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# STARS AND STRIPES®

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**AFGHANISTAN**

US airstrikes are keeping Taliban at bay as bases close

By SUSANNAH GEORGE  
*The Washington Post*

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — The Taliban's attacks outside this large provincial capital began this month with little out of the ordinary: sporadic small-arms fire on military outposts. Quickly, though, the gunfire morphed into a barrage of heavy artillery that allowed thousands of Taliban fighters to pour into the district of Arghandab.

Within a matter of days, the district, which had been under government control for a decade, was in Taliban hands.

It was only after a series of punishing U.S. airstrikes that Afghan ground forces were able to retake the territory, Afghan officials said. U.S. air support played a similarly critical role in October in pushing back the militant group in Helmand province, where the Taliban came within yards of breaching the provincial capital's limits.

The battles come as U.S. forces

SEE AIRSTRIKES ON PAGE 6



SUSANNAH GEORGE/The Washington Post  
**A member of a bomb disposal unit prepares to move out to territory around Kandahar city recently retaken from Taliban control.**



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

**President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris introduce their nominees and appointees to key national security and foreign policy posts at The Queen theater on Tuesday in Wilmington, Del.**

## Biden brings forward his intended national security team

By MATTHEW LEE AND ALEXANDRA JAFFE  
*Associated Press*

WILMINGTON, Del. — Declaring "America is back," President-elect Joe Biden introduced selections for his national security team Tuesday, his first substantive offering of how he'll shift from the Trump administration's "America First" policies by relying on foreign policy and national security experts from the Democratic establishment to serve as some of his most important advisers.

Biden's Washington veterans all have ties to former President Barack Obama's administration

as the president-elect has sought to deliver a clear message about his desire to reestablish a more predictable engagement with the United States on the global stage.

"It's a team that reflects the fact that America is back, ready to lead the world, not retreat from it," said Biden, at an introductory event at which his selections stood on stage, at least six feet apart and masked.

The president-elect's team includes Anthony Blinken, a veteran foreign policy hand well-regarded on Capitol Hill whose ties to Biden go back some 20 years, for secretary of state; lawyer Alejandro

Mayorkas to be homeland security secretary; veteran diplomat Linda Thomas-Greenfield to be U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; and Obama White House alumnus Jake Sullivan as national security adviser.

Avril Haines, a former deputy director of the CIA, was picked to serve as director of national intelligence, the first woman to hold that post, and former Secretary of State John Kerry will make a curtain call as a special envoy on climate change. Kerry and Sullivan's position will not require Senate confirmation.

With the Senate's balance of

power hinging on two runoff races in Georgia that will be decided in January, some Senate Republicans have already expressed antipathy to Biden's picks as little more than Obama world retreats.

Sen. Tom Cotton, an Arkansas Republican and potential 2024 GOP presidential hopeful, derisively accused Biden of surrounding himself with "panda huggers" who will go soft on China. Sen. Marco Rubio, who sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that will consider Blinken's nomination, broadly wrote off the early

SEE TRANSITION ON PAGE 10



# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## Holiday sales expected to increase

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The National Retail Federation, the nation's largest retail trade group, expects that holiday sales could actually exceed growth seen in prior seasons, despite all the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic.

The reason? Shoppers are looking for opportunities to spend and celebrate the holidays during tough times.

The trade group said Monday that it predicts that sales for the November and December period

will increase between 3.6% and 5.2% over 2019 to a total ranging between \$755.3 billion and \$766.7 billion.

The numbers, which exclude automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants, compare with a gain of 4% to \$729.1 billion last year. Holiday sales have averaged gains of 3.5% over the past five years.

"After all they've been through, we think there's going to be a psychological factor that they owe it to themselves and their families to

have a better-than-normal holiday," said NRF Chief Economist Jack Kleinhenz in a statement.

Kleinhenz cited that households have strong balance sheets buoyed by a strong stock market, rising home values and record savings boosted by government stimulus payments issued earlier this year.

The group warns any further shutdowns of stores as virus cases surge could derail sales. And it emphasized that any renewal of a government stimulus package would help the holidays.

### EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Nov. 25)	\$1.16
Dollar buys (Nov. 25)	0.821
British pound (Nov. 25)	\$1.30
Japanese yen (Nov. 25)	101.00
South Korean won (Nov. 25)	1,083.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain(Dinar)	0.3770
Britain (Pound)	1.3324
Canada (Dollar)	1.3048
China(Yuan)	6.5912
Denmark (Krone)	6.2723
Egypt (Pound)	15.6689
Euro	0.8429
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7514
Hungary (Forint)	304.37
Israel (Shekel)	3.3442
Japan (Yen)	104.68
Kuwait(Dinar)	0.3057
Norway (Krone)	8.9732

Philippines (Peso)	48.18
Poland (Zloty)	3.76
Saudi Arab (Riyal)	3.7502
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3434
So. Korea (Won)	1,112.35
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9118
Thailand (Baht)	30.40
Turkey (Lira)	7.9545

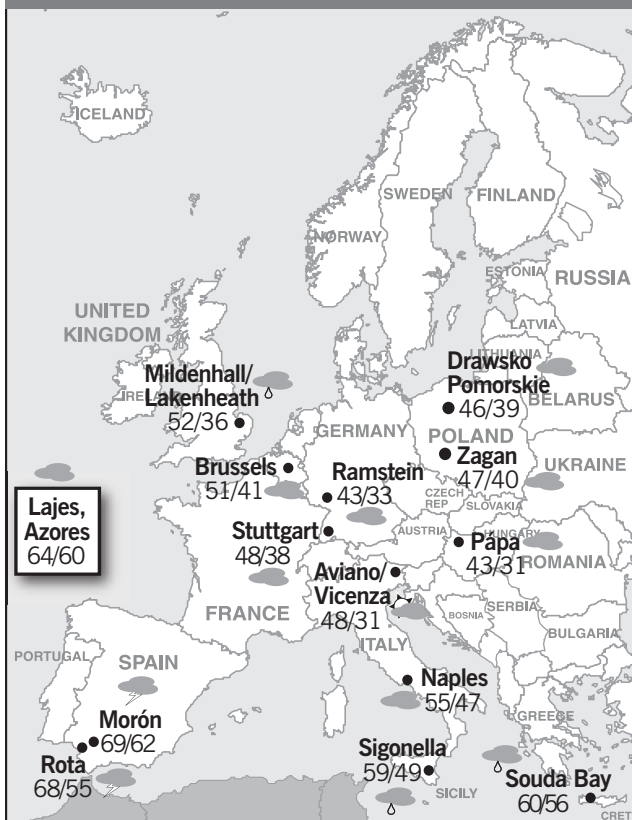
(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military 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.)

### WEATHER OUTLOOK

#### WEDNESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



#### WEDNESDAY IN EUROPE



#### THURSDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

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## MILITARY

# Navy releases Pensacola shooting report

Lack of oversight, negative command culture are found to be factors in incident

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A breakdown in oversight of foreign aviation students and a culture of harassment and cultural insensitivity potentially contributed to the deadly shooting at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., in December 2019, according to a new investigative report.

The Navy's 267-page report of the investigation by Rear Adm. John Meier, commander of Naval Air Force Atlantic, looked into the circumstances leading up to the shooting and what could be done to prevent another attack in the future.

The Navy's report, which was released Friday, stated the primary cause for the shooting was Royal Saudi Air Force 2nd Lt. Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani's self-radicalization. This included his social media activity and radical posts, according to the report. Though Attorney General William Barr stated in January that the shooting was a terrorist attack and Alshamrani was motivated by jihadist ideology, the investigation found he did not come to the United States for terrorist reasons based on the amount of time that he was in the country and number of opportunities that he had to carry out an attack.

In addition to Alshamrani's actions and behaviors, the report also stated a lack of coordination and risk assessments across training commands likely increased the possibility of him committing an insider attack.

"Military leaders, government employees, contracted employees, peers, and civilians knew of isolated events and indicators, but all remained unaware of a complete picture of 2nd Lt. Alshamrani's potential threat indicators. While these indicators are apparent in hindsight, they were not evident in aggregate before 6 December 2019," the report states.

On that morning, Alshamrani went to one of the aviation training school buildings at NAS Pensacola with a Glock-45 9mm handgun that he lawfully purchased but illegally brought onto the base. He moved throughout the building for several minutes, killing



DAVID HOLMES/U.S. Navy

Naval Security Forces patrol Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., several days after the Dec. 6, 2019, shooting on base.

three sailors and injuring eight others before a local sheriff's deputy shot and killed him.

Alshamrani had been in the United States for naval aviation training since 2017, according to the report. There are more than 5,100 foreign nationals from 153 countries in the United States for Defense Department security cooperation-related training, Pentagon spokesman Chris Garver said a few days after the incident. About 200 foreign nationals were at the base at the time of the attack, according to Capt. Timothy Kinsella, the commanding officer of NAS Pensacola.

Following the attack, former Defense Secretary Mark Esper ordered a review of security precautions at all military installations and facilities and a review of vetting procedures for foreign nationals training in the United States.

The Navy temporarily halted training for about 300 Saudi aviation students at three Florida bases following the shooting. Additionally, 21 Saudi students training in the U.S. were sent back home after an FBI in-

vestigation found anti-American sentiment in social media posts or child pornography.

The Navy's new report found while Alshamrani had been in training at NAS Pensacola for 18 months, he reported to five separate commands, which limited oversight by individual commanders and kept critical information about him isolated in those commands. The investigation recommended reports and files be shared more efficiently, including more digitalization so commanders have a better overall understanding of student trainees as they progress.

Harassment and culturally insensitive actions were also prevalent in the foreign student program. Alshamrani was nicknamed "pornstache" by a contracted instructor and Alshamrani filed an equal opportunity complaint in April 2019 against him, according to the report. The contractor was given a corrective action memo and apologized, however Alshamrani was frustrated it took almost 40 days for remediation and he felt the apology was insufficient, according to the report.

The investigation also found all students at Naval Aviation Schools Command at NAS Pensacola had to deal with a bad climate in the unit and the international military training office was found to contribute to it.

"[International military training office] personnel subjected [international military students] to derogatory and sometimes abusive comments as well as humiliating public reprimands. While U.S. military and civilian leaders were aware of [student] complaints, they did not proactively intervene and correct the [office] staff."

The report recommended Naval Aviation Schools Command assign new staff to the international military training office and the personnel complete cultural competency training before they arrive.

Alshamrani was able to purchase a gun legally on July 20, 2019, due to current federal law, however he illegally brought the weapon onto the base and stored it at his temporary base home. The report states a contracted instructor was present when he applied for the gun, however the instructor did not know the firearms policies for the foreign students. Following the shooting, Esper issued a policy memo that prohibits foreign military students and their families from having, transporting, or using personally owned firearms, according to the report.

The investigation found the Royal Saudi Air Force country liaison officer responsible for maintaining good order and discipline of the students had left in September 2019 and the billet was not filled until January 2020. Without the officer, there was a marked decline in the military discipline of the Saudi students. The report states if the liaison officer had been there, that person might have been able to provide better oversight of Alshamrani and intervened.

The report also recommended the Defense Department and State Department review creating a policy that requires psychological and behavioral tests for foreign military students training or working in the United States. While it's not clear that the tests would have shown Alshamrani as a threat, the report states it could have "identified critical traits" that could have made it easier to understand his demeanor and associated risk.

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## USS John S. McCain challenges Russia's claims in Pacific

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy on Tuesday sent another warship to challenge maritime claims in the Western Pacific, this time in an area claimed by Russia, according to a 7th Fleet spokesman.

The guided-missile destroyer USS John S. McCain, based at Yokosuka, "asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the vicinity of Peter the Great Bay in the Sea of Japan," with a freedom of navigation operation aimed at challenging Russia's "excessive maritime

claims," Lt. Joe Keiley said in the statement.

Named for Czar Peter the Great, who ruled Russia from 1682 to 1725, the bay is the largest in the Sea of Japan and comprises about 377,600 square miles.

The Soviet Union in 1984 claimed the bay as internal waters, drawing a 106-nautical-mile line from its adjacent coasts to enclose it. After the Soviet Union's fall, Russia continued the claim, which the Navy said is "inconsistent with the rules of international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention to enclose the wa-

ters of a bay," Keiley said.

"By drawing this closing line, the U.S.S.R. attempted to claim more internal waters — and territorial sea farther from shore — than it is entitled to claim under international law," he said in the statement.

"By conducting this operation, the United States demonstrated that these waters are not Russia's territorial sea and that the United States does not acquiesce in Russia's claim that Peter the Great is a 'historic bay' under international law," Keiley added.

The Russian Defense Ministry

said that when the McCain crossed about 1.2 miles into the bay, its anti-submarine destroyer Admiral Vinogradov threatened the ship via an international communication channel that it would "force (the McCain) out of the country's territorial waters in a ramming maneuver" if they did not leave, according to the state-owned TASS news website.

"After the warning was issued and the Admiral Vinogradov changed its course, the USS John S. McCain destroyer returned to international waters," the ministry said, according to TASS.

Keiley called Russia's allegation "false," adding that "USS John S. McCain was not 'expelled' from any nation's territory."

"McCain conducted this FONOP in accordance with international law and continued to conduct normal operations in international waters," Keiley said. "The United States will never bow in intimidation or be coerced into accepting illegitimate maritime claims, such as those made by the Russian Federation."

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## MILITARY

# Bill proposed to improve DOD's abuse prevention

BY ROSE L. THAYER

*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — Two senators have introduced a bipartisan bill to improve staffing levels for a Defense Department program designed to address domestic abuse while also raising awareness of the program's existence among military spouses.

Sens. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., introduced the Military Domestic Violence Prevention Act, which takes aim at improving the Defense Department's Family Advocacy Program through better resourcing, sharing more information about its services with families and enhancing coordination between the military service branches, according to a joint news release from the senators.

"Domestic violence survivors in the military deserve our full support as they rebuild and recover, and we owe it to them to ensure perpetrators are held accountable," Sinema said in a statement issued Thursday. "Our bipartisan bill empowers survivors by improving counseling and encouraging reporting on military bases, ensuring the health and safety of everyone in our military communities."

The bill requires the Family Advocacy Program to report to Congress on staffing "to ensure the program is properly resourced," according to the news release. As of now, this specific staffing information is not reported to Congress, according to an aide in Cornyn's office speaking on the condition of anonymity.

Delivered through the service branches, the Family Advocacy Program addresses domestic abuse, child abuse and neglect and problematic sexual behavior in children and youth, according to its website. It also coordinates with military and civilian agencies to prevent and identify abuse and provide appropriate treatment for affected service members and their families.

Incidents reported to the program make up the information available in an annual Pentagon



SGT. SARAH ENOS/U.S. Army

**Bob Steger, family advocacy program specialist for Army Community Services at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., informs soldiers during a suicide awareness walk about classes offered on the installation side of family advocacy.**

report on the prevalence of domestic abuse among service members and their families. The fiscal year 2019 report, released in April, stated the Pentagon funds more than 1,950 positions in the military departments for clinical providers, domestic abuse victim advocates, new parent support personnel and prevention staff. The report did not describe how those staffers are divided among military bases or whether all funded positions were filled.

The report also stated that 7,921 of the 13,571 incidents of domestic abuse reported to the program met the program's definition of abuse, which is "domestic violence, or a pattern of behavior resulting in emotional or psychological abuse, economic control and/or interference with personal liberty that is directed to a person who is a current or former spouse, a person with whom the abuser shares a child in common or a current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile."

There were 12 confirmed do-

mestic abuse fatalities in 2019 involving military personnel as perpetrators or victims, according to the Pentagon report.

Fewer than one in five domestic violence survivors now self-report to their base's advocacy program, according to the senators. To raise awareness, the bill creates a pilot program to educate spouses about it when they receive a military identification card and enroll in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, known as DEERS.

The senators cited two deaths this year of service members from their home states who told their friends and families that they felt their safety was threatened by a peer, but did not make official reports on base.

Army Spc. Vanessa Guillen, a Texas native, was killed in April at Fort Hood, Texas, by a fellow soldier who her family said had previously sexually harassed her.

Air Force Airman 1st Class Natasha Aposhian of Arizona was shot and killed in June at Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D., by an-

other airman. She had dated the man, but recently told him that she did not want to continue seeing him, according to her parents.

Some victims choose not to report domestic violence because of community stigma and fear of retribution from the perpetrator, according to a report from the RAND Corporation.

"Service members who put their lives on the line shouldn't have to fear reporting domestic violence or face dealing with the resulting trauma alone," Cornyn said in the statement issued Thursday. "In addition to funding education and prevention programs, this legislation would encourage members of the military and their families to seek help while ensuring they have access to the resources they need to heal."

The bipartisan bill also requires the Defense Department to produce a report on solutions to encourage reporting and identify lessons learned that can be shared between service branches and bases.

The National Resource Center

**"Far too often, service members and their family members do not seek help when dealing with domestic violence, resulting in serious consequences that could have been prevented."**

Jennifer Dane,  
Air Force veteran

on Domestic Violence, an organization that conducts research and provides comprehensive information and resources on domestic violence, applauded the efforts of the bill.

"We know that domestic violence is preventable," according to a statement from the center. "We also know that survivors of violence in the military face unique circumstances that compound their vulnerability and increase barriers to safety and healing."

The senators said they've received endorsements on the bill from two military-specific advocacy organizations, Protect Our Defenders and the Modern Military Association of America.

"Far too often, service members and their family members do not seek help when dealing with domestic violence, resulting in serious consequences that could have been prevented," said Jennifer Dane, Air Force veteran and interim executive director of the Modern Military Association of America. "Our military families deserve better, and it's critical that we take action to stop the escalation of violence through earlier education, prevention and treatment."

