP	G	A	PTS
Nikita Kucherov, TB	56	36	58	94
Nathan MacKinnon, COL	56	33	58	91
Connor McDavid, EDM	50	21	62	83
David Pastrnak, BOS	56	35	45	80
J.T. Miller, VAN	57	27	47	74
Artemi Panarin, NYR	55	32	42	74
Elias Pettersson, VAN	57	29	44	73
Auston Matthews, TOR	53	49	24	73
William Nylander, TOR	54	29	43	72
Mikko Rantanen, COL	56	29	41	70

NBA/MLB

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	43	12	.782	—
New York	33	22	.600	10
Philadelphia	32	22	.593	10½
Brooklyn	21	33	.389	21½
Toronto	19	36	.345	24
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	30	25	.545	—
Orlando	30	25	.545	—
Atlanta	24	31	.436	6
Charlotte	13	41	.241	16½
Washington	9	45	.167	20½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	36	17	.679	—
Milwaukee	35	21	.625	2½
Indiana	31	25	.554	6½
Chicago	26	29	.473	11
Detroit	8	46	.148	28½
Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New Orleans	33	22	.600	—
Dallas	32	23	.582	1
Houston	24	30	.444	8½
Memphis	20	36	.357	13½
San Antonio	11	44	.200	22
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	39	16	.709	—
Oklahoma City	37	17	.685	1½
Denver	36	19	.655	3
Utah	26	30	.464	13½
Portland	15	39	.278	23½
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Clippers	36	17	.679	—
Phoenix	33	22	.600	4
Sacramento	31	23	.574	5½
L.A. Lakers	30	26	.536	7½
Golden State	27	26	.509	9

Sunday's games
2024 All-Star Game
 East NBA All Stars 211, West NBA All Stars 186

Thursday's games
 Brooklyn at Toronto
 Detroit at Indiana
 New York at Philadelphia
 Orlando at Cleveland
 Phoenix at Dallas
 Boston at Chicago
 Houston at New Orleans
 L.A. Clippers at Oklahoma City
 Charlotte at Utah
 Washington at Denver
 L.A. Lakers at Golden State
 San Antonio at Sacramento

Haliburton shines in All-Star spotlight

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Pacers guard Tyrese Haliburton found himself playing a new role on NBA All-Star weekend — host. He served as Indianapolis' unofficial ambassador. He became a part-time concierge, offering suggestions for restaurant choices and places to visit. He promoted the NBA's 2K esports league, even doubled as a ticket broker. He made a video thanking local fans for their support. And he did all of it in addition to his full-time job. Yet Haliburton proved himself every bit as valuable, versatile and successful off the court over the past week as he's been on it this season — and did it all with a smile.

"It's been a zoo, it's been a lot, but it's been a lot of fun," he said Saturday afternoon still in the midst of this wild, whirlwind adventure. "I've been told I'm kind of like the prom king of the weekend, so I'm just doing whatever I'm asked to do."

The 23-year-old two-time All-Star never complained. He rarely does.

Instead, Haliburton thrived underneath the bright spotlight of one of the NBA's biggest stages, re-introducing basketball fans to the Pacers, his new hometown and himself as potentially the next star in Indiana's rich hoops tradition.

He shouldered everything from the seemingly endless interviews for TV and being mic'd up for the game, to purchasing a luxury suite at the arena because it was more affordable to accommodate all of the ticket requests.

Many All-Star regulars such as LeBron James, Kevin Durant or Damian Lillard have created plans to navigate what can be a grueling



DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

Indiana Pacers guard Tyrese Haliburton carries the Championship trophy after the East defeated the West 211-186 in the NBA All-Star game in Indianapolis on Sunday. Haliburton finishes the game with 32 points.

All-Star weekend schedule.

Few, though, play the starring role in front of their home fans. The closest James, Durant or Lillard came was two years ago when James, with the Lakers, returned to Cleveland. Stephen Curry might get his chance next season when San Francisco will host.

