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# STARS AND STRIPES®

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CORY D. PAYNE, U.S. AIR FORCE/AP

**U.S. Army Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, launching station is loaded onto a C-17 Globemaster III from the 4th Airlift Squadron at Fort Bliss, Texas.**

# Shrinking stockpile

## US used 14% of its THAADs against Iran, a report says. It could take years to replenish.

**BY LARA KORTE**
*Stars and Stripes*

It could take three to eight years for the U.S. to replenish its stockpile of high-altitude missile interceptors after the military launched nearly 14% of its arsenal during last month's conflict with Iran, according to a new report.

The analysis, conducted by researchers at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America, found that interceptors fired by the United States' Terminal High Altitude Area Defense systems accounted for nearly half of all interceptors used to protect Israel from Iran's medium-range ballistic missiles during the 12-day bombardment.

While the THAADs — along with Israel's Arrow-2 and Arrow-3 interceptors — successfully destroyed 201 of Iran's 574 missiles, the rapid depletion raises concerns about capabilities in future conflicts, said Ari Cicurel, author of the report.

"It sent a clear signal to Iran, to Russia, to China, that we're willing to use our military assets in defense of our closest partner in the Middle East and to help it defend itself and defeat attacks," said Cicurel, who is JINSA's associate director of foreign policy. "But it also means that we need to rapidly replenish our stockpiles, and not just go back to baseline levels."

The Pentagon did not immediately respond Wednesday to questions about JINSA's estimates or

**SEE STOCKPILE ON PAGE 7**

# DOD outlines new medical waiver rules for service

**BY DAVID KLEPPER**
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — People with congestive heart failure, undergoing treatment for schizophrenia or who have a history of paraphilic disorders will no longer be eligible for a medical waiver to serve in the military, according to new rules issued by the Pentagon on Tuesday.

The guidance signed by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth updates a list of conditions that disqualify potential recruits from serving in the armed forces. The decision comes after the Pentagon announced earlier this year that it would ban transgender troops and review other medical conditions that are currently eligible for a waiver.

"America's warfighters must be physically and mentally capable of performing their duties in the harshest of conditions," Hegseth wrote in the memo announcing the changes. "Severe underlying medical conditions introduce significant risks on the battlefield and threaten not only mission priorities, but also the health and safety of the affected individual and their fellow service members."

Waivers have long been used to enlist young people who might otherwise be unqualified for military service due to a wide array of medical, conduct or other reasons.

Most waivers are issued for medical conditions ranging from asthma, eyesight problems or skin disorders to more complex health conditions, such as past psychological illness or previous sports injuries that may have healed but

**SEE RULES ON PAGE 7**

# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## OpenAI CEO warns of voice fraud crisis in banking

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — OpenAI CEO Sam Altman warned the financial industry of a "significant impending fraud crisis" because of the ability of artificial intelligence tools to impersonate a person's voice to bypass security checks and move money.

Altman spoke at a Federal Reserve conference Tuesday in Washington.

"A thing that terrifies me is apparently there are still some financial institutions that will accept the voiceprint as authentication," Altman said. "That is a crazy thing to still be doing. AI has fully defeated that."



Altman

Voiceprinting as an identification for wealthy bank clients grew popular more than a decade ago, with customers typically asked to utter a challenge phrase into the phone to access their accounts.

But now AI voice clones, and eventually video clones, can impersonate people in a way that Altman said is increasingly "indistinguishable from reality" and will require new methods for verification.

"That might be something we can think about partnering on," said Fed Vice Chair for Supervision Michelle Bowman, the central bank's top financial regulator, who was hosting the discussion with Altman.

## EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates | |
|---|---|
| Euro costs (July 24) | 0.83 |
| British pound (July 24) | $1.32 |
| Japanese yen (July 24) | 144.00 |
| South Korean won (July 24) | 1,345.00 |

| Commercial rates | |
|---|---|
| Bahrain (Dinar) | 0.3744 |
| Britain (Pound) | 1.3544 |
| Canada (Dollar) | 1.3614 |
| China (Yuan) | 7.1743 |
| Denmark (Krone) | 6.3649 |
| Egypt (Pound) | 49.0631 |
| Euro | 0.8527 |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | 7.8498 |
| Hungary (Forint) | 340.27 |
| Israel (Shekel) | 3.3381 |
| Japan (Yen) | 146.53 |
| Kuwait (Dinar) | 0.3046 |
| Norway (Krone) | 10.1087 |
| Philippines (Peso) | 56.77 |
| Poland (Zloty) | 3.62 |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 3.7473 |
| Singapore (Dollar) | 1.2779 |
| South Korea (Won) | 1377.02 |
| Switzerland (Franc) | 0.7939 |
| Thailand (Baht) | 32.18 |
| Turkey (NewLira) | 40.4527 |

