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GI seeks dismissal over jury diversity in neo-Nazi plot case

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Lockdown lifted at S. Korea base after contact tracing

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STARS AND STRIPES

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Marines take infantry training 'step further'

New, longer entry-level course seeks to create individuals better able to think and act for themselves in combat

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps is ditching some of its formation marches and adding board games to a new, longer entry-level infantry training course aimed at creating Marines who can better think and act for themselves.

The Infantry Marine Course pilot program launched last month at the service's School of Infantry-West on Camp Pendleton, Calif., where instructors were pictured

"Rote memorization, instant obedience to orders are good for certain things, and they're not getting thrown away from this course."

A.J. Pasciuti
Chief Warrant Officer 3

instructing new Marines on how chess relates to battlefield tactics. The course focuses less on micromanagement and more on individual responsibility, the service said in a statement.

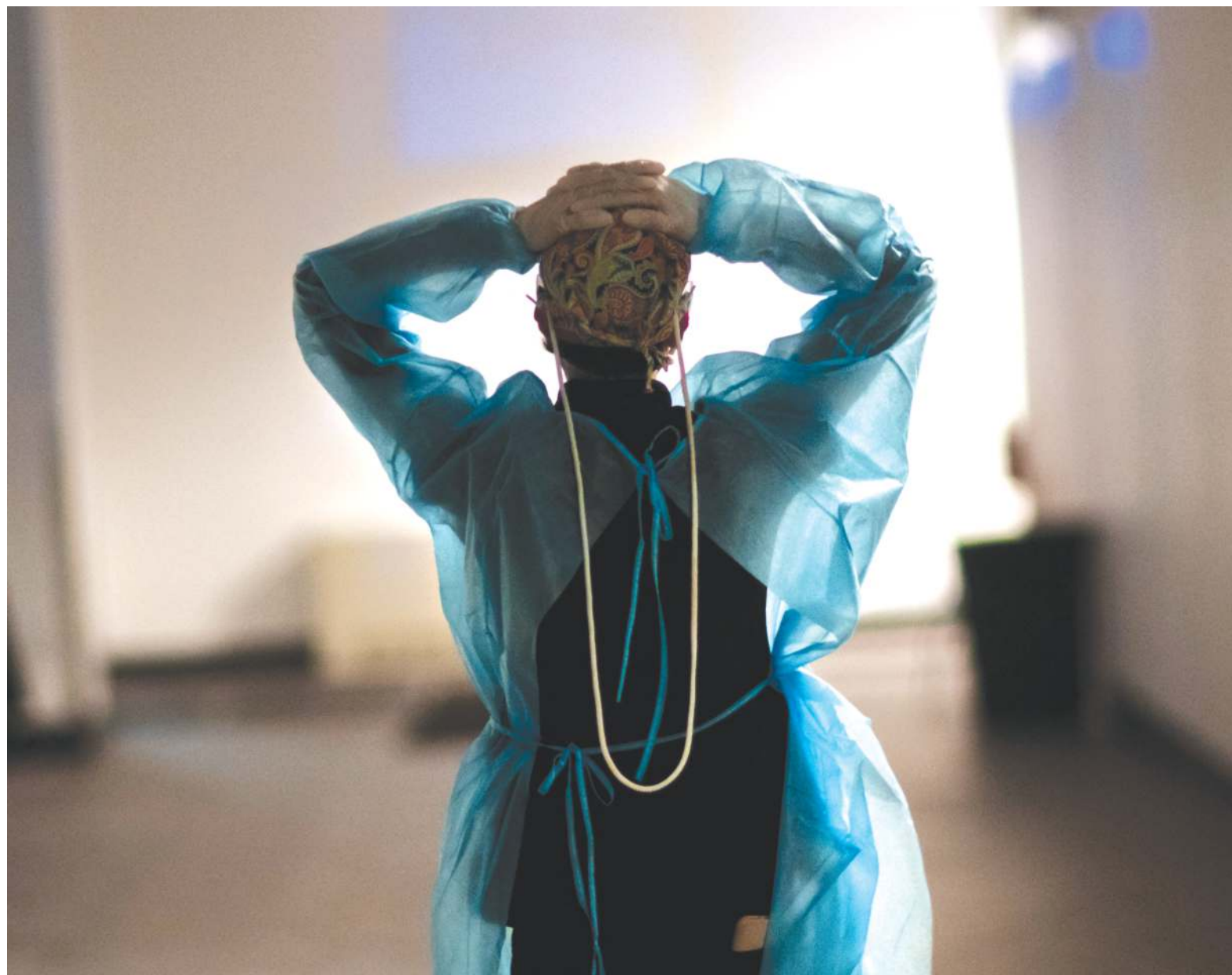
"Rote memorization, instant obedience to orders are good for certain things, and they're not getting thrown away from this course," Chief Warrant Officer 3 A.J. Pasciuti, the training battalion's gunner, said in Friday's statement. "We're just going a step

further, and understanding that the individual — and a collective of individuals — is what wins in combat."

The new course was developed over a year and is based on Commandant Gen. David Berger's plan for revamping the service for future conflicts.

Under Berger's vision, grunts will be expected to fight in small units that will be

SEE INFANTRY ON PAGE 3



VIRUS OUTBREAK

Horrifying milestone

By JOCELYN GECKER
Associated Press

Just one year ago, America had no idea.

Life in February 2020 still felt normal. Concern was building about a mystery respiratory illness that had just been named COVID-19. There was panic buying, and a sense of trepidation. Yet it was tempered by a large dose of American optimism. The coronavirus still felt like a foreign problem, even as U.S. authorities recorded the country's first known death from the virus.

Precisely a year later, America is hurtling toward a horrifying milestone of 500,000 deaths from COVID-19.

The first known deaths from the virus in the U.S. happened in early February 2020, both of them in Santa Clara County, Calif. It took four months to reach the first 100,000 dead. The toll hit 200,000

SEE MILESTONE ON PAGE 6

Registered traveling nurse Patricia Carrete, of El Paso, Texas, walks down the hallways during a night shift Wednesday, in Cranston, R.I.

DAVID GOLDMAN/AP

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Survey: German businesses optimistic amid virus

Associated Press

FRANKFURT, Germany — Optimism rose among German businesses in February, according to a closely watched survey — despite a worrisome flattening out in the decline of coronavirus infections.

The index of business sentiment compiled by the Ifo institute showed that industry continues to hold up better than public-facing services during the pandemic, even as battered tourism businesses expressed cautious optimism about the upcoming vaca-

tion season.

The survey index for Europe's largest economy climbed to 92.4 points after a reading of 90.3 points in January, the institute said in a news release Monday.

The results show brightening outlooks among thousands of German businesses, particularly in manufacturing and industry, where the index rose in all important sectors. Retailers were somewhat less pessimistic than the month before, despite collapsing sales. For hospitality businesses

such as hotels and restaurants, "the situation remains difficult," the Munich-based institute said, while "in the tourism sector there is cautious optimism again regarding the vacation season."

The outlook brightened despite caution from German Health Minister Jens Spahn, who on Friday noted that infection numbers have stopped declining in recent days. Manufacturing businesses such as the auto industry have been able to cope better with anti-pandemic measures.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Feb. 23)	\$1.18
Dollar buys (Feb. 23)	0.8029
British pound (Feb. 23)	\$1.37
Japanese yen (Feb. 23)	103.00
South Korean won (Feb. 23)	1076.00

South Korea (Won)	1112.35
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8957
Thailand (Baht)	30.01
Turkey (NewLira)	7.0589

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

Commercial rates	
Bahrain(Dinar)	0.3770
Britain (Pound)	1.4047
Canada (Dollar)	1.2629
China(Yuan)	6.4638
Denmark (Krone)	6.1224
Egypt (Pound)	15.6846
Euro	0.8233
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7538
Hungary (Forint)	295.73
Israel (Shekel)	3.2689
Japan (Yen)	105.14
Kuwait(Dinar)	0.3026
Norway (Krone)	8.4809
Philippines (Peso)	48.77
Poland (Zloty)	3.70
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7504
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3224

INTEREST RATES

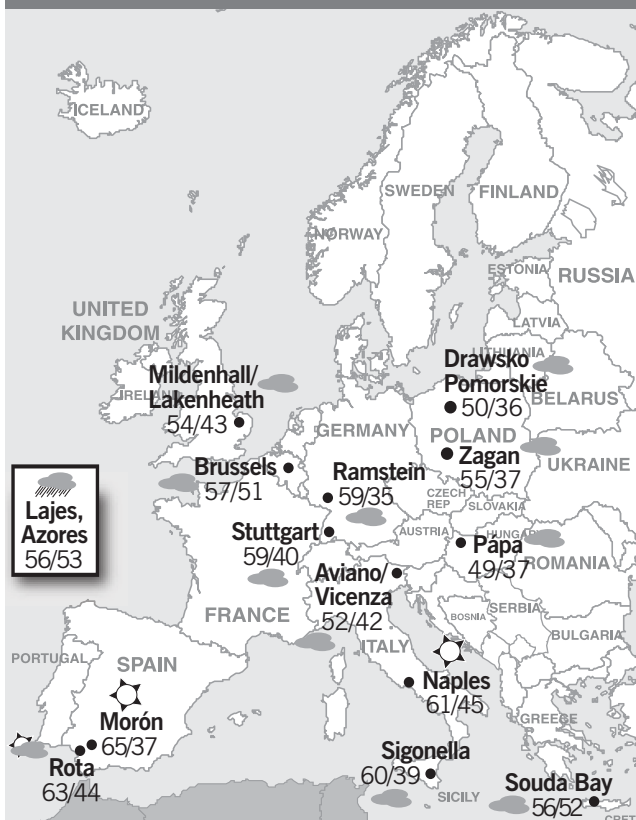
Prime rate	3.25
Interest Rates Discount rate	0.75
Federal funds market rate	0.04
3-month bill	0.04
30-year bond	2.14

WEATHER OUTLOOK

TUESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



TUESDAY IN EUROPE



WEDNESDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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MILITARY

GI charged in neo-Nazi plot says jury lacks diversity

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

A soldier indicted on federal charges of conspiring with neo-Nazis to ambush his own unit wants his case dismissed because the grand jury didn't include enough Black and Hispanic members.

Pvt. Ethan Melzer's attorneys said the lack of diversity in the jury pool violated their client's rights to an impartial jury and due process. But prosecutors said they adhered to the Constitution and federal law.

The two sides met Monday with U.S. District Judge Gregory H. Woods over the phone to discuss the case and set deadlines for upcoming motions, pending a decision on the defense motion to dismiss, which was filed in November.

Melzer, 22, was arrested last

spring in Italy, where he served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and pleaded not guilty in September to eight charges, including conspiracy to kill U.S. nationals, and conspiring and attempting to murder U.S. service members, as well as providing support to terrorists.

Prosecutors accused him of using an encrypted app to send sensitive details about his unit's locations, movements and security to members of the extremist groups Order of the Nine Angles, or O9A, and the neo-Nazi "RapeWaffen Division." They say he sought to plot an ambush on his unit during a planned deployment to Turkey.

The grand jury that indicted him was drawn from the northern part of the Southern District of New York and convened in White Plains, though the case is being tried in a Manhattan federal court

in the district's south, where there's a larger Black and Hispanic population.

Melzer's attorneys said prosecutors violated his rights under the Fifth and Sixth Amendments, and a 1968 federal law, when they sought the indictment in the less diverse community.

"Allowing a defendant to be indicted in one division and tried in another opens the door to prosecutorial gamesmanship where the government can forum shop for the racial, gender and economic demographics of their choice," the attorneys wrote.

But in an opposing motion filed in late December, prosecutors said they sought and obtained indictments in June and August from one of the few available federal grand juries in the district as the pandemic forced suspension of other grand juries throughout

the country.

Doing so was consistent with the law because the jury was in the same district as the trial court, they argued.

"Most of the defendant's claims to the contrary rest on a faulty premise: That a defendant who is likely to be tried in the Manhattan courthouse must be indicted by a grand jury sitting in that same courthouse," the federal prosecutors wrote. "That is not the law."

They argued that the defense's analysis of demographics relies on an "apples-to-oranges comparison" of the minority makeup of the jury pool and the communities, and that any minority underrepresentation in the jury selection process is the result of what courts have found to be outside factors, not prohibited systematic exclusion.

In a reply filed last month, Mel-

zer's attorneys disputed the government's claim that the pandemic limited them from using a Manhattan jury and argued that the government's choice to "needlessly" seek the indictment in White Plains should count as systematic exclusion.

The judge has yet to issue a decision on the motion on Melzer's case, said defense attorney Jennifer Willis, who works for a nonprofit that defends poor people charged with federal crimes.

On Monday, the court gave the defense about three months to review the evidence the government has provided for its case, which Assistant U.S. Attorney Sam Adelsberg described as "fairly voluminous," including classified documents and other materials.

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Infantry: Marines' new training reflects transition to information age

FROM PAGE 1

highly mobile and independent, and often dispersed far from headquarters. The new course is aimed at giving rookie Marines the tactical and cognitive skills to act on their own, and takes a "fundamentally different approach" than its eight-week predecessor, the Corps said.

"To be more dispersed and more precise, we need privates now that can operate by themselves and don't have to be told and shown where to go all the time," said Lt. Col. Walker Koury, the training battalion's commander.

The unit's Alpha Company is taking the course first before a second one launches at Camp Lejeune, N.C., later this spring. It's expected to alternate two more cycles between the east and west coasts before being finalized next year, the statement said.

Already about double the length of the course it's meant to replace, the pilot is expected to eventually grow to 18 weeks, USNI News reported late last year. The added time and a dedicated combat instructor to lead each squad of 14 Marines allows for more practical application and repetitions, the service said in its statement.

Reflecting the transition from the industrial era over to the information age, the Marine Corps is seeking to shift from creating what Koury described to USNI News as "automatons" to what Pasciuti has called "autonomous Marines."

"Through freedom of thought and freedom of action ... they'll have a higher level of understanding," Pasciuti said. "Rather than 'Do a thing because I said so,' it's



KERSTIN ROBERTS/U.S. Marine Corps

Marine Chief Warrant Officer 3 A.J. Pasciuti, the battalion gunner for Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry-West, answers a question from a student about the new infantry course on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., in January.

'get to a fundamental end state, and here are the tools that can help you achieve that goal.'"

After initial training on a topic, Marines will be expected to apply their own thinking the next time it comes up. Instead of following itemized gear lists and being marched where they need to be, they'll be expected to be more responsible for themselves throughout the course.

Playing chess is meant to en-

courage them to think about their actions in a complex environment. They will also no longer be trained in terms of narrow specialties such as rifleman, machine gunner, mortarman or anti-tank missileman, but instead will be expected to be proficient in every company-level weapon by graduation.

"The infantry Marine of the future will be able to do all (the skills of the specialties) and understand

when and where that skill needs to be applied," said Staff Sgt. Jude Stewart, the lead marksmanship instructor for Alpha Company.

During the first nine weeks, trainees will learn individual skills in weapons handling, land navigation and radio communications, mainly using the M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle.

Later weeks of the training will focus on testing the Marines' knowledge while they work in fire

teams and squads, learning to patrol over complex terrain and employ fire and maneuver tactics. Students will also lead several force-on-force actions during the latter phase.

"What we have to recognize is these young Marines, through a collective of individuals, will win the day for us," Pasciuti said.

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PACIFIC

French navy helps block illegal trades by N. Korea

By HANA KUSUMOTO

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — A French navy frigate will patrol the East China Sea until early March as part of United Nations efforts to enforce sanctions on North Korea, according to Japan's Ministry of Defense.

The frigate *Prairial* will look for illicit ship-to-ship transfers of goods by North Korea, whose commerce is shackled by the U.N. until it dismantles its nuclear

weapons program.

The U.N. since 2006 has passed almost a dozen resolutions aimed at North Korea, including bans on sales or purchase of military equipment and the export of electrical equipment, coal, agricultural products and other goods, according to the Council on Foreign Relations.

This is the second time since 2019 that a French vessel has patrolled in the East China Sea, the

ministry said on its website Thursday.

Japan welcomes France's contribution toward dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a "complete, verifiable and irreversible manner," according to the ministry.

The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and coast guard will cooperate with other nations enforcing those sanctions and gath-

er information on vessels suspected of making illegal transfers with North Korea, the ministry said.

The *Prairial* took part in a refueling exercise with the U.S. Navy and JMSDF on Friday in southern Japanese waters, according to a JMSDF news release.

European countries are increasing their presence and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region due to rising concern over China's

military buildup and its military activities.

A French nuclear-powered submarine conducted a covert patrol in the South China Sea earlier this month and France plans to deploy its amphibious assault ship to Japan later this year, according to the Kyodo News service.

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S. Korea base lifts lockdown; parts of Tokyo open to some US troops

By JOSEPH DITZLER

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Reports of new coronavirus cases in Japan's capital fell to their lowest level since November while those in South Korea's largest city spiked after the recent New Year holiday there.

New infections in South Korea topped 600 per day after the Lunar New Year weekend on Feb. 12-14, the country's interior minister, Jeon Hae-cheol, said at a meeting Monday in Seoul. That number had fallen to 313 by midnight Sunday, according to the Central Disease Control Headquarters.

Seoul recorded 102 new patients and Gyeonggi province reported 116. It is home to Camp Humphreys, the largest U.S. base in the country.

Osan Air Base, about 40 miles south of Seoul, returned to its pandemic normal Saturday, a day after its commander declared a lockdown to trace the contacts of a service member who tested positive.

Osan allowed most of its personnel to get back to their weekend routines, save those who had visited a list of hot spots associated with its first service member infected with the coronavirus.



AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

Shibuya Ward in central Tokyo, shown here earlier this month, is one of three city precincts still off-limits to personnel at Yokota Air Base, whose commander trimmed the no-go list Monday.

On the list were the outgoing mail area of the base post office from 4 p.m.-4:20 p.m. Feb. 16, the Ginkgo Tree dining facility from 6:30 p.m.-7:10 p.m. Thursday, and finally on Friday, the Starbucks from 9:05 a.m.-10:05 a.m. and the LG main phone shop from 10:10 a.m.-10:40 a.m.

The base commander, Col. John Gonzales, declared a shelter-in-place Friday evening, essentially ordering all the 51st Fighter Wing's population into their homes until public health authorities had traced all the service

member's contacts. The service member attended a large off-base gathering earlier in the week in violation of U.S. military health protection orders and South Korean directives, Gonzales said.

Meanwhile, another air base reported a case of its own Saturday. K-16, an Army airfield in Seongnam city southeast of Seoul, had a soldier test positive after contact with another individual not related to the U.S. military, according to a news release from U.S. Forces Korea.