But Haliburton, the former Iowa State star who grew up in Wisconsin, got the opportunity in just his second All-Star trip.

The fourth-year pro cherished every moment — his grand entrance at Thursday night's inaugu-

ral Opening Celebration in a shiny, blue and gold No. 24 IndyCar; mingling with three Indiana Hall of Fame icons in Larry Bird, Reggie Miller and Oscar Robertson; cheering teammates Benedict Mathurin and Oscar Tshiebwe in Friday night's Rising Stars games and winning Saturday night's skills challenge with Mathurin and Pacers center Myles Turner before being eliminated in a tie-breaking round of the 3-point contest.

Yet none of it affected Haliburton's play Sunday. He opened the

game by making five consecutive 3s, finished with 32 points, seven rebounds and six assists on 11-for-15 shooting and went home after leaving quite an impression.

"His teammates love him, fans love him. I'm excited to watch his career going forward because I know he's going to do some incredible things here in Indiana," Durant said. "But just for the game of basketball as a whole, you can tell he's one of those point guards that the next generation, kids in elementary school, middle school kids will be looking up to."

SPRING TRAINING ROUNDUP

Trout wants to stay with Angels; Rendon talks priorities

By STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

Mike Trout discussed his future and Anthony Rendon talked about his priorities as the Los Angeles Angels stars spoke Monday when position players started workouts at spring training camps across Arizona and Florida.

Trout, a three-time MVP and 11-time All-Star who has played in only one postseason series, said he has no interest in requesting a trade as the Angels retool following two-time MVP Shohei Ohtani's move to the Los Angeles Dodgers.

The 32-year-old Trout has spent his entire 13-year career with the Angels and signed a \$426.5 million, 12-year contract in 2019. The Angels went 73-89 last year for their eighth



Trout Rendon

consecutive losing season. They haven't reached the playoffs since 2014, when they were swept by Kansas City in the Division Series.

"I think the easy way out is to ask for a trade," Trout told reporters, including The Athletic. "There might be a time, maybe. I really haven't thought about this. When I signed that contract, I'm loyal. I want to win a championship here. The overall picture of winning a championship

or getting to the playoffs here is the bigger satisfaction than bailing out or taking the easy way out. I think that's been my mindset. Maybe down the road, if some things change."

Trout says he continued to lobby owner Arte Moreno and upper management for free-agent additions that can boost the Angels following the departure of Ohtani, who signed a \$700 million, 10-year deal with the Dodgers.

One big free-agent move the Angels did make in recent years was the signing of Rendon to a \$245 million, seven-year deal in December 2019 as he was coming off a World Series title with Washington. Rendon, a two-time Silver Slugger winner in seven seasons with the Na-

tional, hasn't played more than 58 games in any of his four years with the Angels because of injuries.

Rendon spoke Monday about how his enthusiasm for the game has remained the same throughout his career, but he also noted that baseball has "never been a top priority for me."

"This is a job," Rendon told reporters. "I do this to make a living. My faith, my family come first before this job."

Ohtani takes live BP

Ohtani took live batting practice for the first time this spring training as he returns from elbow surgery. The Dodgers posted video Monday of Ohtani homering.

The two-way player won't be

pitching this season after surgery on his right elbow last September, but he's hoping to be ready for the season opener as a hitter.

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said Sunday that Ohtani won't play in the Dodgers' Cactus League opener Thursday against San Diego.

Phillies sign Merrifield

Philadelphia finalized its signing of three-time All-Star utilityman Whit Merrifield to an \$8 million, one-year contract that includes a \$7 million salary this year and an \$8 million club option for 2025 with a \$1 million buyout.

Merrifield, 35, batted .272 with 11 homers, 67 RBIs and 26 steals for the Toronto Blue Jays last season.

DAYTONA 500



MIKE TROXELL/AP

Multiple cars get caught up in a crash triggered by Alex Bowman in turn 3 during the final laps of Monday's Daytona 500 in Daytona Beach, Fla. Bowman wasn't part of the crash and finished second.