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

## INTEREST RATES

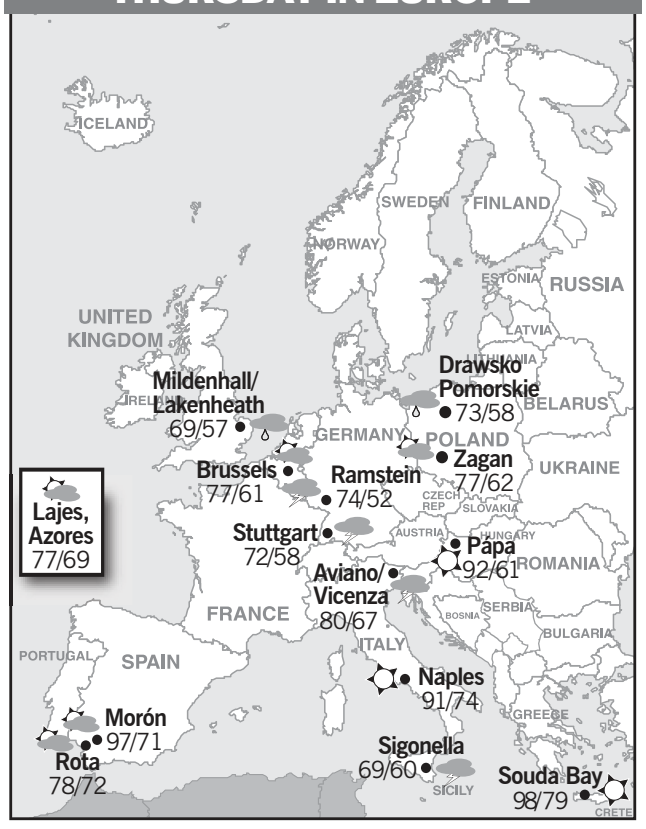
| | |
|---|---|
| Prime rate | 7.50 |
| Interest Rates Discount rate | 4.33 |
| Federal funds market rate | 4.38 |
| 3-month bill | 4.35 |
| 30-year bond | 4.92 |

## WEATHER OUTLOOK

### THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST




### THURSDAY IN EUROPE




### FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC




The weather is compiled from weather.com

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MILITARY

# Senators air concerns over foreign aid cuts

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee voiced concerns Tuesday over the Trump administration's reductions to diplomatic initiatives and foreign aid, arguing the cuts will hamper the work of commanders nominated to lead U.S. troops in Africa and special operations forces.

The senators, mostly Democrats, said they were worried the dismantling of the humanitarian assistance agency USAID, a downsizing of the State Department and other efforts to retreat from America's global engagement would create a vacuum, especially in Africa, that competing powers such as China and Russia would fill.

"For decades, we have relied upon our State Department diplomats and ... USAID to develop deep, lasting relationships in Africa that can outlast China and Russia's coercion," said Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island, the top Democrat on the panel. "I am deeply concerned that our 'soft power' leadership in Africa has been significantly undermined over the past several months."

Misgivings about the cuts repeatedly surfaced at the committee's confirmation hearing for Air Force Lt. Gen. Dagvin R.M. Anderson, who is nominated to lead U.S. Africa Command, and Navy Vice Adm. Frank Bradley, the nominee to lead U.S. Special Operations Command.

Anderson now serves as the director for joint force development of the Joint Staff while Bradley is the commander of Joint Special Operations Command.

"You're going to have diplomatic duty, whether you signed up for that or not," Sen. Angus King, I-Maine, told Anderson. "You're going to have to build relationships, not necessarily strictly military, but with the local governments and the local leadership."

King described the disbanding of USAID in particular as "one of the greatest geopolitical mistakes in my lifetime."

Anderson did not comment on President Donald Trump's policy moves but said he worked extensively with the State Department, USAID and non-governmental organizations when he commanded special operations forces in Africa and recognized their strategic impact.




ERIC KAYNE/Stars and Stripes

**Navy Vice Adm. Frank Bradley, left, and Air Force Lt. Gen. Dagvin R.M. Anderson testify Tuesday during a Senate Armed Services Committee confirmation hearing. Bradley is nominated to be commander of U.S. Special Operations Command. Anderson is nominated to be commander of U.S. Africa Command.**

"These programs are important as long as they provide for the security and prosperity of our nation," Anderson said, referring to USAID and a global program to combat AIDS. "I think as we target those in key areas, they can help build stability in key regions."

Committee chairman Roger Wicker, R-Miss., asked Anderson how Moscow and Beijing would respond if the U.S. were to abandon its foreign-aid engagements — "I think they'd be celebrating, would they not?"

"I know that if there's opportunities, they will seize them," Anderson said.

He said Africa was increasingly at the center of a great-power rivalry and is seeing more activity from China, which is expanding its military footprint on the continent, and Russia, which seeks to destabilize the continent through disinformation campaigns.

"Both of those nations see their futures running through the continent," Anderson said.

If confirmed, he said he would look at "creative ways" to build relationships in Africa and suggested economic investments through private firms could provide opportunities for engagement as the continent's population rises.

"One of the things that AFRICOM is positioned well to do is to convene people to have these discussions, understanding we provide the military aspect of it," Anderson said. "We can provide a venue to bring folks together to look at the security implications of these investments."

Bradley expressed confidence that meaningful ties could still be forged amid budget cuts. He acknowledged the "important capability" provided by American diplomats and aid providers but said he also recognized the difficulty of managing competing budgetary priorities.

"However the distribution of those tasks and those efforts are made, we will continue to work with them closely to make sure we bring the best combination of those levers and tools to bear," he said.

The Trump administration's effort to slash federal spending and rein in the size of the government includes a significant overhaul of the State Department, which Secretary of State Marco Rubio has derided as too bloated, costly and ideological.