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## Amphibious ready group deploys in the Pacific after deadly sinking

BY WYATT OLSON

*Stars and Stripes*

The amphibious ready group that suffered the loss of eight Marines and a sailor during training off the California coast in July and a coronavirus outbreak last month is now conducting regular operations in the Pacific, a Navy spokesman said Monday.

"The Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group and the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit are underway and conducting routine operations

in U.S. Third Fleet," Cmdr. Sean Robertson, a spokesman for the San Diego-based 3rd Fleet, told Stars and Stripes.

Citing operational security, Robertson declined to specify where the group — which includes the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island and the amphibious transport docks USS San Diego and USS Somerset — was now operating or where it was headed.

Pacific Fleet referred questions about the ready group to 3rd Fleet.

Citing two unnamed defense officials, USNI News reported Monday that the ships had completed months of training with an exercise off Hawaii last week and were officially deployed as of Friday.

The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit and Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group were conducting a routine training exercise off San Clemente Island, Calif., on July 30 when an amphibious assault vehicle carrying 16 personnel started taking on water.

The amphibious assault vehicle, which weighed about 26 tons, quickly sank in waters hundreds of feet deep. Nine of those aboard lost their lives.

The deployment workup was also hampered by the pandemic.

Last month, personnel with the 15th MEU tested positive for the virus while deployed in the Northern Pacific, according to the Marine Corps Times. They were quarantined aboard ship until they could be transferred to shore.

The Navy did not say how many tested positive but maintained the infections did not affect the unit's ability to complete its mission.

The Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit returned to Norfolk, Va., in late July after a seven-month deployment.

The Japan-based America Amphibious Ready Group and 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit has patrolled throughout the Western Pacific this year.



## PACIFIC

# Documents show pollutants on Okinawa

By MATTHEW M. BURKE  
Stars and Stripes

## Journalist hopes papers will help veterans seeking health compensation from the VA

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Welsh journalist in Japan has released a trove of U.S. government documents regarding pollutants at U.S. bases in the Pacific in hopes they will aid veterans seeking compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for a variety of service-related ailments.

Jon Mitchell, 46, an investigative journalist and contracted correspondent for the Japan Times and Okinawa Times who lives in Yokohama, released over a dozen documents that he uncovered while writing “Poisoning the Pacific: The U.S. Military’s Secret Dumping of Plutonium, Chemical Weapons and Agent Orange,” which was published by Rowman & Littlefield in October.

The document release on Rowman & Littlefield’s website for “Poisoning the Pacific” caps off more than a decade of reporting by Mitchell. The documents cover the storage and leakage of chemical weapons, lead in the drinking water at schools on Kadena Air Base and “forever chemicals” like PFOS contamination at Kadena and Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

Mitchell’s previous work has been used by American veterans seeking VA compensation, something he said he hopes will continue with the current crop of records.

“I really think active service members, their families and former service members, they need to be able to access this information so they can provide this documentary proof to their health care providers and also to [Veterans Affairs] when they’re filing for health claims for exposures that occurred in Japan and mainly on Okinawa,” Mitchell said by phone Oct. 16. “Because the bases are concentrated on Okinawa, the contamination is concentrated on Okinawa as well.”

During college, Mitchell studied U.S. history and the use of Agent Orange in the Vietnam War.

He first visited Okinawa in October 2010 on assignment for the Japan Times. He said locals in the northern jungle region expressed concerns while recalling U.S. service members spraying defoliants around their bases.

“They told me the military had sprayed Agent Orange,” Mitchell said. “They said they were worried about the ongoing contamination of their land and the local base workers had been dying quite young.”

### A decade of research

After those interviews, Mitchell spent years requesting documents

through the Freedom of Information Act and tracking down American veterans who back island residents’ claims.

“The Americans were worried about the health of their children,” he said. “The Americans were sick with illnesses they believed had been caused by their own spraying of Agent Orange.”

The U.S. government maintains there is “no credible evidence of Agent Orange use, storage, testing, or transportation in Okinawa, and thus no evidence to support claims of exposure to Agent Orange during military service in Okinawa,” the Department of Veterans Affairs told Stars and Stripes in 2017. The VA has continuously denied wholesale exposure claims by veterans lacking documentary proof.

“VA currently has no evidence that Agent Orange or any other tactical herbicide was used on Okinawa that would warrant revision of current policies,” VA press secretary Christina Noel said in a statement emailed Oct. 31 to Stars and Stripes. “If credible evidence is obtained showing otherwise, VA will reconsider its current policy.”

Despite the government’s position, 108 barrels were found starting in 2013 buried on land adjacent to Kadena Air Base, Stars and Stripes previously reported. The barrels contained traces of cancer-causing dioxin and toxic ingredients of Agent Orange and other common pesticides and herbicides, Japan’s Defense Ministry said at the time. The discovery coincided with Mitchell’s reporting that earned him the 2015 Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan’s lifetime achievement award for press freedom.

In one U.S. Forces Japan talking paper from 1993 that Mitchell shared with Stars and Stripes three years ago, the U.S. government described how large amounts of hazardous chemicals and waste coming back from Vietnam were stacked in barrels at U.S. bases on the island. They included insect, rodent and plant killers; acids; alkalis; degreasers; and solvents.

The barrels, which appear to number in the thousands, according to photographs from the time, were exposed to the elements for long periods and leaked into the soil, which then seeped into the sea, killing fish offshore, according to the report Mitchell obtained.

Toxic substances like arsenic, asbestos, lead and hexavalent chromium have also been discovered on land near Camp Lester

that has since reverted to Japanese ownership. In 2015 and 2016, habu snakes captured adjacent to Camp Kinser tested positive for toxic substances.

High levels of the hazardous organic compound perfluorooctane sulfonate, or PFOS, were detected in streams running through Kadena Air Base and in adjacent groundwater wells. Military officials later admitted the use of a firefighting foam, banned in Japan, that contains the compound.

There have been several high-profile spills of the firefighting foam in recent years, including about 60,000 gallons at MCAS Futenma on April 10.

In October 2015, the first U.S. veteran was awarded disability benefits related to Agent Orange exposure on Okinawa. A year later, a second veteran received benefits. Since then, at least 13 others have been successful, Mitchell said.

A Government Accountability Office report from 2018 found that the Defense Department’s official list of herbicide testing and storage locations outside of Vietnam “is inaccurate and incomplete” and that ships carrying Agent Orange to and from Vietnam did stop in Okinawa, among other area in the region. It was unclear how much was loaded or unloaded.

### The documents

The first documents of note released by Mitchell are an organizational history of the Army’s 267th Chemical Company from March 1966 and a 1969 Army chief of staff report titled, “Overseas Storage of Chemical Agents/Munitions.”

The organizational history confirms three movements of chemical weapons to Okinawa between 1963 and 1965. The weapons were removed in 1971 as part of Operation Red Hat, according to the 1987 report “Chemical Weapons Movement History Compilation,” which can be found on the Environmental Protection Agency’s website.

The 1969 chief of staff report details a chemical weapons leak at the Chibana Army Ammunition Depot and discusses moving the weapons to Guam. The weapons listed include nerve agents VX and sarin and the blister agent sulfur mustard.

Both documents confirm Okinawa was a Project 112 chemical and biological warfare testing site. The DOD does not classify Okinawa as one, according to its Project 112 site on Health.mil.

Representatives from the VA

did not respond to questions related to Project 112 posed by Stars and Stripes in October.

A 2015 document Mitchell unearthed, “Department of Defense Dependent Schools Lead Assessment Project, Kadena Air Base,” reported 165 fixtures in 106 rooms at DOD schools had lead levels above the 20 parts per billion action limit established by the EPA, the report said. There were eight high-risk rooms/faucets, 88 medium-risk rooms and 10 low-risk rooms.

A high-risk room or faucet means a probable drinking source like a kitchen sink, water fountain or breakroom sink, the report said. A medium-risk source is neither a probable drinking source, nor it can be ruled out as a probable drinking source, like a classroom or a bathroom sink.

“All high-risk faucets were placed out-of-order and permanently removed or replaced using zero-lead content fixtures,” a spokesman for Kadena’s 18th Wing wrote in a statement emailed Nov. 3 to Stars and Stripes, citing Kadena’s 18th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, Bioenvironmental Engineering Flight. Signs telling students “Do not drink” were put up around medium-risk sources, an education campaign and a flushing program was launched.

Kadena resampled in 2015, 2017 and 2018, the statement said. Dozens of fixtures have been remediated.

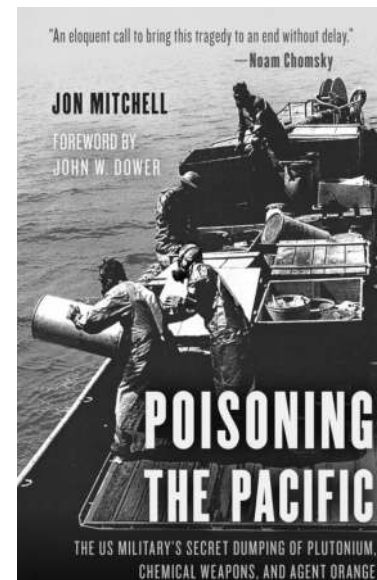
Mitchell also uncovered Okinawa prefectural records from 2016 that detailed extremely high levels of PFOS and PFOA, perfluorooctanoic acid, at a fire training area aboard MCAS Futenma. Testing found 1.8 micrograms per liter of PFOA and 27 micrograms per liter of PFOS, according to those records.

In early 2020, Japan established a combined safety threshold of 0.05 micrograms per liter for PFOS and PFOA.

A subsequent document from testing firm Maxxam Analytics, a Canadian company now known as Bureau Veritas, to Kadena’s 18th Wing indicated elevated levels of PFOS and PFOA at a fire training area retention basin.

Officials from Kadena’s 18th Wing did not respond to questions posed by Stars and Stripes about PFOS and PFOA.

The DOD has admitted to 651 contaminated sites in the U.S. but none in Japan, Mitchell said, something he believes will eventually change. U.S. military officials in Japan told Stars and



JON MITCHELL

**Journalist Jon Mitchell's book details pollutants at U.S. bases in the Pacific.**

Stripes last year the source of the PFOS and PFOA pollution on Okinawa is not necessarily U.S. military facilities.

“The U.S. works diligently to comply with the Japan Environmental Governing Standards,” U.S. Forces Japan wrote in a statement emailed to Stars and Stripes on Nov. 17.

It touted an environmental agreement signed between the two nations in 2015 that enhanced cooperation on environmental matters, including establishing protocol to give Japanese authorities access to U.S. bases on Okinawa in the event of a spill or land return.

“Environmental sampling conducted over decades by relevant U.S. and Japan government authorities indicates that actions taken aboard our installations are effective in reducing impacts both on and off base,” the statement said.

“We will continue to take a proactive and bilateral approach to environmental stewardship as the health and safety of our nations’ publics is equally as important as their defense.”

Mitchell, who has written three Japanese language books on military pollution, said more important than selling copies of his first English-language book is letting veterans know these documents exist and are available free.

“All of these documents provide support for veterans who are sick and veterans who believe their sickness is linked to their service on Okinawa,” Mitchell said. “The proof is there, and I think the military will do the right thing and admit to it.”

To access to these documents, see under “Features” at: <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781538130339/Poisoning-the-Pacific-The-US-Military's-Secret-Dumping-of-Plutonium-Chemical-Weapons-and-Agent-Orange>.  
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## WAR ON TERRORISM

## Airstrikes: US forces slowly closing Kandahar Air Field

FROM PAGE 1

have begun to close Kandahar Air Field, according to two Afghan officials, as part of an accelerated drawdown of U.S. forces in the country. After the recent weeks of intense fighting, many here fear the reduced troop numbers and base closures could mean less U.S. support for future battles against an emboldened Taliban.

The U.S. airstrikes were “the only reason the Taliban was pushed back,” said Lt. Col. Niaz Mahmud Majahad, the national police commander in Arghandab whose forces fought the Taliban until the military arrived. “If it weren’t for the airstrikes, the Taliban would not have fallen.”

Over the next two months, the number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan will be cut in half, from around 5,000 to 2,500, acting defense secretary Christopher Miller announced from the Pentagon on Tuesday. That level will mark the lowest number of U.S. troops on the ground in the conflict since 2002.

It was a move Miller’s predecessor warned against in a classified memo days before he was fired. Former defense secretary Mark Esper cited ongoing violence in Afghanistan and apprehension about undercutting negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban among his concerns about a more rapid withdrawal.

A U.S. defense official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue, said a small number of U.S. service members are at Kandahar Air Field as the drawdown continues. Many of them are preparing equipment to be sent out of the country as the Jan. 15 drawdown deadline looms, he said.

The U.S. military command in Afghanistan, known as Resolute Support, did not comment on airstrikes against the Taliban in Helmand and Kandahar or on the status of Kandahar Air Field.

Kandahar Air Field, which Afghan officials say provided support for the airstrikes last week,



SUSANNAH GEORGE / The Washington Post

**Javid Ahmed, a member of Afghanistan's national police, stands atop an outpost on the edge of Kandahar city overlooking Arghandab district. The district had been in government control for over a decade before it was overrun by the Taliban earlier this month as the militants launched a series of offensives.**

was once the largest NATO base in Afghanistan, home to what U.S. troops called the “boardwalk,” a collection of stores, restaurants and U.S. fast-food chains such as KFC and TGI Fridays.

Gul Ahmad Kamin, 34, a member of parliament from Kandahar, said U.S. forces have been slowly closing the airfield for months and were just one week away from shuttering the base when Taliban fighters attacked nearby Lashkar Gah, Helmand’s provincial capital. A senior Afghan official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the matter confirmed that U.S. forces have closed parts of the base.

An Afghan employee of a private security company located near U.S. compounds on the base said he noticed movement to close the base about a month and a half ago, when several large shipping containers were handed over to the Afghan military, surveillance balloons were reeled in and deflated, and U.S. troops began selling

off their civilian vehicles to private contractors. He spoke on the condition of anonymity because his employer did not authorize him to speak to the media.

Throughout the weeks-long Taliban offensive in southern Afghanistan, the massive cargo planes continued their runs to and from Kandahar Airfield, he said.

For Afghan government forces stationed in and around Kandahar, the presence of U.S. troops is as much about symbolism as it is about the technical support they can provide, Kamin said.

“It’s all about morale,” he said. “When U.S. forces are increasing, the morale is higher. When they are decreasing, the morale suffers.”

In many parts of Afghanistan, as U.S. troops have drawn down, insecurity and higher levels of violence have followed. And although the public text of the U.S.-Taliban deal does not call for a reduction in violence, U.S. officials have said Taliban attacks on cities and

towns under Afghan government control are “not consistent” with the agreement.

Abdul Nafi Pashtun, commander of Afghanistan’s 04 paramilitary unit, said the Taliban’s assault on Arghandab is another breach of the deal.

“Their plan was to enter Kandahar city,” he said. Established primarily to conduct night raids and other small, targeted operations, Pashtun’s unit has been marshaled to fight on the front lines over the past seven months as Taliban attacks have intensified and regular Afghan units with less U.S. support have proved unable to protect territory under government control.

He and his commandos were called in to support other Afghan forces as they struggled to retake Arghandab earlier this month. The district, considered the gateway to Kandahar city, sits on its northwestern edge along one of three main roads that connect the city to the rest of Afghanistan.

Majahad, the national police commander in Arghandab, said an estimated 3,500 Taliban fighters launched the first assault on his district and “had 500 motorbikes with them,” he said, shaking his head.

In three decades of military service, he said, he never saw a Taliban assault of such magnitude. “There is no doubt they are stronger and more well equipped now,” he said.

“And with this news (of faster U.S. troop withdrawals), the Taliban gets a great advantage.”

Fatima, a widow in her 60s from Arghandab who like many Afghans goes by a single name, fled to Kandahar city more than two weeks ago with three small children.

“There were bullets everywhere,” she said. “This war is the worst I have seen since the Soviet time.”

Saki Jana fled with her family from Panjawai district west of Kandahar, where intense clashes with the Taliban are ongoing. She also said the number of Taliban fighters was far greater in this attack than in previous assaults.

“They were just everywhere, on every street. They only ran to hide when you could hear a helicopter coming,” she said.

Without the fear of U.S. air and drone strikes since the signing of the February deal, the Taliban can more easily move fighters and equipment around the country, Majahad said.

And the militants can also gather openly in larger groups, as they did in the days and weeks leading up to the offensives in Helmand and Kandahar.

“I don’t think we will ever be able to go back,” Fatima said. While Afghan government forces have retaken most of her district, she said she doesn’t trust that they won’t abandon their posts the next time the Taliban launches an assault.

“The Americans are leaving, the Taliban are increasing their attacks, and we are stuck in between,” she said. “This country is just being destroyed.”

## More than a dozen killed in Afghan roadside bomb blast

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Roadside bombs exploded in central Afghanistan on Tuesday killing at least 13 civilians and a traffic policeman, officials said, even as government negotiators and the Taliban meet to try to end decades of war.

Tariq Arian, spokesman for the Interior Ministry, said 45 people were also wounded in a blast in Bamiyan city in Bamiyan province. Several shops and vehicles were destroyed or damaged.

Mohammad Reza Yusuofi, spokesman for the provincial police chief in Bamiyan, said there were two bombs that exploded in quick succession.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack and Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, said the group was not involved.

The Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan has declared war on the country’s minority Shiite Muslims — and Bamiyan is a mostly Shiite province.

Violence and chaos have increased in Afghanistan in recent months even as government negotiators and the Taliban are meeting in Qatar to find an end to decades of relentless war. The two sides have made little progress.