In Japan, no commands report-

ed new coronavirus infections between 6 p.m. Friday and 6 p.m. Monday.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government announced on Monday that another 178 people had tested positive, its lowest one-day coronavirus count since 188 on Nov. 24, according to public broadcaster NHK and metro government data.

At Yokota Air Base, the headquarters in western Tokyo of U.S. Forces Japan, the 374th Medical Group on Monday said it expected "small weekly shipments of COVID vaccines until we've met the

demand for our base population," according to its Facebook post. COVID-19 is the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus.

"At this time, we do not know the quantities nor the dates for each shipment, but we will reach out to those next on the prioritization list as the doses become available," the post said.

On the same day, base commander Col. Andrew Campbell narrowed the area of central Tokyo off-limits to off-duty service members to three downtown wards: Shibuya, Shinjuku and Roppongi, along with the Chinatown area of Yokohama. Defense Department civilian employees, contractors and family members are expected to comply.

Central Tokyo has been off-limits to nearly all U.S. personnel for months.

Campbell left intact a curfew on dining in off-base restaurants anywhere in Tokyo, the three surrounding prefectures and another six in Japan. All 10 are under a state of emergency due to the coronavirus until March 7.

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.
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Another DODEA school named after Bob Hope will open on Okinawa

By MATTHEW M. BURKE

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — If the namesake of the new Bob Hope Elementary School, opening soon at Kadena Air Base, were alive today, he might say that Bing Crosby will want his name on a high school.

The school is still under construction and no ribbon-cutting is set, but Department of Defense Education Activity's Pacific South school district recently announced it's opening Bob Hope Elementary come the 2021-22 school year. It is the latest 21st century school on Okinawa, DODEA said Wednesday.

Hope, an actor and droll comedian, played off his co-star, the equally blithe crooner Bing Cros-

by, in seven "road" pictures, starting with "The Road to Singapore" in 1947. Hope also undertook 57 USO tours, entertaining troops in conflict zones from World War II to the Persian Gulf War, according to the USO. He died in 2003.

To fill the new school, which will serve kindergarten through fifth grade, DODEA-Pacific will close Stearley Heights Elementary and shuffle attendance zones, according to the DODEA statement.

Students from Yomitan, Kadena Town, Seville Manor and the area of North Terrace east of Fairchild Avenue will be assigned to Bob Hope Elementary. Students from Stillwell Park will be reassigned to Kadena Elementary, ac-

ording to DODEA's statement.

"Throughout the process of assigning an attendance zone for Bob Hope Elementary, our focus has been on keeping communities together," Pacific South District Superintendent Jim Journey was quoted as saying. "We know how important it is for students to attend school with their neighbors, and we also understand the important roles our schools play to the communities they serve."

About a decade ago, DODEA announced plans to shutter Kadena's Bob Hope Primary and Amelia Earhart Intermediate schools, which serve kindergarten through third grade and fourth through sixth grades, respectively. Both schools were built in 1980 and were to be replaced by a new

elementary school.

Neither "are slated to close at this time," however, DODEA-Pacific spokeswoman Miranda Ferguson wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes on Monday.

DODEA's 21st century schools are designed to prepare students for the tech-focused jobs of the future, DODEA officials have said. The first two on Okinawa, Kadena Elementary and Kadena Middle, opened in February 2018. The elementary school cost \$75 million.

The schools feature classrooms without walls called "neighborhoods," collaborative teaching and data-driven instruction. Bouncing balls for chairs, water-bottle stations and laptop docks are the most popular features with students.

Bob Hope Elementary will feature new furniture, new technology, a new playground and a new performance space.

Administrators said they are planning "a meaningful opportunity" for the Stearley Heights school community to say goodbye at the end of this school year.

"Stearley Heights Elementary has served its students well over the years," Journey said. "Its legacy will live on in each and every one of the students and staff members who have walked through its doors."

To see a map of the new school attendance zones, visit bit.ly/Pac-SouthZoning.

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WAR/MILITARY



ABDUL KHALIQ/AP

Security personnel inspect the site of a deadly roadside bomb explosion in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, on Sunday.

3 killed in 2 separate roadside bomb explosions in Afghanistan

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Separate roadside bomb explosions in Afghanistan killed at least three people including a child and wounded 20 others on Sunday Afghan officials said.

Kabul police spokesman Ferdaws Faramarz said that a roadside bomb explosion targeted a police car, killing the driver and a nearby child as well as wounding five other civilians including children.

The majority of bomb attacks in the capital Kabul in recent months have been sticky bombs

— explosive devices with magnets that are attached to vehicles and detonated by remote control or timer.

The second explosion was caused by a bomb placed in a crowded market in southern Helmand province, killing one civilian and wounding 15 others including two police, said provincial police spokesman, Mohammad Zaman Hamdard.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for any of the attacks. Afghan police officials say that an investigation was underway.

The Islamic State group's local affiliate has claimed responsibility for some of the attacks, but many go unclaimed, with the government blaming the Taliban. The insurgents have denied responsibility for most of the attacks.

Afghanistan has seen a nationwide spike in bombings, targeted killings and violence on the battlefield as peace negotiations in Qatar between the Taliban and the Afghan government have stalled. It's been over a month since the sides last met to discuss how to proceed.

Victims of Wis. plane crash were both celebrated pilots

By SHANZEH AHMAD

The Wisconsin State Journal

Both victims of Tuesday's plane crash in Janesville, Wis., were celebrated pilots, and one was a "valued member" of the Madison-based Wisconsin Air National Guard 115th Fighter Wing and a decorated veteran.

Staff Sgt. Remington K. Viney, 26, of Kimberly, and Tanner W. Byholm, 25, of Glidden, died in the crash about a mile south of the Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport shortly before 9:20 a.m. Tuesday.

"It was no secret that Staff Sgt. Viney had a passion for flying," the 115th Fighter Wing said in a Facebook post.

Viney began her military career with the Wisconsin Air National Guard in December 2013 after graduating with honors from Sun Prairie High School in 2012. She

enlisted as a crew chief and was assigned to the 115th Fighter Wing. In 2018, she began working full-time in the command post.

She got her private and commercial pilot licenses and worked as a flight instructor.

Viney deployed to Kadena Air Base in Japan in 2015, Kunsan Air Base in Korea in 2017 and Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada in 2018.

Byholm served as a Marine reservist for six years before joining the Air Force Reserve, and he became an A-10 pilot.

"Tanner loved flying and shared that love with his family and friends, taking them up in the air as often as he could," according to his obituary.

Byholm earned his flight instruction certification from Fox Valley Technical College and a degree from UW-Oshkosh, according to his obituary.



Staff Sgt. Remington K. Viney

Viney and Byholm were the only occupants in the "experimental" and "very unique" plane that crashed Tuesday, authorities said. The plane had taken off from the airport and was trying to come back when it crashed in a wooded, low-lying area.

Rock County Sheriff Troy Knudson said the crash site was "treacherous to get to." Responders reached the site shortly after 10 a.m. and found the plane upside down and partially submerged in water and mud.

Soldier in Germany loses appeal for return of drone

By MARCUS KLOECKNER AND IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — A U.S. soldier who was fined 500 euros and had his electronics confiscated after shooting aerial pictures of the 2019 Oktoberfest in Munich has lost his appeal to have his drone returned to him, court officials said Monday.

The service member, whom German media reports and the Army have identified as Feng Q., in late September 2019 violated a German law when he flew his drone over the vast field where Oktoberfest is held, a spokesman for the district court in Munich, Klaus-Peter Juengst, told Stars and Stripes by email.

A law enacted on Aug. 1, 2019, declared the air space above Oktoberfest a no-fly zone, Juengst said.

The soldier, who the Army said is assigned to U.S. Medical Department Activity Bavaria in Vilseck, said "there were no signs anywhere" to indicate flying was forbidden over the Theresienwiese, where the beer festival is held, the Bild Zeitung tabloid quoted him as saying.

But the court argued that it was reasonable to expect him and anyone else to know that "flying an object over a gathering of people like the Oktoberfest is prohibited," Juengst said. The authorities estimate that 6.3 million people attended the beer festival, which ran from Sept. 21 to Oct. 6, 2019.

German police were able to track down the American as he flew his drone around 150 feet above the festival on the opening night. They confiscated the drone and his cellphone, and he was fined 500 euros.

"He paid the fine after the event," said Alain Polynice, a spokesperson for MEDDAC Bavaria, but had to go to court to ask for his devices back.

The court in Munich agreed Friday to return the soldier's phone but rejected his request to recover his drone, with the prosecution arguing that "the defendant's request for the return of his possessions indicated an ongoing risk that he intended to use the drone again," Juengst said.

Under German law, confiscated goods that were used in the commission of a crime or misdemeanor can only be returned if the risk of the goods being used to commit a similar offense has been ruled out, he said.

Feng told the court that the phone was not used to control the drone, Juengst said.

The soldier wasn't the only person flying a drone over Oktoberfest in 2019, which is the last time it was held.

"One of the police officers who testified said there were probably six or seven other drone flights over the Oktoberfest," but the police weren't able to track down all of them, Juengst said.

Last year, the famous beer festival was canceled for the first time since World War II because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Feng and the public prosecutor both waived the right to appeal the decision, making it final, Juengst said, adding that the district court has no say over what will happen to the drone. The aircraft was valued at about \$1,500, Bild reported.

"The public prosecutor's office in Munich will decide if it will be used or destroyed," he said.

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Rockets target US Embassy in Baghdad, no casualties

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — At least two rockets struck Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone on Monday without causing any casualties, Iraq's army said in a statement. Security officials said the U.S. Embassy was the target.

Two Iraqi security officials said three rockets struck the Green Zone, one falling within the perimeters of the vast U.S. Embassy complex. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

A statement from the military said there were no casualties and

that an investigation was ongoing. There was minor property damage, including a damaged vehicle. The Green Zone houses foreign embassies and is the seat of Iraq's government.

It was the third attack to target the American presence in Iraq in a week. A U.S.-led coalition contractor was killed and civilians were wounded in a rocket attack outside Irbil international airport last Tuesday. On Saturday, rockets wounded personnel working for a U.S. defense company at Balad airbase.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Milestone: US COVID-19 deaths near 500,000

FROM PAGE 1

deaths in September and 300,000 in December. Then it took just over a month to go from 300,000 to 400,000 and about two months to climb from 400,000 to the brink of 500,000.

The running total passed 499,000 Monday, roughly the population of Kansas City, Mo., and just shy of the size of Atlanta. The figure compiled by Johns Hopkins University surpasses the number of people who died in 2019 of chronic lower respiratory diseases, stroke, Alzheimer's, flu and pneumonia combined.

The global death toll was approaching 2.5 million, according to Johns Hopkins.

President Joe Biden planned to honor the 500,000 lives lost from COVID-19 with a moment of silence and candle lighting ceremony at sunset Monday at the White House.

He's expected to be joined by first lady Jill Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff.

A relentless march of death and tragedy has warped time and memory. It became easy to forget the shocking images, so many day after day, of scenes once unthinkable in a country of such wealth and power.

Looking back, we can see it happened in phases.

In the beginning, the crisis felt far away.

Last February, Americans still greeted each other with handshakes and commuted to work in crowded public transportation. Children were still at school in actual classrooms. Hollywood icon Tom Hanks walked the red carpet at the Oscars, not knowing a month later he and his wife would contract COVID-19. Baseball spring training drew the usual crowds, without a face mask in sight.

But an ominous cruise ship with COVID-infected passengers circled off the coast of California. Within weeks, the Grand Princess — and the initial efforts by the state and the federal governments to bar it from coming ashore — became a symbol of America's misguided belief that it could keep the disease out.



ERIC GAY/AP

Medical personnel talk as they care for COVID-19 patients at DHR Health on July 29 in McAllen, Texas. A year after the U.S. recorded the first known death from the coronavirus, America is closing in on 500,000 deaths from the virus.

Words like shutdown and social distancing were not yet part of our national vocabulary in those early days. Few of us wore masks as we stood in long lines to stockpile groceries and cleared the shelves of toilet paper.

Heartbreak and despair arrived quickly.

Nightmarish scenes we had witnessed in China and Italy reached America, and the nation snapped to attention. Nursing homes near Seattle became the sites of the first deadly U.S. outbreak. We watched the elderly and frail suffer alone: An octogenarian with COVID-19, stretched out in a hospital bed, blowing her family a kiss through a window.

The World Health Organization declared the crisis a pandemic in March, and everything from college campuses to corporate headquarters cleared out. The NCAA announced that the rite of spring for so many Americans — its college basketball tournament — would be played before largely empty arenas, and then abruptly canceled it.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading expert on infectious disease, became a household name in

daily news conferences. When he estimated in March that 100,000 to 200,000 Americans could die from the virus, horror was tempered by total disbelief. President Donald Trump touted hydroxychloroquine as a "game changer" but medical experts disagreed.

American hustle and bustle came to a standstill as hotspots exploded across the country. The typically jam-packed Los Angeles freeways emptied into eerie stretches of open road. The lights stayed on in Times Square but its legendary energy and crowds vanished. April felt like Armageddon in New York City; ambulances constantly blared down streets, body bags were forklifted into refrigerated trucks that parked outside hospitals where they served as makeshift morgues and stark symbols of death.

Aerial footage captured by AP showed another unthinkable sight: a mass grave in New York City for unclaimed bodies of COVID-19 victims. Workers in hazmat suits were seen lowering wooden coffins, stacked neatly on top of each other, into deep trenches dug in a potter's field off the coast of the Bronx.

We marveled at the heroism of healthcare workers and tried to show our gratitude; New Yorkers clapped and cheered and banged pots each night at 7 p.m. to honor those doctors and nurses.

The reality that America had become the global epicenter of modern history's deadliest pandemic crashed into focus.

Life moved online: everything from work and school to doctors appointments, birthday parties, weddings — and funerals.

It became clear that no one was safe. But some were at far greater risk. Racial disparities in who contracted the virus played out across America as data showed that Black and Latino people were disproportionately affected by the virus and were disproportionately dying of it.

Catching COVID-19 became just one of many concerns as the pandemic shut society, forcing businesses to close and unemployment to skyrocket. Paychecks shrank or disappeared altogether for millions, and harrowing portraits of hunger emerged across the country as Americans lined up at food banks, many for the first time in their lives.

Science mixed with politics, deepening a national divide and adding to the stress of a nation overwhelmed. Protests against racial injustice sent people, most of them wearing masks, into the streets.

Amid the upside-downness of life, we sought normalcy. Restaurants in some places hung their "open" signs and refused to abide by stay-at-home orders, welcoming customers willing to dine inside. Others came up with creative al fresco options.

Then came some glimmers of hope.

Amid escalating loss, vaccines arrived in mid-December, kicking off the biggest vaccination effort in U.S. history. It felt like the first good news in a doomed year. As doctors and nurses got the first shots, some cheered. Others wept, the constant trauma and sorrow merging with hope in one indescribable cathartic moment.

As vaccine supply picked up — slowly — many of the country's amusement parks and stadiums, after months vacant, reopened as vaccination mega sites.

Holidays, so often a time of hope, brought more suffering. Empty chairs at family tables were a painful reminder of lost loved ones. Millions of Americans ignored official pleas to avoid travel and gatherings, making the holidays a catalyst for new infections. Surge upon surge of new cases followed Thanksgiving and then Christmas and New Year's Eve, with each day seemingly setting new records for infections.

As the country and the world bid goodbye, and good riddance, to 2020 it became clear that 2021, at least the early months, would look pretty similar.

Politics shifted with President Joe Biden taking over from Trump. After four years of chaos and controversy, the new president brought a jarring sense of calm to national politics. Still, vaccine delays persist, and it's not clear if America is winning its war against the virus.

The COVID-19 death toll is not stopping at 500,000, and the virus has mutated countless times, with some variants easier to spread and harder to protect against.

Biden team aiming for beyond 100M vaccine numbers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It sounded so ambitious at first blush: 100 million vaccination shots in 100 days.

Now, one month into his presidency, Joe Biden is on a glide path to attain that goal and pitching well beyond it to the far more ambitious and daunting mission of vaccinating all eligible adults against the coronavirus by the end

of the summer.

Limited supply of the two approved COVID-19 vaccines has hampered the pace of vaccinations — and that was before extreme winter weather delayed the delivery of about 6 million doses this past week. But the United States is on the verge of a supply breakthrough as manufacturing ramps up and with the expectation

of a third vaccine becoming available in the coming weeks.

That means the act of delivering injections will soon be the dominant constraint, and it's prompting the Biden administration to push to dramatically expand the universe of those who will deliver injections and where Americans will meet them to get their shots.

"It's one thing to have the vac-

cine, and it's very different to get it in someone's arms," Biden said Friday as he toured Pfizer's manufacturing plant in Portage, Mich. The company is set to double its pace of vaccine deliveries.

Since their approval in December, more than 75 million doses of the two-shot regimen Moderna and Pfizer vaccines have been distributed, of which 63 million have

been injected, reaching 13% of Americans. Nearly 45 million of those doses have been administered since Biden's inauguration.

The pace of deliveries of those vaccines is about to take off. About 145 million doses are set for delivery in the next 5 1/2 weeks, with an additional 200 million expected by the end of May and a further 200 million by the end of July.

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Mask-wearing may continue into 2022 according to Fauci

From wire reports

Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease official, gets asked the question of when things will be normal again several times per week, and he is aware of how closely Americans are following his every prediction amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"No, you know, I can't say that, Dana," Fauci told CNN's Dana Bash when she asked him on Sunday whether his timeline for a return to normality had been pushed back by a year or more. "Because then it will be a sound bite that's not true. I'm saying: We don't know."

If consensus among experts on this subject exists, it is that nobody really knows when normal will return. Fauci also said masks — for many Americans, one of the most visible signs of abnormality — may still be necessary in 2022.

"I think it is possible that is the case," he said when asked whether Americans will still be wearing masks next year. The level of new infections must go "way down," he added, before he could say people will not need face coverings.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Arizona health officials on Sunday reported 1,804 new COVID-19 cases and 25 additional deaths.

The latest numbers increased the state's pandemic totals to 807,967 cases and 15,505 known deaths.

The U.S. Centers for Disease

Control said Saturday that Arizona ranked third in the country for COVID-19 deaths per capita over the last seven days and 19th in cases.

The number of ICU beds used by COVID-19 patients around the state declined to 501 on Saturday, the fewest since Nov. 22.

California

LOS ANGELES — California's death toll during the coronavirus pandemic remains alarmingly high, topping 49,000 this weekend, even as the rates of new infections and hospitalizations continue to plummet across the state.

The number of patients in California hospitals with COVID-19 slipped below 7,000, a drop of more than a third over two weeks, the state Department of Public Health reported Sunday.

The 6,760 new confirmed cases are more than 85% below the mid-December peak of about 54,000. Total cases are approaching 3.45 million.