Congress last week approved the administration's request to claw back about $8 billion in foreign assistance and is weighing a budget request to virtually eliminate funding for the U.S. Agency for Global Media that provides news to parts of the world with little press freedom.

Sens. Tim Kaine, D-Va., and Mark Kelly, D-Ariz., said they feared the U.S. was leaving a void in the information space and risked allowing Russia, China and Iran to spread their influence.

Some Republicans on Tuesday objected to the line of questioning by Democrats, defending the administration's cuts to USAID and other programs as in the best interests of the United States.

"There are smart things to do that aren't just about blowing things up and killing people but that has been crowded out with a mission creep in this wandering foreign policy that just believes that we can just do all this do-gooding stuff around the world," said Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Mo.

Sen. Tim Sheehy, R-Mont., a former Navy SEAL officer, said the ability to project economic power and stability is important but nothing will ever supersede American military might.

"The real power projection is when we can display to the world that we are going to protect our interests and our people ruthlessly, no matter what," he said. "That is what the real power projection, the U.S. military is about."

# Army says its 250th anniversary celebration in DC cost $30 million

BY MATTHEW ADAMS
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Army's parade and festival last month to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the service in the nation's capital cost $30 million, a spokesman said Tuesday.

"We conducted the parade for a very specific reason because we saw it as our opportunity to introduce or to continue introducing America's Army to the American people. We wanted Americans to feel connected to their Army," service spokesman Steve Warren told reporters at the Pentagon.

For the parade, the Army had about 6,700 troops from every service division, 150 vehicles and more than 50 aircraft. The cost for the parade and other events was estimated to be between $25 and $45 million, including an estimated $16 million to repair streets and other damage to the city following the event, NBC News reported at the time.

The Army took preparations to protect roads, including placing steel plates on the parade route where tanks would have to turn sharply and fitting vehicles with new track pads.

The parade caused minimal damage to streets in Washington, Warren said. The service spent $3 million on steel plates. The plates had to be secured with six-inch spikes into the asphalt that left holes in the ground that the Army refilled.

The only additional damage Warren said was a curb that was crushed by a tank near the staging area where vehicles were kept. He did not have a cost for the curb.

"The only check that I'm aware of that we had to write was to repair that curb," he added.

The Army's anniversary celebration June 14 was the same day as President Donald Trump's birthday. Estimates showed about 198,000 people passed through metal detectors to attend the events, according to Secret Service data. But because there were separate checkpoints for the festival and the parade, it is not clear if people who attended both were counted twice. Leading up to the event, the Army estimated 200,000 would attend.



STEPHANIE SCARBROUGH/AP

**Troops march in a military parade commemorating the Army's 250th anniversary on June 14 in Washington.**

Though the service does not know how many people decided to join the Army because of the celebration, the service has seen an increase in website traffic and social media performance since the parade, Warren said.

"While we have no scientific way to back it up, I think instinct tells us that increase in interest, some of that translated to an increase in joining," he said.

MILITARY

# ‘Gaslit and abandoned’

## Gulf War veterans push to declassify documents on chemical exposure

By Linda F. Hersey
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A group of veterans and their advocates are pushing the Defense Department to declassify tens of thousands of documents from the first Gulf War with the aim of finding clues to the potential toxic exposures of more than 100,000 troops from the military’s demolition of a chemical weapons complex in southern Iraq.

But their demands for the release of all classified documents from the Gulf War, which are stored in the National Archives, are reviving a contentious issue over the destruction in 1991 of a major weapons depot in the Khamisiyah region that the military found later contained chemical weapons.

“We believe the remaining [classified] documents on the first Gulf War may hold information researchers need to find a cure for Gulf War illness or at the very least improve treatments. But these documents have never been seen outside the intelligence community,” said Ronald Brown, a former Army specialist who served in the Gulf War and is helping to lead the effort.

There are more than 1 million classified documents that might contain information on potential health effects to troops from chemical weapons exposure in the first Gulf War, according to GulfLINK, a website created by the Defense Department. But only about 46,000 of those documents have been released.

The Government Accountability Office in 2004 published an investigation of the large-scale demolition operation at Khamisiyah and questioned the accuracy of the DOD’s projections about the path of the chemical plume and which troops were affected.

Brown and other veterans met in June with members of the Defense Health Agency in Virginia that manages the military’s global health system. They did so after sending a letter to President Donald Trump’s administration asking for help.

Brown said agency leaders pledged to work with the veterans.

“My team and I are eager to continue discussions [about] Khamisiyah and potential deployment-related exposures and to describe Department of Defense’s collaborative lines of effort to address past exposures, mitigate future hazards, and protect the health of our forces and veterans,” according to a letter to veterans from Tracie Lattimore, acting deputy assistant undersecretary of defense for health readiness policy and oversight.

Gulf War illness is a term to describe “medically unexplained chronic symptoms” experienced by some veterans who served in the Gulf War, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Chronic medical problems commonly reported by veterans include fatigue, joint pain, respiratory problems, headaches and gastrointestinal issues.

Brown said the Defense Department previously had stopped responding to the veterans’ requests for information in 2020 until he and other veterans sent letters in February to Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

“Many of us veterans developed symptoms while in theater that never went away. My symptoms have worsened over the years, and my medical issues have compounded,” said 57-year-old Army veteran Anthony Hardie of Florida, a former staff sergeant who is national director of Veterans for Common Sense.