Bowman triggers crash, escapes to finish second

By MARK LONG
Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Alex Bowman never saw how “the big one” started. He just knew he was involved.

He was surprised to learn he triggered it.

Bowman sparked the crash that involved nearly two dozen cars and knocked six former NASCAR champions out of contention in the Daytona 500 on Monday night.

Bowman was bump-drafting Hendrick Motorsports teammate William Byron on the backstretch with nine laps to go when Byron lost control, turned into Brad Keselowski and pretty much wrecked the field.

“I can’t even see far enough (ahead) to see that Byron hitting Keselowski is what started it,” Bowman said. “I knew I had William in a spot that I didn’t want to have him in. But we’re all just sort of sandwiched up there.”

“I was lifting to try to get off him once he was aimed the wrong place. But we’re all just shoving each other. That’s what speedway racing has kind of become. If it’s my fault, I didn’t mean to crash anybody by any means.”

Byron and Bowman were the biggest beneficiaries of the melee. They escaped with little damage to their cars and went on to give Hendrick a 1-2 finish in “The Great American Race.”

The damage was epic for everyone else, even for a race that is known for spectacular crashes and mangled cars in every direction.

“Some of those situations where you get to be that ping-pong guy between two cars, you’re a little bit along for the ride,” Bowman said.

Bowman’s ride was hardly as detrimental as it was

for at least 20 others. Defending Cup Series champion Ryan Blaney was knocked out along with fellow former champs Chase Elliott, Keselowski, Kyle Larson, Joey Logano and Martin Truex Jr.

Three-time Daytona 500 champ Denny Hamlin as well as the past two winners of NASCAR’s season opener, Austin Cindric and Ricky Stenhouse Jr., were also involved.

“Speedway racing again,” Logano said. “It’s a lot of fun until this happens. It was pretty interesting with a lot of pushing and shoving there at the end. ... The pushes are stupid the whole time. The whole thing, everybody just gets more and more intense.”

“You know it’s going to happen. Anyone can see it happening. You just know it. It happens every year. With 10 to go, there’s going to be a caution. You just hope you’re not in it and you can’t ride around. ... It’s usually the people that start the wreck that stay alive. That’s the frustrating part.”

The race was mostly a green-flag affair until drivers started bumping, banging and making moves down the stretch.

Bowman was trying to be a good teammate and work with Byron to get to the front. They eventually did, just not the way anyone else wanted.

“Once you get that few laps left in the race, it’s gridlock, so you’re pretty much doing your best to push,” Cindric said.

And everyone lives with the results, which is what Bowman will do. He had a chance to pass Byron on the last lap before another wreck brought out a final caution. NASCAR froze the field and declared Byron the winner by a few feet.

“I’d rather be second than crash,” Bowman said. “I would have liked to just race for it. ... It’s awesome to see us get a 1-2 finish, but being this close to winning the Daytona 500, it certainly hurts. But 30th probably hurts worse.”

“That’s what speedway racing has kind of become. If it’s my fault, I didn’t mean to crash anybody by any means.”

Alex Bowman
Second-place finisher

Caution: Byron’s best previous finish was 21st

FROM PAGE 24

“William Byron was already a superstar, and I mean, he just went to another level of being superstar,” said Hendrick vice chairman Jeff Gordon, himself a three-time Daytona 500 winner in the No. 24 Chevrolet.

“I wasn’t driving the car, but I felt like I was making every lap out there with him,” he said. “We’re going to celebrate. This is a huge win.”

Byron, who had never finished higher than 21st in the Daytona 500, is a self-taught racer who used computer equipment to hone his skills. He made it to the championship last season when he won a career-high six races, but lost out on the title to Ryan Blaney, the older brother of Byron’s longtime girlfriend.

“I’m just a kid from racing on computers and winning the Daytona 500, I can’t believe it,” Byron said. “I wish my dad was here. He’s sick, but this is for him, man. We’ve been through so much, and we sat up in the grandstands together and watched the race.”