California reported another 408 deaths, bringing the total since the outbreak began to 49,105 — the highest in the nation.

New York

NEW YORK — The first case of the South African coronavirus variant has been discovered in a New York state resident, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Sunday.

The South African variant case involved a resident of Long Island's Nassau County, Cuomo said



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

California Gov. Gavin Newsom, front left, greets resident Israel Ortiz, right, after Newsom visited a mobile vaccination site at Ramona Gardens Recreation Center in Los Angeles on Sunday. California's new system of delivering and scheduling coronavirus vaccines is being rolled out in select counties.

in a news release. The sequencing was conducted at Opentrons Labworks Inc's Pandemic Response Lab, a New York City-based commercial lab, and verified at the Wadsworth Center in Albany.

New York state's latest COVID-19 numbers, meanwhile show a continued downward trend in hospitalizations and deaths following the holiday season spike.

There were fewer than 5,800 patients hospitalized with the virus Saturday, a decline of more than 800 from a week earlier.

Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA CITY — More than 1,000 new coronavirus cases and nearly 30 new deaths were reported in Oklahoma on Sunday, the state health department reported.

The 1,036 new cases and 26 new deaths reported by the Oklahoma State Department of Health

brings the state's total virus cases to 419,354 and the totals deaths to 4,181 since the pandemic began.

The seven-day rolling average of new cases in the state has fallen below 1,000 during the past two weeks, dropping from 2,215.7 per day to 932.4, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. The seven-day rolling average of new cases has fallen to its lowest level since Sept. 16, according to the COVID Tracking Project. The seven-day rolling average of deaths declined from 34.1 per day to 24.7 during the past two weeks.

More than 681,400 Oklahomans have now received the coronavirus vaccine, including more than 204,000 who have received both required doses, according to the Oklahoma State Department of Health report.

Wisconsin

MILWAUKEE — The daily up-

date on COVID-19 numbers posted Sunday by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services listed no deaths for the first time since late September.

Health officials confirmed 403 new cases in the last day, the lowest count since 324 positive tests were registered in late June. The new case average continued its decline with a mark of 610, the lowest number since 595 in early July.

The COVID Tracking Project reported that the rolling average number of daily new cases over the last two weeks in Wisconsin has decreased by 43%. There were about 203 new cases per 100,000 people in that time, which ranks 42nd in the country for new cases per capita.

A total of 559,575 cases and 6,284 deaths have been recorded in Wisconsin since the start of the pandemic.

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STARS AND STRIPES




VIRUS OUTBREAK

Hard-hit Italians mark full year of outbreak pain

By **LUCA BRUNO**
Associated Press

CODOGNO, Italy — With wreath-laying ceremonies, tree plantings and church services, Italians on Sunday marked one year since their country experienced its first known COVID-19 death.

Towns in Italy's north were the first to be hard-hit by the pandemic and put under lockdown, and residents paid tribute to the dead. Italy, with some 95,500 confirmed virus dead, has Europe's second-highest pandemic toll after Britain. Experts say the virus also killed many others who were never tested.

While the first wave of infections largely engulfed Lombardy and other northern regions, a second surge starting in the fall of 2020 has raced throughout the country. The number of new coronavirus infections has remained stubbornly high despite a raft of restrictions on travel between regions, and in some cases between towns. In addition, gyms, cinemas and theaters have been closed and restaurants and bars must shut early in the evening. There's a 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. nationwide curfew.

So far, Italy has confirmed 2.8 million cases.

It was in the hospital at the Lombard town of Codogno where a doctor recognized what would go down in medical history as the first known COVID-19 case in the West in a patient with no links to the outbreak in Asia, where coronavirus infections initially emerged. The diagnosis was made on the evening

of Feb. 20, 2020, in a 38-year-old otherwise healthy, athletic man.

Near the Red Cross office in Codogno on Sunday, Lombardy's governor and the town mayor attended a ceremony to unveil a monument to COVID-19 victims. The memorial consists of three steel pillars, representing resilience, community and starting over. A wreath was laid, and townspeople stood in silence to honor the dead.

"Panic, total panic," was how one of Codogno's 15,000 residents, Rosaria Sanna, on Sunday remembered what she felt at the start. And a year later "I am still scared because it is not over yet."

Some of her fellow townspeople lit candles during morning Sunday Masses in Codogno's St. Blaise Church.

The Codogno hospital patient survived, after being transferred to another hospital and spending weeks on a respirator.

But it was in the northeastern town of Vo, in the neighboring Veneto region, where Italy's first known COVID-19 death was registered on Feb. 21, 2020.

In Vo's memorial ceremony, officials planted a tree. A plaque has been installed, quoting a line from the Italian poet Ugo Foscolo, whose works are widely studied by the nation's schoolchildren. The inscription reads: "A man never dies if there is someone who remembers him."

Italy's first known fatality from COVID-19 was a 77-year-old Vo man, a retired roofer who liked to play cards.



GREGOR FISCHER, DPA/AP

Pupils attend a lesson at the "Russee" elementary school in Kiel, Germany, on Monday. Elementary schools and kindergartens in more than half of Germany's 16 states reopened Monday after two months of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Germany reopens some schools amid fears virus may rebound

Associated Press

BERLIN — Elementary students in more than half of Germany's 16 states returned to school Monday after more than two months at home, the first major relaxation of the country's pandemic measures since before Christmas.

Kindergartens also reopened their doors for preschool children, giving much-anticipated relief to stressed parents trying to juggle working from home and child care during the lockdown.

The move was agreed to at a meeting between German Chancellor Angela Merkel and state governors two weeks ago, and stuck to despite signs that the decline in case numbers seen in the country is flattening out again and even rising in some areas.

Education Minister Anja Karliczek has defended the decision to

reopen schools, saying younger children in particular benefit from learning together in groups.

Schools should use "all available means to prevent virus transmission," Karliczek told German news agency dpa, expressing confidence that state education officials in Germany would consider the infection numbers when deciding where to reopen.

Germany's disease control agency says there were 4,369 newly confirmed cases and 62 deaths in the past day, though Monday's numbers are often low due to reporting delays on the weekend.

Elementary school students in Berlin and elsewhere are required to wear masks in class and some will continue to do part of their schooling from home, to help reduce class sizes. Officials have pledged to install air filtration de-

vices in all classrooms. So far that effort hasn't progressed very far and teachers instead have to regularly open windows to avoid stale, potentially virus-laden air from building up.

Education unions have called for teachers and kindergarten workers to be moved into a higher priority group for vaccinations, an idea that government officials have said they will consider.

The governor of Bavaria said Monday that Germany should aim to do rapid testing of 1 million people each day, in addition to the hundreds of thousands of regular PCR tests conducted daily. Markus Soeder also announced that his state, which has seen a sharp rise in cases in some counties on the border with the Czech Republic, would reopen flower and gardening stores Monday.

Vaccinations start without rush in Australia, parts of Asia

Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — Australia started its COVID-19 inoculation program Monday, days after its neighbor New Zealand, with both governments deciding their pandemic experiences did not require the fast tracking of vaccine rollouts that occurred in many parts of the world.

Other countries in the Asia-Pacific region that have dealt relatively well with the pandemic either only recently started vaccinating or are about to, including Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Singapore.

Catherine Bennett, an epidemiologist at Australia's Deakin University, said countries that do

not face a virus crisis benefit from taking their time and learning from countries that have taken emergency vaccination measures such as the United States.

"We've now got data on pregnant women who are vaccinated. Natural accidents, like incorrect dosing, happen in a real world rollout," Bennett said. "All of those things are really valuable insights."

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison had his first dose of the Pfizer vaccine Sunday in a show of confidence in the product. Australia is prioritizing building public confidence in COVID-19 vaccines ahead of speed of delivery.

Health and border control workers, as well as nursing home resi-

dents and workers, started getting the Pfizer vaccine Monday at hubs across the country. Australian Health Minister Greg Hunt will get the AstraZeneca vaccine when it becomes available within weeks.

The vast majority of cases in Australia are travelers infected overseas who are detected during 14-day mandatory hotel quarantines. Australia has recorded 909 coronavirus deaths.

New Zealand began inoculations last week after receiving its first batch of the Pfizer vaccine.

The nation of 5 million has successfully stamped out the spread of the virus, and the first people to get the shots are border workers and their families. That's a different



TOBY ZERNA, POOL/AP

New South Wales Police officer Lachlan Pritchard receives the Pfizer vaccine in Sydney on Monday as Australia starts its COVID-19 vaccination program.

priority group than in most countries, and the idea is to stop the virus from spreading from any arriving travelers who are infected. Af-

ter that, health care and essential workers, along with vulnerable older people, will be vaccinated.

Elsewhere in Asia, Thailand, which has seen only 83 virus deaths, has yet to start vaccinations. It will receive the first 200,000 doses of the Sinovac vaccine on Wednesday.

Vietnam, which has recorded 35 deaths, announced last week that it will receive 5 million vaccine doses by the end of February and hopes to start inoculations as early as the beginning of March.

Cambodia, which has yet to report any virus deaths, received its first shipment of 600,000 vaccine doses from China on Feb. 7, part of 1 million doses Beijing donated.

NATION

China urges US to lift limits on trade, stop interference

Associated Press

BEIJING — China's top diplomat called Monday for President Joe Biden's administration to lift restrictions on trade and people-to-people contacts while ceasing what Beijing considers unwarranted interference in the areas of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi's comments at a Foreign Ministry forum on U.S.-China relations come as Beijing presses the new administration in Washington to drop many of the confrontational measures adopted by former President Donald Trump.

Trump hiked tariffs on Chinese imports in 2017 and imposed bans and other restrictions on Chinese tech companies and academic exchanges as he sought to address concerns about an imbalance in trade and accusations of Chinese theft of American technology.

Trump also upgraded military and diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy claimed by China as its own territory, while sanctioning Chinese officials blamed for abuses against Muslim minorities in Xinjiang and a crackdown on freedoms in Hong Kong.

"We know that the new U.S. administration is reviewing and assessing its foreign policy," Wang told diplomats, scholars and journalists at the Lanting Forum. "We hope that the U.S. policy makers will keep pace with the times, see clearly the trend of the world, abandon biases, give up unwarranted suspicions and move to bring the China policy back to reason to ensure a healthy, steady development of China-U.S. relations."

As is standard in Chinese foreign policy, Wang put the onus for

improving relations squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. and offered no direct proposals for major breakthroughs, even while encouraging increased dialogue.

Wang said China has "no intention to challenge or replace the United States" and is ready to peacefully coexist and seek common development.

Wang urged the U.S. to "stop smearing" the reputation of China's ruling Communist Party and to "stop conniving at or even supporting the erroneous words and actions of separatist forces for Taiwan independence and stop undermining China's sovereignty and security on internal affairs concerning Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet."

He said the U.S. should reactivate all levels of dialogue that he said the U.S. had effectively halted under the Trump administration, and boost cooperation on major bilateral and international issues. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the global economic recovery are the three biggest issues on which the sides can cooperate, he said.

On trade, Wang said China would defend the rights of U.S. companies while hoping the U.S. would "adjust its policies as soon as possible, among others, remove unreasonable tariffs on Chinese goods, lift its unilateral sanctions on Chinese companies and research and educational institutes and abandon irrational suppression of China's technological progress."

"I hope that the two sides will work together to steer the giant ship of China-U.S. relations back to the course of sound development toward a bright future with boundless prospects," he said.



MIKALA COMPTON, (NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS) HERALD-ZEITUNG/AP

Residents wait in line as Oliver Johnson fills up coolers and containers with Solomon Johnson, 15, and Eden Johnson, 14, at the water station at the New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center in New Braunfels, Texas, on Friday.

Hospitals confront lack of water in harsh winter storm aftermath

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Hospitals across the South grappled with water shortages Sunday in the wake of a devastating winter storm as the region carried on with recovery efforts and the weather offered a balmy respite, with temperatures reaching as high as the mid-60s.

At the height of last week's storm, hospitals scrambled to care for patients amid record cold temperatures as snow and ice battered parts of the country more accustomed to going through winter with light jackets and short sleeves. The icy blast ruptured water mains, knocked out power to millions of utility customers and contributed to at least 76 deaths — half of which occurred in Texas. At least seven people died in Tennessee and four in Portland, Ore.

A rural hospital in Anahuac, Texas, about 50 miles east of Houston, lost both water and power.

William Kiefer, CEO of Chambers Health, which runs the hospital along with two clinics and a wellness center, said the facilities resorted to backup generators and

water from a 275-gallon storage tank. They refilled it three times using water from a swimming pool in the wellness center.

When temperatures were in the teens last Monday, a woman about to give birth walked into the hospital after she could not make it through the ice and snow to her hospital in suburban Houston. Emergency room staff delivered the baby safely, Kiefer said.

"It would have taken her another two hours to get to (the suburban Houston hospital) if our facility wasn't there," he said. "We can probably assume she would have had the baby in her car and the snow. Not a good situation."

Water was restored Thursday, and operations had returned to normal on Sunday, he said. The health system plans to look into installing more sophisticated backup systems, he said.

Houston Methodist Hospital spokeswoman Gale Smith said water had been restored at two community hospitals in the system, which was dealing with an influx of dialysis patients after their local centers closed, she added.

After temperatures plunged as

much as 40 degrees below normal last week, the forecast for the Houston area called for a high of 65 degrees Sunday. The city lifted its boil-water advisory Sunday afternoon.

About 30,000 Texans were still without power due to downed power lines and other equipment failures. Gov. Greg Abbott said during a news conference that he expected all service to be restored by Sunday night or Monday.

Abbott also said he was concerned about the threat of massive electric bills after wholesale energy prices skyrocketed while power plants were offline. He said it would be the "top priority" for the Legislature, and he vowed not to end the legislative session until lawmakers ensure that the state's power grid is retrofitted to handle extreme winter and summer weather.

Nearly 230,000 customers across the South were still without power as of Sunday, according to PowerOutage.us, a website that tracks power outages. Other large blackouts were in Mississippi, West Virginia, Kentucky and Oregon.

Supreme Court won't halt turnover of Trump's tax records

By JESSICA GRESKO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a significant defeat for former President Donald Trump, the Supreme Court on Monday declined to step in to halt the turnover of his tax records to a New York state prosecutor.

The court's action is the apparent culmination of a lengthy legal battle that had already reached the high court once before.

Trump's tax records are not

supposed to become public as part of prosecutors' criminal investigation, but the high court's action is a blow to Trump because he has long fought on so many fronts to keep his tax records shielded from view. The ongoing investigation the records are part of could also become an issue for Trump in his life after the presidency. Trump has called it "a fishing expedition" and "a continuation of the witch hunt — the greatest witch hunt in histo-

ry."

The Supreme Court waited months to act in the case. The last of the written briefs in the case was filed Oct. 19. But a court that includes three Trump appointees waited through the election, Trump's challenge to his defeat and a month after Trump left office before issuing its order.

The court offered no explanation for the delay, and the legal issue before the justices did not involve whether Trump was due

any special deference because he was president.

The court's order is a win for Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr., who has been seeking Trump's tax records since 2019 as part of an investigation. Vance, a Democrat, had subpoenaed the records from the Mazars accounting firm that has long done work for Trump and his businesses. Mazars has said it would comply with the subpoena, but Trump, a Republican, sued to

block the records' release.

Vance's office had said it would be free to enforce the subpoena and obtain the records in the event the Supreme Court declined to step in and halt the records' turnover, but it was unclear when that might happen. In a three-word statement, Vance on Monday said only: "The work continues."

Representatives for Trump did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

NATION

Boeing wants to ground 777s after engine failure

Associated Press

Boeing has recommended that airlines ground all 777s with the type of engine that suffered a catastrophic failure over Denver over the weekend, as U.S. regulators ordered United Airlines to step up inspections of those planes.

Several airlines, including United, said they were temporarily removing the aircraft from service after one of the American carrier's planes made an emergency landing at Denver International Airport on Saturday because its right engine blew apart just after takeoff. Pieces of the casing of the engine, a Pratt & Whitney PW4000, rained down on suburban neighborhoods. None of the 231 passengers or 10 crew on board were hurt, and the plane landed safely, authorities said.

U.S. Federal Aviation Administration Administrator Steve Dickson said in a statement Sunday that based on an initial review of safety data, inspectors "concluded that the inspection interval should be stepped up for the hollow fan blades that are unique to this model of engine, used solely on Boeing 777 airplanes."

Dickson said that would likely mean some planes would be grounded — and Boeing said they should be until the FAA sets up an inspection regime. Japan ordered the planes out of service, according to the financial newspaper Nikkei, while saying that an engine in the same family suffered trouble in December.

Boeing said there were 69 777s with the Pratt & Whitney 4000-112 engines in service and another 59 in storage.

United is the only U.S. airline with the engine in its fleet, according to the FAA, and it had 24 of the planes in service. Two Japanese airlines have another 32 that are being pulled while Asiana Airlines grounded nine, seven of which were in service, until Boeing establishes a plan to fix the problems. Korean Air said it was discussing whether to ground 16 aircraft, six of which are in service.

"We are working with these regulators as they take actions while these planes are on the ground and further inspections are conducted by Pratt & Whitney," Boeing said in a statement issued Sunday, re-



ANDY CROSS, THE DENVER POST/AP

A North Metro firefighter walks past airplane debris on Elmwood Street near E. 13th Avenue on Saturday in Broomfield, Colo.

ferring to American and Japanese regulators.

The engine maker said it was sending a team to work with investigators.

The emergency landing this past weekend is the latest trouble for Boeing, which saw its 737 Max planes grounded for more than a year after two deadly crashes in 2019. The planes began returning to the skies late last year — a huge boost for the aircraft maker, which lost billions during the Max grounding because it has been unable to deliver new planes to customers.

Video posted on Twitter from Saturday's emergency showed the engine fully engulfed in flames as the plane flew through the air. Freeze frames from different video taken by a passenger sitting slightly in front of the engine appeared to show a broken fan blade in the engine.

Passengers, who were heading to Honolulu, said they feared the plane would crash after an explosion and flash of light, while people on the ground saw huge chunks of the aircraft pour down, just missing one home and crushing a truck. The explosion, visible

from the ground, left a trail of black smoke in the sky.

The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board said that two of the engine's fan blades were fractured and the remainder of the fan blades "exhibited damage." But it cautioned that it was too early to draw conclusions about what happened.

United says it will work closely with the FAA and the NTSB "to determine any additional steps that are needed to ensure these aircraft meet our rigorous safety standards and can return to service."

Bone cancer survivor to join billionaire on SpaceX flight

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — After beating bone cancer, Hayley Arceneaux figures rocketing into orbit on SpaceX's first private flight should be a piece of cosmic cake.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital announced Monday that the 29-year-old physician assistant — a former patient hired last spring — will launch later this year alongside a billionaire who's using his purchased spaceflight as a charitable fundraiser.