“Just declassify everything pertaining to the war,” Hardie said. “If the Defense Department has to set limits it will.”

Veterans for Common Sense and the Vietnam Veterans of America are advocacy groups working with Brown and other Gulf War veterans to pressure the Defense Department to declassify the documents.

“Whether [declassifying the documents] reveals something — that remains to be seen. But it is a matter of justice to Gulf War veterans,” said Hardie, who served from 1986 to 1993 with deployments to the Persian Gulf. “This is important to a huge cohort of veterans who feel gaslit and abandoned by the DOD.”

James McCormick, executive director of government affairs at Vietnam Veterans of America, said his organization stepped in to advocate for the Gulf War veterans because they do not have a major advocacy organization of their own. He said VVA has been providing assistance since 2016 to Gulf War veterans seeking information about chemical weapons releases connected to the destruction of weapons depots in Iraq.




Anthony Hardie

**Former Army Staff Sgt. Anthony Hardie said his medical issues have compounded since he served during Operation Desert Storm.**



Ronald Brown

**Former Army Spc. Ronald Brown said he started feeling sick 15 minutes after demolitions started at a munitions depot in Khamisiyah, Iraq, in 1991.**

“This is a role that Vietnam Veterans of America has taken on and invested in through funds, advocacy and seriously taking to heart the founding principle of VVA — ‘Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another,’ ” McCormick said.

The veterans and their advocates also are asking for notification letters to be sent to veterans who served in the Khamisiyah region about their exposure risks and for the VA to work with the Defense Department to provide medical exams.

“Representatives from the DOD office of the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs have been in correspondence with, and recently met with, representatives from the Vietnam Veterans of America to discuss topics associated with findings on demolitions involving Iraqi chemical weapons at Khamisiyah, Iraq, in 1991,” the Defense Department said Monday.

“The DOD is committed to providing up-to-date health risk communications to DOD personnel and veterans. Similarly, the DOD works closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs to coordinate and collaborate, as needed, to help facilitate veterans’ access to all appropriate care and benefits available to them,” the Defense Department said in a written statement.

The VA said the agency and research organizations continue to evaluate possible causes of Gulf War veterans’ chronic multisymptom illnesses, including chemical and biological weapons.

Brown said a large volume of documents from the Gulf War declassified in 1995 indicated the existence of interview transcripts with service members after the destruction of the weapons depot at Khamisiyah. He said the publicly released documents also showed chemical sampling was done, but the results were redacted.

“We would like to see the interview transcripts and the results from the chemical sampling,” Brown said. “We’re hoping to find that in the additional documents. There’s got to be a paper trail.”

But Kirt Love of Texas, a 61-year-old disabled Gulf War veteran, said he doubts the declassification of more Gulf War documents will provide more information about toxins released from the destruction of chemical weapons.

“The Defense Department continues to stall and I’m not confident they will change. Gulf War veterans have been made into the problem child no one wants to deal with,” he said. “It’s a tactic to shut us up.”

Brown, 57, said he began to feel sick in March 1991, 15 minutes after the demolitions started.

“I came home sick and the problems continue,” said Brown, who took photos of the mushroom clouds that plumed from the destruction. He has breathing problems and other medical issues that doctors struggle to treat.

“This has been going on for 34 years,” said Brown, who has a 100% disability rating from the VA connected to environmental exposures in the Gulf War. It took him 13 years to get the VA to acknowledge his illnesses were connected to his Gulf War service, he said.

“I had to fight like hell. There were a lot of denials and appeals. There’s nothing that will fix my health problems,” Brown said. “But this group of veterans struggle to have their problems recognized and their voices heard.”



Ronald Brown

**Chemical weapons are stacked inside a munitions depot in Khamisiyah, Iraq, that the military destroyed in 1991.**

MILITARY

# Army on cusp of human-machine fusion in squads

## Driscoll: Future warfighting may see autonomous robots alongside troops

By Wyatt Olson
*Stars and Stripes*

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii — In the not-too-distant future, the Army will field blended human-machine squads that mimic the stuff of science fiction, Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll told reporters Tuesday at this Honolulu installation.

"I think what you will see in a couple of years when you drive back on this base is you'll see an infantry squad vehicle going out into training with some autonomously led robots beside it, and some drones that are capable of swarming flying above it," he said. "And I think you'll start to see this mixture of human and machine in a way that used to be kind of science fiction — but we're right on the edge of it."

Driscoll arrived Monday in Hawaii on a trip that will also take him to Australia and the Philippines. He was joined at Schofield Barracks by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George and Maj. Gen. Marcus Evans, commander of the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division.

The 25th ID is one of three divisions at the forefront of the Army's "Transforming in Contact" initiative, which aims to rapidly put the newest technology into the hands of soldiers to make them more lethal, survivable and adaptable in any environment.

As part of that initiative, 25th ID is taking delivery of 16 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS, launchers this summer as the Army moves to increase the firing range and mobility of its Pacific ground forces. At the same time, the division is divesting itself of 14 howitzers.

Driscoll said he was talking with soldiers to better understand their combat needs in furtherance of Transforming in Contact.