The ISIS affiliate has claimed responsibility for recent attacks in Afghanistan, including two horrific assaults on educational institutions that killed at least 50 people, most of them students.

The U.S. blamed the ISIS affiliate for an attack on a maternity

hospital earlier this year that killed 24 new mothers and infant babies. The hospital was located in Kabul’s Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood, dominated by ethnic Hazaras who are mostly Shiites.

If Tuesday’s attack in Bamiyan is claimed by the ISIS affiliate, it will be a dangerous escalation and a disturbing development if the group is able to penetrate into a province that has been considered a refuge from the bitter fighting elsewhere in the country.

Bamiyan’s Buddhist population

was mostly destroyed in early 2001 by the Taliban, who ruled for five years until late 2001 when they were overthrown by the U.S.-led coalition. The province is also a popular tourist destination, mostly because of Band-e-Amir National Park.

Also on Tuesday, Norway’s Foreign Minister Ine Eriksen Soeride said the Scandinavian country will provide around \$72.1 million in development assistance and humanitarian aid in 2021 to Afghanistan.



## PACIFIC

# Historic hangar at air base in Tokyo getting \$5.7M upgrade

By **SETH ROBSON**  
*Stars and Stripes*

**YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan** — A massive 72-year-old hangar that's hosted B-29 bombers, countless change-of-command ceremonies and a troop talk by the sitting U.S. president is getting a \$5.7 million upgrade at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo.

Hangar 15, at the southern end of Yokota's runway, is 50 feet tall from floor to rafters and 164 feet wide — big enough to accommodate the C-130J Super Hercules transport planes operated by the 374th Airlift Wing.

In recent months, the hangar, which houses the headquarters of the 374th Maintenance Squadron, has been enclosed by a tall metal wall across its front.

In March, contractor Nippo Corp. began work to replace the hangar's giant sliding doors, 374th Airlift wing spokesman 1st Lt. Stuart Thrift said in an email Tuesday. Air Force activities that would normally take place inside the hangar have shifted to other

facilities.

The Nippo Corp. workers have been digging foundations for a structure that will support a pair of massive new doors, said Leigh Ishida, project team chief with the 374th Civil Engineer Squadron, during a tour of the facility Monday.

"There were some safety issues with the antiquated system," he said of the old metal folding doors, which dated to the hangar's construction in 1948.

The doors, which were removed and sent for recycling, were motorized but could be cranked open and closed by hand, which took a lot of energy and involved several airmen, Ishida said.

There was a danger of an airman being crushed by the old, heavy doors, which sustained damage in a typhoon a few years ago.

The new doors will be automatic and linked to the hangar's fire alarm system, he said.

Built for U.S. forces occupying Japan, the hangar has always been a maintenance facility,

Thrift said. Aircraft that have flown out of Yokota since its construction include B-29 Superfortress bombers stationed at the base during the Korean War.

Other planes that may have been maintained in the hangar include B-57 Canberra, B-50 Superfortress, B-52 Stratofortress and B-47 Stratojet bombers, Thrift said.

The hangar's size makes it the perfect spot for command-change ceremonies for base leaders or the three-star generals who lead USFJ.

During Yokota's annual Friendship Festival, an event canceled this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the hangar houses a stage where bands entertain curious locals who come to check out military aircraft outside.

In March 2017, the first of Yokota's 14 Super Hercules aircraft pulled up to the hangar to be met by a crowd of airmen, journalists and officials.

In November of that year, troops filled the hangar and chanted "USA! USA!" during a visit by



SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

**Leigh Ishida, project team chief for the 374th Civil Engineer Squadron, checks out renovation work for Hangar 15 at Yokota Air Base, Japan, on Monday.**

President Donald Trump who spoke to them wearing a leather flight jacket in front of a giant American flag and F-16 and F-35B fighters. A few months later, in February 2018, Vice President Mike Pence stood in the hangar and blasted North Korea for human rights abuses while describing Yokota as a "citadel of strength."

Another historic hangar near Yokota's south end was demol-

ished last fall to make way for a new maintenance and fabrication facility. Known as Building 800, the hangar was constructed by the Japanese Imperial Army in the 1930s when Yokota was known as Tama Army Airfield.

Renovation of Hangar 15 is scheduled to wrap up by June of next year, Thrift said.

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## 9 new virus cases hit US bases in Japan, S. Korea

By **JOSEPH DITZLER**  
AND **MATTHEW KEELER**  
*Stars and Stripes*

**TOKYO** — The U.S. military on Tuesday reported nine new coronavirus infections at a Navy installation in Japan and an Army post in South Korea.

Eight of those patients tested positive since Friday at Yokosuka Naval Base, home of the 7th Fleet south of Tokyo.

Six of those patients are new arrivals to the country who tested positive while in quarantine, according to a base news release.

A seventh tested positive after showing symptoms of COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the virus; the eighth tested positive after having contact with another infected individual, accord-

ing to the base.

Contact tracers found that some recent infections were picked up in the nearby city of Yokohama, according to a base Facebook post Tuesday. Yokohama is considered a red zone, or high-risk area, according to an order by base commander Capt. Rich Jarrett. The city is not off-limits, but U.S. military personnel are under tighter restrictions there than in less riskier zones.

Yokosuka has reported 36 coronavirus cases so far this month and 131 since June.

At Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, the top enlisted leader for U.S. Forces Japan on Monday said the spike in infections at two bases in Japan may have sprung from a "couple different baby showers,"

or gender-reveal parties.

Yokota reported 43 new cases since Nov. 13 and Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in western Japan has reported 23 this month, in both instances three times their totals from June to October.

Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Rick Winegardner Jr., speaking on American Forces Network Radio, urged service members and their families to exercise caution over the long Thanksgiving weekend.

Without specifying either installation, Winegardner said the viral clusters emanated from "just a couple families getting together," which "sounds an awful lot like what's going to happen this week."

U.S. Forces Korea reported one

new case, a soldier at Camp Humphreys. That patient, unlike most previous cases, acquired the virus locally, according to a command news release.

Over the past several days, the soldier visited several locations at Camp Humphreys, the Army's main installation south of Seoul, including a restaurant and a gym.

Anyone who visited the Texas Roadhouse from 7-9 p.m. Sunday or the Zoeckler Fitness Center from 5:20-6:10 p.m. Monday should call the COVID hotline at 0503-337-2556, base commander Col. Michael Tremblay said during a Facebook Live presentation Tuesday.

Cleaning crews and contact tracers were dispatched, according to USFK.

"The Soldier did the right thing by adhering to our core tenets by immediately seeking medical treatment when he was feeling sick," said USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams, according to the release.

The soldier is quarantined at a Humphreys' barracks for coronavirus patients.

Of 369 coronavirus infections reported in South Korea among U.S. service members, civilian employees and family members, only 28 acquired the virus locally. The majority, more than 225, tested positive in isolation after arriving from the United States.

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## Coronavirus cases among Veterans Affairs patients surpass 13,000

By **NIKKI WENTLING**  
*Stars and Stripes*

**WASHINGTON** — More than 13,300 Department of Veterans Affairs patients are sick with the coronavirus — a number that more than doubled in the past 20 days and represents the most active cases the VA has ever had at one time.

Cases have increased 108% since Nov. 2. On that day, VA cases

hit an all-time high, surpassing the number of active cases seen during a surge of the virus in July. Every day since Nov. 2, the department has set a new record.

Deaths are also on the rise. As of Monday, 4,584 veterans had died of the virus — up 12% since the beginning of the month. In addition, 69 VA employees have died, five of them in the past 20 days.

The Minneapolis VA hospital

has the most cases across the VA system, with 433 patients who are currently sick with the coronavirus — an increase of 113% in a little over two weeks. The Cleveland VA hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, has the second-most cases with 417, and Aurora, Colo., has the third, with 310.

VA hospitals across the nation are experiencing more cases than previously seen. Fifty-one hospi-

tals reported having more than 100 active cases Monday. Only two VA locations reported having no active cases: the hospital in Spokane, Wash., and the VA outpatient clinic in the Philippines.

The numbers reflect a nationwide trend that shows a third wave of the virus affecting most of the United States, particularly the Midwest.

Fernando Riviera, director of

the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System, published a public letter to patients Monday. He said the New Orleans hospital would likely raise its threat level because of an increased rate of positive coronavirus tests and may soon limit services to non-coronavirus patients.

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## VIRUS OUTBREAK

# Wiesbaden school closes after rise in virus cases

Stars and Stripes

Wiesbaden Middle School classrooms closed Tuesday through the beginning of January after a spike in coronavirus cases, a move that coincided with a recent in-person promotion ceremony at the garrison involving multiple community members that later tested positive.

Remote learning will continue at the middle school until winter break, with students potentially returning to class Jan. 4, Department of Defense Education Activity-Europe spokesman Stephen Smith said.

School officials did not disclose how many students and staff members tested positive.

“The impact of quarantined staff is what is driving the transition to remote learning,” Smith said in an email response Tuesday.

Isabel White, the acting principal at Wiesbaden Middle School, said in a letter to families and staff Monday that the school was closing to in-person instruction “as a result of the number of DODEA employees and students identified as close contacts” through public health tracing.

Base schools across Europe have been forced to temporarily shut down their classrooms for varying lengths of time because of new coronavirus cases. Wiesbaden Elementary School, which had closed for two weeks because of virus cases, reopened Monday, Smith said. Wiesbaden High School also remains open.

The closure at the middle school

also comes less than two weeks after a Nov. 13 promotion ceremony at the Wiesbaden garrison, which U.S. Army Europe and Africa said Tuesday was attended by less than 50 people, a “handful” of whom later tested positive for the virus.

Beth Clemons, a USAREUR-AF spokeswoman, said it was unclear why the ceremony wasn’t held virtually. During the coronavirus pandemic, it has become routine for various commands across Europe to conduct virtual ceremonies to reduce the risks of transmission.

During the event, which was attended by Wiesbaden garrison commander Col. Mario Washington, masks were worn and social distancing was maintained, Clemons said. Washington was tested after the event, but his test results and those of more than a dozen others came back negative, Clemons said.

“We are reiterating guidance to all to remain vigilant and not become complacent,” Clemons said in an email. “The health, welfare, and readiness of our force, our families’ and our community is our top priority and we must all continue to follow host nation and command guidance to stop the spread of COVID-19.”

Wiesbaden city experienced a 20% increase in average active coronavirus cases during the period from Nov. 16 through Monday, according to German public health data.

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NORMAN LLAMAS/Stars and Stripes

People socialize at a cafe in Sacile, Italy's town center, in June. The Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, which includes Aviano Air Base, has imposed a ban on eating and drinking in public through Dec. 3 in a bid to prevent gatherings that might spread the coronavirus.

## Region near Aviano bans eating in public, allows outdoor exercise

By NORMAN LLAMAS  
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Outdoor exercise facilities will remain open following a reversal by Italian authorities, but eating and drinking in public was barred at Aviano following the announcement of new coronavirus restrictions in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, Italian and Air Force officials said.

The new regional law will last through Dec. 3.

A preliminary version of the new rules was set to suspend activities at sports centers throughout Friuli Venezia Giulia, which has been marked by Italian public health officials as “orange,” denoting a region of medium-high coronavirus risk with elevated restrictions.

However, the final version of the law keeps outdoor exercise venues open, the 31st Wing said in a Tuesday afternoon message.

The gyms at Aviano had previously been closed, but the new rule means that the track and tennis courts, among other facilities, will remain open, 31st Fighter Wing officials said Tuesday.

People can also still use roads, “specifically Perimeter Road on base for running,” wing spokeswoman Julie Scott said Tuesday.

In September, the Air Force announced a servicewide suspension of physical training tests through Jan. 1 because of coronavirus restrictions. Testing in January is scheduled to resume without taking height, weight and waist measurements, an Air Force statement at the time said.

The ban on eating and drinking in public is “aimed at avoiding gatherings in front of the premises or in other public areas that are open to the public,” regional president Massimiliano Fedriga told reporters Monday.

The rule barring gatherings and parties also remains in effect and Italian officials recommended avoiding public transportation unless there is no other option.

Italy, along with much of Europe, has seen a sharp upswing in the number of coronavirus cases since October. It is home to several U.S. bases, including Aviano, U.S. Army Garrison Italy in Vicenza, and the Navy’s 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples.

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## School closings leave students in rural areas isolated

Associated Press

CUBA, N.M. — The midday arrival of a school bus at Cyliss Castillo’s home on the remote edge of a mesa breaks up the long days of boredom and isolation for the high school senior.

The driver hands over food in white plastic bags, collects Castillo’s school assignments and offers some welcome conversation before setting out for another home.

The closing of classrooms and the switch to remote learning because of the coronavirus have left Castillo and other students in this school district on the sparsely populated fringe of the Navajo Nation in New Mexico profoundly isolated — cut off from direct human contact and, in many cases, unconnected to the grid.

Like many of his neighbors, Castillo does not have electricity, let alone internet.

It is yet another way in which the pandemic has exposed the gap between the haves and have-nots in the U.S.

“There’s not a lot to do here. You clean up, pick up trash or build stuff. Like, I built that shed right there,” the 18-year-old Castillo said, pointing at a pitched-roof plywood shed.

“Hopefully, hopefully by next semester we’ll be going back into school,” he said. “I don’t like online. I like to be, you know, in school, learning. That’s just not me. I just find it a lot easier and a lot better than just out here, not doing nothing.”

The Cuba Independent School District, centered in a village of

800 people, has kept the buses running as a way to bring school to students who live in widely separated cabins, trailers, campers and other structures on a vast checkboard of tribal, federal and county land.

On their routes, the buses carry school assignments, art supplies, meals and counselors who check in with students who are struggling with online bullying, abuse, thoughts of suicide or other problems.

The buses are a lifeline for families in the Cuba school district, of whom nearly half are Hispanic and half are Native American, including many Navajo-speaking English-language learners.

Many do not have running water. Castillo and others with no electricity charge their school-issued laptops with car batteries or

at a relative’s house. One student has sent her laptop on the buses to be charged at school. This far out, internet service is unavailable or prohibitively expensive.

For students without home internet, the buses bring USB drives loaded with assignments and video lessons from teachers. Some students like Castillo eventually asked for paper packets because of the difficulty in charging laptops.

With COVID-19 cases spiking in New Mexico to their highest levels yet, it is unclear when the district will begin offering in-person classes again.

The district has a record of adapting to challenges, and a high school graduation rate of 83% — well above the state average — to show for it. It has long employed a

“community school” approach in which social workers, nurses and teachers help students around the clock, not just during the school day, on the theory that they will do better academically if their home life can be made better.

All students were issued Chromebooks in 2019, well before the coronavirus outbreak. That made the shift to distance learning easier in March when school buildings shut down.

As COVID-19 rates spiked, the school switched to making bus deliveries every other day, instead of every day.

“They’ll still get the same amount of food, but they won’t get the same amount of human contact,” district counselor Victoria Dominguez said.



## VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

# Los Angeles could issue stay-at-home order as cases rise

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The nation's largest county was on the brink of a stay-home order just days before Thanksgiving after a spike of coronavirus cases Monday surpassed a threshold set by Los Angeles public health officials to trigger one.

An "impressive and alarming surge" of more than 6,000 new cases put the county over a five-day average of 4,500 cases per day, said Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer, though she declined to take action until county supervisors met Tuesday.

If the county orders residents to stay home, it would be the first such action since mid-March when Gov. Gavin Newsom followed several counties and issued a statewide order that closed schools and severely restricted movement, except for essential workers or to buy groceries or pick up food.

Cases and hospitalizations have been rapidly rising across California in November. The state recorded its highest day of positive test results Saturday with more than 15,000. It had more than 14,000 cases Sunday. Hospitalizations have increased 77% over the past two weeks.

## Georgia

ATLANTA — U.S. Sen. Kelly Loeffler said Monday that she will return to public campaigning after she got a second straight negative coronavirus test.

The Georgia Republican is facing a Jan. 5 runoff in one of the state's twin U.S. Senate races.

Loeffler took a rapid COVID-19 test Friday evening that came back positive, a day after she campaigned with Vice President Mike Pence and U.S. Sen. David Perdue, who also faces a Jan. 5 runoff.

A test Saturday came back inconclusive and a test Sunday came back negative, Loeffler's campaign said. She had isolated after the Friday test and said she was consulting with medical experts and following guidelines of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## South Carolina

COLUMBIA — A three-day ticket blitz in South Carolina's capital city brought 130 citations for going unmasked in public places despite the coronavirus pandemic — and fire chief Aubrey Jenkins says more are coming.

He spoke Sunday, the sixth day in a row that South Carolina had

reported more than 1,000 infections of the new coronavirus. Monday made it seven, with 1,095 positive tests and a total of 194,902. Five deaths from COVID-19 were reported Monday, bringing the total to 3,987.

Columbia passed a mask ordinance in June and beefed it up this month, including a \$100 fine. Before the weekend blitz, only about 50 citations had been issued.

Nearly all of last week's citations were in Columbia's Five Points nightlife area, though department personnel also checked other areas including hospitality districts and big box stores, Jenkins said Sunday.

## Nevada

RENO, Nev. — The head of the Nevada agency promoting business growth urged companies on Monday to embrace the governor's latest move to tighten COVID-19 restrictions, saying it's the best way to protect against future shutdowns that are likely if the coronavirus keeps spreading at unprecedented rates.

State health officials said the percentage of residents testing positive for COVID-19 over the previous 14 days has doubled since mid-October, from 8.2% on Oct. 15 to record highs of 16.7% on Sunday and Monday.

Gov. Steve Sisolak announced the state's most expansive mask mandate to date Sunday and reduced the capacity at casinos, restaurants, bars and many other businesses from 50% to 25% effective at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday.