Arceneaux will become the youngest American in space — beating NASA record-holder Sally Ride by over two years — when she blasts off this fall with entrepreneur Jared Isaacman and two yet-to-be-chosen contest winners.

She'll also be the first to launch with a prosthesis. When she was 10, she had surgery at St. Jude to replace her knee and get a titanium rod in her left thigh bone. She still limps and suffers occasional leg pain, but has been cleared for flight by SpaceX. She'll serve as the crew's medical officer.

"My battle with cancer really prepared me for space travel," Arceneaux said in an interview. "It made me tough, and then also I think it really taught me to expect the unexpected and go along for the ride."

She wants to show her young patients and

other cancer survivors that "the sky is not even the limit anymore."

"It's going to mean so much to these kids to see a survivor in space," she said.

Isaacman announced his space mission Feb. 1, pledging to raise \$200 million for St. Jude, half of that his own contribution. As the flight's self-appointed commander, he offered one of the four SpaceX Dragon capsule seats to St. Jude.

"It's not all supposed to be about getting people excited to be astronauts someday, which is certainly cool," Isaacman, 38, said last week. "It's also supposed to be about an inspiring message of what we can accomplish here on Earth."

He has two more crew members to select, and he plans to reveal them in March.

One will be a sweepstakes winner; anyone donating to St. Jude this month is eligible. So far, more than \$9 million has come in, according to Rick Shadyac, president of St. Jude's fundraising organization. The other seat will go to a business owner who uses Shift4Payments, Isaacman's Allentown, Pa., credit card-processing company.

Liftoff is targeted around October at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, with the capsule orbiting Earth two to four days.



ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL/AP

Hayley Arceneaux stands near a SpaceX rocket at the aerospace company's headquarters in Hawthorne, Calif.

Trump to speak in first post-White House debut

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump will be making his first post-presidential appearance at a conservative gathering in Florida next weekend.

Ian Walters, spokesman for the American Conservative Union, confirmed that Trump will be speaking at the group's annual Conservative Political Action Conference on Feb. 28.

Trump is expected to use the speech to talk about the future of the Republican Party and the conservative moment, as well as to criticize President Joe Biden's efforts to undo his immigration policies, according to a person who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the plans.

CPAC is being held this year in Orlando, Fla., and will feature a slew of former Trump administration officials and others who represent his wing of the GOP, including former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem.

From The Associated Press

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman's face slashed in an unprovoked attack

NY NEW YORK — A 60-year-old woman was slashed across her face in an unprovoked attack on a Bronx street, according to New York City police.

The woman was walking along a sidewalk when a man approached her from behind and tapped her on the shoulder, police said. When she turned around, the man silently slashed her across the forehead and eyes before fleeing in a gray Honda Civic.

The victim was treated at a hospital.

Police released a photo of the vehicle, along with a plea for tips.

Redwood forest area preserved in \$25M deal

CA SAN FRANCISCO — A sprawling redwood forest north of San Francisco received permanent protection under a deal between a Bay Area environmental group and a family who has owned it since 1925.

Under the agreement, Save the Redwoods League paid \$24.7 million to buy a conservation easement over the sweeping Mailliard Ranch, located about 80 miles north of San Francisco in Mendocino County, the Mercury News reported.

The nearly 15,000-acre property belongs to the Mailliard Family, which includes Charlotte Mailliard Shultz, wife of former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, who died Feb. 6 in Palo Alto.

The forest will not be open to the public. The family will continue to own the property and be allowed to conduct commercial logging — at half the rate currently permitted under state laws — on second-growth redwoods there, as it has done for generations.

Crews rescue parachutist dangling from power lines

AZ ARIZONA CITY — A military parachutist who dropped onto high-voltage power lines in southern Arizona had to dangle for several hours before he could be safely rescued by firefighters and utility crews.

Firefighters arranged to have the lines de-energized before crews using a ladder truck could get near the parachutist and pull off the rescue, Eloy Fire District Assistant Chief Robert Maestas said.

The jump went awry south of Arizona City near a small private airport that had been the planned landing point for the training jump.

The parachutist was making the jump with other members of a small group of military personnel from a foreign country, Ian Mackenzie, military operations director for Airborne Support Group, an Arizona company that runs the drop zone, told The Associated Press.



JACQUELINE DORMER, (POTTSVILLE, PA.) REPUBLICAN-HERALD/AP

Taking a spin

Josh Warne, of West Penn Township, Pa., dances with his daughter, Evie Warne, 6, at the Daddy Daughter Dance at the Tamaqua Community Arts Center in Tamaqua, Pa. This was the first time holding the dance and was in partnership with the Eastern Schuylkill Recreation Commission with the Tamaqua Community Arts Center.

Man convicted of robbing same bank twice in 1 year

SD SIOUX FALLS — A federal jury convicted a Nebraska man of robbing the same bank in South Dakota twice in a year's time.

Ferris Valentine was convicted of two counts of bank robbery in Sioux Falls.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in South Dakota said the 54-year-old Omaha man and a partner robbed the First National Bank in Sioux Falls on Nov. 15, 2016.

Prosecutors said in November 2017, Valentine robbed the same bank again, wearing a mask, as he did in the first robbery, and again used a gun.

Officer fired after 8 force incidents in 5 months

SC COLUMBIA — A police officer who shot a man in the head during a traffic stop in South Carolina was fired after using force on at least eight people over the past five months, officials said.

Columbia Police officer Sean Rollins was fired for unsatisfactory performance after an internal review, police spokesperson Jennifer Timmons said.

The firing came after The Post and Courier of Charleston reviewed police reports and body

THE CENSUS

10 The number of times a Georgia woman said that her neighbor's dog attacked her, leading her to ask local officials to do more to crack down on aggressive pets. Sonja Snyder of Homerville told WALB-TV about the attacks, which have led to scars from bite marks on her arms. Hospital records and police reports document some of the cases, and she said she's accumulated \$30,000 in medical bills. One sheriff's report says Snyder's neighbor has been cited, but she said the dog remains a threat.

camera footage from Rollins after he shot Sir Brandon Legette in the back of the head during a scuffle after a traffic stop in 2019.

The documents reviewed by the newspaper showed Rollins struck, forcibly subdued or used his stun gun on no fewer than eight people over five months.

Customs inspectors find cocaine-coated cereal

OH CINCINNATI — Customs authorities in Ohio said they intercepted a shipment of cereal earlier this month with a special frosting — cocaine.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in Cincinnati reported finding 44 pounds of cocaine-coated cornflakes that had been shipped from South America to a Hong Kong home.

Officials said a narcotics detection dog named Bico was checking out incoming freight from Peru on Feb. 13 when he alerted officers to the package. Officers found that the cereal contained white powder and the flakes were coated with

a grayish substance. Both tested positive for cocaine.

After 2 years and 2-state journey, cat is back home

NE NORTH PLATTE — Nearly two years after going missing, a big black-and-white cat named Crookshaw is back with his Colorado family after being identified in Nebraska.

The North Platte Telegraph reported that the tuxedo cat and his owners were reunited after the cat's identity was discovered when his microchip was scanned at Tender Hearts Veterinary Center in North Platte. He had been missing from his home in Northglenn, Colo. — 258 miles away — since May 2019.

The cat's journey began when he wandered away from his home into a woman's yard. She assumed he was a stray and took him in, then moved from Colorado to North Platte taking the cat with her. The woman recently decided to move again, but she couldn't take the cat because of a restric-

tion at her new place. She reached out to Sami Erickson, who operates a program to trap, neuter and return feral cats.

Erickson took the cat to Tender Hearts for a checkup, where they found the microchip.

Man sentenced to 80 years for stabbing death

MT BILLINGS — A Montana man who was twice convicted of killing another man during a drunken argument over which branch of the military was better was sentenced to 80 years in prison.

William Earl Cunningham, 69, of Laurel was first convicted of deliberate homicide in March 2015 in the 2014 death of Nathan Horn, 40.

The Montana Supreme Court overturned Cunningham's conviction and 80-year sentence in 2018, saying he was denied the chance to question the professional history and credibility of a state witness and not allowed to fully testify about why he was afraid of Horn. He testified he killed Horn in self-defense.

This time, Cunningham's attorney asked for a 40-year sentence with 20 years suspended, which would have made Cunningham immediately eligible for parole. Prosecutors again sought the 80-year sentence.

WORLD

Protesters defy Myanmar threat on strike

Atomic agency lauds Iran compromise

Associated Press

YANGON, Myanmar — Protesters gathered in Myanmar's biggest city Monday despite the ruling junta's threat to use lethal force against people who join a general strike against the military's takeover three weeks ago.

More than 1,000 protesters gathered near the U.S. Embassy in Yangon despite barriers blocking the way, but left to avoid a confrontation after 20 military trucks with riot police arrived nearby. Protests continued in other parts of the city, including next to Sule Pagoda, a traditional gathering point.

Factories, workplaces and shops were shuttered across the country Monday in response to the call for a nationwide strike.

The junta had warned against a general strike in a public announcement Sunday night on state television broadcaster MRTV.

"It is found that the protesters have raised their incitement towards riot and anarchy mob on the day of 22 February. Protesters are now inciting the people, especially emotional teenagers and youths, to a confrontation path where they will suffer the loss of life," the on-screen text said in English, replicating the spoken announcement



Anti-coup protesters raise their hands with clenched fists during a rally near the Mandalay Railway Station in Mandalay, Myanmar, on Monday. A call for a Monday general strike by demonstrators protesting the military's seizure of power has been met by the ruling junta with a thinly veiled threat to use lethal force.

AP

in Burmese.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Twitter the U.S. would take firm action "against those who perpetrate violence against the

people of Burma as they demand the restoration of their democratically elected government."

"We call on the military to stop violence, release all those unjustly

detained, cease attacks on journalists and activists, and respect the will of the people," State Department spokesman Ned Price said on Twitter.

Bloomberg News

Iran offered a last-minute compromise to international atomic inspectors that stops short of completely curtailing their intrusive monitoring powers, tapping the brakes on a standoff that is escalating to become the Biden administration's first major foreign policy challenge.

International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi ended talks on Sunday in Tehran without convincing Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to roll back a law that will suspend comprehensive snap inspections and other monitoring measures from Tuesday. He nevertheless described the result as "good" and said in Vienna that he won inspectors a three-month partial reprieve which gives the diplomats space to potentially resolve the dispute.

The Biden administration has said it's willing to meet with Iran to discuss a "diplomatic way forward" in efforts to return to the nuclear deal, a first step toward easing tensions.



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WORLD

UAE weapons show draws major deals, traders amid virus

By ISABEL DEBRE
Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — In spite of the surging coronavirus pandemic, major arms makers descended Sunday on a convention center in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, hoping to make deals with militaries across the Middle East.

The UAE unveiled \$1.36 billion in local and foreign arms deals to supply its forces with everything from South African drones to Serbian artillery. Although the figure surpasses the 2019 show's opening announcement, defense experts anticipate a drop in military spending this year as the pandemic and slumping global oil prices squeeze budgets.

The biennial trade fair, the In-

ternational Defense Exhibition and Conference, is Abu Dhabi's first major in-person event since the outbreak of the virus — a sign of its significance to the oil-rich sheikhdom that has maintained tight movement restrictions in recent months. Zoom wouldn't suffice for the 70,000 attendees and 900 exhibitors who rely on the largest weapons expo in the Middle East to scout for potential clients and hawk their latest wares.

Top Emirati officials, including Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, were on hand, wandering between displays of rifles, rockets and bombs.

But with hand sanitizer as ubiquitous as sterile drone displays, the pandemic's effects remained visible. Significant na-



KAMRAN JEBRELI/AP

A military delegation visits the display of Halcon, a regional leader in the end-to-end manufacturing of precision-guided systems, during Sunday's opening day of the International Defence Exhibition & Conference, IDEX, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

tional pavilions were absent, including the United States, the world's largest arms exporter.

Big American companies turned up but kept a low profile. Lockheed Martin representatives standing beside models of stealth F-35 fighters were tight-lipped amid the Biden administration's review of several major foreign arms sales initiated by former President Donald Trump.

China, which boasts the

world's second-largest arms-manufacturing industry, enticed passers-by with a real-sized ballistic missile called "Fire Dragon."

At Russia's pavilion, Chechen regional leader Ramzan Kadyrov inspected a vast array of Kalashnikovs. Not far off Poland's WB Group showed glitzy sales videos of its "suicide drone" plummeting from great heights to blast away armored vehicles.

Violent attack as Niger's voters select president

NIAMEY, Niger — Deadly violence struck Niger's presidential elections Sunday when seven members of the National Electoral Commission were killed when their car hit an explosive device, the government announced.

Three others were severely injured in the explosion which occurred in Gotheye village in the Tillaberi region in the country's west, Addine Agalass, an advisor to Tillaberi's governor said.

The attack happened while Nigeriens were nearly finished voting in the second round of the country's presidential elections. It's unclear if it was intended to target the electoral commission officials or if it was related to the election, said Agalass.

The West African nation's been battling rising attacks by Islamic extremists for years and Niger experts had warned that Sunday's elections could see violence.

"The new president needs to focus on our security at the borders and in our cities," said Abdou Razak, a resident of Niamey.

From The Associated Press

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What 500,000 COVID-19 deaths means

BY DAVID VON DREHLE

The Washington Post

The data spread like Soviet-era samizdat, the secret anti-propaganda writings used to pass from hand-to-hand in the USSR among brave souls hungry for the truth. Participants in a webinar organized by the American Hospital Association had downloaded a shocking presentation by U.S. epidemiologists. They applied their knowledge to the new coronavirus spreading from provincial China. The material spread through a rapidly expanding circle of dismay — a virus warning gone viral.

This was a year ago, February 2020. The number of U.S. deaths attributed to the virus was zero. (Later, investigators would discover that at least two American victims had been killed by the middle of that month.)

Of all the data in the presentation, one slide stood out, driving the appalled circulation. James Lawler, an epidemiologist at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha — one of the centers of U.S. Ebola response — had run the numbers and projected that the coronavirus could kill some 480,000 or more Americans in the coming year.

Half a million people dead. It boggled the mind: Holy ...! Could it be true? What if it were?

That would be more Americans dead than the military members who were killed in World War II. It would approach the equivalent of everyone living in Wyoming. A thousand deaths a day would not come close to half a million. I have no way of proving this, apart from my own memory of the mood of a year ago — when crowds

thronged another Mardi Gras and plans were ripening for another lusty Spring Break — but I don't think 1 American in 10 imagined that such a grim reaping lay ahead.

Now a year has passed, and more than 499,000 Americans have died of complications from COVID-19. The coronavirus is likely already multiplying inside the unlucky person fated to be the 500,000th to die. Lawler's projection a year ago, launched like a rocket in that fateful webinar, has come to ground precisely on target — a chronicle of half a million deaths foretold.

This terrible number is full of meanings. Unpacking them all — examining them, learning from them, arguing over them — will take some time. Certainly, the number says something profound about arithmetic. If the virus kept spreading as it was observed to spread and killing as it was known to kill, then math would do the rest, grinding away at human lives until the full number was reached. Lawler was no visionary; he was a man willing to face the arithmetic without flinching.

To change a mathematical outcome, one needs to only change an input. Clearly, we failed in the effort to do so. All the pleading and arguments of pandemic politics did not alter the variables of Lawler's computation; too little was done to slow the spread or lessen the lethality. As a result, the forecast came fatally true.

So from the rock of arithmetic comes another meaning. The number 500,000 represents a choice — though people might disagree over exactly what was chosen. Some chose not to believe in the number. The belief that COVID-19 deaths are exaggerated is sufficiently widespread to be the Lie of

the Year for the publication PolitiFact. As disturbing as that is, it might not be worse than the other choice: a decision by society that all those deaths were acceptable.

We were warned. Lawler and others provided projections that came true again and again, bringing us to the half-million mark like clockwork. Despite these warnings, some number of employers did not make their workplaces safe; some number of families refused to defer their reunions; some number of revelers chose not to keep a safe distance or wear masks. On some level, some number of Americans looked at the forecast of a half-million fatalities in a year's time and embraced it, rather than change their routines to alter the arithmetic.

The same is true of many other countries, should that be a consolation to you.

Finally, the number contains oceans of grief. For the loved ones of the dead, ignoring or denying the number is not an option. The COVID-19 toll is not some huge and faceless mass; it is the accumulation of 500,000 specific individuals, each with a name, a way of laughing, a favorite song, a life story. Many of them were elderly, but the elderly are grieved. Many of them were in poor health, but the infirm can be missed. The pain has a peculiar quality, sharpened by the very facts of the pandemic: funerals that could not be held; wakes that could not be convened; hugs that could not be shared.

An average of 1,370 per day. An average of 57 per hour. Approximately one per minute, every minute of a miserable year.

David Von Drehle writes a twice-weekly column for The Washington Post. He is the author of "Rise to Greatness: Abraham Lincoln and America's Most Perilous Year" and "Triangle: The Fire That Changed America."

Cruz wants to be a populist. But he can't get it right.

BY JOEL STEIN

Special to The Washington Post

Ted Cruz wants to be a populist. He's read all the manuals about how normal Americans think, dress, act and talk. But he can't quite get the moves right.

He got a mullet, which is brilliant anti-elitist behavior. But he screwed it up, getting a haircut that is business in the front but barely two months of pandemic in the back. He grows a beard like the survivalists do but styles it like a kombucha salesman.

Born Rafael, Cruz calls himself Ted, which is just shy of a real populist name like Chase or Blake. Or Squee.

Four years ago, Cruz "liked" a porn video on Twitter. That's not the same strong, populist game as having sex with a porn star and then paying her off to keep quiet about it in a way that will make sure every person on Earth knows about it. But it's a start. Then Cruz fumbled the moment and blamed a staffer for pressing "like" on his Twitter account.

When asked what his favorite movies are, he named the Godfather ... trilogy. "I like 'Godfather III,'" he said. "I actually thought it was a wonderful culmination of Michael Corleone." When Cruz tries to talk about normal stuff, he sounds like Borat.

Cruz understood that calling someone a "snowflake" is a cruel insult to level at your enemies. Then he named his own dog Snowflake. That's like a normal person

naming his dog Ted Cruz.

But it looked as though he finally nailed the populist costume when he took off for Cancún from Houston as people in Texas burned their furniture during power failures amid the lowest temperatures in decades. Cancún is spot-on populist. It's a town where, early last year, a hotel offered "drunk yoga."

Cruz claimed he went there because his daughters wanted a vacation. If the daughter of anyone I know said she wanted to go to Cancún, her parents would search for excuses to say no. They'd blurt out something about crime or tell them that college admissions directors subscribe to Señor Frog's Instagram page.

Cruz didn't need any of those excuses to reject his daughters' request for an international vacation. All he had to say was "pandemic." He didn't have to mention "leadership," "responsibility" or "people sleeping in their cars."