"What the soldiers were telling us is a lot of the equipment we've been giving them for the last decade or two — the Humvees, the [joint light tactical vehicles] — it just doesn't work in this terrain," he said. "When they're deploying to the Philippines, it doesn't work."

Last fall, 25th ID fielded about 100 of the Army's new infantry squad vehicles, which allowed small formations of soldiers to transit the battle space more nimbly and with greater stealth.

"They love them," Driscoll said of the feedback soldiers gave him.

Driscoll said the Army's budget for the upcoming fiscal year will "massively invest in our data layer."

A data layer refers to a structured approach to managing and sharing data from various sources that can be quickly integrated, analyzed and made available to users.

A more robust data layer "will allow our things to communicate with our sensors and communicate with our people in near real time," Driscoll said.

"If you look at the commercial sector, a lot of what's going on with electronic vehicles is they became software manifesting in the world as the vehicle," he said. "And we, the United States Army, have to do the same thing."

Soldiers can expect "all sorts" of autonomous systems that can coexist with human-led systems, Driscoll said.

"It's going to allow us to use generative [artificial intelligence] to help us with things like our air and missile defense and our offensive targeting," he said. "It's going to basically allow the human being to be enabled and empowered with digital tools in a way that we are not all the way scaled with right now."



WYATT OLSON/Stars amd Stripes

**Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll and the service's chief of staff, Gen. Randy George, speak with reporters near a pair of HIMARS launchers at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, on Tuesday.**

## Army secretary wants to move quicker on Hawaii live-fire training lands deal

*Associated Press*

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii — The U.S. Army's top civilian leader said Tuesday that he wants to move more quickly on an agreement that will allow the military to continue using the only large-scale live-fire training range for ground forces in Hawaii.

Army Secretary Dan Driscoll said he discussed the issue during a meeting with Hawaii Gov. Josh Green on Monday. The Army leases a key part of Pohakuloa Training Area on the Big Island from the state, and its contract to do so expires in 2029.

It wants to be able to continue using the land so it can quickly send troops from Hawaii to Asia and the Pacific, something that is growing in importance as China becomes more assertive particularly regarding Taiwan, the self-ruled island that Beijing claims as its own territory.

A May public hearing on whether to extend the lease generated hours of testimony against allowing the Army to stay.

Many Native Hawaiians and environmental activists upset with the U.S. military's history of damaging Hawaiian lands with target practice and fuel leaks said they wanted the Army to return the land to the state.

# Top senior enlisted sailor to end 38-year career at sea

By Alison Bath
*Stars and Stripes*

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James Honea will retire in the coming months, capping a 38-year career that began on a frigate during the Cold War and ends in Washington as the top enlisted sailor.

Honea, who has served as the 16th MCPON since September 2022, will leave Sept. 12, a Navy statement said Tuesday.

Honea worked to remove barriers and improve the quality of life for sailors and their families, according to the statement.

"I will carry with me the countless memories of meeting sailors across the fleet, hearing about your remarkable achievements, as well as the level of trust you placed in me to advocate for you and your families," Honea said in the statement.



WILLIAM BENNETT IV/U.S. Navy

**Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James Honea attends a recruit graduation ceremony in Great Lakes, Ill., on May 15.**

The MCPON is the senior enlisted sailor in the Navy and serves as an adviser to the chief of naval operations, the highest-ranking officer in the service.

The job includes addressing sailors' concerns and acting on input from the fleet during visits to ships, bases and other naval units.

Honea's work with Congress and the Defense Department contributed to significant quality-of-life advancements for Navy personnel, including a 15% pay increase for junior enlisted sailors, according to the statement.

He also helped improve unaccompanied housing, medical care, spouse employment and child care services, and was behind initiatives to better enlisted leadership development, naval education and performance evaluations, the Navy said.

It was unclear Wednesday when the Navy will name the next MCPON, who is typically chosen by the chief of naval operations.

Last month, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth nominated Adm. Daryl Caudle to lead the Navy. The Senate Armed Services Committee is scheduled to begin Caudle's confirmation process during a hearing Thursday.

Adm. James Kilby, vice chief of naval operations, has served as acting chief since February following Hegseth's dismissal of Adm. Lisa Franchetti, who had been in the post since August 2023.

Following his enlistment in 1987, Honea first served as a boatswain's mate aboard the frigate USS John A. Moore, according to his Navy biography.

In 2006, he was promoted to master chief and selected to serve as command master chief in 2009, completing tours on the destroyer USS Gridley and the amphibious transport dock ship USS New Orleans, the biography states.

His ashore assignments include command master chief of U.S. Navy Embedded Training Teams, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix, deploying to Afghanistan.

He also served as the command master chief of U.S. Naval Forces Korea and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet, among other assignments, according to the biography.

"As I embark on the next chapter of my life, I will forever cherish the impact you've had on me and look forward to crossing paths with you again in the fleet," Honea said in the statement.

MILITARY

# PFAS levels rose in treated water from base

By Hana Kusumoto and Alex Wilson
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Levels of chemicals in treated water discharged from two sites outside this U.S. airlift hub in western Tokyo spiked recently but remained within safe limits, according to Japanese government surveys.

The findings were announced July 14 by Japan's Ministry of Defense and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government following multistage surveys near Yokota. They followed the discharge of approximately 400,000 gallons of treated water between May 30 and June 17.