The fourth, and final, caution of the race began when Hendrick driver Alex Bowman hit Byron from behind and it caused Byron to sideswipe Brad Keselowski and trigger a 23-car crash that caused a red flag that lasted more than 15 minutes.

There were four laps remaining on the final restart and Byron was in second in the No. 24 Chevrolet. He and Ross Chastain of Trackhouse Racing pushed back and forth for the lead and it was Byron out front as a crash broke out behind him just as he’d crossed under the white flag marking the final lap of the race.

Byron was followed by teammate Bowman in a 1-2 sweep for Chevrolet and Hendrick. Christopher Bell in a Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing finished third and was followed by a Chevy from Corey LaJoie of Spire Motorsports and a Toyota from Bubba Wallace for 23XI Racing.

AJ Allmendinger was sixth in a Chevy for Kaulig Racing and was followed by John Hunter Nemechek in a Toyota for Legacy Motor Club. Chase Briscoe was eighth in a Ford for Stewart-Haas Racing, followed by Legacy driver Erik Jones and SHR teammate Noah Gragson.

The race ran one day later than scheduled because of persistent rain all weekend at Daytona. Monday was supposed to open with the rescheduled second-tier Xfinity Series race and then lead into the 500, but when it was still raining Monday morning, NASCAR reordered the events and made the Xfinity race the closer.

The flexibility NASCAR has

Scoreboard

Daytona 500

NASCAR Cup Series

Monday

At Daytona International Speedway

Daytona Beach, Fla.

Lap length: 2.50 miles

(Start position in parentheses)

- (18) William Byron, Chevrolet, 200 laps, 51 points.
- (7) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 200, 42.
- (4) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 200, 34.
- (29) Corey LaJoie, Chevrolet, 200, 33.
- (24) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, 200, 39.
- (28) AJ Allmendinger, Chevrolet, 200, 0.
- (10) John H. Nemechek, Toyota, 200, 30.
- (11) Erik Jones, Toyota, 200, 29.
- (38) Noah Gragson, Ford, 200, 28.
- (20) Chase Briscoe, Ford, 200, 27.
- (17) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 200, 35.
- (34) Kyle Busch, Chevrolet, 200, 37.
- (14) Zane Smith, Chevrolet, 200, 24.
- (5) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 200, 33.
- (27) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 200, 24.
- (37) Daniel Hemric, Chevrolet, 200, 21.
- (15) Ty Gibbs, Toyota, 200, 20.
- (19) Chris Buescher, Ford, 200, 20.
- (8) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 200, 22.
- (40) David Ragan, Ford, 200, 17.
- (21) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 199, 24.
- (6) Austin Cindric, Ford, 199, 24.
- (25) Ryan Preece, Ford, 199, 14.
- (36) Riley Herbst, Ford, 199, 0.
- (30) Josh Berry, Ford, 199, 12.
- (22) Justin Haley, Ford, 199, 11.
- (39) Anthony Alfredo, Chevrolet, 198, 0.
- (23) Jimmie Johnson, Toyota, 196, 9.
- (3) Tyler Reddick, Toyota, accident, 192, 14.
- (32) Ryan Blaney, Ford, accident, 192, 17.
- (35) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Chevrolet, accident, 192, 9.
- (1) Joey Logano, Ford, accident, 191, 5.
- (16) Brad Keselowski, Ford, accident, 191, 4.
- (13) Daniel Suárez, Chevrolet, accident, 191, 12.
- (31) Todd Gilliland, Ford, accident, 191, 2.
- (2) Michael McDowell, Ford, 176, 1.
- (33) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 146, 1.
- (26) Kaz Grala, Ford, accident, 5, 1.
- (12) Harrison Burton, Ford, accident, 5, 1.
- (9) Carson Hocevar, Chevrolet, accident, 5, 1.

Race statistics

Average speed of race winner: 157.174 mph.

Time of race: 3 hours, 10 minutes, 52 seconds.