But he really blew it when he booked his rooms at the Ritz-Carlton. A real populist does not stay at a Ritz-Carlton. A real populist stays at Secrets, Dreams, Temptation or the Fiesta Americana. Or better yet, a buddy's pullout couch at Secrets, Dreams, Temptation or the Fiesta Americana.

Despite having a rolling suitcase, Cruz said he was just flying to Cancún to drop off his daughters. We know the whole drop-off thing was false because we've seen Cruz's wife Heidi's group text chat planning the

trip with some Houston friends. A populist doesn't have friends who leak texts to an editor at The New York Times. Because a populist's friends don't know any editors at The New York Times.

But his giveaway error was backing down. After he got caught, he changed his return ticket and flew back to Texas on standby and acknowledged his "mistake." And then he apologized for crossing the border to provide a better life for his family.

Donald Trump would never admit a mistake. He would have said, instead, that while Joe Biden had secretly gone on a trip to Ukraine, he was going to the Ritz-Carlton Cancún to get a sweet deal on decorations for his "beautiful" border wall. Trump would have said that the whole story was fake news, a socialist hoax to distract from frozen wind farm cancer. The point is: Trump would not have made sense.

Cruz's dilemma is that he needs the votes of people who are nothing like him. He's cerebral and devoid of instinct, so he over-thinks what a populist would do, works out 30 steps to get there and winds up in the populist uncanny valley.

Which is a never-ending flight back and forth to Cancún.

Joel Stein is the author of "In Defense of Elitism: Why I'm Better Than You and You're Better Than Someone Who Didn't Buy This Book."

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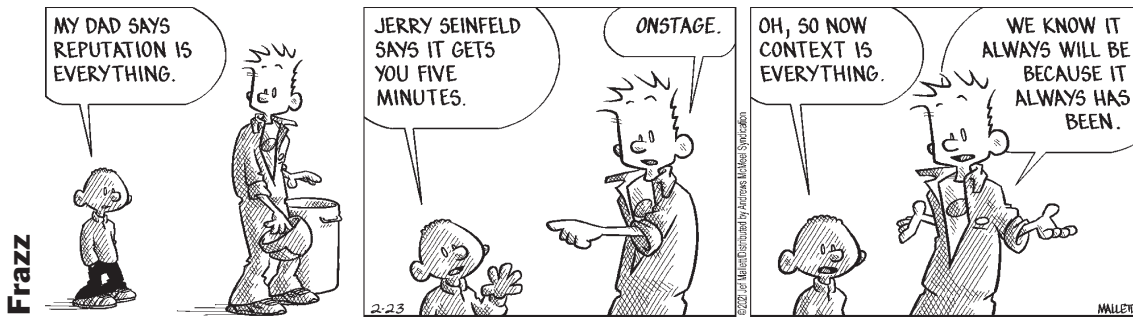


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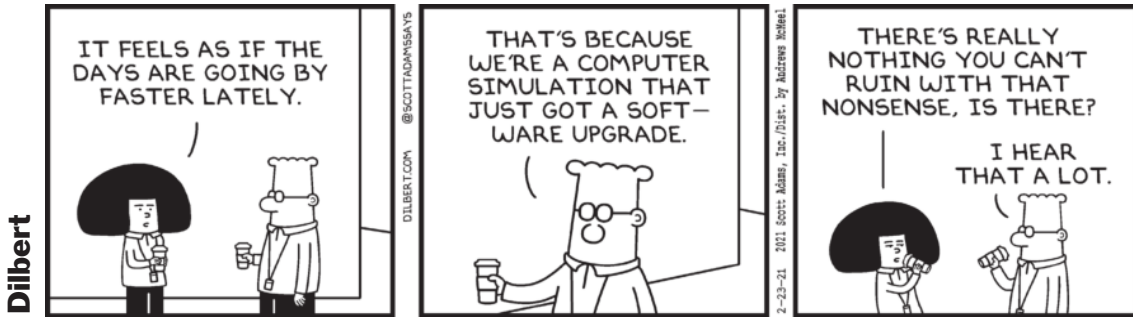
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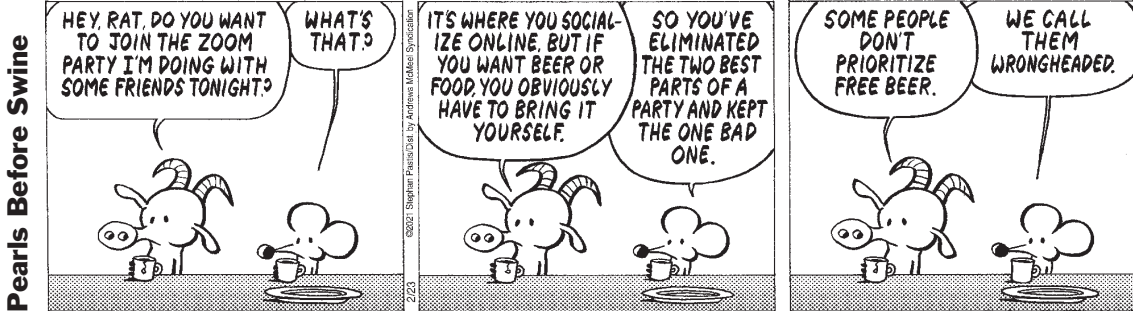
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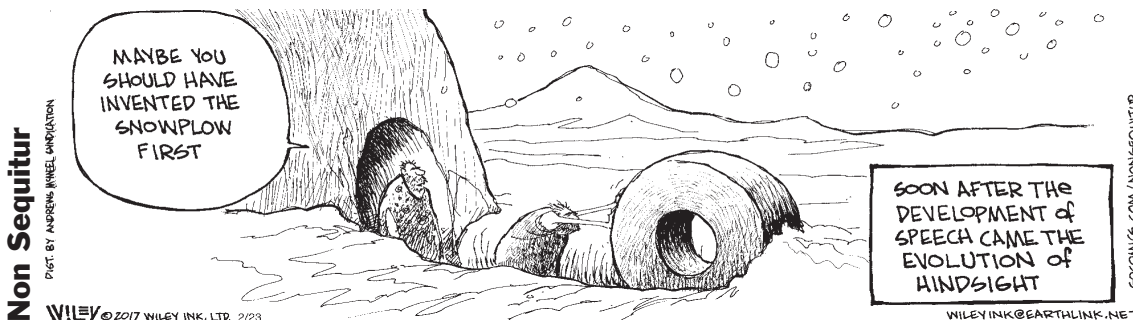
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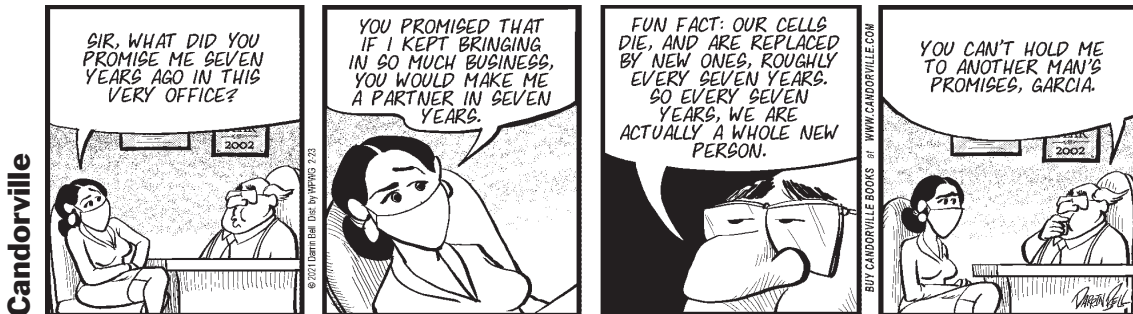
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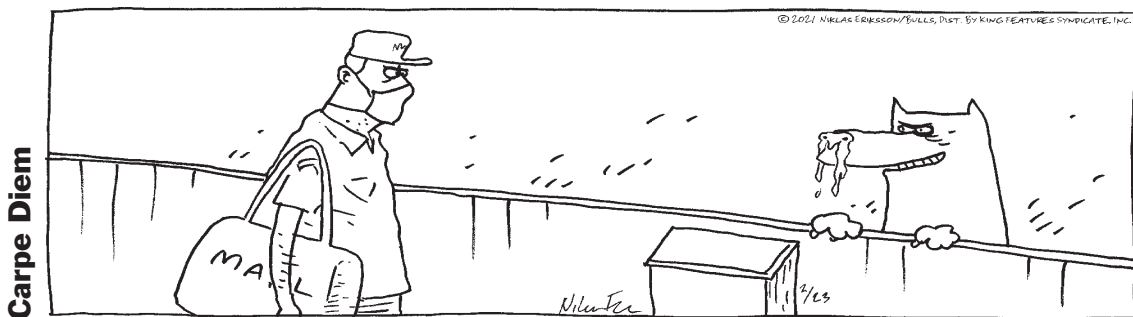
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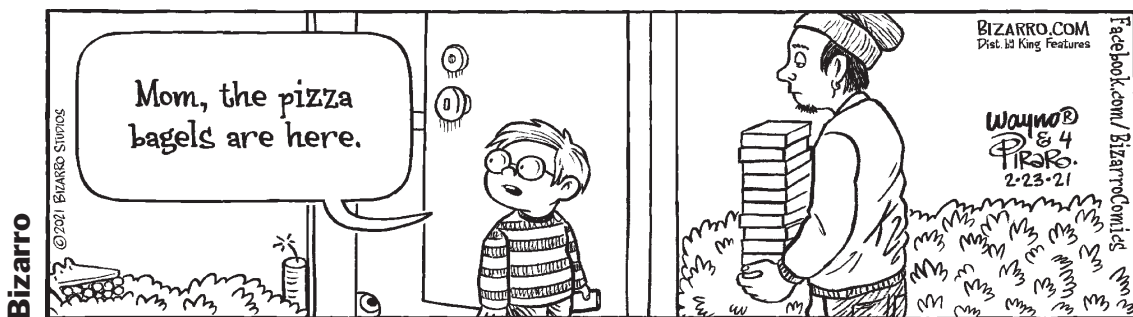
Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro

Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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ACROSS

- 1 "Pow!"
- 5 Cave mammal
- 8 Farmer's place
- 12 Video-streaming site
- 13 Lawyers' org.
- 14 Grenoble girlfriend
- 15 "Frozen" snowman
- 16 Disinfect
- 18 Actress Isabel of "The Jeffersons"
- 20 Ravi's instrument
- 21 "— Little Teapot"
- 22 Zero-star review
- 23 Bitten by a bee
- 26 Tapas bar drink
- 30 Football filler
- 31 YMCA class
- 32 Massachusetts cape
- 33 "Evil Ways" band
- 36 Trademark
- 38 Raggedy doll
- 39 Calendar abbr.
- 40 Vermont ski town
- 43 Holy place
- 47 Deli purchase
- 49 Saab model
- 50 Level
- 51 — Paulo
- 52 Really pesters
- 53 Do in
- 54 French Mrs.
- 55 "— chic!"

DOWN

- 1 "— on first?"
- 2 Luau dance
- 3 Arkin or Alda
- 4 Breakfast bread
- 5 Iraqi port city
- 6 "That's not — idea"
- 7 Sunbather's goal
- 8 Going together
- 9 Send forth
- 10 Minnelli of "Cabaret"
- 11 Lusty look
- 17 "This — outrage!"
- 19 Texter's "Wow!"
- 22 Standard
- 23 Airline to Sweden
- 24 — Maria (coffee liqueur)
- 25 Coffee vessel
- 26 Hot tub
- 27 Sony rival
- 28 Charged bit
- 29 Toss in
- 31 MSNBC rival
- 34 Garish
- 35 From the top
- 36 Chignon
- 37 Take back
- 39 Sierra Nevada lake
- 40 Bygone fliers
- 41 Shadow
- 42 Draft status
- 43 Swindle
- 44 Rip
- 45 Desire
- 46 Rolling stone's lack
- 48 Doctrine

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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CRYPTOQUIP

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 JYRMMK MLHO ULCAYA, OL
 XZYK SYRJ OYYJ-GMHW A?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: OLD COMICS CHARACTER WHO CONDUCTED LONG SIGHTSEEING RIDES IN MOTOR COACHES: BUS-TOUR BROWN.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals K

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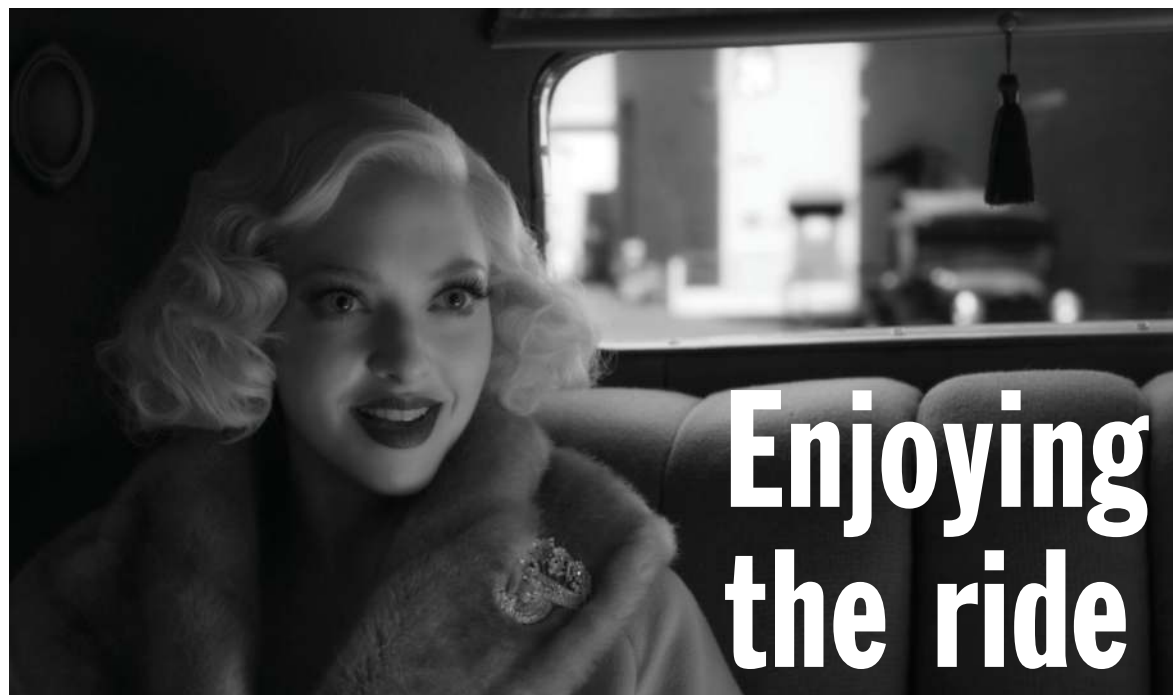


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FACES



Netflix

Amanda Seyfried plays Marion Davies in "Mank," a role that's stirring up some awards buzz.

Seyfried not taking attention surrounding 'Mank' role for granted

BY LINDSEY BAHR

Associated Press

Amanda Seyfried has one big regret about "Mank." Yes, the David Fincher film about "Citizen Kane" screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz has earned her some of the best marks of her career and made her, for the first time, a top awards contender. Yes, her performance has helped reframe the narrative around silent movie star Marion Davies. But her father never got to come to the set. And it breaks her heart.

Classic movies are Jack Seyfried's entire world. He is an old Hollywood die-hard. Over the years when Amanda had auditions on studio lots, she'd try to bring him along to see the murals, the city streets and the projection rooms. The trip to California to see his daughter in action in "Mank" was scheduled for early February 2020. But he got sick. And soon after, "Mank" wrapped.

Seyfried, 35, came to the role of Marion with few preconceptions about a woman whom history had reduced to being the mistress of publishing magnate William Randolph Hearst. And, of course, there was the drunken and unsophisticated Susan Alexander Kane, the presumed stand-in for Marion in "Citizen Kane," which didn't help her reputation even if Orson Welles insisted that character wasn't based on her.

Jack Fincher's "Mank" script told a different story. Here, Marion was a smart, witty and talented woman who held her own with titans of industry.

Seyfried worried that she was too contemporary, both in her look and her thinking, for this 1930s world. It helped that she got to be more involved than usual

in helping develop the character on screen. The costume and props department would lay out options and she'd get to choose her own purse or rings, for instance.

"I was able to claim parts of her in that decision making," she said. "When you have that kind of power and control in creating the character that the audience is going to see, it makes you feel closer to them."

In Seyfried's two decades in the business, she's had more than a few undeniable successes (think "Mamma Mia!" and "Mean Girls"). But she's also had "plateaus" and she knows she needs to manage her expectations, if only for her own sanity.

When her agent called her to tell her that Fincher was considering her for a role, her first thought was "David Fincher knows who I am?" She wouldn't even let herself believe she had it until she was on set.

Awards were never her main goal, longevity was. But in the business of entertainment, she knows nominations and wins can mean opportunities. Ten years ago, she said, she'd probably have downplayed something like getting her first Golden Globe nomination. Now she's not afraid to admit that she's excited. "Within the business it is really important," she said.

Her co-star Gary Oldman isn't surprised that she's getting this kind of attention. In fact, it's overdue.

"Sometimes it's just the type of movie that one is in isn't necessarily taken as seriously as other types of movies," said Oldman. "But she's incredibly talented. And I'm so chuffed for her. It couldn't happen to a nicer girl."

As for her father, he didn't get to see the set, but he's got something more permanent: The film is only a click away on Netflix. And he couldn't be prouder.

Musical duo Daft Punk break up after 28 years

From wire reports

Grammy-winning electronic music pioneers Daft Punk have announced that they are breaking up after 28 years.

The helmet-wearing French duo shared the news Monday in an 8-minute video called "Epilogue." Kathryn Frazier, the band's longtime publicist, confirmed the breakup for The Associated Press.

Daft Punk, comprised of Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo, have had major success over the years, winning six Grammy Awards and launching international hits with "One More Time," "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger" and "Get Lucky."

Bangalter and de Homem-Christo met at a Paris school in 1987. Prior to Daft Punk, they formed an indie rock band named Darling.

They officially formed Daft Punk in 1993, and the helmeted, mute and mysterious musicians released their debut album, "Homework," 1997. They first found success with the international hit "Da Funk," which topped the Billboard dance charts and earned them their first Grammy nomination. A second No. 1 hit and Grammy nomination followed with "Around the World."

But it was the 2014 Grammys where Daft Punk really took the spotlight, winning album of the year for "Random Access Memories" and making history as the first electronic act to win the highest honor at the Grammys. The duo won four awards that night, including record of the year for their bombshell hit "Get Lucky," featuring Pharrell Williams and Nile Rodgers.