The water, previously contaminated with PFOS and PFOA — chemicals once found in firefighting foam used at the base — was treated using activated carbon filters and tested before being released into storm drains.

PFOS and PFOA are part of a broader group of synthetic compounds known as PFAS, or forever chemicals, because they persist in the environment and the human body for extended periods.

U.S. Forces Japan announced in November it had destroyed its final stockpile of PFAS-based firefighting foam.

The North Kanto Defense Bureau — an arm of the Defense Ministry — and the metropolitan government collected water samples between May 29 and June 17 from two spots: a storm drain near Yokota's southwest corner and another near Fussa Minami Park, less than a mile away, according to two news releases issued July 14.

The bureau's initial testing on May 29 found PFAS concentrations at 13 nanograms per liter near the base and 11 nanograms per liter near the park, according to the defense bureau's release. By June 10, levels near the base rose to 30 nanograms per liter, while those near the park increased slightly to 12.

On June 26, concentrations remained stable at 28 nanograms and 10 nanograms per liter, respectively, the release said.

"It is difficult to give a general answer to the factors related to each survey result," a defense bureau spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone on July 16.

The metro government conducted its own survey only near the park and reported lower values, according to its release. The highest level detected was 11 nanograms per liter on June 11; the lowest was 6.3 nanograms per liter on June 27.

Japan maintains a provisional guideline of 50 nanograms per liter for PFOS and PFOA in public water supplies — levels considered unlikely to pose health risks. Permanent standards for tap water are expected to be finalized by April.

The independent study aimed to "eliminate the anxiety" of local residents, the metro government said in its release. It plans to monitor the situation and ensure the base properly handles the reservoir and disposes of its filtration equipment, a metro government official told Stars and Stripes by phone on July 16.

Some Japanese government officials speak to the media only on condition of anonymity.

USFJ said it "remains committed to protecting the health of our personnel, their families, and the surrounding communities in which we live and serve," and plans to continue cooperating with Japan on environmental issues, a command spokesperson said in an unsigned email to Stars and Stripes on July 18.

# Fort Bliss awarded contract for migrant detention facility

By Rose L. Thayer
*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — The Army has awarded a contract for a 5,000-capacity migrant detention facility for Immigration and Customs Enforcement at Fort Bliss in west Texas.

The service on Friday awarded a nearly $232 million firm-fixed-price contract to the veteran-owned company Acquisition Logistics to build and operate the short-term detention facility for single adults, according to the Pentagon. The contract ends Sept. 30, 2027.

Army engineers in April finished leveling the 60-acre site that is accessible through El Paso streets without having to enter the gates of Fort Bliss. It is located behind a public transportation park-and-ride site on Montana Avenue. The land once housed a range control site named Site Monitor, according to Fort Bliss.

The site will hold temporary, soft-sided holding facilities, the Pentagon said in April when plans were approved. The Army will manage the contract, but is not involved in the operations of the facility.

Pentagon officials declined to comment Tuesday on the contract, and the Army could not be reached for comment.

The contract announcement came Monday, just days after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth notified members of Congress of the proposal to temporarily house detained migrants at Camp Atterbury in Indiana and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey.

The detention facilities at military bases are part of President Donald Trump's push to detain people in the United States and deport them. The government has removed more than 111,000 people from the country in fiscal 2025, which began Oct. 1, according to the Department of Homeland Security.



Rose L. Thayer /Stars and Stripes

**A bulldozer sits at a former range control location known as Site Monitor at Fort Bliss, Texas in April. The site will be used to build a detention facility to house migrants.**

Since Trump took office in January, the Defense Department has become increasingly involved in immigration and border operations, including working with Customs and Border Protection along the border with Mexico and providing security for federal agents making immigration-related arrests in California.

Fort Bliss also hosts troops deployed to the southwest border and has loaned its airfield to conduct deportation flights. The base is roughly 1,700 square miles that stretch into New Mexico and offers large swaths of open desert terrain.

It has been used in the past to house unaccompanied child migrants in the U.S. and in 2021 to support Afghan refugees who fled their country when the government collapsed and the U.S. military left.

Bloomberg News reported the latest contract to detain migrants at Fort Bliss has a value of nearly $1.3 billion. It is the largest contract Virginia-based Acquisition Logistics has received from the government, and it does not appear to have experience with detention facilities, Bloomberg reported.

Acquisition Logistics' bid was selected from among 12 others, according to the Pentagon. The Army Field Directorate Office at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston is managing the contract.

# Army's head of aviation, who faced DC crash criticism, has new role

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Army's head of aviation has changed jobs to become chief of the branch's enterprise marketing office, a move that comes before the National Transportation Safety Board holds hearings next week on January's midair collision between an Army helicopter and a commercial jet that killed 67 people.

Brig. Gen. Matthew Braman became chief of the Army Enterprise Marketing Office this month to focus on advertising and boosting recruitment, according to his new bio on an Army website. An Army spokesperson said the plan to move Braman was in place last fall and had nothing to do with the tragedy.



**Braman**

The NTSB will hold three days of hearings, starting next Wednesday, on the crash near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Braman was among those who faced criticism from some in Congress following the collision over the Potomac River, which was the nation's deadliest plane crash since November 2001.