Nevada COVID-19 Response Director Caleb Cage and Department of Business and Industry Director Terry Reynolds said they sympathize with business owners who may struggle to stay afloat amid new cutbacks, but said they are intended to help avert a more dramatic response in the weeks ahead.

## Kentucky

LOUISVILLE — Kentucky's healthcare system could be at risk — and lives at stake — from rising pressures of new coronavirus hospitalizations if conditions do not improve, Gov. Andy Beshear warned Monday, defending the new mandates he issued last week to fight the pandemic.

The Democratic Governor's new restrictions on in-person gatherings at restaurants, schools and event venues have drawn criticism from GOP lawmakers, local business owners and private



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

**Pedestrians walk past a COVID-19-themed mural outside a boarded up business on Monday in Santa Monica, Calif.**

schools throughout the state. Kentucky's Republican Attorney General, Daniel Cameron, joined a Christian school on Nov. 20 in filing a federal lawsuit that seeks a statewide temporary restraining order against a new rule that suspends in-person classes in private and public schools.

Under the new restrictions, middle and high schools are required to continue with remote instruction until January. Elementary schools may reopen on Dec. 7 if the county they are located in is not in the "red zone," the highest category for COVID-19 incidence rates.

Beshear called the decision to close schools to in-person learning a "last result," expressing concern for teachers going to work as more students test positive for the virus. Last week, he said roughly 10,000 students were in quarantine.

## Washington

SEATTLE — A four-week shutdown on indoor service at restaurants and bars prompted by an alarming statewide spike in COVID-19 cases is expected to cost the industry some \$800 million, a representative said Monday.

Anthony Anton, chief executive of the Washington Hospitality Association, urged lawmakers from both parties to find ways to support restaurants, as well as hotels and other hospitality businesses, so they have a plan ready to go when the Legislature next meets.

Gov. Jay Inslee announced Friday an additional \$70 million in grants for businesses, as well as \$65 million for loans and other assistance — federal money appropriated through the CARES Act. Anton said that while anything helps, that would only cover about two days of losses.

Likely relief for the industry could include reducing or suspending business and occupation taxes and the costs of unemployment insurance. But the most significant help will have to come from Congress, Springer said.

## Utah

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah Gov. Gary Herbert on Monday relaxed restrictions on social gatherings ahead of Thanksgiving weekend as coronavirus cases and hospitalizations continue to surge.

There were 545 people hospitalized for COVID-19 in Utah on Monday, and referral center ICU beds reached 91.9% occupancy statewide, according to state data. The increased number of hospitalizations has prompted doctors and public health officials to advise against attending large Thanksgiving gatherings.

Herbert, a Republican, said he will not extend his previous two-week order that required people to limit social gatherings to people in their immediate household, but urged caution. He recommended masks, social distancing and smaller gatherings for the holiday.

Rich Saunders, the interim director of the state health department, recommended that people in high transmission areas, which include 26 of the state's 29 counties, limit social gatherings to 10 or fewer. The state's mask mandate will remain in place.

## Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — Last call for Pennsylvania bars will be at 5 p.m. on Wednesday to cut COVID-19 transmission during what is normally a night of heavy public drinking, Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf announced Monday.

Wolf also imposed new crowd size limits of 500 people indoors and 2,500 outdoors, and vowed there will be more enforcement of mask wearing requirements and other infection control tools.

He said busy bars can lead to "an increase in the exchange of the fluids that leads to increased infection." The order will end 8 a.m. on Thursday, Thanksgiving.

The Wolf administration said infections and deaths from COVID-19 have risen sharply in recent days, raising concerns the infection could spread during holiday gatherings and could challenge the health care system's capacity to adequately treat the sick.

The governor also said there will be limits on civil liability for businesses that enforce the statewide mandate that people wear masks in public spaces.



## NATION

**Transition:** Biden says team is ready to lead, not retreat from world

FROM FRONT PAGE 1

selections as uninspiring.

“Biden’s Cabinet picks went to Ivy League schools, have strong resumes, attend all the right conferences & will be polite & orderly caretakers of America’s decline,” Rubio tweeted.

But Biden’s transition team hailed the president-elect’s selection as a group of “crisis-tested leaders” who will be ready to hit the ground running in the new administration.

Outside the realm of national security and foreign policy, Biden is expected to choose Janet Yellen as the first woman to become treasury secretary.

She was nominated by Obama to lead the Federal Reserve, the first woman in that position, and served from 2014 to 2018.

Biden said his choices “reflect the idea that we cannot meet these challenges with old thinking and unchanged habits.”

He said he tasked them with reasserting global and moral leadership.

Biden’s emerging Cabinet marks a return to a more traditional approach to governing, relying on veteran policymakers with deep expertise and strong relationships in Washington and world capitals.

And with a roster that includes multiple women and people of color — some of whom are breaking historic barriers in their posts — Biden is acting on his campaign promise to lead a team that reflects the diversity of America. Thomas-Greenfield is Black, and Mayorkas is Cuban American.

Mayorkas might pose the most difficult confirmation challenge from Biden’s early round of nominees.



CAROLYN KASTER / AP

**President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris meet virtually with the United States Conference of Mayors at The Queen theater Monday in Wilmington, Del.**

The Senate previously confirmed him in December 2013 by a party-line vote to be the deputy secretary of Homeland Security.

The Senate was controlled by Democrats then, and all Senate Republicans voted against Mayorkas’ confirmation mainly because he was then under investigation by the Obama-appointed inspector general in that department.

At the time, the Senate historian’s office said it was unprecedented for the Senate to vote on a nominee who was under investigation.

The inspector general, John Roth, found in March 2015 that Mayorkas, as director of the U.S.

Citizenship and Immigration Services, appeared to give special treatment to certain people as part of the visa program that gives residency preference to immigrants who agree to invest in the U.S. economy.

Meanwhile, there were signs that the stalled formal transition of power is now underway.

The Pentagon said Tuesday that Kash Patel, the chief of staff to the acting secretary of defense, is heading the department’s transition work. A transition task force has been assembled, led by Tom Muir, the head of the Pentagon office that provides administrative

and management services to all Defense Department facilities in the Washington area.

The move came a day after the head of the General Services Administration wrote the necessary letter of “ascertainment” acknowledging Biden as the apparent winner of election, triggering the transition process.

The ascertainment gives the incoming president and his team access to officials at federal agencies and directs the Justice Department to work on security clearances for transition team members and Biden political appointees.

It even gives his team access to official government website domains and releases \$6.3 million in congressionally appropriated funds to Biden’s transition team and 175,000 square feet of federal office space, including secure areas where Biden and his team can receive sensitive intelligence briefings.

Trump, who continues to press a legal challenge to overturn the election results, again refused to concede his election loss.

Trump tweeted that “the GSA does not determine who the next President of the United States will be.”

**Feinstein plans to leave top Judiciary committee spot**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — California Sen. Dianne Feinstein said Monday she will step down from her role as the top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, giving up the powerful spot after public criticism of her bipartisan outreach and her handling of Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett’s confirmation hearings.

Feinstein, 87, said in a statement that she would not seek the position in the next Congress. She did not say why, but said she would instead focus on wildfire and drought issues and the effects of climate change, which are important in her home state.

She plans to continue to serve on the Judiciary, Appropriations and intelligence panels, but said she will not seek the role of top Democrat on any of those committees.

“I will continue to do my utmost to bring about positive change in the coming years,” she said in the

statement. She has held the Judiciary post since 2017.

Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the Senate’s No. 2 Democrat, said he will seek to replace Feinstein as the committee’s top Democrat.

He is third in seniority on the panel, after Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy, who is currently the top Democrat on the appropriations committee.

Durbin organized the Democratic response during the Barrett hearings, coordinating an effort to focus the criticism on the court’s upcoming consideration of the health care law and away from the nominee personally. He led daily news conferences during breaks in the hearings with the other Democrats on the panel while

Feinstein usually did not appear.

“We have to roll up our sleeves and get to work on undoing the damage of the last four years and protecting fundamental civil and human rights,” Durbin said in a statement.

Durbin’s office has said there is nothing in Democratic caucus rules that blocks him from serving in his leadership post and also as the top Democrat on Judiciary.

Feinstein, first elected in 1992, has been a powerful force in the Democratic Party and is the former chairwoman of the intelligence panel.

She has not shied from bipartisanship even as her state has become increasingly liberal and both parties have become more polarized.

That tension came to a head at the Barrett hearings, when Feinstein closed out the proceedings with an embrace for Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lind-

sey Graham, R-S.C., and a public thanks to Graham for a job well done. Democrats fiercely opposed Barrett’s nomination to replace the late liberal icon Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

“This has been one of the best set of hearings that I’ve participated in,” Feinstein said at the end of the hearing.

Those actions put her immediately in the crosshairs of some influential liberals who had been questioning for some time whether she was right for the job.

Graham also seized on Feinstein’s complimentary words at the end of Barrett’s hearings, frequently repeating them on the campaign trail in his reelection bid this year and using the backlash to disparage Democrats.

“I hate the fact that saying something nice about me, about the way I conducted the hearings, has gotten to the point now that people will drive you out of office,”

Graham said.

In a statement, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said he was “grateful for Senator Feinstein’s leadership and contributions to our caucus and country” in the Judiciary post.

Feinstein’s “experience, decades-long relationship with President-elect Biden, and leadership on so many issues will continue to be an asset for our caucus, California, and the country as we begin a new term with the new president,” said Schumer, D-N.Y.

It is still unclear which party will hold the majority in the Senate next year. If Democrats win two runoff elections in Georgia, they could take the Senate very narrowly.

Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley is expected to reclaim the top Republican spot on the panel next session after leaving for two years to head the Senate Finance Committee.



Feinstein



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Sex club busted for partying sans masks

**NY** NEW YORK — There were plenty of condoms but no masks at a sex club where 80 people were caught partying the night away without adhering to social distancing rules, the New York Sheriff's Office said.

Deputies responding to a complaint found people drinking, eating at a buffet and having sex at a site in Queens. Boxes of condoms were provided and three couples were engaged in sex in a small back room, the Sheriff's Office said.

The event was hosted by Caligula New York, which advertises itself as the "Hottest Swingers Club in New York."

Organizers were ticketed for violating pandemic rules and selling alcohol without a proper license.

## Protesters fined for using noisy megaphones

**FL** NEW PORT RICHEY — A Florida town has fined people involved in recent racial justice protests thousands of dollars for using megaphones police say violate a local noise ordinance.

The Tampa Bay Times reported that officials in New Port Richey have issued 14 citations that total about \$4,700 to at least five protesters. Black Lives Matter activist Christina Boneta said she was fined more than \$2,500 for using her megaphone and once arrested for refusing to sign a citation.

New Port Richey has a strict noise ordinance that was enacted in 2017 to crack down on loud downtown bars and clubs.

## Police search river after third pipe bomb found

**CT** MERIDEN — Connecticut police searched the Quinnipiac River in Meriden after a third pipe bomb was found in the water.

Meriden police requested help from the state police bomb squad to search the area where the third bomb was found to make sure there were no others.

No additional bombs were found, Meriden Sgt. Darrin McKay said.

The other bombs were found in the same area in January and September. McKay said all three bombs had been submerged for long periods of time. Authorities destroyed all the bombs.

Two men who were magnet fishing found the latest bomb, the Record-Journal reported.

The explosives were found in the river near a pedestrian bridge and adjoining vehicle bridge.

## University to train military veterans in farming

**ME** ORONO — The University of Maine is launching a program to offer



JOSEPH C. GARZA, THE (TERRE HAUTE, IND.) TRIBUNE-STAR/AP

## Taking the oath

**Xylon King-Owens, 2, raises his hand also as his mother, Olandria Owens, takes an oath during the finalization of her adoption of Xylon on Friday, during Vigo County Adoption Day in the Vigo County Courthouse in Terre Haute, Ind.**

training in food production to military veterans and farmers with disabilities.

The program is called "Boots-2-Bushels: Boot Camp for Market Gardeners and Farmers," the University of Maine Cooperative Extension said. It is slated to begin in January and will focus on training in small-scale farming for market sales, the extension said.

The program will take place online through May 24 and include hands-on fieldwork from May to September.

The extension said the program will include training in subjects such as crop planning, safe food handling and pest management.

The extension said the program will also be open to family members of military veterans.

## Rockefeller Center skating rink opens up

**NY** NEW YORK — The iconic Rockefeller Center ice-skating rink is set to open in a limited way on time for the holidays.

The sunken rink located in midtown Manhattan will begin welcoming skaters as part of a tradition going back to the 1930s, according to the Rockefeller Center website.

The rink is operating at a reduced capacity, with skate time limited to 50 minutes. Masks are required as a further pandemic safety measure.

## THE CENSUS

**\$3K** The tip amount left by a customer for a single beer as a restaurant closed due to the virus. The man walked in, ordered the beer and asked for the check, which came to \$7.02, Nighttown owner Brendan Ring said. Ring said the man wished him well and told him to share the tip with the four employees who were working brunch service. As the man walked out, Ring wrote, he looked down at the tip and "realized he left a whopping \$3,000. I ran after him and he said no mistake we will see you when you reopen!"

## Man accused of waving chain saw at neighbor

**NE** LINCOLN — A Lincoln man is accused of waving a chain saw at a Black neighbor and yelling racial epithets at her.

The Lincoln Journal Star reports a woman was entering her apartment building when a 41-year-old man allegedly confronted her with a chain saw, told her to leave the property and yelled racial epithets.

The woman ran away and called the police. The man was arrested on suspicion of making terroristic threats. It wasn't immediately clear if he has been charged.

## Police: man arrested after stealing a tractor

**DE** LINCOLN — Police in Delaware say they've arrested a man for stealing a John Deere tractor.

Delaware State Police said Raymond E. Justice was arrested after a trooper in Lincoln spotted

Justice driving a tractor that had been reported stolen.

Police said they found a small amount of crack cocaine on Justice after he was arrested. Police said he's being held at a local jail. It is not clear whether he has hired an attorney.

## Historic railway tunnel now open to the public

**VA** AFTON — Hikers and bicyclists can now explore a historic railroad tunnel in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains after nearly two decades of restoration efforts.

The News Virginian reported that the Claudius Crozet Blue Ridge Tunnel Trail system opened to the public Saturday.

The nearly milelong tunnel was constructed between 1849 and 1859.

Considered an engineering marvel at the time, the Blue Ridge Tunnel was designed by renowned French engineer Claudius Crozet.

Irish immigrants and enslaved laborers built the tunnel. It had to

be built using hand tools and black powder, as dynamite had not yet been invented.

Railways stopped using the tunnel in 1944. CSX Transportation donated the tunnel to Nelson County in 2007. Officials have been working to restore the tunnel since 2001.

The trail has parking lots on both sides and visitors need to bring their own lights to see.

## Large, rare loggerhead turtle rescued on beach

**MA** TRURO — Officials on Cape Cod rescued a rare, 350-pound loggerhead turtle that was stranded on a beach.

The Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary shared a video on its Facebook page of the Friday afternoon rescue in the town of Truro.

The organization said public works officials helped load the large reptile into a truck before it was taken to the New England Aquarium's Sea Turtle Hospital in Quincy.

The Boston-based aquarium said adult male loggerhead turtles are rare in Massachusetts, especially this early in the season.

Connie Merigo, the aquarium's Marine Animal Rescue Department Manager, told MassLive that the turtle is at least 30 years old and has multiple health problems, including breathing difficulties.



# NATION

## Court: States can end Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — A federal appeals court ruled Monday that Texas and Louisiana can cut off Medicaid funding to Planned Parenthood clinics — a move supported by opponents of legal abortion, but opposed by advocates who said it affects a variety of non-abortion health services for low-income women.

The ruling was handed down by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. While it expressly reversed decisions in Texas and Louisiana, it also affects Mississippi, which is under 5th Circuit jurisdiction. The issue is likely to go next to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Opponents of legal abortion have long sought to deny federal Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood clinics.

Abortion rights supporters and advocates for women's health have argued that the move would reduce access and choice for low-income women seeking cancer screenings, birth control and other non-abortion-related health services — even in states where Planned Parenthood clinics don't perform abortions.

The decision by the full 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans reverses an earlier ruling by a three-judge appellate panel that blocked Texas from enforcing its ban on Medicaid funding of Planned Parenthood. It also expressly reversed a ruling in a separate case blocking Louisiana from banning Planned Parenthood funding. A three-judge panel in 2015 had ruled against the ban and that decision stood when the full court deadlocked 7-7 in 2017, when there were only 14 active judges on the court.

The court's personnel has changed since then. Six nominees of Republican President Donald Trump now sit on the court. Four of them participated in Monday's case (one was recused and another joined the court too late to take part) and all four joined Judge Priscilla Owen's opinion for an 11-member majority.

Owen wrote that the seven women who sued Texas officials to challenge the ban had no legal right to question the state's determination that Planned Parenthood was not qualified to provide the services. She noted that a federal statute "unambiguously pro-

vides that a Medicaid beneficiary has the right to obtain services from the qualified provider of her choice," but added that it "does not unambiguously say that a beneficiary may contest or otherwise challenge a determination that the provider of her choice is unqualified."

In dissent, Judge James Dennis wrote that the ruling conflicts with other circuits' decisions and will leave millions of people in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, which falls under 5th Circuit jurisdiction, "vulnerable to unlawful state interference with their choice of health care providers."

The Texas and Louisiana defunding efforts followed the release by anti-abortion activists of secretly recorded videos in 2015.

A state inspector general said the video appeared to show Planned Parenthood had improperly changed how abortions were performed so that better specimens could be preserved for medical research.