"Random Access Memories" was regarded as a genre-bending album highlighted by its mix of live instrumentation, disco sounds, funk, rock, R&B and more. Rolling Stone ranked it No. 295 on their list of the "500 Greatest Albums of All Time" last year.



AP

French act Daft Punk members Thomas Bangalter, left, and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo are shown in 2013.

Kim Kardashian files for divorce from Kanye West

Kim Kardashian has filed for divorce from Kanye West, her representative confirmed Feb. 19. The couple, who share four children, married in 2014 after they began dating two years prior.

Rumors of Kardashian, 40, and West, 43, splitting up have circulated in recent weeks, following a tumultuous year for the couple. West announced July 4 that he intended to run for president, displaying erratic behavior at a campaign rally and on Twitter later that month. He said Kardashian had been trying to get him medical attention, and that he intended to divorce her.

Kardashian largely stayed silent on the matter of her husband's mental health but spoke out on Instagram later in July. She requested "compassion and empathy," noting that family members can be "powerless" to get help for someone who isn't a minor.

"I understand Kanye is subject to criticism because he is a public figure and his actions at times can cause strong opinions and emotions," she wrote. "He is a brilliant but complicated person who on top of the pressures of being an artist and a black man, who experienced the painful loss of his mother... has to deal with the pressure and isolation that is heightened by his bipolar disorder."

Music mogul wants to make the Beach Boys cool again

Bloomberg

Music mogul Irving Azoff sees the Beach Boys as an undervalued gem and thinks he can make the band cool again, profiting along the way.

Azoff, manager of the Eagles and Jon Bon Jovi, has acquired a majority interest in the band's music, as well as an archive of photos, videos and interviews — the latest in a flurry of deals involving classic rockers. Financial terms weren't disclosed, but the total value of the assets is \$100 million to \$200 million, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Formed in Southern California in 1961, the Beach Boys were one of the first great U.S. pop-rock bands and became synony-

mous with surf culture in the 1960s. But the group hasn't held on to its cultural status as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones or even Queen have.

"We think the Beach Boys is an underappreciated trademark," Azoff said in an interview. "They are just not as important as they could and should be."

The Beach Boys join a growing throng of artists who have cashed out of their catalogues in recent months.

But this deal is different from those made by Neil Young or Bob Dylan — whose songs fetched as much as \$300 million — in that the band is giving Azoff's company, Iconic, control over everything from their social-media accounts to their names, likenesses

and life stories. He will be the steward of the Beach Boys, overseeing their work even after the remaining members die.

The group's music ranks high on critics' all-time lists. Rolling Stone recently listed the 1966 studio release "Pet Sounds" as the second-greatest album of all time, behind Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On."

Azoff blames decades of friction and division among members of the group for their fall from rock's Mount Rushmore. Those troubles prevented them from coordinating on projects that could catalyze interest, like documentaries and music rereleases.

"The music has been around for nearly 60 years, and there are generations of people who have yet to discover the depth," he said.



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG, LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

The Beach Boys' Mike Love, right, and Bruce Johnston perform Oct. 23 at the Ventura (Calif.) County Fairgrounds.

SCOREBOARD/SPORTS BRIEFS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Men's Top 25 Fared

No. 1 Gonzaga (22-0) beat Saint Mary's (Cal) 87-65; beat San Diego 106-69.
 No. 2 Baylor (17-0) did not play.
 No. 3 Michigan (16-1) beat Rutgers 71-64; beat No. 4 Ohio St 92-87.
 No. 4 Ohio St. (18-5) beat Penn St. 92-82; lost to No. 3 Michigan 92-87.
 No. 5 Illinois (16-5) beat Northwestern 73-66; beat Minnesota 94-63.
 No. 6 Houston (18-3) lost to Wichita St. 68-63; beat Cincinnati 90-52.
 No. 7 Virginia (15-4) lost to No. 16 Florida St. 81-60; lost to Duke 66-65.
 No. 8 Alabama (18-5) beat Vanderbilt 82-78.
 No. 9 Oklahoma (14-5) beat Iowa St. 66-56.
 No. 10 Villanova (14-3) beat UConn 68-60.
 No. 11 Iowa (17-6) beat No. 21 Wisconsin 77-62; beat Penn St. 74-68.
 No. 12 Texas (13-6) lost to No. 13 West Virginia 84-82.
 No. 13 West Virginia (15-6) beat No. 12 Texas 84-82.
 No. 14 Creighton (16-5) did not play.
 No. 15 Texas Tech (14-7) lost to No. 23 Kansas 67-61.
 No. 16 Florida St. (13-3) beat No. 7 Virginia 81-60; beat Pittsburgh 79-72.
 No. 17 Southern Cal (18-4) beat Arizona St. 89-71; lost to Arizona 81-72.
 No. 18 Virginia Tech (14-4) did not play.
 No. 19 Tennessee (15-6) beat South Carolina 93-73; lost to Kentucky 70-55.
 No. 20 Missouri (14-6) lost to Georgia 80-70; beat South Carolina 93-78.
 No. 21 Wisconsin (16-8) lost to No. 11 Iowa 77-62; beat Northwestern 68-51.
 No. 22 Loyola Chicago (19-4) beat Valparaiso 54-52.
 No. 23 Kansas (17-7) beat Kansas St. 59-41; beat No. 15 Texas Tech 67-61.
 No. 24 Arkansas (17-5) beat Florida 75-64.
 No. 25 San Diego St. (17-4) beat Fresno St. 67-53; beat Fresno St. 75-57.

Sunday's men's scores

EAST

Albany (NY) 67, Stony Brook 59
 Binghamton 72, NJIT 58
 Bryant 76, Merrimack 60
 Colgate 78, Boston U. 63
 Delaware St. 75, St. Mary's (Md.) 58
 George Washington 78, Rhode Island 70
 Holy Cross 67, Army 51
 LIU 81, CCSU 79
 Lehigh 76, Loyola (Md.) 72
 Maryland 68, Rutgers 59
 Mount St. Mary's 74, Fairleigh Dickinson 61
 Navy 69, American 60
 Quinnipiac 93, Rider 68
 Roberts Wesleyan 101, D'Youville 67
 Sacred Heart 88, St. Francis (NY) 82
 Siena 68, Niagara 66
 South Florida 83, Temple 76
 St. Bonaventure 69, Davidson 58
 St. Thomas Aquinas 92, Molloy 63
 Wagner 70, St. Francis (Pa.) 68

SOUTH

Coastal Carolina 65, Georgia Southern 55
 Louisiana-Monroe 78, UALR 66
 NC A&T 70, Florida A&M 63
 Union (Tenn.) 80, Ala.-Huntsville 65
 West Alabama 70, Christian Brothers 64

MIDWEST

Drake 85, Evansville 71
 Iowa 74, Penn St. 68
 Michigan 92, Ohio St. 87
 N. Michigan 66, Davenport 54
 SW Minnesota 76, Sioux Falls 69, OT
 Valparaiso 66, S. Illinois 65
 Wayne St. (Neb.) 82, Augustana (SD) 70
 Wisconsin 68, Northwestern 51
 Xavier 63, Butler 51

SOUTHWEST

Ark.-Fort Smith 72, Dallas Baptist 70
 Houston 90, Cincinnati 52
 Lubbock Christian 88, Texas-Permian Basin 49
 Prairie View 77, Texas Southern 75
 Texas A&M Commerce 80, Oklahoma Christian 78

FAR WEST

Hawaii Hilo 71, Chaminade 67
 Texas Rio Grande Valley 116, Dallas Christian 51
 UNLV 67, San Jose St. 64

Women's Top 25 Fared

No. 1 UConn (18-1) beat St. John's 77-32; beat Xavier 83-32.
 No. 2 South Carolina (18-3) lost to Ten-

nessee 75-67; beat No. 17 Kentucky 76-55.
 No. 3 Louisville (20-2) beat Pittsburgh 82-58; lost to Florida St. 68-59.
 No. 4 NC State (15-2) beat Wake Forest 66-47; beat North Carolina 82-63.
 No. 5 Texas A&M (20-1) beat Mississippi 66-55.
 No. 6 Stanford (20-2) beat No. 13 Oregon 63-61; beat Arizona St. 80-41.
 No. 7 Baylor (17-2) beat Oklahoma 77-66.
 No. 8 UCLA (13-4) beat No. 13 Oregon 83-56; lost to Oregon St. 71-64.
 No. 9 Maryland (16-2) beat Illinois 103-58; beat Minnesota 94-62.
 No. 10 Arizona (15-2) beat California 59-50.
 No. 11 Michigan (13-2) beat Michigan St. 86-82; lost to No. 14 Indiana 70-65; beat No. 15 Ohio St. 75-66.
 No. 12 South Florida (13-1) beat Cincinnati 69-65, OT; beat Tulane 78-69.
 No. 13 Oregon (13-6) lost to No. 5 Stanford 63-61; lost to No. 8 UCLA 83-56; beat Southern Cal 72-48.
 No. 14 Indiana (14-4) beat No. 11 Michigan 70-65.
 No. 15 Ohio St. (13-4) beat Purdue 100-85; lost to No. 11 Michigan 91-55.
 No. 16 Gonzaga (19-3) lost to BYU 61-56; beat San Diego 69-47.
 No. 17 Kentucky (15-6) beat Florida 88-80; lost to No. 2 South Carolina 76-55.
 No. 18 Arkansas (17-7) beat Mississippi 84-74; beat LSU 74-64.
 No. 19 DePaul (13-5) beat Seton Hall 82-76; beat Xavier 83-75; lost to Creighton 83-72.
 No. 19 West Virginia (17-3) beat TCU 81-78.
 No. 21 Tennessee (13-6) beat South Carolina 75-67; lost to No. 22 Georgia 57-55.
 No. 22 Georgia (17-4) beat No. 21 Tennessee 57-55.
 No. 23 South Dakota St. (19-2) beat North Dakota St. 86-78; beat North Dakota St 70-60.
 No. 24 Northwestern (12-5) lost to Nebraska 71-64; beat Wisconsin 67-54.
 No. 25 Missouri St. (15-2) beat Bradley 62-56; beat Bradley 75-62.

Sunday's women's scores

EAST

American U. 62, Loyola (Md.) 52
 Boston College 49, Georgia Tech 43
 Fairfield 60, Monmouth (NJ) 46
 Holy Cross 60, Boston U. 52
 Lafayette 70, Lehigh 60
 Marshall 68, Rice 56
 Mount St. Mary's 87, Bryant 49
 Siena 63, Quinnipiac 60
 St. John's 65, Providence 47
 St. Peter's 70, Niagara 55
 Towson 77, Drexel 62
 Villanova 64, Georgetown 56

SOUTH

Alabama 71, Mississippi St. 63
 Arkansas 74, LSU 64
 Florida Gulf Coast 87, Jacksonville 58
 Florida St. 68, Louisville 59
 Furman 56, W. Carolina 44
 Georgia 57, Tennessee 55
 Georgia Southern 73, NC Central 65
 Howard 67, Coppin St. 45
 James Madison 65, Delaware 62
 Liberty 73, Shepherd 65
 Lipscomb 74, North Florida 70
 Mercer 83, Wofford 74, 2OT
 NC State 82, North Carolina 63
 Norfolk St. 65, NC A&T 54
 Northeastern 78, UNC-Wilmington 58
 Radford 76, Charleston Southern 67, OT
 South Carolina 76, Kentucky 55
 Stetson 64, Kennesaw St. 53
 Texas A&M 66, Mississippi 55
 UALR 66, Louisiana-Monroe 46
 UNC-Greensboro 58, Chattanooga 50
 Virginia Tech 76, Syracuse 68

MIDWEST

E. Michigan 69, Toledo 59
 Kent St. 73, N. Illinois 58
 Michigan 75, Ohio St. 66
 Michigan St. 76, Purdue 73
 Missouri 96, Florida 80
 Nebraska 87, Penn St. 72
 South Dakota 76, Oral Roberts 54

SOUTHWEST

Baylor 77, Oklahoma 66
 FAU 67, UTEP 62
 Texas 59, Kansas 48

FAR WEST

California 67, Arizona St. 55
 Colorado 55, Washington 50
 Fresno St. 82, San Diego St. 61
 Oregon 72, Southern Cal 48
 Oregon St. 71, UCLA 64
 Washington St. 68, Utah 55

DEALS

Sunday's transactions

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball National League
ATLANTA BRAVES — Sent LF Travis Demeritte outright to Gwinnett (IL).
NEW YORK METS — Agreed to terms with OF Kevin Pillar on a one-year contract. Designated OF Guillermo Heredia for assignment.
SAN DIEGO PADRES — Agreed to terms with C Wynston Sawyer on a minor league contract.
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS — Agreed to terms with RHP Aaron Sanchez on a one-year contract. Designated RHP Trevor Gott for assignment.
HOCKEY
National Hockey League
BUFFALO SABRES — Designated Ds Ja-

cob Bryson and Casey Fitzgerald for assignment to the taxi squad.
COLUMBIA BLUE JACKETS — Designated G Mattias Kivleniek for assignment to the taxi squad.
DETROIT RED WINGS — Designated Ds Danny DeKeyser and Alex Biega and LW Mathias Brome for assignment to the taxi squad.
NEW JERSEY DEVILS — Designated F Yegor Sharangovich for assignment to the taxi squad. Recalled F Mikhail Maltsev from the taxi squad to the active roster.
BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES — Transferred F Sean McDermott to the Memphis Hustle (NBA G League)

GOLF

Genesis Invitational

PGA Tour Sunday
At Riviera Country Club Pacific Palisades, Calif.
Purse: \$9.3 million
Yardage: 7,040; Par: 71
Final Round

Max Homa wins playoff on second hole
 Max Homa, \$1,674,000 66-70-70-66-272 -12
 Tony Finau, \$1,013,700 71-67-70-64-272 -12
 Sam Burns, \$641,700 64-66-74-69-273 -11
 Cameron Smith, \$455,700 69-68-71-67-275 -9
 M. Fitzpatrick, \$344,100 66-71-69-71-277 -7
 Viktor Hovland, \$344,100 71-69-70-67-277 -7
 Jon Rahm, \$344,100 70-69-72-66-277 -7
 Wyndham Clark, \$262,725 67-69-73-69-278 -6
 Dustin Johnson, \$262,725 68-67-71-72-278 -6
 Matt Jones, \$262,725 67-72-69-70-278 -6
 F. Molinari, \$262,725 68-73-70-67-278 -6
 Talor Gooch, \$197,625 68-71-69-71-279 -5
 Alex Noren, \$197,625 67-70-71-71-279 -5
 Patrick Rodgers, \$197,625 71-69-70-69-279 -5
 Patrick Cantlay, \$151,125 67-70-71-72-280 -4
 James Hahn, \$151,125 74-66-71-69-280 -4
 J. Schauffele, \$151,125 71-69-71-69-280 -4
 Jordan Spieth, \$151,125 68-68-73-71-280 -4
 Will Zalatoris, \$151,125 69-69-75-67-280 -4
 Rickie Fowler, \$101,835 70-71-73-67-281 -3
 Branden Grace, \$101,835 71-69-70-71-281 -3
 Matthew NeSmith, \$101,835 70-70-73-68-281 -3
 C.T. Pan, \$101,835 71-70-72-68-281 -3
 Scottie Scheffler, \$101,835 67-74-74-66-281 -3
 Nick Taylor, \$101,835 72-69-71-69-281 -3
 Jim Furyk, \$67,890 69-70-74-69-282 -2
 Lanto Griffin, \$67,890 69-71-74-68-282 -2
 Adam Hadwin, \$67,890 71-71-70-70-282 -2
 S. Harrington, \$67,890 71-66-75-70-282 -2
 Andrew Landry, \$67,890 69-69-72-72-282 -2
 C. Tringale, \$67,890 69-71-73-69-282 -2
 Bo Hoag, \$51,925 73-68-73-69-283 -1
 M. Hughes, \$51,925 69-71-74-69-283 -1
 Jason Kokrak, \$51,925 67-68-74-74-283 -1
 M. Leishman, \$51,925 69-73-73-68-283 -1
 Andrew Putnam, \$51,925 71-71-73-68-283 -1
 Kyle Stanley, \$51,925 70-71-71-71-283 -1
 Tyler Duncan, \$40,455 69-70-75-70-284 E
 Russell Henley, \$40,455 69-72-73-70-284 E
 Brooks Koepka, \$40,455 68-70-77-69-284 E
 Kevin Na, \$40,455 70-72-72-70-284 E
 Adam Scott, \$40,455 69-73-76-66-284 E
 Wesley Bryan, \$28,179 69-70-78-68-285 +1
 Cameron Davis, \$28,179 71-69-77-68-285 +1
 Brian Harman, \$28,179 72-69-71-73-285 +1
 Collin Morikawa, \$28,179 73-69-70-73-285 +1
 Sebastián Muñoz, \$28,179 68-71-76-70-285 +1
 J. Niemann, \$28,179 67-68-78-72-285 +1
 J.T. Poston, \$28,179 74-68-72-71-285 +1
 Brendan Steele, \$28,179 71-69-74-71-285 +1
 Sepp Straka, \$28,179 70-71-73-71-285 +1
 C. Hoffman, \$22,153 69-72-74-71-286 +2
 Tom Hoge, \$22,153 72-69-73-72-286 +2
 Danny Lee, \$22,153 72-70-72-72-286 +2
 T. McCumber, \$22,153 67-68-77-74-286 +2
 K. Streelman, \$22,153 72-66-75-73-286 +2
 J.B. Holmes, \$21,297 70-69-75-73-287 +3
 Nate Lashley, \$21,297 73-68-75-71-287 +3
 Richy Werenski, \$21,297 70-71-76-70-287 +3
 Keegan Bradley, \$20,832 68-74-75-71-288 +4
 Brian Gay, \$20,832 72-69-77-70-288 +4
 C. Schwartzel, \$20,460 75-67-73-74-289 +5
 Harold Varner III, \$20,460 70-72-77-70-289 +5
 Scott Piercy, \$20,088 73-67-75-75-290 +6
 Matthew Wolff, \$20,088 71-70-77-72-290 +6
 Kyoung-Hoon Lee, \$19,809 70-72-79-72-293 +9
 Sung Kang, \$19,623 71-68-83-72-294 +10

AUTO RACING

O'Reilly Auto Parts 253

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

1. (12) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 70 laps, 47 points.
 2. (11) Joey Logano, Ford, 70, 52.
 3. (4) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 70, 52.
 4. (17) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 70, 48.
 5. (15) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 70, 39.
 6. (5) Kevin Harvick, Ford, 70, 33.
 7. (34) AJ Allmendinger, Chevrolet, 70, 0.
 8. (2) Michael McDowell, Ford, 70, 29.
 9. (6) Ryan Preece, Chevrolet, 70, 28.
 10. (36) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 70, 27.
 11. (30) Chubbs Wallace, Ford, 70, 27.
 12. (19) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 70, 35.
 13. (13) Cole Custer, Ford, 70, 27.
 14. (37) Erik Jones, Chevrolet, 70, 23.
 15. (27) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 70, 22.
 16. (35) Daniel Suarez, Chevrolet, 70, 21.
 17. (6) Rick Almirola, Ford, 70, 20.
 18. (16) Aric Stenhouse Jr., Chevrolet, 70, 19.
 19. (38) Ty Dillon, Toyota, 70, 0.
 20. (33) Ryan Newman, Ford, 70, 17.
 21. (1) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 70, 31.
 22. (31) Anthony Alfredo, Ford, 70, 15.
 23. (39) James Davison, Chevrolet, 70, 14.
 24. (20) Justin Haley, Chevrolet, 70, 0.
 25. (21) Cody Ware, Chevrolet, 70, 0.
 26. (10) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, 70, 11.
 27. (25) Garrett Smithley, Ford, 70, 0.
 28. (28) Scott Heckert, Ford, 70, 9.
 29. (40) Timmy Hill, Ford, 70, 0.
 30. (8) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 70, 12.
 31. (7) Corey Lajoie, Chevrolet, 70, 6.
 32. (18) Chase Briscoe, Ford, 70, 5.
 33. (22) William Byron, Chevrolet, 69, 8.
 34. (3) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 69, 6.
 35. (14) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 69, 3.
 36. (23) Josh Bilicki, Ford, brakes, 68, 1.
 37. (32) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, 65, 1.
 38. (24) Tyler Reddick, Chevrolet, accident, 58, 1.
 39. (9) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, accident, 26, 1.
 40. (29) Quin Houff, Chevrolet, engine, 3, 1.