Margin of victory: Under Caution.

Caution flags: 5 for 20 laps.

Lead changes: 41 among 20 drivers.

Lap leaders: J.Logano 0-1; M.McDowell

2; J.Logano 3; M.McDowell 4; J.Logano 5-8;

C.Bell 9-30; R.Blaney 31-39; M.McDowell

40-43; J.Berry 44; C.Elliott 45-54; B.Wallace

55; N.Gragson 56-60; D.Ragan 61-62;

K.Busch 63-64; C.Elliott 65-67; B.Keselowski

68; K.Larson 69-71; J.Logano 72-92;

T.Gilliland 93-108; K.Busch 109-113; K.Larson

114-117; A.Cindric 118-122; K.Busch

123; A.Cindric 124-128; K.Busch 129; R.Blaney

130-132; B.Keselowski 133-134; A.Cindric

135-136; B.Wallace 137; A.Cindric 138;

B.Wallace 139; A.Allmendinger 140-148;

K.Busch 149-150; C.LaJoie 151; D.Hamlin

152; K.Busch 153; D.Hamlin 154-162; J.Logano

163-180; R.Chastain 181-185; D.Suárez

186-187; R.Chastain 188-196; W.Byron 197-

200

Leaders summary (driver, times led,

laps led): J.Logano, 5 times for 45 laps;

C.Bell, 1 time for 22 laps; T.Gilliland, 1 time

for 16 laps; R.Chastain, 2 times for 14 laps;

C.Elliott, 2 times for 13 laps; A.Cindric, 4

times for 13 laps; K.Busch, 6 times for 12

laps; R.Blaney, 2 times for 12 laps; D.Hamlin,

2 times for 10 laps; A.Allmendinger, 1

time for 9 laps; K.Larson, 2 times for 7 laps;

M.McDowell, 3 times for 6 laps; N.Gragson,

1 time for 5 laps; W.Byron, 1 time for 4 laps;

B.Wallace, 3 times for 3 laps; B.Keselowski,

2 times for 3 laps; D.Ragan, 1 time for 2

laps; D.Suárez, 1 time for 2 laps; C.LaJoie,

1 time for 1 lap; J.Berry, 1 time for 1 lap.

Wins: W.Byron, 1.

Top 16 in points: 1. W.Byron, 54; 2. A.Bow-

man, 50; 3. C.Bell, 44; 4. C.Elliott, 42; 5.

B.Wallace, 39; 6. J.Nemechek, 37; 7. K.Lar-

son, 37; 8. K.Busch, 37; 9. E.Jones, 35; 10.

C.LaJoie, 33; 11. A.Cindric, 33; 12. D.Hamlin,

30; 13. C.Briscoe, 29; 14. Z.Smith, 29; 15.

N.Gragson, 28; 16. M.Truex, 24.

shown this month in working with-
in its schedule to avoid inclement
weather is practically unprecedented
in the first 75 hours of the series.
NASCAR, to start the month, moved
the exhibition Clash at the Coliseum
up a full day because of impending rain.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Houston's Jamal Shead shoots as Iowa State's Hason Ward defends during the second half Monday. Houston won 73-65.

Shead, No. 2 Houston win another Big 12 showdown

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Jamal Shead had 26 points, including 20 in the second half, and No. 2 Houston took sole possession of first place in the Big 12 with a 73-65 win over No. 6 Iowa State on Monday night.

Emanuel Sharp added 20 points and four steals for the Cougars (23-3, 10-3), who won their 20th consecutive home game — the longest active streak in the country. They hold a one-game lead over the Cyclones (20-6, 9-4) with five games remaining in the regular season for both teams.

“I’m impressed with our kids’ tenacity and toughness,” Houston coach Kelvin Sampson said. “We never let them get it below (five or six points). We’d always make a play.”

Shead shot 5-for-7 from the field and 8-for-9 at the free-throw line in the second half. He finished 6-for-10 from the floor with six assists and three of Houston’s 13 steals.