Braman acknowledged during a hearing in March that military helicopters were still flying over the nation's capital with a key system broadcasting their locations turned off during most missions because it deemed them sensitive.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz called it "shocking and deeply unacceptable" after earlier complaining that the general wasn't answering his questions.

Braman repeatedly evaded Cruz's questions during the hearing about whether he would provide a copy of a memo laying out the policy for when Army helicopters fly with their locators turned off. Braman said he wasn't sure he could provide the memo because it was part of the investigation, but the head of the NTSB assured him that would be OK.

Former NTSB and FAA crash investigator Jeff Guzzetti, who has followed the crash investigation and watched the hearing, welcomed the news that Braman is no longer leading the Army's aviation unit.

"Personally I think that's a good thing. That guy was just not playing ball in my view," Guzzetti said. "He was too protective and defensive and evasive and secretive. And that's not what you need in this type of situation."

Cruz, the Republican chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, said in April that troubling missteps since the crash "underscore the precarious situation in the nation's airspace."

# MILITARY




JOSEFINA GARCIA/U.S. Army

**Army soldiers conduct preventive checks and service on a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system.**

## **Stockpile:** Replenishing DOD's interceptor supply could take 3 to 8 years to complete

**FROM PAGE 1**

concerns about a potential interceptor shortfall.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly expressed a desire to avoid more long, drawn-out conflicts in the Middle East.

But decisions to target Iranian nuclear facilities last month and Houthi rebels in Yemen earlier this year have raised concerns among defense analysts about readiness in other parts of the world, particularly the Asia-Pacific region.

The U.S. fired 92 THAAD interceptors during the conflict, Cicurel's research shows, cutting into its total estimated supply of about 632.

THAAD interceptors are produced by Lockheed Martin and cost about $12.7 million apiece, according to recent budget estimates from the Missile Defense Agency.

The U.S. acquired 11 interceptors in 2024 and is scheduled to receive 12 more by the end of the year. Between 25 and 37 additional interceptors are expected by the end of fiscal year 2026, but replenishing the stockpile could still take three to eight years, according to JINSA.

Other experts say the recent use of THAAD interceptors in Israel could prompt Congress to spend additional funds to supplement the shortfall.

The report also found that the U.S. used roughly 30 Patriot interceptors defending Iran's attacks against Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. While Patriot missiles are cheaper and faster to produce, they don't offer the same theater-level defense that THAADs do, Cicurel said.

Adding to Pentagon concerns, Iran's hit rate appeared to increase during periods when THAADs were the primary means of deterrence, the report said, suggesting potential system limitations during sustained attacks.

Video of the interceptions analyzed by JINSA suggests that during periods in which THAADs represented more than 60% of interceptors used, Iran increased its hit rate by 1% to 4%.

"As interception systems are pushed to their limits, even minor inefficiencies or delays can have significant consequences," the report said.

Still, Cicurel noted that the defense was still highly successful. Of the roughly 258 attempts to intercept Iran's missiles, only about 10% failed, with 57 striking populated areas.

A majority of Iran's 316 fired missiles were allowed to strike unpopulated areas, according to JINSA's analysis.

The THAAD production rate means the U.S. may have to choose between shoring up its own arsenal and fulfilling foreign deliveries, Cicurel said. Those include a $15 billion deal with Saudi Arabia to send over seven THAAD batteries and 360 interceptors.

Qatar also recently signed a $42 billion defense deal with the U.S. that includes THAAD systems.

# Study: US falling behind Russia, China in AI usage

BY JOHN VANDIVER
*Stars and Stripes*

U.S. troops need more artificial intelligence support to challenge Russia and China on the information battlefield, where those two adversaries have American forces outgunned, according to a new Pentagon-commissioned report.

Machine learning tools can give a boost to military teams carrying out influence operations, in which American foes are now engaged "at a scale that (the Defense Department) cannot match," the Rand Corp. report released Tuesday said.

The United States risks falling farther behind if it doesn't adopt AI technology in large volumes, the study said.

"Adversaries are rapidly adopting and applying generative AI capabilities for many functions, including influence," Rand said.

The Pentagon should prioritize AI investments for information operations and seek out related AI training opportunities for troops involved in the mission, the report contends.

Across the military, commands are experimenting with AI in search of an edge in making faster decisions. The technology is expected to transform everything from how high-level headquarters command forces to how infantrymen on the front lines make decisions on the fly.

For years, the U.S. military has been involved in influence operations around the world. Such missions can take many forms, ranging from dropping leaflets to alert a local population in a war zone, to identifying false narratives pushed by adversaries or seeking to undermine popular support for an enemy force.

Given how fast information moves, the Pentagon needs to be able to detect adversaries' action "in the media ecosystem" and move quickly to discredit them before their preferred narratives take hold, Rand said.

"DoD experts framed this challenge with the example of the prevalence of false civilian death tolls reported by Hamas that persist despite authoritative sources having refuted them," the report authors said.

Generative AI can "balance the battlefield" by allowing fewer U.S. personnel to produce more content faster, the report states.

Army special operations teams are experimenting with such tools. For example, a system known as Ghost Machine has already been developed. Among other capabilities, it can clone voices to convey desired messages, Rand said.