Investigations by 13 states into those videos have concluded without criminal charges, and Planned Parenthood officials have denied any wrongdoing.

## Police arrest 1 in Calif. fatal church stabbing

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — A suspect has been arrested in connection with the fatal stabbings of two people and the wounding of three others at a church in California's Silicon Valley that was being used as a homeless shelter, police said Monday.

"We have one suspect in custody for last night's homicide," the San Jose Police Department said in a Twitter post.

The stabbings happened Sunday night at Grace Baptist Church, where no services were taking place, and officials said a man died there and a woman died at a hospital.

Three other men who were wounded were hospitalized Monday in serious but stable condition.

The church, through its nonprofit Grace Solutions, offers an overnight winter shelter to up to 50 men and women during cold, rainy weather and it makes showers available daily for drop-in visits, according to the nonprofit's website.

"Unhoused individuals were brought into the church to get them out of the cold," the San Jose police department tweeted.

The temperature in San Jose was in the low 50s when the attack

happened Sunday shortly before 8 p.m., but dropped into the high 30s overnight.

The city of 1 million, like the rest of the San Francisco Bay Area, has experienced a recent rise in homeless people. In San Jose's latest homeless census conducted in 2019, officials counted 6,097 homeless people — up from 4,350 in 2017.

The motive of the attack was under investigation, police said. Grace Baptist Church did not immediately respond to a telephone message Monday seeking comment.

"Our hearts are torn for the victims and their loved ones in last night's horrific stabbing at Grace Baptist Church in Downtown — we have lost two community members," San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo said on social media. "We pray for the recovery of others seriously injured in that attack."

Sunday night's homicides were the city's 41st and 42nd of the year and the fifth and sixth this month, The San Jose Mercury News reported Monday.

Restrictions related to the pandemic have led to a drop in most categories of crimes in the city this year.



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WORLD

# China launches moon mission to collect rocks

Associated Press

WENCHANG, China — China launched an ambitious mission on Tuesday to bring back rocks and debris from the moon's surface for the first time in more than 40 years — an undertaking that could boost human understanding of the moon and of the solar system more generally.

Chang'e 5 — named for the Chinese moon goddess — is the country's boldest lunar mission yet. If successful, it would be a major advance for China's space program, and some experts say it could pave the way for bringing samples back from Mars or even a crewed lunar mission.

The four modules of the Chang'e 5 spacecraft blasted off at just after 4:30 a.m. Tuesday atop a massive Long March-5Y rocket from the Wenchang launch center along the coast of the southern island province of Hainan.

Minutes after liftoff, the spacecraft separated from the rocket's first and second stages and slipped into Earth-moon transfer orbit. About an hour later,



MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

**A Long March-5 rocket sits on the launch pad at the Wenchang Space Launch Center in southern China's Hainan Province early Tuesday.**

Chang'e 5 opened its solar panels to provide its independent power source.

Spacecraft typically take three days to reach the moon.

The launch was carried live by national broadcaster CCTV which

then switched to computer animation to show its progress into outer space.

The mission's key task is to drill almost 7 feet beneath the moon's surface and scoop up about 4.4 pounds of rocks and other debris

to be brought back to Earth, according to NASA. That would offer the first opportunity for scientists to study newly obtained lunar material since the American and Russian missions of the 1960s and 1970s.

The Chang'e 5 lander's time on the moon is scheduled to be short and sweet. It can only stay one lunar daytime, or about 14 Earth days, because it lacks the radioisotope heating units to withstand the moon's freezing nights.

The lander will dig for materials with its drill and robotic arm and transfer them to what's called an ascender, which will lift off from the moon and dock with the service capsule. The materials will then be moved to the return capsule to be hauled back to Earth.

The technical complexity of Chang'e 5, with its four components, makes it "remarkable in many ways," said Joan Johnson-Freese, a space expert at the U.S. Naval War College.

"China is showing itself capable of developing and successfully carrying out sustained high-tech

programs, important for regional influence and potentially global partnerships," she said.

In particular, the ability to collect samples from space is growing in value, said Jonathan McDowell, an astronomer at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Other countries planning to retrieve material from asteroids or even Mars may look to China's experience, he said.

While the mission is "indeed challenging," McDowell said China has already landed twice on the moon with its Chang'e 3 and Chang'e 4 missions, and showed with a 2014 Chang'e 5 test mission that it can navigate back to Earth, re-enter and land a capsule. All that's left is to show it can collect samples and take off again from the moon.

"As a result of this, I'm pretty optimistic that China can pull this off," he said.

The mission is among China's boldest since it first put a man in space in 2003, becoming only the third nation to do so after the U.S. and Russia.

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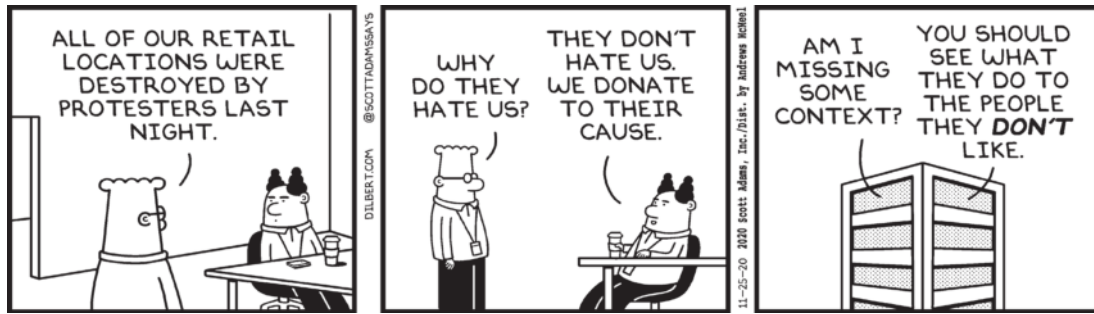
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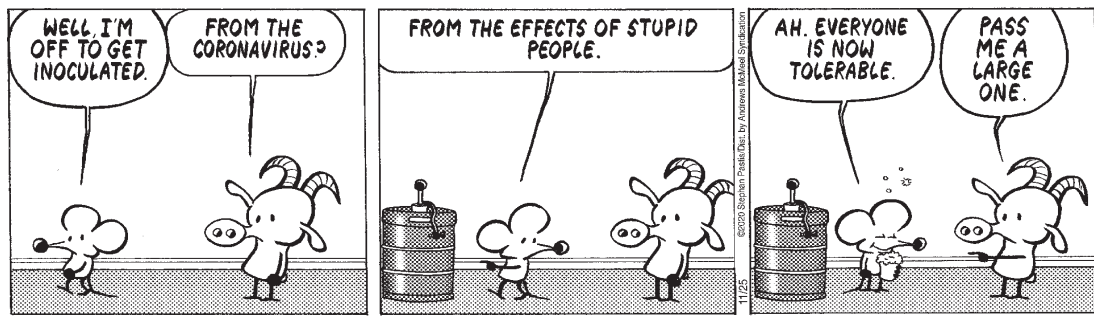
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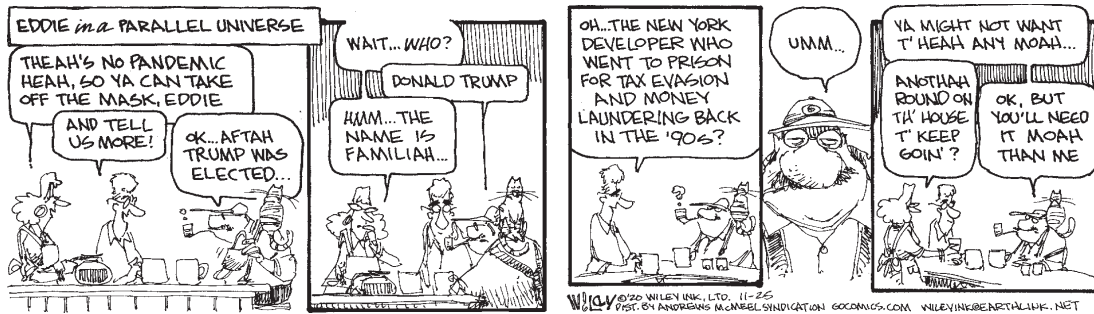
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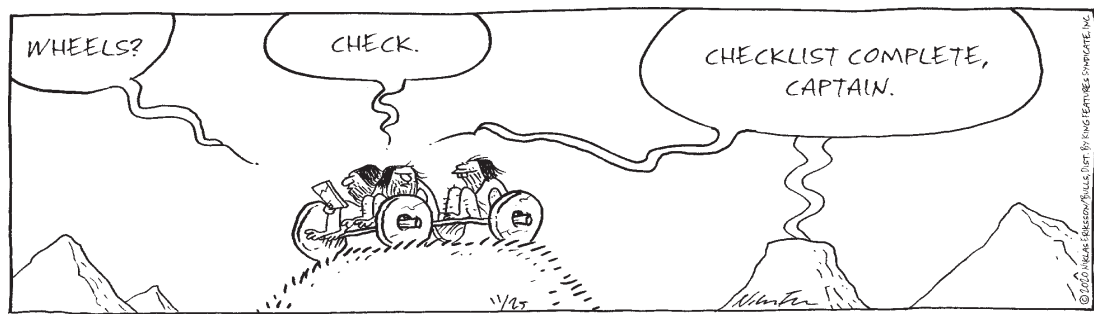
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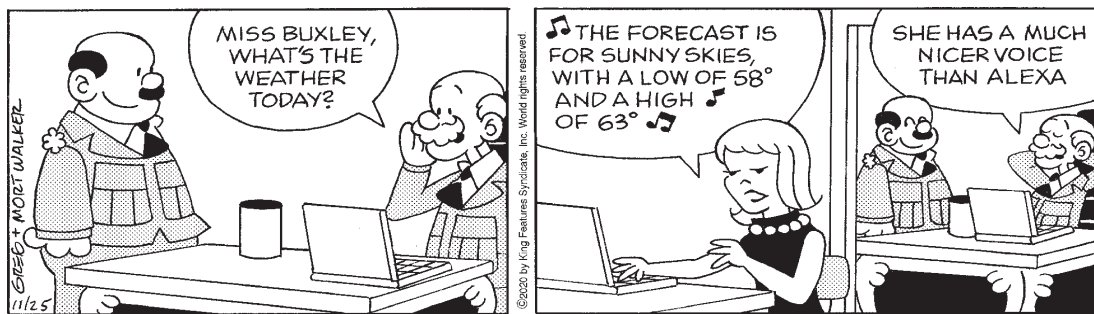
Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



### Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
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45	46							47			48	49	50
51						52	53						
54						55				56			
57						58				59			

#### ACROSS

- 1 Fishing rod
- 5 Cauldron
- 8 Mast
- 12 "So be it"
- 13 Paris street
- 14 Jet speed measure
- 15 Leopards
- 17 Never again?
- 18 Noah's landfall
- 19 Sitting Bull's tribe
- 21 Tours season
- 22 Say it's so
- 23 Jungfrau, e.g.
- 26 Conclusion
- 28 Obliterate
- 31 "Hud" actress Patricia
- 33 Speck
- 35 Diving duck
- 36 Taboos
- 38 Cattle call
- 40 Chopper
- 41 Furnace fuel
- 43 "Downton Abbey" channel
- 45 Kigali's land
- 47 Eucalyptus eaters
- 51 H.H. Munro's pen name
- 52 Talk show guest
- 54 Nest setting
- 55 "No seats"

- 56 — Hari
- 57 Cold War initials
- 58 911 responder
- 59 Latin 101 word

- 23 New England cape
- 24 Zodiac feline
- 25 Breakfast orders
- 27 Monk's title
- 29 Gender
- 30 Lamb's dam
- 32 More wacky
- 34 Stylish bun
- 37 Blue
- 39 Reed instrument
- 42 Expire
- 44 Hayek of "Frida"
- 45 Queue after Q
- 46 Military conflicts
- 48 Actor Hemsworth
- 49 "The Thin Man" dog
- 50 Doc's "Now!"
- 53 Branch

#### Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	C	E	D		S	U	B		M	I	C	E
C	O	R	A		C	R	Y		I	D	O	L
M	A	R	Y	J	A	N	E		N	E	W	S
E	L	S		U	P	S		S	T	A	L	E
				M	M	E		R	A	J		
S	N	O	O	P		P	O	P	U	L	A	R
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E	N	Y	A		M	A	S	O	N	J	A	R
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D	A	T	A		P	A	Y		A	X	E	L

#### 11-25

#### CRYPTOQUIP

U H T T K U B    U K V B    X K I K E -  
 X M W R F Z R F    E B T Y Z I B U    S B X W V B  
 Y E B V B R G K H U I O    D B W I Y M O .  
 D K H I G Y M B O S B X M W - V Z I I Z K R U ?  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SOMEBODY WERE MISTAKEN ABOUT HOW THE SENSE OF TOUCH WORKS, WOULD HE BE TACTUALLY INCORRECT?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals P





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Ernie Gates

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## Afghan plan outcome falls on Biden

By BY DOYLE McMANUS

Los Angeles Times

With less than two months left in his term, President Donald Trump still has time to make some final impulsive moves on foreign policy that will affect U.S. interests for years to come.

He has started with Afghanistan, where he abruptly ordered a partial troop withdrawal last week, but only after the Pentagon resisted his efforts to pull all U.S. troops out.

Trump has long chafed at his inability to end the U.S. war against the Taliban, which just entered its 20th year.

It's hard to blame him; the war has cost more than \$2 trillion and 2,355 American lives, without turning Afghanistan into a stable democracy.

But by arbitrarily ordering troops home, Trump could snatch catastrophe from the jaws of defeat.

U.S. forces no longer seek a military victory in Afghanistan; they abandoned that goal long ago.

The remaining 4,500 troops — down from more than 100,000 in 2011 — are there for two reasons: to help suppress al-Qaida, which carried out the 9/11 terrorist attacks on America, and to pressure the Taliban toward a durable peace agreement with the central government in Kabul.

Trump's sudden pullout made both objectives harder to obtain.

It could have been worse. The president had wanted to withdraw all 4,500 U.S. troops by Election Day, a transparently political move. Then he reportedly wanted them out by Jan. 20, Inauguration Day, to claim bragging rights for keeping a cam-

paign promise.

But Pentagon officials warned that a total withdrawal in 60 days would be chaotic.

"It could look like Saigon in 1975: helicopters on the embassy roof," one former official told me, referring to the disastrous retreat at the end of the Vietnam War.

So the president backed off — halfway.

His newly named acting secretary of Defense, Christopher C. Miller, announced a drawdown of 2,000 troops, along with similar withdrawals from Iraq and Somalia.

Military officials didn't offer a strategic rationale for the numbers, the list of countries or the deadline of Inauguration Day — presumably because there isn't one.

Even a halfway withdrawal creates problems. It not only cuts troops available for counterterrorist operations; it reduces U.S. leverage over the Taliban in their fitful peace talks with the Kabul government.

The strangest thing about Trump's decision is that it undermines his own objectives. The peace talks are the product of his own administration's diplomacy — one of its few genuine foreign policy successes.

Over a year and a half of negotiations, Trump appointee Zalmay Khalilzad cajoled the Taliban into a deal to end the war, a deal Trump approved in February.

Under the arrangement, the Taliban agreed to stop attacking U.S. forces, reduce attacks on government forces, prevent al-Qaida from using Taliban-held territory as a base for terrorism and launch long-term peace talks with the Kabul regime.

The United States said that if the Taliban kept those promises, it would withdraw all its forces by May 2021, only six months from now. It was a reasonable, realistic deal that earned praise from both parties in Wash-

ington.

The Taliban hasn't fulfilled all its commitments. It stopped attacking U.S. troops — no Americans have been killed in combat since the deal was made — but it escalated attacks on Afghan security forces.

The Taliban did enter peace talks with the Kabul government, but they quickly stalled. Taliban leaders' promise to keep a lid on al-Qaida hasn't been fully tested.

By ordering 2,000 troops home without getting anything in return, Trump gave up some of his most potent leverage against the Taliban.

Trump's decision had other downsides as well. It was a betrayal of U.S. military allies, both Afghan and European, who weren't consulted before he issued his order to retreat.

European countries — led by Germany, Britain and Italy — now have more troops in Afghanistan than the United States. They depend on the U.S. military for critical support, including air power and emergency medical evacuations.

If a long-term peace deal is struck, the United States will ask those allies to contribute financial support for the new Afghan government — another key piece of Western leverage in the peace negotiations.

The consequences will fall to President-elect Joe Biden's administration to handle.

In the end, Trump didn't get all U.S. troops home by Election Day, or even Inauguration Day, as he had hoped. Nor did he end the war, or put the peace talks on a solid track.

But he did succeed in one respect: He made Biden's job harder.

McManus is a Washington columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

## Trump's Pentagon purge threatens security

By BY JOHN M. CRISP

Tribune News Service

At best, President Donald Trump's exit from the White House is ungraceful. At some point, it becomes disgraceful. And then dangerous. In fact, it already has.

For example, our nation is not in a good place with the pandemic; no one could credibly argue otherwise. Whether a different president could have done a better job of handling the virus is no longer important. What is important is a smooth transition of our virus response between the administration that got us where we are and the administration that has to see us through the pandemic. This is not happening.

Other dangerous things are happening. Hastily removing troops from Afghanistan will make the situation more difficult for the Biden administration. Suddenly firing the defense secretary in the last two months of an administration is destabilizing, and it undermines our national security.

The most dangerous action of all, however, is Trump's willingness to violate the essential norm in a democracy, the peaceful transfer of power based on the results of an election. No one is saying that Trump doesn't have a right to recounts or other legal options. But to call the election into question, based on no evidence, is to subvert the very idea of democracy itself.