“Jamal Shead paid his dues, and those are the guys that when it comes time to step up, you can depend on,” Sampson said. “He was

the guy that was not going to let us lose tonight.”

Houston, which never trailed, turned 16 Iowa State turnovers into 20 points. Meanwhile, the Cougars committed only nine turnovers.

“If you have single-digit turnovers against Iowa State, you have a chance,” Sampson said. “I thought the key tonight was single-digit turnovers. We had nine turnovers, and we turned them over 16 times and scored 20 points off their turnovers. That was the story of the game for us.”

Iowa State coach T.J. Otzelberger called Shead “amazing.”

“A guy with his competitive spirit, his fight and his drive,” Otzelberger said. “You know when he’s going to the foul line, he’s going to cash in and make sure that his team is successful, and he certainly did that tonight.”

Keshon Gilbert had 17 points for the Cyclones, who outrebounded Houston 39-30. Tre King and Curtis Jones scored 13 apiece.

Both teams shot 42% from the field.

“We just weren’t able to make

enough plays to cut into that lead to get position where we needed to be to be successful tonight,” Otzelberger said.

The Cyclones got as close as three early in the second half, but Houston built its lead back to 43-32 on a 3-pointer by Sharp with 15 minutes left.

Iowa State continued to chip away, getting the deficit down to four several times in the second half, with the last coming on a 3 by King with 8:22 to go. But the Cougars scored the next four points and went back ahead by eight on a layup by J’Wan Roberts with 7:18 left.

“They just hit timely shot after timely shot,” Otzelberger said. “Anytime we had any type of surge or push, they would hit a big shot and answer.”

Big picture

Iowa State: Fell to 6-5 in Quad 1 games. The Cyclones are 15-0 at home but 4-4 on the road.

Houston: The Cougars improved to 9-3 in Quad 1 games. They have at least three more remaining in the regular season.

TOP 25 THIS WEEK

Cougars taking first ranking in 16 years to No. 4 Arizona

BY DAVE SKRETTA

Associated Press

Washington State coach Kyle Smith had just finished watching his team almost entirely shut down Stanford last weekend, and win for the 10th time in its last 11 games, when he made a rare admission for college basketball coaches.

“Right now,” Smith said, “this is the best team we’ve had in five years.”

The No. 21 Cougars can underscore just how good they are Thursday night, when they carry their first AP Top 25 ranking since the 2007-08 season into a Pac-12 showdown with fourth-ranked Arizona. Washington State sprung an upset in Tucson last year, when the Wildcats also were in the top five, and beat the perennial heavyweight in January in Pullman, Wash.

“We’ve done it before but it’s the hardest place to play in the country,” said Smith, who took the Cougars to back-to-back NITs but has his sights set firmly on their first NCAA Tournament bid since that 2008 team lost to North Carolina in

the Sweet 16.

“It’s going to be loud and crazy and that’s probably the No. 1 challenge: Can we handle that?” Smith said. “They’re good at home, and they’re fast and they’re athletic. And they’re big. Did I mention that? We’ll give it a good go, see what happens.”

Only good things have been happening lately for long-suffering Washington State (20-6, 11-3), which sits just a half-game back of the Wildcats (20-5, 11-3) as the Pac-12 schedule hits the homestretch. The Cougars’ only loss since the first week of January came in overtime at California, and they avenged that loss in a rout last week.

The last time they had a 10-1 stretch in conference play was during the 1940-41 season, when they had a 13-1 streak in the old Pacific Coast Conference. That team lost to Wisconsin 39-34 in the national championship game.

“We appreciate it,” Cougars forward Andrej Jakimovski said, “but I think we’re just taking it day by day and game by game.

“Obviously we have a lot of com-

pliments,” Jakimovski added, “and there are people asking, like, ‘What’s the difference from this team and last years’, or the year before?’ And I’m always saying, ‘We have such a good group of guys. We love each other, on and off the court. You can see the connection we have, and that’s the beauty of this team.’”