Race Statistics

Average Speed of Race Winner: 84.456 mph.
Time of Race: 2 hours, 59 minutes, 32 seconds.

Margin of Victory: 2.119 seconds.
Caution Flags: 8 for 12 laps.
Lead Changes: 12 among 7 drivers.
Lap Leaders: C.Elliott 0-12; C.Bell 13; C.Elliott 14-28; A.Allmendinger 29-30; D.Hamlin 31-35; D.Suarez 36-37; Ku.Busch 38; C.Bell 39-40; C.Elliott 41-57; J.Logano 58-61; Ku.Busch 62; J.Logano 63-68; C.Bell 69-70

Leaders Summary (Driver, Times Led, Laps Led): C.Elliott, 3 times for 44 laps; J.Logano, 2 times for 10 laps; C.Bell, 3 times for 5 laps; D.Hamlin, 1 time for 5 laps; Ku.Busch, 2 times for 2 laps; A.Allmendinger, 1 time for 2 laps; D.Suarez, 1 time for 2 laps.
Wins: C.Bell, 1; M.McDowell, 1.
Top 16 in Points: 1. D.Hamlin, 104; 2. J.Logano, 92; 3. K.Harvick, 83; 4. C.Bell, 82; 5. C.Elliott, 79; 6. M.McDowell, 75; 7. R.Preece, 74; 8. Ku.Busch, 65; 9. A.Dillon, 64; 10. B.Keselowski, 64; 11. C.Custer, 54; 12. K.Larson, 53; 13. B.Wallace, 52; 14. M.Trux, 47; 15. C.Lajoie, 38; 16. R.Stenhouse, 38.

NASCAR Driver Rating Formula
 A maximum of 150 points can be attained in a race.
 The formula combines the following categories: Wins, Finishes, Top-15 Finishes, Average Running Position While on Lead Lap, Average Speed Under Green, Fastest Lap, Led Most Laps, Lead-Lap Finish.

TENNIS

WTA Adelaide International

Monday
At Memorial Drive Tennis Centre Adelaide, Australia
Purse: \$565,530
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
Women's Singles Qualification

Storm Sanders, Australia, def. Caty McNally (9), United States, 6-2, 6-3.
 Liudmila Samsonova (10), Russia, def. Misaki Doi (5), Japan, 7-6, 6-3.
 Coco Gauff (1), United States, def. Kaja Juvan (8), Slovenia, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3.
 Maddison Inglis (12), Australia, def. Christina McHale (3), United States, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1.
 Jasmine Paolini (6), Italy, def. Astra Sharma (11), Australia, 3-6, 6-2, 6-1.
 Madison Brengle (4), United States, def. Ellen Perez, Australia, 6-3, 6-2.

Women's Singles Round of 32

Anastasija Sevastova, Latvia, def. Car-

oline Garcia, France, 6-2, 6-4.
 Wang Qiang (8), China, def. Olivia Gaudeki, Australia, 6-4, 6-3.
 Shelby Rogers, United States, def. Veronika Kudermetova, Russia, 6-3, 7-6 (4).
 Danielle Collins, United States, def. Zheng Saisai, China, 7-6 (5), 6-1.

Women's Doubles Round of 16

Abbie Myers and Ivana Popovic, Australia, def. Arina Rodionova and Storm Sanders, Australia, 6-4, 2-6, 10-3.
 Xu Yifan and Zhaoxuan Yang, China, def. Shuko Aoyama and Ena Shibahara (1), Japan, 6-4, 3-6, 10-6.
 Lizette Cabrera and Maddison Inglis, Australia, def. Belinda Woolcock and Jaimee Fourlis, Australia, 6-1, 6-1.
 Andreja Klepac, Slovenia, and Lucie Hradecka, Czech Republic, def. Bethanie Mattek-Sands and Asia Muhammad (4), United States, 6-1, 6-4.
 Hayley Carter, United States, and Luisa Stefani, Brazil, def. Sam Stosur and Ellen Perez, Australia, 6-7 (7), 6-3, 10-4.

AP SPORTLIGHT

Feb. 23

1968 — Wilt Chamberlain becomes first player to score 25,000 points in the NBA.
1980 — Eric Heiden wins his fifth gold medal and shatters the world record by six seconds in 10,000-meter speed skating at the Lake Placid Winter Olympics.
1985 — Indiana coach Bob Knight is ejected five minutes into the Hoosiers' 72-63 loss to Purdue when he throws a chair

BRIEFLY

Houma defeats Finau in playoff at Riviera

Max Homa couldn't have scripted a victory like this at Riviera. He grew up watching this PGA Tour event. And he won the Genesis Invitational in a playoff over Tony Finau.

Homa looked like the winner when he stuffed his approach to 3 feet on the final hole. He missed the birdie putt for the win.

In the playoff on No. 10, his tee shot settled at the base of a tree. Homa managed to extend the playoff with a par, and he won when Finau made bogey from the bunker on the next hole. It was more heartache for Finau, who now has 10 runner-up finishes worldwide since winning the Puerto Rico Open five years ago.

Rangers' Panarin takes leave of absence

New York Rangers star Artemi Panarin is taking a leave of absence from the team after a Russian tabloid printed allegations from a former coach that he attacked a woman in Latvia almost a decade ago, which he denies.

Forgery trial pushed back for Olympic official

The trial of an influential Olympic official was adjourned Monday before any evidence was presented of alleged forgery to implicate a political rival in Kuwait in a fake coup plot.

Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahad al-Sabah, long known as the kingmaker of Olympic elections, appeared in criminal court in Geneva charged along with four others of forging documents. The maximum jail sentence is five years.

The panel of three judges adjourned the case because defendant Hamad al-Haroun — described in an indictment document as a former trusted aide to the sheikh — came to court without legal representation.

N.J. will allow fans back into arenas in March

New Jersey venues with an indoor seating capacity of 5,000 or more will be allowed to have 10% of those seats occupied by fans starting on March 1, the Gov. Phil Murphy said Monday on the WFAN sports radio station.

Cycling bans official for sexually harassing riders

A Belgian cycling official was banned from the sport on Monday after multiple women riders alleged he sexually harassed them. The International Cycling Union said Patrick Van Gansen's ban was backdated to last April and runs through the end of next year.

MLB

Rockies' Desmond will opt out again

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

DENVER — Ian Desmond provided a calming voice to help the Colorado Rockies stick together soon after losing star third baseman Nolan Arenado in a blockbuster trade.

That just may be the veteran outfielder's biggest contribution this season.

Desmond decided Sunday to opt out for a second straight season. He announced on his Instagram account that his "desire to be with my family is greater than my desire to go back and play baseball under these circumstances."

No amount of lobbying by Rockies manager Bud Black could persuade the 35-year-old Desmond, who was scheduled to make \$8 million this season after walking away from a pro-rated salary of \$5,555,556 last season.

"This was a decision not about money," said Black, whose team will begin full-squad workouts Tuesday in Arizona. "This was from the heart, and from the stomach. This was hard. This was agonizing for him."

Desmond did leave the door open for a possible return by adding "for now" in his post. He vowed to "continue to train and watch how things unfold."

His leadership was on display soon after the Rockies traded eight-time Gold Glove winner Arenado to the St. Louis Cardinals. Desmond along with shortstop Trevor Story, outfielder

Charlie Blackmon, reliever Scott Oberg and others preached the same message over and over — stick together.

"That goes to show who he is and his commitment to the team," Black said. "Again, he's going to follow us. He's going to continue to train. He's going to assess what's going on and maybe his feelings in a month, two months, two weeks, two days ... I don't know, but he's engaged. He's not, from those conversations with his teammates, checked out."

Desmond is in the final year of a five-year, \$70 million deal he signed in December 2016. Colorado has a \$15 million option for 2022 with a \$2 million buyout.

In opting out last summer during the coronavirus-shortened season, Desmond cited a desire to spend more time with his family and to help grow youth baseball in his Florida hometown. He also added the COVID-19 pandemic made the baseball season one that "is a risk I am not comfortable taking."

On Sunday, Desmond wrote of his decision: "This impacts a lot of people, some positively and some negatively, and I own that. At the end of the day, this weighs on me more than anyone but I'm following my heart and I feel good about my decision."

Desmond added that he's informed teammates, the coaching staff and front office and they've all been "extremely understanding and supportive."



KEITH SRAKOCIC / AP

Milwaukee Brewers catcher Omar Narváez hit .176 last season after hitting .278 in 2019.

Narváez out to regain hitting form

By STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

Milwaukee Brewers catcher Omar Narváez refuses to blame his hitting struggles last year on the unusual circumstances of the pandemic-delayed 2020 season.

"Everything got out of control," Narváez said Sunday from the Brewers' spring training complex in Phoenix. "To me, it feels like there's no excuses. It was a short season. Everyone talks about that. I feel like as a professional, I cannot have excuses. It didn't go well."

Narváez, 29, arrived in Milwaukee with a reputation as a quality hitter and not so skilled defensively. He was just the opposite in his first season in the National League after the Brewers acquired him from Seattle in December 2019.

His batting average plunged from .278 in 2019 to .176 last year. His on-base percentage sank from

.353 to .294. After homering 22 times in 132 games in 2019, he had two homers in 40 games last year.

Hitting coach Andy Haines says Narváez was one of many batters putting too much pressure on themselves because of the shortened season.

"You could see him trying to do way too much," Haines said. "I said it not (just) about Omar, but about a lot of hitters I was watching, they're literally trying to have a good season with every swing they took. You can see it. And baseball cannot be played that way. It can't. If the game's ever sent us a reminder that it can't be played that way, it sent us a pretty strong one in 2020."

Narváez agrees he didn't have the right approach at the plate last season.

"I was just swinging at everything," Narváez said. "I was putting myself in bad position to try to

hit the ball. That's one of the adjustments I'm trying to make this offseason. I'm going to stick with it during the season."

His hitting woes overshadowed the tremendous strides he made behind the plate to upgrade what had been his biggest weakness.

Narváez improved his pitch-framing abilities to such an extent that he led all catchers in converting non-swing pitches bordering the strike zone into called strikes, according to metrics compiled by the Baseball Savant website. He had never ranked higher than 39th in that category before last season.

He also didn't allow any passed balls and threw 30% of potential base stealers, up from 18% in 2019.

"Everybody says it was a bad year for me," Narváez said. "I don't feel like it. Offensively, yes. But the on the defensive side, it was a good year for me. I take a lot of pride in that."

Wrist: Strasburg says he's ahead in his preparation for season

FROM PAGE 24

first time since before he was shut down in August, Strasburg said the problem went away immediately after the 15-minute carpal tunnel surgery.

"I haven't had any residual effects from it. ... I think, if anything, all the work I've done strengthening it has only improved the movement of my pitches," Strasburg said.

The No. 1 overall pick in the 2009 amateur draft began preparing for this season much earlier than usual, doing a light catch on Nov. 1 instead of mid-December, and throwing bullpens early in January instead of later in the month.

"Endurance-wise, stamina-wise, I feel like I'm a lot further along than I have (been) in years past," he said. "I wanted to give myself some extra time to work through some mechanical things and be ready to go on Day One."

That he was: The 32-year-old



JULIO CORTEZ / AP

Stephen Strasburg walks with a member of the Nationals training staff as he heads to the dugout after leaving the game during the first inning against the Baltimore Orioles in Baltimore, Aug. 14, 2020.

was throwing off a mound alongside teammates during Friday's workout.

"He is in preparation mode,"

general manager Mike Rizzo said, "not in rehabilitation mode."

Strasburg said the stop-start nature of last year's pandemic-af-

fect schedule — spring training was stopped in March, then teams resumed preparations in July — was tough on his arm.

There was a period of uncertainty about when the so-called "summer camp" would start, so Strasburg would throw into a net to try to stay ready.

It was when things picked up again that the numbness first surfaced.

"If I knew it was going to start when it did, I definitely would have just not picked up a baseball for some time," he said. "It ended up hurting me more than helped me."

One of the other top four members of Washington's rotation, Max Scherzer, is being told to progress cautiously at the start of spring training — not because of anything to do with his arm, but because he sprained his left ankle about two weeks ago, Martinez said.

"He said he felt OK, and he went

to throw a bullpen and he felt it. So we told him: It's early, we're going to back off a little bit," Martinez said about the three-time Cy Young Award winner.

"Hopefully this is something that won't hold him back too much," Martinez continued. "As we all know, this is the last year on his contract, so he's going to push himself. But we need to be careful right now."

With quite a bit of roster churn, including the additions of starter Jon Lester, lefty reliever Brad Hand, outfielder Kyle Schwarber and first baseman Josh Bell, they anticipate last season being an aberration for a club that made the playoffs five of the prior eight years.

"We're not a perfect team, but I think we're really talented and a good team. We have high expectations this year," Rizzo said. "We feel that we put ourselves again in position to be a world championship club this year."

NHL

Scoreboard

East Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	16	11	3	2	24	51	36
Washington	17	9	5	3	21	58	60
Philadelphia	15	8	4	3	19	51	51
Pittsburgh	16	9	6	1	19	51	53
N.Y. Islanders	17	8	6	3	19	41	41
N.Y. Rangers	16	6	7	3	15	40	42
New Jersey	13	6	5	2	14	36	37
Buffalo	14	5	7	2	12	35	43

Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	16	12	3	1	25	62	43
Florida	16	11	3	2	24	56	47
Chicago	19	9	6	4	22	55	56
Tampa Bay	15	10	4	1	21	54	36
Columbus	19	8	7	4	20	55	64
Dallas	12	5	3	4	14	40	34
Nashville	17	7	10	0	14	40	57
Detroit	20	5	12	3	13	39	64

West Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
St. Louis	18	10	6	2	22	59	56
Vegas	15	10	4	1	21	45	34
Colorado	14	9	4	1	19	44	29
Los Angeles	16	7	6	3	17	51	48
Arizona	17	7	7	3	17	44	49
Minnesota	14	8	6	0	16	38	36
San Jose	16	7	7	2	16	45	58
Anaheim	18	6	9	3	15	34	50

North Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Toronto	19	14	3	2	30	72	51
Edmonton	20	12	8	0	24	72	62
Winnipeg	18	11	6	1	23	61	49
Montreal	17	9	5	3	21	57	47
Vancouver	22	8	12	2	18	65	78
Calgary	18	8	9	1	17	47	54
Ottawa	20	5	14	1	11	47	80

Saturday's games

Buffalo 3, New Jersey 2
 N.Y. Rangers 4, Washington 1
 Detroit 2, Florida 1
 Los Angeles 4, Arizona 2
 Carolina 4, Tampa Bay 0
 San Jose 5, St. Louis 4
 Minnesota 5, Anaheim 1
 Edmonton 7, Calgary 1
 Colorado 3, Vegas 2
 Pittsburgh 3, N.Y. Islanders 2
 Nashville 4, Columbus 2
 Toronto 5, Montreal 3
 Chicago at Carolina, ppd
 Tampa Bay at Dallas, ppd

Sunday's games

Washington 4, New Jersey 3
 Ottawa 3, Montreal 2, OT
 Boston 7, Philadelphia 3
 Winnipeg 4, Vancouver 3, OT

Monday's games

Buffalo at N.Y. Islanders
 Calgary at Toronto
 Dallas at Florida
 Tampa Bay at Carolina
 Los Angeles at St. Louis
 Anaheim at Arizona
 Vegas at Colorado
 Minnesota at San Jose

Tuesday's games

Buffalo at New Jersey
 Chicago at Columbus
 Montreal at Ottawa
 Pittsburgh at Washington
 Nashville at Detroit
 Edmonton at Vancouver

ROUNDUP

Bruins rout Flyers in Lake Tahoe

Associated Press

STATELINE, Nev. — After going through the handshake line following a lopsided win, the Boston Bruins all gathered at center ice for one last team photo.

It truly was a picture-perfect day for the Bruins at Lake Tahoe.

David Pastrnak had three goals and Boston took control by scoring three times in a span of 1:39 during the second period to beat the Philadelphia 7-3 on Sunday in a scenic outdoor game.

“It was beautiful,” Pastrnak said. “I think personally playing in both conditions, the sun and the dark was great. The dark is beautiful, too. You get to play outside. Overall it was an unbelievable experience.”

After a delay-filled opening game of the weekend between Colorado and Vegas because of bright sun that made for poor ice conditions, the game Sunday went off with fewer hitches. The Bruins’ high level of play matched the picturesque setting with the lake and snow-covered mountains in the background.

Pastrnak scored in the opening minute of the first two periods and then again late in the third to give him his second hat trick in three games against the Flyers this season. Charlie Coyle, Trent Frederic and Nick Ritchie scored in succession late in the second to give Boston five wins in five games this year against Philadelphia.

Charlie McAvoy also scored and Tuukka Rask made 16 saves for the Bruins.

“Hats off to the NHL and everyone who made this happen. It was really special,” said defenseman John Moore, who had two assists. “I’ve played in some outdoor events and this one blows those out of the water.”