Why is Trump doing this?

Others have speculated: One valuable by-

product of contesting the election is the opportunity for bait-and-switch fundraising to help the Trump campaign retire debt. This is happening.

Some suggest that Trump is making a fuss to enhance his post-presidency. Trump's stock-in-trade has always been grievance. Few things would generate as much oxygen for Trump's potential media career than being cheated out of the presidency.

Or maybe Trump figures that the myth of victimization will keep his political life alive, enhancing his influence in the Republican Party and even fueling a 2024 run.

Trump's behavior likely reflects various motivations, but I'm attracted to the philosophical principle that says the most likely answer to a question is the simplest one. Trump is psychologically unprepared to see himself as the loser of the world's biggest contest. His inability to accept the result of the election expresses itself as a desperate denial of reality. His anger motivates his revenge against those he believes have not supported him completely.

Some have characterized Trump's behavior as a tantrum. Children get over tantrums and the family moves on, which suggests that our republic will survive whatever damage Trump inflicts as he leaves.

Still, there's plenty to worry about. The most ominous numbers to emerge from the election come from surveys that indicate the support that Trump enjoys for his attempt to overturn the vote. A Monmouth

University poll found that 77% of Trump supporters believe that the election was fraudulent. An Economist/YouGov poll of 1,500 registered voters found that 82% of Republicans said that "Biden did NOT legitimately win the election."

Nearly 74 million people voted for Trump. These polls suggest that some 60 million Americans believe the 2020 election was fraudulent. How do we bring all those people back around to believing in our democracy? It's an awesome task. They have been gulled and beguiled by Russian trolls and social media silos. Their perception of the world is skewed by dubious sources.

They doubt everything and believe anything. Their commitment to the status quo blinds them to the ways the country is changing demographically and reinforces their determination to resist. They don't like what is happening so, they deny it.

Trump did not create these 60 million people, but he understands instinctually how to exploit them. One hopes that his disgraceful, undemocratic behavior would shake their confidence in him and remind them that a democracy depends on a commitment to rules and norms and not to people. So far, it doesn't seem to be working.

How do we reclaim 60 million Americans who have lost their faith in democracy? I do not know. But no greater task confronts us.

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Georgetown, Texas.



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## FACES



ABC/AP

**“JEOPARDY! The Greatest of All Time” champion Ken Jennings will be the first interim guest for the late Alex Trebek, and the show will try other guest hosts before naming a permanent replacement.**

# Jennings to be interim ‘Jeopardy!’ host

BY CHRISTIE D’ZURILLA  
*Los Angeles Times*

Champion Ken Jennings is going to succeed the late Alex Trebek as “Jeopardy!” host — at least in the short term.

Jennings will be the first in a series of “interim guest hosts” of the game show when it resumes production Nov. 30, the show announced Monday. Those episodes will air the week of Jan. 11.

“Alex believed in the importance of ‘Jeopardy!’ and always said that he wanted the show to go on after him,” executive producer Mike Richards said in a statement. “We will honor his legacy by continuing to produce the game he

loved with smart contestants and challenging clues.”

“Jeopardy!” wrapped production with Trebek on Oct. 29, a little more than a week before his death from pancreatic cancer on Nov. 8.

Now, the show wants to create “a sense of community and continuity for our viewers” by bringing in familiar guest hosts for the foreseeable future, Richards said. Additional guest hosts will be announced in coming weeks.

Jennings is known as the “Jeopardy!” GOAT after winning a prime-time “Greatest of All Time” showdown in January that included fellow champions James Holzhauer and Brad Rutter. He also

holds the show’s records for most consecutive games won — 74 — and highest winnings in regular season play, at \$2,520,700.

The show also revised its plan to air Trebek’s final episode Christmas Day. Instead, some of Trebek’s best episodes will rerun during the weeks of Dec. 21 and 28, with his final shows coming the week of Jan. 4 “in order to give his millions of fans a chance to see his final appearances” free from holiday hubbub.

Jennings was named a consulting producer on the show in September, which meant he presented his own video categories, developed projects, assisted with con-

testant outreach and served as a general “Jeopardy!” ambassador.

“I’m delighted to have the opportunity to remain involved with my favorite show,” Jennings said before the show returned to the air in mid-September after a pandemic-induced hiatus. “I’m still in on all the action, but I don’t have to worry about phrasing things in the form of a question anymore.”

His new role on the show sparked early speculation that Jennings was being groomed as Trebek’s successor.

Trebek had hosted the show since its revival in 1984, becoming an institution in America’s living rooms over the years.

## This week: ‘Saved by the Bell,’ Miley Cyrus & Melissa McCarthy

Associated Press

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

### Movies

The Christmas movie, that yuletide evergreen, is subtly changing. **“Happiest Season,”** which premieres Wednesday on Hulu, has many of the genre’s comforting standards — a homecoming trip, family discord, a secretly planned engagement — but it opens the holiday comedy to a fresh cast of characters, and comes away all the more charming for it. Writer-director Clea DuVall’s film — planned as a theatrical release by Sony Pictures — stars Kristen Stewart and Mackenzie Davis as Harper and Abby, a couple who travel to Harper’s WASPY family for the holidays. Just before they arrive, Harper confesses she isn’t out to her family. The supporting cast includes Aubrey Plaza, Mary Steenburgen and Daniel Levy.

**“Superintelligence,”** too, is a studio film uprooted to a streaming service by the pandemic. The Melissa McCarthy comedy, her latest with director-husband Ben Falcone (“Tammy,” “The Boss”), was headed to theaters but will instead debut Thursday on HBO Max. In it, an artificial-intelligence supercomputer voiced by James Corden tasks McCarthy’s unemployed character with saving the world.

Ironically, the week’s top Netflix release is the one that’s been playing in theaters. After two weeks in select cinemas, Ron Howard’s **“Hillbilly Elegy”** began streaming Tuesday. The adaptation of J.D. Vance’s much-talked-about 2016 bestseller hasn’t been a hit with critics, but it’s also a kind of regular feature to the season: a big ‘ol helping of awards bait, with a handful of big performances by elite actors (Glenn Close, Amy Adams).

— AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

### Music

Miley Cyrus is ready to rock. The pop star recruited famous rock stars to help on her seventh studio release, **“Plastic Hearts,”** including Stevie Nicks, Billy Idol and Joan Jett. Mick Rock, the iconic rock photographer who has shot everyone from David Bowie to Debbie Harry, photographed the “Plastic Hearts” cover art. Pop fans shouldn’t worry too much

about Miley’s rock sound. The album, out Friday, features a collaboration with hitmaker Dua Lipa and includes producers like Mark Ronson (Amy Winehouse, Bruno Mars) and Louis Bell (Post Malone).

Speaking of **Dua Lipa**, the Brit has had a major year thanks to the success of her sophomore album, “Future Nostalgia,” and the hit single “Don’t Start Now.” She’ll celebrate Friday with “Studio 2054,” a multidimensional live experience where Lipa is promising fans “a night of music, mayhem, performance, theater, dance and much more.” The singer said there will be “surprise superstar guests” at the event, and standard tickets costs \$11.99.

**Smashing Pumpkins** will release a double album Friday. “CYR” features 20 tracks produced by founding member and frontman Billy Corgan. The band’s 11th album also features founding members James Iha and Jimmy Chamberlin as well as guitarist Jeff Schroeder. “CYR” is the follow-up to 2018’s “SHINY AND OH SO BRIGHT, VOL. 1 / LP: NO PAST. NO FUTURE. NO SUN” — Corgan, Iha and Chamberlin’s first collaborative album in 18 years.

— AP Music Editor Mesfin Fekadu

### Television

If you like “Bones” and “CSI” but just need more French accents, your best bet is the terrific NOVA special **“Saving Notre Dame.”** The hour-long PBS documentary airing Wednesday shows the incredible lengths architects, engineers and craftspeople have gone to restore the iconic Paris cathedral stricken by 2019’s fire. There is detective work — where did the original limestone come from? — and painstaking efforts to reclaim the building’s glory, like stained glass specialists using cotton swabs to remove toxic lead. Everyone wears full hazard protection gear as they navigate a “giant house of cards.”

Can you have a **“Saved by the Bell”** without Screech? Peacock is hoping fans won’t notice that character’s absence when its sequel to the popular TV series brings back members of the original cast — Elizabeth Berkeley, Mario Lopez, Tiffani Thiessen and Mark-Paul Gosselaar — but not Dustin Diamond, who played the quirky Screech. In this sequel kicking off Wednesday, Gosselaar is California governor who has a son at Bayside High, Berkeley is a guidance counselor and Lopez is once again



Hulu/AP

Kristen Stewart, left, and Mackenzie Davis in a scene from “Happiest Season.”



RCA/AP

Miley Cyrus is ready to rock on **“Plastic Hearts,”** which will be released Friday.

A.C. Slater, now a gym teacher.

It happens all the time: You wake up next to a dead body in a Bangkok hotel. In the case of HBO Max’s adaptation of **“The Flight Attendant,”** the comedy and darkness work simultaneously. Kaley Cuoco of “The Big Bang Theory” plays an air hostess with a drinking problem whose looney attempts to cover up her part in the death place her in the crosshairs of the FBI. The first three episodes of the limited series premier Thursday, with the first one free if you’re willing to give HBO Max your email.

— AP Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy

## ‘Queen’s Gambit’ draws record 62M households, Netflix reports

From wire reports

“The Queen’s Gambit,” the buzzy, female-led drama set in the 1960s chess world, has become Netflix Inc.’s most popular limited scripted series ever.

Some 62 million households watched the show in its first 28 days, Netflix said Monday. In the streaming giant’s typical practice, it provided no direct context for the figure, and Netflix shows have no independent ratings figures.

Still, “The Queen’s Gambit” is clearly among Netflix’s more culturally resonant programs of recent years. Since its debut in October, searches for chess sets on eBay are up 250%, and Walter Tevis’ 1983 novel that inspired the series has returned to bestseller lists, Netflix said in a blog post.

The seven-episode series is ranked in the top 10 most watched on Netflix in 92 countries, including first in 63, the company said.

The show follows an orphaned female chess prodigy, played by Anya Taylor-Joy, who struggles with drug addiction as she rises to become one of the world’s best players.

In other news from the streaming giant, Netflix plans to establish one of the largest production hubs in North America with an expansion of its existing studio complex in New Mexico and a commitment to an additional \$1 billion in production spending, government and corporate leaders announced Monday.

Ten new stages, post-production services, offices, mills, backlots and other infrastructure would be added to Netflix’s growing campus on the southern edge of Albuquerque. Aside from construction jobs, the project is expected to result in 1,000 production jobs over the next decade.



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# SCOREBOARD/COLLEGE FOOTBALL

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

### AP Top 25 schedule

- No. 1 Alabama (7-0) vs. No. 22 Auburn, Saturday
- No. 2 Notre Dame (8-0) at No. 25 North Carolina, Friday
- No. 3 Ohio State (4-0) at Illinois, Saturday
- No. 4 Clemson (7-1) vs. Pittsburgh, Saturday
- No. 5 Texas A&M (5-1) vs. LSU, Saturday
- No. 6 Florida (6-1) vs. Kentucky, Saturday
- No. 7 Cincinnati (8-0) at Temple, Saturday
- No. 9 Oregon (3-0) at Oregon State, Friday
- No. 11 Northwestern (5-0) at Michigan State, Saturday
- No. 12 Indiana (4-1) vs. Maryland, Saturday
- No. 13 Georgia (5-2) at South Carolina, Saturday
- No. 14 Oklahoma (6-2) at West Virginia, Saturday
- No. 15 Iowa State (6-2) at No. 20 Texas, Friday
- No. 16 Coastal Carolina (8-0) at Texas State, Saturday
- No. 18 Wisconsin (2-1) vs. Minnesota, Saturday
- No. 19 USC (3-0) vs. Colorado, Saturday
- No. 21 Oklahoma State (5-2) vs. Texas Tech, Saturday
- No. 23 Louisiana-Lafayette (7-1) at Louisiana-Monroe, Saturday
- No. 24 Tulsa (5-1) at Houston, Saturday

### DEALS

#### Monday's transactions

- BASEBALL**  
Major League Baseball National League
- CHICAGO CUBS** — Agreed to terms with president of baseball operations Jed Hoyer on a five-year contract.
- BASKETBALL**  
National Basketball Association
- ATLANTA HAWKS** — Signed G Rajon Rondo.
- DETROIT PISTONS** — Acquired G Zhaire Smith from Philadelphia in exchange for C Tony Bradley.
- NEW YORK KNICKS** — Acquired F Ed Davis from Utah in exchange for cash considerations.
- FOOTBALL**  
National Football League
- ATLANTA FALCONS** — Signed RB Tony Brooks-James and WR Devin Gray to the practice squad. Released LB Jake Carllock from the practice squad.
- BALTIMORE RAVENS** — Signed TE Eric Tomlinson to the practice squad. Designated G Tyre Phillips to return from injured reserve.
- CHICAGO BEARS** — Placed DB Eddie Jackson on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
- CINCINNATI BENGALS** — Placed QB Joe Burrow on injured reserve. Signed G Quinton Spain and QB Brandon Allen to the active roster.
- GREEN BAY PACKERS** — Released P Drew Kaser.
- HOUSTON TEXANS** — Claimed G Hjalte Froholdt off waivers from New England and placed him on the exempt/commissioner permission list. Activated TE Kahale Warring from injured reserve.
- MIAMI DOLPHINS** — Placed OL Jesse Davis on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
- MINNESOTA VIKINGS** — Placed WR Adam Thielen on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
- NEW YORK GIANTS** — Designated S Xavier McKinney and OLB Oshane Ximines to return from injured reserve.
- NEW YORK JETS** — Waived QB Mike White. Activated TE Ross Travis to the practice squad from the reserve/COVID-19 list.
- PHILADELPHIA EAGLES** — Signed RB Jordan Howard to the practice squad.
- SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS** — Waived LB Kiko Alonso. Placed DLs D.J. Jones and Jordan Willis on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
- SEATTLE SEAHAWKS** — Placed TE Greg Olsen on injured reserve. Signed DT Damon Harrison to the active roster.
- TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS** — Promoted RB Kenjon Barner to the active roster.

### AP SPORTLIGHT

#### Nov. 25

- 1925** — Red Grange, playing his first game as a professional with the Chicago Bears, is held to 36 yards in a 0-0 tie with the Chicago Cardinals.
- 1934** — The Detroit Lions suffer the first defeat in franchise history, 3-0 to the Green Bay Packers. The Lions had won the first 10 games of the season.
- 1948** — Howie Dallmar of the Philadelphia Warriors matches his NBA record for foulity by missing all 15 shots against the Washington Capitols.
- 1976** — Buffalo's O.J. Simpson rushes for 273 yards and scores two touchdowns in a 27-14 loss to the Detroit Lions on Thanksgiving Day.
- 1980** — "No Mas, No Mas." Roberto Duran quits with 16 seconds to go in the eighth round at New Orleans, allowing Sugar Ray Leonard to regain the WBC welterweight title.
- 1985** — Clemson's Grayson Marshall sets an NCAA record with 20 assists in an 83-57 victory over Maryland-Eastern Shore.