The difference is bearing out in the win-loss column. The Cougars need two wins to match the team two years ago that won 22 but needed a run to the NIT semifinals to get there, and three would give them their most wins since going 26-9 in 2008.

So while many coaches might demure when they are asked to compare teams, Smith hardly seemed to have a problem calling this year’s bunch “the best team we’ve had in five years.” Because the truth is, there really is no comparison at all.

Brutal Big 12

Iowa State moved up to No. 6 in the AP Top 25 on Monday, the highest ranking for the Cyclones since Dec. 14, 2015, and just in



YOUNG KWAK/AP

Washington State forward Isaac Jones dribbles against California guard Jaylon Tyson on Thursday. The Cougars won their sixth straight and moved into the Top 25 for the first time in 16 years.

time to face second-ranked Houston in yet another massive showdown in the brutal Big 12.

The Cyclones at least get a reprieve — if there is such a thing — when they play last-place West Virginia this weekend. Houston follows with a trip to No. 11 Baylor for the only scheduled meeting between those schools this season.

Speaking of the Bears, they were to visit No. 25 BYU on Tuesday night.

SEC on the rise

The Big 12 is starting to feel some pressure from the SEC when

it comes to conference superiority. The football heavyweight has six teams in the AP Top 25 after Florida entered the poll at No. 24 this week, matching the Big 12 for the most of any league.

The Gators will take their ranking on the road Wednesday when they play No. 13 Alabama, which began the week with a one-game lead over Tennessee in the SEC race. Florida has won three straight while the Crimson Tide have won six of their last seven.

Alabama’s tough week continues on Saturday, when it plays No. 17 Kentucky at Rupp Arena.

SPORTS



Big 12 showdown

Shead leads second-ranked Houston past No. 6 Iowa State » College basketball, Page 23



DAYTONA 500

DAVID GRAHAM/AP

William Byron, right, and Alex Bowman cross the finish line under caution Monday in the Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway. Byron won the race for the first time.

Byron wins under caution

Hendrick drivers go 1-2 in boss' 40th year

BY JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — The goal was obvious to William Byron: put the No. 24 Chevrolet in Victory Lane in the 2024 Daytona 500 to launch Hendrick Motorsports' 40th anniversary season.

Mission accomplished, even if Byron had to complete an agonizing final lap under caution around Daytona International Speedway awaiting the winner to be declared.

"Did we win it? Did we win it?" Byron kept asking over his radio.

The emotion he heard over his radio from crew chief Rudy Fugle confirmed Byron had just won the biggest race of his career.

"Well, no one told me. And Rudy was crying on the radio, so I was like 'Dude, I hope he's crying for good reason,'" Byron said. "I guess he was a ball of emotion there, and so I was like 'Did we actually win or not?'"

Byron snapped Hendrick Motorsports' nine-race Daytona 500 losing streak with a win Monday in the rain-delayed "Great American Race." He crossed

under the white flag denoting the final lap at the exact moment a crash broke out behind him. The caution flag was thrown and he wasn't quite sure if he was the official winner as he circled Daytona one final time.

The last Hendrick driver to win the Daytona 500 was Dale Earnhardt Jr. in 2014. The 26-year-old from Charlotte, N.C., is the sixth different driver to win the 500 for Rick Hendrick, the winningest team owner in NASCAR history who made his way to Victory Lane on the actual 40th anniversary of his first Cup win.

"The first time we came here, we didn't think we had any business even being here," Hendrick said in Victory Lane. "We felt way out of our league. Now here we are 40 years later. You couldn't write the script any better. To win this on the 40th, to the day, it's just awesome."

The ninth Daytona 500 win for Hendrick Motorsports tied the team with Petty Enterprises for most in NASCAR history.



Hendrick

SEE CAUTION ON PAGE 22



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Byron celebrates in Victory Lane after becoming the sixth different driver to win the Daytona 500 for Hendrick Motorsports.

Wild get two hat tricks in win over Canucks » NHL, Page 20



027664 463149