Joel Farabee, Sean Couturier and James van Riemsdyk scored for the short-handed Flyers, who have six players on the COVID-19 list. Carter Hart allowed six goals



RICH PEDRONCELLI / AP

Bruins right wing David Pastrnak, center, celebrates with teammates Brad Marchand, left and Patrice Bergeron after scoring against the Flyers in the first period of Boston’s 7-3 win Sunday in Stateline, Nev.

on 23 shots in the first two periods and has now given up 20 goals in four losses to Boston this season.

With the bright sun out again Sunday, the NHL moved the game time to 4:30 p.m. PST to avoid the problems that led to a delay of more than eight hours on Saturday between the first and second periods.

The start of this game was delayed about 20 more minutes because there was some glare on the ice from the sun, and players said it was hard to see in the first period.

“It wasn’t easy, obviously. The hardest part was probably the first with all the sun,” Couturier said. “Being blinded by the sun in some places, it was kind of dangerous sometimes. But it was the same thing for both teams.”

Capitals 4, Devils 3: T.J. Oshie scored twice to end a lengthy

drought, Alex Ovechkin had a late power-play goal and host Washington erased a two-goal deficit to beat New Jersey.

Ovechkin scored with 4:04 left, and that turned out to be a necessary insurance goal when Nikita Gusev beat Craig Anderson with 11.9 seconds left. But it was too late for another comeback, and the Capitals avoided back-to-back losses.

Anderson made 22 saves for his first NHL victory since March 7. Anderson and New Jersey’s Aaron Dell each hadn’t started an NHL game in more than 11 months.

After the Devils jumped out to a 2-0 lead, Oshie stared the comeback by scoring on a deflection on the power play in the second period. That ended a nine-game goal drought and Dell’s shutout bid on Washington’s 23rd shot of the game.

Senators 3, Canadiens 2 (OT): Brady Tkachuk scored at 3:30 of overtime to lift host Ottawa past Montreal.

Drake Batherson and Josh Norris also scored, and Matt Murray made 30 saves. The Senators are last in the NHL at 5-14-1.

Corey Perry and Nick Suzuki scored for the Canadiens, with Perry tying it at 2 with 5:35 left in the third period.

Jets 4, Canucks 3 (OT): Pierre-Luc Dubois scored 27 seconds into overtime to lift visiting Winnipeg past Vancouver for a two-game sweep.

The Canucks’ Elias Pettersson tied it with 38 seconds left in regulation on a power play, his second goal of the game.

Dubois also scored in the second period, Mark Scheifele and Neil Pionk added goals and Connor Hellebuyck made 31 saves.



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AUTO RACING/COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Bell gives Gibbs racing another surprise win

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Give him good cars and Christopher Bell will win races. But in his second race? With a new team? That seemed unlikely.

Bell defied the odds Sunday and earned his first career Cup series victory — in just his second race since Joe Gibbs Racing pulled him back into its inner circle — to close out an unpredictable week of racing at Daytona International Speedway.

Michael McDowell was the surprise Daytona 500 winner and then Bell earned an earlier-than-expected first trip to victory lane. It's just the third time in NASCAR history the first two races of the season were won by first-time winners. It was previously done in 1949 and 1950 — NASCAR's first two seasons.

More important, Bell and McDowell have snagged coveted berths in the 16-driver playoff field, a troubling trend for mid-pack teams that need all 26 regular-season races to point their way into the championship picture. Race winners earn automatic berths and the remaining spots are decided by the points standings.

"The dynamic has changed dramatically," Brad Keselowski said. "We're very early in the season and it's now turned into a points race for those last few spots. If you don't win, you're in a lot of trouble because it's not looking like you're going to be able to get in the playoffs."

Bell chased down Joey Logano on the winding Daytona road course to grab his first victory. Logano had a commanding lead but Bell, on fresher tires than Logano, reeled him in and passed him with just over one lap remaining.

"This is one of the highlights of my life," Bell said. "I've prepared my whole life for this moment to race in the Cup Series."

The 26-year-old Oklahoman is a longtime Toyota development driver who won 16 Xfinity Series races driving for Gibbs. But there's only four Cup seats in the organization and they were full last season when it was time to move Bell to the big leagues.

He was instead loaned to Leavine Family Racing, and although it was also a Toyota team, the one-car operation wasn't nearly as strong as the Gibbs group. Team owner Joe Gibbs last summer decided not to renew Erik Jones, who said he was blindsided by the move, and instead bring Bell back into the fold.

It put the pressure on Bell to deliver and he did after a rocky opening a week ago. Bell was running at the front of the Daytona 500 pack when he gave Aric Almirola too big of a shove and triggered a 16-car



JOHN RAOUX / AP

Christopher Bell celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series road course race at Daytona International Speedway, Sunday, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

crash on just the 14th lap of NASCAR's first race of the season.

Bell's win bookended a statement weekend for JGR's young drivers. Ty Gibbs, the 18-year-old grandson of team owner Joe Gibbs, won the Xfinity Series race Saturday night in his first career national series start.

McDowell backed up his Daytona 500 win with a career-best road course finish of eighth.

Logano for the second week came up empty but without the dramatics of his last-lap crash with teammate Keselowski as they raced for the Daytona 500 win. Logano finished second.

"I hate being that close," Logano said.

Denny Hamlin was third to give Gibbs two cars in the top three. Kurt Busch finished fourth and Keselowski wound up fifth for a decent Team Penske rebound.

Keselowski and Logano before the race had their first interaction since the Daytona 500 crash — Logano called it "a healthy conversation" — and the teammates will now try to move forward.

Kevin Harvick finished sixth and AJ Allmendinger, in his first Cup race since the 2018 season finale, finished seventh. It was the highest finish in three Cup races for Kaulig Racing, an Xfinity Series team formed in 2016 that wants to be full-time Cup next season.

Chase Elliott again had the most dominant car but his streak of four consecutive victories in points-paying road races was snapped. He led a race-high 45 laps and was out front when caution for rain 15 laps from the finish forced Hendrick Motorsports to make a strategic call.

Elliott traded track position for new tires, pitted from the lead and fell to 15th. He worked his way up to fifth but spun when he ran into the back of Kurt Busch. Elliott finished 21st.



JAY LAPRETE / AP

Michigan's Hunter Dickinson, left, posts up against Ohio State's E.J. Liddell. Dickinson had 22 points and nine rebounds in the Wolverines' 92-87 win Sunday in Columbus, Ohio.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

No. 3 Michigan, Dickinson hold off No. 4 Ohio State

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Hunter Dickinson had 22 points and nine rebounds and Eli Brooks scored 17 as No. 3 Michigan held off a late flurry to beat No. 4 Ohio State 92-87 on Sunday.

In a matchup of teams aiming for No. 1 seeds in the NCAA Tournament, the Wolverines led by nine with 23 seconds left. But a pair of three-pointers from Duane Washington Jr. around a layup by CJ Walker layup got the Buckeyes within three points with 3 seconds to go.

Brooks sealed the win with a couple of foul shots.

Chaundee Brown Jr. came off the bench to score 15 points and Isaiah Livers added 12 for the Wolverines (16-1, 11-1 Big Ten). Michigan won its fifth straight around a three-week break due to COVID-19 issues.

Washington had a career-high 30 points and went 5 for 10 on 3s for Ohio State (18-5, 12-5). E.J. Liddell had 23 points and 10 rebounds.

No. 6 Houston 90, Cincinnati 52: Quentin Grimes had 20 points and eight rebounds, and the host Cougars used a big first half to roll past the Bearcats.

Tramon Mark scored 12 points, DeJon Jarreau added 11 points and five rebounds, and Fabian White Jr. had 10 points and nine rebounds for Houston (18-3, 12-3 American Athletic Conference). The Cougars shot 47% and hit 19

of 21 from the free throw line.

Jeremiah Davenport scored 11 points and Tari Eason added 10 points for Cincinnati (7-8, 5-5), which saw its four-game winning streak snapped.

No. 11 Iowa 74, Penn State 68: Luka Garza scored 23 points to become the Hawkeyes' all-time leading scorer, and they won on the road over the Nittany Lions.

Garza has 2,126 points for Iowa, breaking the record of 2,116 points set by Roy Marble from 1985-89. Garza also had 11 rebounds for his 10th double-double of the season. CJ Fredrick added 18 points for the Hawkeyes.

It was the fourth consecutive win for Iowa (17-6, 11-5 Big Ten). Izaiah Brockington and Myreon Jones each had 11 points to lead Penn State (7-12, 4-11).

No. 21 Wisconsin 68, Northwestern 51: Micah Potter scored 19 points, D'Mitrik Trice had 13 and the visiting Badgers routed the Wildcats on the road.

Jonathan Davis and Brad Davison added 12 points apiece, helping Wisconsin (16-8, 10-7 Big Ten) bounce back from consecutive losses to No. 3 Michigan and No. 11 Iowa. The balanced Badgers improved to 10-1 when they have at least four players score in double figures.

With a matchup against No. 5 Illinois looming on Saturday, Wisconsin used its deep roster and stingy defense to avoid a three-game slide. Led by Potter, the

Badgers had a 31-15 advantage in bench points. They also forced 14 turnovers.

Northwestern (6-14, 3-13) lost its 13th straight game. Boo Buie scored 19 points for the Wildcats.

Navy 69, American 60: Greg Summers matched his career high with 21 points as the Midshipmen won on the road.

Cam Davis had 17 points for Navy (13-2, 10-1 Patriot League), which earned its fifth straight road victory. Richard Njoku added eight points with seven rebounds. Tyler Nelson also had seven rebounds. The Midshipmen were 53% shooting in the game (28-for-53).

Jamir Harris had 30 points for the Eagles (2-4, 2-4), the only scorer in double figures. Josh Alexander added eight points with five assists. Connor Nelson had eight rebounds.

Summers rounded out Navy's scoring with two free throws and a dunk.

Holy Cross 67, Army 51: Austin Butler had 23 points and 12 rebounds as the host Crusaders beat the Black Knights.

Matt Faw had 14 points for Holy Cross (4-11, 4-11 Patriot League). R.J. Johnson added six assists.

Army totaled 21 first-half points, a season low for the team.

Lonnie Grayson had 14 points and seven rebounds for the Black Knights (10-7, 6-6). Charlie Peterson added seven rebounds.

NBA

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference					
Atlantic Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Philadelphia	20	11	.645	—	
Brooklyn	20	12	.625	½	
Toronto	16	15	.516	4	
Boston	15	15	.500	4½	
New York	15	16	.484	5	
Southeast Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Charlotte	14	15	.483	—	
Miami	13	17	.433	1½	
Atlanta	13	17	.433	1½	
Orlando	13	18	.419	2	
Washington	10	17	.370	3	
Central Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	18	13	.581	—	
Indiana	15	14	.517	2	
Chicago	13	16	.448	4	
Cleveland	10	21	.323	8	
Detroit	8	22	.267	9½	
Western Conference					
Southwest Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
San Antonio	16	11	.593	—	
Memphis	13	13	.500	2½	
Dallas	13	15	.464	3½	
New Orleans	13	17	.433	4½	
Houston	11	17	.393	5½	
Northwest Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
Utah	24	6	.800	—	
Portland	18	11	.621	5½	
Denver	16	14	.533	8	
Oklahoma City	12	18	.400	12	
Minnesota	7	24	.226	17½	
Pacific Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
L.A. Lakers	22	9	.710	—	
L.A. Clippers	22	10	.688	½	
Phoenix	19	10	.655	2	
Golden State	16	15	.516	6	
Sacramento	12	18	.400	9½	
Saturday's games					
Charlotte 102, Golden State 100					
Miami 96, L.A. Lakers 94					
Phoenix 128, Memphis 97					
Chicago 122, Sacramento 114					
Washington 118, Portland 111					
San Antonio at New York, ppd					
Indiana at Houston, ppd					
Sunday's games					
New Orleans 120, Boston 115, OT					
Oklahoma City 117, Cleveland 101					
Orlando 105, Detroit 96					
New York 103, Minnesota 99					
Toronto 110, Philadelphia 103					
Atlanta 123, Denver 115					
Brooklyn 112, L.A. Clippers 108					
Milwaukee 128, Sacramento 115					
Monday's games					
San Antonio at Indiana, ppd					
Chicago at Houston					
Memphis at Dallas					
Charlotte at Utah					
Miami at Oklahoma City					
Portland at Phoenix					
Washington at L.A. Lakers					
Tuesday's games					
Atlanta at Cleveland					
Detroit at Orlando					
Boston at Dallas					
Golden State at New York					
Philadelphia at Toronto					
Sacramento at Brooklyn					
Minnesota at Milwaukee					
Portland at Denver					
Washington at L.A. Clippers					
Leaders					
Through Saturday Scoring					
	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Beal, WAS	25	289	183	823	32.9
Embiid, PHI	24	234	237	733	30.5
Lillard, POR	28	259	203	840	30.0
Doncic, DAL	27	271	178	785	29.1
Rebounds					
	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Capela, ATL	26	123	243	366	14.1
Gobert, UTA	30	106	299	405	13.5
Drummond, CLE	25	101	236	337	13.5
Assists					
	G	AST	AVG		
Harden, BKN	25	282	11.3		
Westbrook, WAS	20	194	9.7		

Lowly Timberwolves fire Saunders

Coach let go after parts of 3 seasons; team is league-worst 7-24

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
Associated Press

The Minnesota Timberwolves fired coach Ryan Saunders on Sunday night, hours after the team with the NBA's worst record this season lost for the eighth time in the last nine games.

A person with knowledge of the situation said that the Timberwolves were finalizing plans to introduce Toronto assistant Chris Finch as the new coach Monday. The person spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because Finch's hiring has not been formally completed.

Saunders, the 34-year-old son of longtime Minnesota coach Flip Saunders, was with the Timberwolves for parts of three seasons, going 43-94. Minnesota has the league's worst record this season at 7-24 and is already 7½ games out of what would be the final play-in spot for the Western Conference postseason.

"We would like to thank Ryan for his time

and commitment to the Timberwolves organization and wish him the best in the future," Timberwolves President of Basketball Operations Gersson Rosas said. "These are difficult decisions to make, however this change is in the best interest of the organization's short and long-term goals."

It had been a wildly disappointing season for the Timberwolves, who started 2-0 and haven't had much to savor since. Karl-Anthony Towns, the team's best player, dislocated his left wrist in the season's second game and missed six games — then returned and missed 13 more after being diagnosed with COVID-19.

D'Angelo Russell, the other key piece for the Timberwolves, had surgery last week on his left knee and may be out until April.

There was no sign that the Timberwolves had stopped playing for Saunders; they were down by 21 points in the third quarter at New York earlier Sunday, then took the lead in the final minutes before falling 103-99.



JIM MONE / AP

Timberwolves coach Ryan Saunders was fired after going 43-94 over parts of three seasons, including 7-24 this season.

ROUNDUP

Pelicans roar back, beat Celtics in OT

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Brandon Ingram hit a go-ahead three-pointer with 33.3 seconds left in overtime and the New Orleans Pelicans beat the Boston Celtics 120-115 on Sunday after rallying from 24 points down in the third quarter.

Ingram finished with 33 points. Zion Williamson scored 24 of his 28 points after halftime and had 10 rebounds, four assists and a block for the Pelicans, and Josh Hart had 17 points, 10 rebounds, three blocks and a steal.

Jayson Tatum had 32 points and nine rebounds for the Celtics and Jaylen Brown added 25 points. They appeared to be cruising to their third victory in four games when Tristan Thompson's free throws made it 79-55 midway through the third quarter.

New Orleans pulled even at 98 on Ingram's three with 4:10 left. The lead changed hands twice in the last 11 seconds of regulation, with Tatum hitting a jumper to make it 106-105 and Williamson making a layup as he was fouled to put the Pelicans up 108-106 with 6.9 seconds to go. Tatum then hit a driving floater in the final second to force overtime.

Nets 112, Clippers 108: James Harden scored 37 points and Brooklyn won at Los Angeles for its season-best sixth victory in a row.

The Nets wrapped up a 5-0 trip, beating Golden State, Sacramento, Phoenix, and both Los Angeles teams to complete their longest undefeated single trip in franchise history. All but two of the wins were by double digits. They've now defeated West teams eight



GERALD HERBERT / AP

New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson scored 24 of his 28 points in the second half and overtime of his team's 120-115 victory over the Boston Celtics on Sunday in New Orleans.

straight times.

Knicks 103, Timberwolves 99: Tom Thibodeau's first game against his former team turned out to be the last one for Ryan Saunders.

Julius Randle had 25 points and 14 rebounds, and the visiting New York Knicks recovered after blowing a 21-point lead to pull out the victory over Minnesota, which fired Saunders afterward.

Bucks 128, Kings 114: Giannis Antetokounmpo had 38 points and Khris Middleton scored 32 to lead host Milwaukee past skidding Sacramento.

The Bucks won their second straight after ending a five-game

losing streak with a victory over Oklahoma City on Friday night. Antetokounmpo added 18 rebounds, one off his season high, to help his team send the Kings to their seventh consecutive loss. Milwaukee has won nine in a row against Sacramento.

Magic 105, Pistons 96: Nikola Vucevic had 37 points and 11 rebounds, Evan Fournier added a season-high 29 points and host Orlando beat Detroit.

The Magic have won three in a row, their longest streak since opening the season 4-0.

Hawks 123, Nuggets 115: Trae Young had 35 points and 15 assists, Clint Capela added 22

points and 10 rebounds and host Atlanta beat Denver.

The Hawks had lost five of six and eight of 10.

Raptors 110, 76ers 103: Pascal Siakam and Fred VanVleet each had 23 points and host Toronto beat Philadelphia for its fourth straight victory.

Chris Boucher scored 11 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter for Toronto, hitting three three-pointers as the Raptors opened the period on a 15-8 surge.

Thunder 117, Cavaliers 101: Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 31 points and nine assists and Oklahoma City handed host Cleveland its 10th consecutive loss.

SPORTS



Wolverines survive

No. 3 Michigan holds off late push by No. 4 Ohio State » College hoops, Page 22

MLB

Familiar feeling

Nats' ace Strasburg says he's fully recovered from nerve issue in right wrist

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

Stephen Strasburg was among the first players manager Dave Martinez ran into at the Washington Nationals' spring training facility Thursday before the team's first official workout for pitchers and catchers.

That's significant because the 2019 World Series MVP pitched only five innings in 2020 before he was shut down because of a nerve problem in his right wrist that required surgery.

"He's going to get ready to start the season just like normal. Normal spring training for him," said Martinez. "He looks good. He looks great, actually. And he feels good, which is the most important thing."

The nerve issue in Strasburg's wrist would get aggravated every time he threw a baseball, the Washington ace said Sunday, and "basically would go from numbness in my thumb to numbness in my whole hand."

Speaking to reporters for the

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Rockies' Desmond opts out for 2nd straight season
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Washington Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg
JEFF ROBERSON/AP

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