## PRO SOCCER

### MLS playoffs

- Play-in Eastern Conference Friday, Nov. 20**  
New England 2, Montreal 1  
Nashville 3, Inter Miami 0
- First Round Eastern Conference Saturday, Nov. 21**  
Orlando City 1, New York City FC 1, (Orlando advances 6-5 on penalties)  
Columbus 3, New York 2
- Tuesday, Nov. 24**  
Toronto vs. Nashville at East Hartford, Conn.  
New England at Philadelphia
- Western Conference Sunday, Nov. 22**  
Sporting Kansas City 3, San Jose 3, (Sporting KC advances 3-0 on penalties)  
Minnesota United 3, Colorado 0  
Portland 3, Dallas 3, (Dallas advances 8-7 on penalties)
- Tuesday, Nov. 24**  
Los Angeles FC at Seattle
- Conference Semifinals Eastern Conference Sunday, Nov. 29**  
**Game 1:** Orlando City vs. TBD  
**Game 2:** Columbus vs. TBD
- Western Conference Dec. 1 or Dec. 2**  
Minnesota United at Sporting KC
- Dec. 1 or Dec. 2**  
Dallas vs. TBD
- Conference Championships Sunday, Dec. 6**  
**Game 1:** Teams TBD  
**Game 2:** Teams TBD
- MLS Cup Saturday, Dec. 12**  
Teams TBD

## TENNIS

### ATP rankings

#### Singles Through Nov. 22

1. Novak Djokovic, Serbia, 12030
2. Rafael Nadal, Spain, 9850
3. Dominic Thiem, Austria, 9125
4. Daniil Medvedev, Russia, 8470
5. Roger Federer, Switzerland, 6630
6. Stefanos Tsitsipas, Greece, 5925
7. Alexander Zverev, Germany, 5525
8. Andrey Rublev, Russia, 4119
9. Diego Schwartzman, Argentina, 3455
10. Matteo Berrettini, Italy, 3075
11. Gael Monfils, France, 2860
12. Denis Shapovalov, Canada, 2830
13. Roberto Bautista Agut, Spain, 2710
14. Milos Raonic, Canada, 2580
15. David Goffin, Belgium, 2555
16. Pablo Carreno Busta, Spain, 2535
17. Fabio Fognini, Italy, 2400
18. Stan Wawrinka, Switzerland, 2320
19. Grigor Dimitrov, Bulgaria, 2260
20. Karen Khachanov, Russia, 2245
21. Felix Auger-Aliassime, Canada, 2216
22. Cristian Garin, Chile, 2170
23. Alex de Minaur, Australia, 1860
24. Borna Coric, Croatia, 1855
25. John Isner, USA, 1850
26. Dusan Lajovic, Serbia, 1785

#### Doubles

1. Robert Farah, Colombia, 8530
2. Juan Sebastian Cabal, Colombia, 8440
3. Horacio Zeballos, Argentina, 7180
4. Mate Pavic, Croatia, 6950
5. Wesley Koolhof, Netherlands, 6590
6. Nicolas Mahut, France, 6430
7. Bruno Soares, Brazil, 6430
8. Nikola Pietrangeli, Croatia, 6330
9. Marcel Granollers, Spain, 5775
10. Lukasz Kubot, Poland, 5700

### WTA Rankings

#### Singles Through Nov. 22

1. Ashleigh Barty, Australia, 8717
2. Simona Halep, Romania, 7255
3. Naomi Osaka, Japan, 5780
4. Sofia Kenin, USA, 5760
5. Elina Svitolina, Ukraine, 5260
6. Karolina Pliskova, Czech Republic, 5205
7. Bianca Andreescu, Canada, 4555
8. Petra Kvitova, Czech Republic, 4516
9. Kiki Bertens, Netherlands, 4505
10. Aryna Sabalenka, Belarus, 4220
11. Serena Williams, USA, 4080
12. Belinda Bencic, Switzerland, 4010
13. Victoria Azarenka, Belarus, 3426
14. Johanna Konta, Great Britain, 3152
15. Garbine Muguruza, Spain, 3016
16. Madison Keys, USA, 2962
17. Iga Swiatek, Poland, 2960
18. Petra Martic, Croatia, 2850
19. Elena Rybakina, Kazakhstan, 2696
20. Elise Mertens, Belgium, 2650
21. Marketa Vondrousova, Czech Republic, 2538
22. Maria Sakkari, Greece, 2405
23. Anett Kontaveit, Estonia, 2330
24. Jennifer Brady, USA, 2320
25. Angelique Kerber, Germany, 2271
26. Alison Riske, USA, 2256

#### Doubles

1. Hsieh Su-wei, Chinese Taipei, 9010
2. Barbora Strycova, Czech Republic, 8945
3. Kristina Mladenovic, France, 8115
4. Tímea Babos, Hungary, 7955
5. Aryna Sabalenka, Belarus, 7575
6. Elise Mertens, Belgium, 7490
7. Barbora Krejčíková, Czech Republic, 5955
8. Katerina Siniakova, Czech Republic, 5865
9. Xu Yifan, China, 5820
10. Gabriela Dabrowski, Canada, 5675

# SEC shuffles schedule

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Southeastern Conference has shuffled its schedule, pushing back the Arkansas-Missouri and Tennessee-Vanderbilt games that had been set for Saturday.

The league announced Monday that it has postponed the Arkansas-Missouri game because of a combination of positive tests, contact tracing and the resulting quarantining within the Arkansas program.

Vanderbilt and Missouri will now meet Saturday to make up a game that was postponed on Oct. 17.

The SEC is still trying to get in 10 games for all 14 teams, and last week reserved the right to revise the schedule up until 8 p.m. CT on Mondays.

No date has been set for Arkansas-Missouri or Tennessee-Vanderbilt, but Dec. 19 is a possibility for teams not playing in the league championship game.

“As we continue to adapt to the current realities, it’s important to remain flexible as we move forward in the final weeks of the season,” SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey said. “Contact tracing continues to be the biggest contributing factor to game interruptions.”

“We will continue to manage the remaining weeks of the football schedule to allow for as many games to be played as possible.”

Arkansas at Missouri is the sixth game scheduled for this weekend that has been postponed because of COVID-19 issues with one of the teams involved, including the Apple Cup between Washington and Washington State.

In Conference USA on Monday, Louisiana Tech at FIU was canceled and Western Kentucky at Charlotte was pushed back from Saturday to Dec. 1. That game will have an unusual 10:30 a.m. ET kickoff time on a Tuesday.

In the past two weeks, 33 games involving FBS teams have been postponed or canceled, about 27% of



MARK HUMPHREY / AP

Vanderbilt quarterback Ken Seals passes against Florida during Saturday's game in Nashville, Tenn.

the schedule.

In the Big Ten, Minnesota announced it won't practice on Tuesday, conducting all-virtual meetings instead because of presumptive COVID-19 positive tests within the program.

The Gophers are scheduled to play Saturday at Wisconsin, which has already had two games canceled due to the virus. The university said the team's goal is to return to regular practice on Wednesday. Several Minnesota players were sidelined and three staff members were quarantined for last week's game against Purdue.

# Norvell stands by decision

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Florida — Florida State coach Mike Norvell is standing by the decision to postpone the Seminoles' game Saturday against No. 4 Clemson after the Tigers reported a positive player test following their arrival on campus, adding that even though he and his team wanted to



Norvell

play there were safety concerns.

“We believe the right decision was made,” Norvell said on Monday.

The game was called off a few hours before kickoff Saturday when medical teams from both schools could not agree that it was safe to play.

Clemson offered Florida State an additional round of testing and delaying the start until later Saturday, or even Sunday or Monday.

Tigers coach Dabo Swinney was angered by the decision, saying Florida State administrators were using COVID-19 as “an excuse” not to play.

Norvell, who had COVID-19 and missed a game earlier this season, said the decision was entirely based on the coronavirus and the safety of his team.

“Football coaches are not doc-



MATT CASHORE / AP

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said Florida State should reimburse Clemson for traveling expenses after Saturday's game in Tallahassee, Fla., was postponed hours before kickoff.

tors. Some of us might think that we are,” Norvell said. “There’s a reason why those (medical) advisors are able to make those decisions from the information provided.”

Norvell said he tried to call Swinney on Saturday, but the two did not connect and have not talked.

Clemson athletic director Dan Radakovich said Monday on the ACC Network that Swinney is his players' biggest advocate — “And he should be.”

“His comments,” the AD said,

“while maybe a little disheartening to some, really were his feelings.”

Radakovich has said he will speak with the ACC about rescheduling the game. Both teams have open dates on Dec. 12, a week before the league's championship game.

Swinney said Sunday that Florida State forfeited the game and if the Seminoles wanted to make it up, they should play at Clemson or pay the athletic department's \$300,000 or so in traveling expenses.



# NFL

## Scoreboard

American Conference						
East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	7	3	0	.700	272	265
Miami	6	4	0	.600	264	202
New England	4	6	0	.400	209	238
N.Y. Jets	0	10	0	.000	149	302
South						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Indianapolis	7	3	0	.700	276	208
Tennessee	7	3	0	.700	279	259
Houston	3	7	0	.300	227	272
Jacksonville	1	9	0	.100	202	298
North						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	10	0	0	1.000	298	174
Cleveland	7	3	0	.700	238	261
Baltimore	6	4	0	.600	268	195
Cincinnati	2	7	1	.250	213	270
West						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	9	1	0	.900	321	214
Las Vegas	6	4	0	.600	286	276
Denver	4	6	0	.400	206	267
L.A. Chargers	3	7	0	.300	260	273

National Conference						
East						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	3	6	1	.350	220	254
Dallas	3	7	0	.300	235	318
N.Y. Giants	3	7	0	.300	195	236
Washington	3	7	0	.300	200	227
South						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	8	2	0	.800	295	222
Tampa Bay	7	4	0	.636	320	253
Carolina	4	7	0	.364	253	272
Atlanta	3	7	0	.300	252	275
North						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Green Bay	7	3	0	.700	308	258
Chicago	5	5	0	.500	191	209
Detroit	4	6	0	.400	227	287
Minnesota	4	6	0	.400	264	278
West						
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
L.A. Rams	7	3	0	.700	243	192
Seattle	6	3	0	.700	318	287
Arizona	6	4	0	.600	287	238
San Francisco	4	6	0	.400	238	234

**Sunday's games**  
 Carolina 20, Detroit 0  
 Cleveland 22, Philadelphia 17  
 Houston 27, New England 20  
 New Orleans 24, Atlanta 9  
 Pittsburgh 27, Jacksonville 3  
 Tennessee 30, Baltimore 24, OT  
 Washington 20, Cincinnati 9  
 Denver 20, Miami 13  
 L.A. Chargers 34, N.Y. Jets 28  
 Dallas 31, Minnesota 28  
 Indianapolis 34, Green Bay 31, OT  
 Kansas City 35, Las Vegas 31  
**Open:** Buffalo, Chicago, N.Y. Giants, San Francisco

**Monday's game**  
 L.A. Rams 27, Tampa Bay 24

**Thursday's games**  
 Houston at Detroit  
 Washington at Dallas  
 Baltimore at Pittsburgh

**Sunday, Nov. 29**  
 Arizona at New England  
 Carolina at Minnesota  
 Cleveland at Jacksonville  
 L.A. Chargers at Buffalo  
 Las Vegas at Atlanta  
 Miami at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.  
 N.Y. Giants at Cincinnati  
 Tennessee at Indianapolis  
 New Orleans at Denver  
 San Francisco at L.A. Rams  
 Kansas City at Tampa Bay  
 Chicago at Green Bay

**Monday, Nov. 30**  
 Seattle at Philadelphia

**Thursday, Dec. 3**  
 Dallas at Baltimore

**Sunday, Dec. 6**  
 Cleveland at Tennessee  
 Washington at Pittsburgh  
 Las Vegas at N.Y. Jets  
 Jacksonville at Minnesota  
 Cincinnati at Miami  
 Indianapolis at Houston  
 Detroit at Chicago  
 New Orleans at Atlanta  
 N.Y. Giants at Seattle  
 L.A. Rams at Arizona  
 New England at L.A. Chargers  
 Philadelphia at Green Bay  
 Denver at Kansas City



MARK LoMOGLIO / AP

Los Angeles Rams quarterback Jared Goff threw for 376 yards and three touchdowns to lead the Rams to a 27-24 victory Monday night at Tampa Bay.

## Goff throws 3 TDs in Rams' defeat of Bucs

BY FRED GOODALL  
 Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Jared Goff likes how the Los Angeles Rams are shaping up.

“We can be as good as we want to be, honestly,” the fifth-year quarterback said after Monday night’s 27-24 victory over Tom Brady and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. “We’ve got it all in front of us. Everything is there for us to take.”

Goff threw for 376 yards and three touchdowns, and Matt Gay kicked a 40-yard field goal with 2:36 remaining to lift the Rams back into first place in the NFC West.

Goff completed 39 of 51 passes, including short scoring throws to Robert Woods, Van Jefferson and Cam Akers. Los Angeles’ defense pressured Brady all night and sealed the win with rookie safety Jordan Fuller’s second interception of the six-time Super Bowl champion.

Goff threw a pair of interceptions, too, helping the Bucs remain close in the second half.

But when the Rams (7-3) needed him to stand tall, he rebounded to lead them right down the field to retake the lead after Brady tied it with his second TD pass.

“I’ve always believed in myself in any situation, but when you actually do it in a tough environment, it makes you feel good,” Goff said.

“Jared just continued to demonstrate resilience,” Los Angeles coach Sean McVay said. “I love the fact he was outstanding from the jump. We had that one little mistake, and he just kept competing. What he did in terms of leading us down the field at the most important moment was critical.”

Cooper Kupp had 11 receptions for 145 yards and Woods finished with 10 catches for 130 yards. Both

caught passes on the eight-play, 53-yard drive Goff led to move the Rams into position for Gay’s winning kick.

Brady was 26-for-48 for 216 yards and two touchdowns. Los Angeles sacked him once.

### L.A. Rams 27, Buccaneers 24

L.A. Rams	7	10	7	3	—	27
Tampa Bay	0	14	3	7	—	24

#### First Quarter

LAR—Woods 4 pass from Goff (Gay kick), 3:55.

#### Second Quarter

TB—M.Evans 9 pass from Brady (Succop kick), 14:10.

TB—Fournette 2 run (Succop kick), 8:35.

LAR—Jefferson 7 pass from Goff (Gay kick), 4:31.

LAR—FG Gay 38, :00.

#### Third Quarter

TB—FG Succop 38, 12:41.

LAR—Akers 4 pass from Goff (Gay kick), 5:39.

#### Fourth Quarter

TB—Godwin 13 pass from Brady (Succop kick), 3:53.

LAR—FG Gay 40, 2:36.

A—15,730.

	LAR	TB
First downs	22	20
Total net yards	413	251
Rushes-yards	20-37	18-42
Passing	376	209
Punt returns	2-4	3-19
Kickoff returns	0-0	1-24
Time of Possession	33:13	26:47
Interception returns	2-43	2-17
Comp-Att-Int	39-51-2	26-48-2
Sacked-Yards Lost	0-0	1-7
Fumbles-lost	1-0	0-0
Punts	5-43.4	5-49.0
Penalties-Yards	5-65	2-7

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**RUSHING**—L.A. Rams, Brown 3-20, Akers 5-15, Henderson 8-5, Higbee 1-1, Goff 1-0, Woods 2-(minus 4). Tampa Bay, Jones 10-24, Fournette 7-17, Brown 1-1.

**PASSING**—L.A. Rams, Goff 39-51-2-376. Tampa Bay, Brady 26-48-2-216.

**RECEIVING**—L.A. Rams, Woods 12-130, Kupp 11-145, Everett 4-27, Higbee 4-19, Reynolds 3-32, Henderson 2-4, Brown 1-8, Jefferson 1-7, Akers 1-4. Tampa Bay, Brown 8-57, Godwin 7-53, Evans 5-49, Brate 3-23, Gronkowski 2-25, Fournette 1-9.

**MISSED FIELD GOALS**—L.A. Rams, Gay 44.

# Ravens' Ingram, Dobbins test positive for virus

Thursday's game with Steelers remains on

BY MARK MASKE  
 The Washington Post

The Baltimore Ravens temporarily closed their training facility Monday morning after two players, running backs Mark Ingram II and J.K. Dobbins, and other members of the organization tested positive for the coronavirus.

The team reopened its facility later Monday and planned to conduct a light walk-through practice, coach John Harbaugh said. Their game Thursday night in Pittsburgh against the unbeaten Steelers remained on as scheduled, according to Harbaugh and another person familiar with the NFL's planning.

Baltimore's issues came as the NFL further toughened its coronavirus protocols. The league told teams in a memo Monday that, beginning with this week's Thanksgiving games, all players who are on the sideline during a game (those not substituting or preparing to take the field and not wearing their helmets) must wear masks or double-layered gaiters.

“Players who fail to wear masks on the sidelines will be subject to discipline,” the NFL's memo said. “Clubs are required to enforce these rules. Violations by players and/or staff will result in accountability measures being imposed upon the Club. It is strongly recommended that each Club designate one or two individuals in the Bench Area to ensure compliance with these rules.”

Coaches and team staffers already were required to wear masks while on the sideline during games. Sideline mask-wearing previously had been recommended for players during games but not required; it was required of players before and after games. Monday's memo by the NFL also outlined a reduction to the number of players allowed to travel to a road game and further restrictions on access to team facilities while players and coaches are present.

Harbaugh confirmed during a video news conference that Ingram and Dobbins had tested positive. According to Harbaugh, defensive tackle Brandon Williams was placed in a five-day quarantine after being identified as a high-risk close contact. The three players were placed on the Rav-



NICK WASS / AP

The Baltimore Ravens closed their training facility Monday after running backs J.K. Dobbins and Mark Ingram, above, and other team employees tested positive for COVID-19.

ens' Covid-19 reserve list and will miss the game in Pittsburgh.

“There's nobody else besides that,” Harbaugh said. “There's nobody else that has it. I think our players did a great job on the sideline with masks, a great job in the locker room. We tried to follow the protocols throughout the game and throughout the weekend at the hotel and the meetings during the week. Our guys have done a good job of that. So I'm appreciative of them for that. That's probably the thing that gives us a chance to play this game on Thursday night: the guys doing a great job of that here in the building and at the game.”

The team announced earlier Monday that “multiple members” of the organization had tested positive without providing details. The Athletic reported as many as four members of the organization tested positive, including staff.

“We will continue to work closely with and follow guidance from the NFL, team doctors and our medical trainers,” the Ravens said in a statement.

Baltimore, with its sudden shortage at running back, will face competitive issues against the Steelers. But the NFL does not appear to be considering a postponement of Thursday night's game unless there are further positive tests by the Ravens.

Players, coaches and certain team staffers are tested daily under the protocols developed by the NFL and the NFL Players Association. The positive test results came from the game-day testing conducted Sunday before the Ravens played the Tennessee Titans in Baltimore.



# COLLEGE BASKETBALL

## This week's schedule

### Wednesday's games

#### EAST

Towson vs. St. Bonaventure at Uncasville, Conn.  
George Washington at Navy  
Drexel at Penn St.  
Fairleigh Dickinson at Quinnipiac  
Point Park at Robert Morris  
Sacred Heart at Rutgers  
Stony Brook at Bryant  
Fairfield at Providence  
N. Iowa vs. West Virginia at Sioux Falls, S.D.  
Old Dominion at Maryland  
Virginia vs. Maine at Uncasville, Conn.  
Gannon at Buffalo  
UMBC at Georgetown  
Florida vs. Mass.-Lowell at Uncasville, Conn.  
Coppin St. at Marshall  
Hofstra at Monmouth (NJ)  
S. Dakota St. vs. West Virginia at Sioux Falls, S.D.  
St. Francis (Pa.) at Pittsburgh  
St. Peter's at St. John's  
Villanova vs. Boston College at Uncasville, Conn.

#### SOUTH

Florida College at South Florida  
Fort Lauderdale at FIU  
Lancaster Bible at James Madison  
Mount St. Mary's at Morgan St.  
Radford at Virginia Tech  
Appalachian St. at SC State  
Carver at Kennesaw St.  
Florida National at Georgia Southern  
Longwood vs. Alabama St. at Winston-Salem, N.C.  
North Georgia at Mercer  
Prairie View vs. UALR at Louisville, K.Y.  
UNC-Wilmington vs. W. Carolina at Asheville, N.C.  
Akron vs. Middle Tennessee at Estero, Fla.  
Bellarmine at Chattanooga  
Cent. Arkansas at Mississippi  
Middle Georgia State at Troy  
Southern Wesleyan at SC-Upstate  
Piedmont at The Citadel  
Alcorn St. at UAB  
Delaware St. at Wake Forest  
Evansville at Louisville  
North Florida vs. E. Kentucky at Raleigh, N.C.  
Columbus State at Georgia  
Jackson St. vs. Arkansas St. at Oxford, Miss.  
Ball St. at N. Kentucky  
Brewton-Parker College at Wofford  
Coll. of Charleston at North Carolina  
Morehead St. at Kentucky  
Coker at South Carolina  
Oakwood University at North Alabama  
Coastal Georgia at Jacksonville  
FAU at South Alabama  
Florida A&M at Florida Gulf Coast  
High Point at Davidson  
NC Wesleyan at Elon  
St. Andrews at VMI  
Xavier University of Louisiana at Louisiana-Lafayette  
Jacksonville St. at Alabama  
Brescia at Murray St.  
Campbellsville-Harrodsburg at Lipscomb  
Charleston Southern at NC State  
Charlotte at Tennessee  
Gardner-Webb at Duke  
Indiana St. vs. East Carolina at Estero, Fla.  
Clemson vs. Mississippi St. at Melbourne, Fla.  
Detroit vs. Richmond at Lexington, K.Y.  
Georgia St. at Georgia Tech

#### MIDWEST

McNeese St. at Nebraska  
Oakland at Xavier  
North Dakota at Miami (Ohio)  
SIU-Edwardsville at Saint Louis  
Drake at Kansas St.  
Illinois St. at Ohio St.  
NC A&T at Illinois  
San Francisco vs. LSU at Lincoln, N.E.  
Toledo vs. Bradley at Cincinnati, O.H.  
Bowling Green at Michigan  
Culver-Stockton at UMKC  
NC Central at Iowa  
W. Kentucky vs. N. Iowa at Sioux Falls, S.D.  
Austin Peay vs. Nebraska-Omaha at Estero, F.L.  
E. Michigan at Michigan St.  
Liberty vs. Purdue at Melbourne, F.L.  
W. Kentucky vs. Nevada at Lincoln, N.E.  
W. Michigan at Butler  
Green Bay at Minnesota  
IUPUI at Chicago St.  
Ill.-Chicago at N. Illinois  
Oral Roberts at Missouri  
S. Dakota St. vs. Creighton at Sioux Falls, S.D.  
SE Louisiana at Fort Wayne  
South Dakota vs. Colorado at Manhattan, K.S.  
Tennessee Tech at Indiana  
Ark.-Pine Bluff at Marquette  
E. Illinois at Wisconsin

#### SOUTHWEST

ETSU vs. Abilene Christian at Estero, F.L.  
Rhode Island vs. Stephen F. Austin at Uncasville, C.T.  
Lamar at Houston  
Oklahoma St. at Texas-Arlington  
Mary Hardin-Baylor at Texas State  
Northwestern St. at Texas Tech  
MVSU at Arkansas  
Houston Baptist at TCU  
Rio Grande at Texas  
Sam Houston St. at SMU  
UTSA at Oklahoma  
Texas A&M International at Texas A&M-CC  
Texas of the Permian Basin at UTEP

#### FAR WEST

Montana St. at UNLV  
Nicholls vs. UC Davis at Santa Clara, C.A.  
UC Irvine vs. Pepperdine at San Diego, C.A.  
Memphis vs. Saint Mary's (Cal) at Sioux Falls, S.D.  
Northwest University at Oregon St.  
Idaho St. at Santa Clara  
Seattle vs. Idaho at Portland, O.R.  
Simpson University at San Jose St.  
UC Riverside at Pacific  
Utah Valley at Stanford  
Cal St.-Fullerton at San Diego  
Colorado St. vs. California at Corvallis, O.R.  
N. Arizona at Arizona  
Westmont at CS Northridge  
Colorado Christian at Denver  
S. Utah at Loyola Marymount  
Westminster (UT) at BYU  
Bethesda at Sacramento St.  
Adams State at Weber St.  
E. Washington at Oregon  
Grambling St. at Grand Canyon  
Texas Southern at Washington St.  
Baylor vs. Arizona St. at Uncasville, C.T.  
Wichita St. vs. Utah St. at Sioux Falls, S.D.  
UCLA at San Diego St.  
William Jessup at Fresno St.  
California Baptist at Southern Cal  
Portland St. at Washington



RAY CARLIN / AP

Kansas guard Christian Braun, left, is congratulated by teammate Devon Dotson after a three-point basket last season. Dotson is gone, and the Jayhawks might not even be the top team in the conference.

# Baylor, Kansas class of Big 12

BY DAVE SKRETTA

Associated Press

Kansas was the heavy favorite to land the overall No. 1 seed for the NCAA Tournament when word began to filter through conference tournaments that COVID-19 was going to shut down the remainder of the season.

Now, the Jayhawks might not even be the favorites to finish first in the Big 12.

With four starters back from a team that gave Kansas fits last season, second-ranked Baylor has been picked by many as the class of the conference.

Jared Butler, Davion Mitchell and MaCio Teague give the Bears one of the nation's best backcourts, top-100 recruit L.J. Cryer

and transfer Adam Flagler provide depth, Mark Vital can stake claim as one of the country's best defenders and Tristan Clark is ready to take over for departed big man Freddie Gillespie.

"In a season that got moved back and a short summer, you definitely benefit from having guys that have college experience," Baylor coach Scott Drew said. "Now, just because players did it one year doesn't guarantee that they'll be as successful the next year. But it definitely gives you an advantage, and most people would take it rather than not."

Experience is one thing; experience winning is another. The Bears haven't reached the third weekend of the NCAA Tourna-

ment since 2012, and they haven't won a league championship since sharing the Southwest Conference title in 1950.

The Jayhawks may have lost big man Udoka Azubuike and point guard Devon Dotson, their key cogs last season, but they return a bevy of talent along with a championship pedigree that has made them so tough over the years.

"It's just a different team," said forward Jalen Wilson, an elite recruit who wound up missing last season with an injury. "We don't have Doke, we don't have Dot, but we have other wings, new players, and I think we just have a new team that's a little bit younger, that's hungry to play, hungry to win."

# Cautiously: March Madness, regular season will be much different

FROM PAGE 24

Though a vaccine appears to be on the way, there's a good chance that in March, fans and bands and mascots will largely miss out, much the way they've been missing out inside arenas and stadiums that have hosted recent NBA, MLB and NHL seasons, as well as the current and oft-interrupted college and pro football schedules.

But the reality is the people college basketball really needs at the arenas are the TV crews.

CBS and various cable affiliates are scheduled to pay around \$800 million this season to televise America's most frenetic sports celebration for three weeks each March and April. That's on top of the millions the biggest conferences generate in media revenue during the regular season.

Most of it is money earmarked

for distribution by the NCAA and the conferences to the schools, which combine hoops and football revenue to fund smaller sports in their programs. A staggering 116 of those programs have been cut from 34 schools at the Division I level since the pandemic hit, according to the USOPC, whose very ability to field an Olympic team is largely dependent on the college system.

Another year like that would have the potential to mark the beginning of the end of the college sports system as we know it.

"When you look around the country, this has potential to force some schools to recalibrate what they're capable of supporting," said John Tauer, the coach at St. Thomas, the Minnesota school that is moving from Division III to Division I. "It's a complicated question that every school is going

to answer differently."

So, how to get from November to March?

The Ivy League has already bagged it, canceling all winter sports, which means there will be no Harvard or Yale come tournament time, and none of those eminently entertaining stories about how smart guys can play hoops, too.

Most everyone else is planning a season. Many teams are planning shorter road trips and a smaller footprint. No trip's success — not even that of a quick bus ride — will be taken for granted. Testing protocols are in place and, as the college football season has shown us with the cancellation of a handful of games every weekend, all participants will need to be able to adjust on the fly.

"Those thoughts creep in every day," Florida coach Mike White

said. "I wonder how many games I'll miss this year. I wonder how many games we'll have our five starters out there, 12 guys available."

When teams do start playing, some of the top players to watch will be Jared Butler (Baylor), Cade Cunningham (Oklahoma State), Ayo Dosunmu (Illinois) and Luka Garza (Iowa).

Garza averaged nearly 24 points and 10 rebounds as a junior last season. The pandemic complicated his decision about whether to stay in school or go pro. He will now enter the season as one of the rarest birds in the college basketball ecosystem — a senior who also has NBA lottery potential.

A mere eight months ago, those kind of issues — namely, the mass migration of players to the NBA after a single year of college, or no college at all — fueled that peren-

nial cauldron of debate about the overall health of the sport and the need for reforms.

COVID-19 makes that seem less important now.

Though there's always a lot of hand-wringing about the outsized role of money — passed both legitimately and under the table — in college basketball, there is no debate about this: Without any games, the money will dry up and college sports as we know it will be reshaped, too.

And so, even with positive cases of the virus surging and the health risks as dire as they've ever been, teams scurry to fill in blank spots on their schedules and get ready to put on a show. There was no March Madness to mark the first practices of the season, but that was never the goal.

The goal is March Madness — even if it's a TV-only event.



## COLLEGE BASKETBALL



CLIFF JETTE / AP

Iowa's Luka Garza dunks as Penn State's Myles Dread looks on during a game in Iowa City, Iowa, on Feb. 29. Iowa is the Big Ten's highest ranked team to begin the season at No. 5.

## Depth perception: Iowa is top team in stacked Big Ten

BY ERIC OLSON  
Associated Press

The Big Ten office just released its schedule last week, nonconference games are in a state of flux and other uncertainties loom over the college basketball season because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

None of that can tamp down Illinois coach Brad Underwood's enthusiasm.

"This Big Ten basketball season," he said, "will be the best ever."

To Underwood's point, the Associated Press preseason Top 25 does illustrate unprecedented depth in the conference. Seven teams are ranked, the most since the poll went from 20 to 25 teams in 1989.

Wisconsin, Maryland and Michigan State shared the regular-season title last season, and Illinois finished a game back in fourth.

The team everyone is talking about entering this season is No. 5 Iowa, largely because of the unexpected return of consensus All-American and Big Ten preseason player of the year Luka Garza and a supporting cast full of experience.

"The challenge," McCaffery said, "is can we win more against a tougher schedule?"

The Hawkeyes will measure themselves early against No. 16 North Carolina and No. 1 Gonzaga.

Other ranked Big Ten teams are

No. 7 Wisconsin, No. 8 Illinois, No. 13 Michigan State, No. 23 Ohio State, No. 24 Rutgers and No. 25 Michigan.

### On the coaching front

At Penn State, Jim Ferry will serve as interim head coach after the resignation of Patrick Chambers last month. Chambers stepped down after an internal investigation into inappropriate conduct stemming from a remark he made to a player that referenced a noose.

### Who's back

Garza and Illinois' Ayo Dosunmu and Kofi Cockburn are the only returning players who received AP postseason honors last season.

Garza has scored 20 or more points in 16 straight games, the longest streak by an Iowa player since 1971. Dosunmu, a fellow all-conference first-team pick, was the Illini's leading scorer and went over 20 points in eight games. The 7-foot, 290-pound Cockburn, the newcomer of the year, averaged 13.8 points and 8.8 rebounds.

### Other top players

Indiana's Trayce Jackson-Davis (13.5 ppg, 8.4 rpg); Iowa's Joe Wieskamp (14.0 ppg, 85.6% FT) and Connor McCaffery (4.6-to-1 assist-turnover ratio); Michigan's Isaiah Livers (12.9 ppg); Michigan State's Aaron Henry (10 ppg); Minnesota's Marcus Carr (15.4

ppg); Penn State's Myreon Jones (40.3% 3pt FG); Purdue's Trevion Williams (11.6 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 51.6% FG); Rutgers' Geo Baker (10.9 ppg, 1.1 steals); and Wisconsin's Nate Reuvers (13.1 ppg, 1.9 blocks).

### Top freshmen

■ Indiana guard Khristian Lander, a national top-20 recruit from Evansville who de-committed from Louisville and is regarded as the best point guard prospect in the country.

■ Illinois guard Adam Miller averaged 27 points for Morgan Park High in Chicago last year and was the state's two-time Gatorade player of the year.

■ Michigan center Hunter Dickinson fills a major need and, at 7-foot-1 and 255 pounds, is physically ready to make an impact.

### Top transfers

■ Michigan State junior forward Joey Hauser started 31 games and averaged 9.7 points and 5.3 rebounds for Marquette in 2018-19.

■ Minnesota junior guard Both Gach averaged 10.7 points, 3.6 rebounds and 2.9 assists and started 25 games for Utah last season.

■ Ohio State senior forward Seth Towns was the 2018 Ivy League player of the year who shot 44% on threes for Harvard. He missed last season because of injury.

## Loaded Pac-12 eyeing multiple tournament bids

### Arizona State, Oregon, UCLA are highly ranked

BY JOHN MARSHALL  
Associated Press

The Pac-12 expected to get six, maybe even a record-tying seven teams, into last season's NCAA Tournament.

The conference's hopes, like those of leagues and teams across the country, were dashed when March Madness was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

As the pandemic-delayed 2020-21 season is set to start, the Pac-12 is again in position to have one of the toughest, deepest conferences in college basketball.

"A year ago, overall we had one of our best seasons as a conference," Arizona coach Sean Miller said. "This year, I think it might be the strongest year in my 12 years in the Pac-12."

Oregon has been the Pac-12's gold standard, winning four regular-season and three conference tournament titles the past five years. The Ducks lost Pac-12 player of the year Payton Pritchard, but Dana Altman may field an even better team this year with a mix of veterans, transfers and another strong recruiting class.

Oregon is ranked No. 20 in The Associated Press preseason poll.

No. 22 UCLA made a push for a surprise NCAA Tournament berth in its first season under Mick Cronin and has most of that team back.

Arizona State is the conference's highest-ranked team in the AP preseason poll at No. 18, gets Remy Martin back and has arguably

the best recruiting class in program history.

Stanford lost Tyrell Terry to the NBA draft, but returns four starters. The Cardinal also pulled off a recruiting coup by landing Ziaire Williams, one of the nation's top recruits. Miller has reloaded his roster with six talented foreign players to replace the three talented freshmen who left for the NBA after last season.

### Top returners

Arizona State got a huge boost when Martin opted to return to the desert instead of leaving for the NBA. He's the Pac-12's top returning scorer after averaging 19.1 points per game last season and is one of the nation's most dynamic guards.

Utah got a similar lift when Allen, who averaged 17.3 points and 7.2 rebounds last season, decided to return. Wright seems like he's been at Colorado for 10 years and continues to be one of the league's best all-around guards.

California was one of the nation's worst offensive teams last season, but guard Matt Bradley was one of the Pac-12's best scorers, averaging 17.4 points.

Oregon's Will Richardson had a solid sophomore season, averaging 11 points, 3.7 rebounds and 2.3 assists while shooting nearly 47% from three-point range.

Oregon State senior guard Ethan Thompson has been a proven scorer for several years in Corvallis.



RINGO H.W. CHIU / AP

Guard Tyger Campbell, center, is a top returning player for UCLA, which is ranked No. 22 to start the season.



# SPORTS



## Hot hand

Goff throws 3 TD passes as Rams hold off Buccaneers » **NFL, Page 21**



ALEX GALLARDO / AP

Gonzaga forward Corey Kisper, right, drives to the basket against Loyola Marymount guard Eli Scott on Jan. 11 in Los Angeles. The Zags are No. 1 in the preseason Top 25.



JERRY LARSON / AP

Guard Jared Butler and Baylor are No. 2 in the preseason rankings.

# Proceeding cautiously

## College basketball begins amid pandemic

By **EDDIE PELLIS**  
*Associated Press*

As more than 300 teams prepare to start a season that will look nothing like any before it, the conversation isn't so much about who will be cutting down the nets at the end of March Madness as much as whether anyone will cut down the nets at all.

If some team, any team, does climb a ladder in Indianapolis — and the top candidates include the usuals, with No. 1 Gonzaga, Duke, Kentucky and Kansas among them — then consider the season a success.

Anything short of that, and nothing less than the future of college sports could hang in the balance.

This is the new world created by a CO-

VID-19 crisis that is mushrooming to more than 190,000 new cases a day across America just as college basketball gets set to tip off its season Wednesday.

Teams will play truncated schedules — many cut from 31 to 27 or 25 games — after truncated preseasons. It's a shrunken, ever-shifting and still perilous grid laid out with the health of players and coaches in the forefront of everyone's mind, but with an unspoken belief that the show really does need to go on.

The end game is the 68-team extravaganza known as March Madness, the event that was wiped off the calendar eight months ago in a stunningly rapid turn of events as the seriousness of the pandemic set off

alarms across the U.S. It cost the NCAA around \$375 million, and sent shockwaves around the entire college sports landscape.

"The bottom line is that American higher education, not just athletics, is hemorrhaging like never before," Duke athletic director Kevin White said earlier this fall to the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, of which he is a member.

The NCAA is already making plans to turn this year's postseason into something much different, and much less, than it has been in the past — proposing to hold all games in a single city, most likely Indianapolis, which is where the Final Four is already scheduled for April 3-5.

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## SEC forced to postpone 2 more games » College football, Page 20