"A team may want to mimic an enemy commander as part of an effort to get them to surrender," the report gave as an example.

AI tools that enable quick production of graphics, videos and other material with individually tailored messages could help troops hit their target audiences with greater precision, Rand said.

In one scenario, researchers tested how a planning team could refine messages to resonate with individual terrorists as part of a deradicalization effort.

In a battlefield scenario, AI also would enable military psyop teams embedded with conventional forces to disseminate messages faster, Rand said.

Still, the U.S. should be cautious about overdoing it. Adopting the preferred tactic of the Russians and Chinese of "flooding the zone" with their propaganda carries risks, the report noted.

"They are going high volume low effort; we are throwing a specific dart," one influence operator told Rand.

The adversaries' approach is arguably less effective because the volume of content can dampen the credibility of the message. American operators will need to find the sweet spot to win on the information battlefield, the report said.

## **Rules:** Several conditions may only be waived by the secretary of branch

**FROM PAGE 1**

still must be evaluated.

Prior to the new rules, heart failure, current treatment for schizophrenia and a history of paraphilic disorders — defined as a persistent sexual interest in atypical objects or activities — were among a long list of physical and mental health conditions in which waivers were allowed.

Multiple sclerosis, a history of cystic fibrosis, past organ transplants or a suicide attempt within the past 12 months also will be considered disqualifying conditions that make a person ineligible for service.

The new rules list several conditions in which a waiver may only be granted by the secretary of a military branch. Those conditions include a missing eye, hand or foot, past corneal transplants, liver failure, kidney disease, past psychotic disorders or the presence of an implanted pacemaker or defibrillator.

The detailed rules governing which medical conditions quality for a waiver have come under greater scrutiny amid the Trump administration's ban on transgender troops.

New rules required active-duty troops as well as National Guard and Reserve troops to identify themselves as transgender and voluntarily leave the service or face involuntary separations.

NATION

# Trump's AI plan relies on Silicon Valley ideas

By Matt O'Brien and Ali Swenson
*Associated Press*



ALEX BRANDON/AP

**White House AI and crypto czar David Sacks speaks as President Donald Trump listens at an event for the signing of the GENIUS Act in the East Room of the White House, Friday, in Washington.**

An artificial intelligence agenda that started coalescing on the podcasts of Silicon Valley billionaires is now being forged into U.S. policy as President Donald Trump leans on the ideas of the tech figures who backed his election campaign.

The White House on Wednesday revealed the "AI Action Plan" Trump ordered after returning to the White House in January. Trump gave his tech advisers six months to come up with new AI policies after revoking President Joe Biden's signature AI guardrails on his first day in office.

The unveiling was co-hosted by the bipartisan Hill and Valley Forum and the All-In Podcast, a business and technology show hosted by four tech investors and entrepreneurs who include Trump's AI czar, David Sacks.

The plan includes some familiar tech lobby pitches. That includes accelerating the sale of AI technology abroad and making it easier to construct the energy-hungry data center buildings that are needed to form and run AI products. It also includes some of the AI culture war preoccupations of the circle of venture capitalists who endorsed Trump last year.

Countering the liberal bias they see in AI chatbots such as ChatGPT or Google's Gemini has long been a rallying point for the tech industry's loudest Trump backers.

Trump's plan seeks to block the government from contracting with tech companies unless they "ensure that their systems are objective and free from top-down ideological bias." A Biden-era framework for evaluating the riskiest AI applications should also be stripped of any references to "misinformation, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and climate change," the plan said.

Sacks, a former PayPal executive and now Trump's top AI adviser, has been criticizing "woke AI" for more than a year, fueled by Google's February 2024 rollout of an AI image generator that, when asked to show an American Founding Father, created pictures of Black, Asian and Native American men.

"The AI's incapable of giving you accurate answers because it's been so programmed with diversity and inclusion," Sacks said at the time.

Google quickly fixed its tool, but the "Black George Washington" moment remained a parable for the problem of AI's perceived political bias, taken up by X owner Elon Musk, venture capitalist Marc Andreessen, Vice President JD Vance and Republican lawmakers.

The Trump administration's latest push against "woke AI" comes a week after the Pentagon announced new $200 million contracts with four leading AI companies, including Google, to address "critical national security challenges."

Also receiving one of the contracts was Musk's xAI, which has been pitched as an alternative to "woke AI" companies. The company has faced its own challenges: Earlier this month, xAI had to scramble to remove posts made by its Grok chatbot that made antisemitic comments and praised Adolf Hitler.

The plan aims to speed up permitting and loosen environmental regulation to accelerate construction on new data centers and factories and the power sources to fuel them. It condemns "radical climate dogma" and recommends lifting a number of environmental restrictions, including clean air and water laws.

Trump has previously paired AI's need for huge amounts of electricity with his own push to tap into U.S. energy sources, including gas, coal and nuclear.

Many tech giants are already well on their way toward building new data centers in the U.S. and around the world. OpenAI announced this week that it has switched on the first phase of a massive data center complex in Abilene, Texas, part of an Oracle-backed project known as Stargate that Trump promoted earlier this year. Amazon, Microsoft, Meta and xAI also have major projects underway.

The tech industry has pushed for easier permitting rules to get its computing facilities connected to power, but the AI building boom has also contributed to spiking demand for fossil fuel production that will contribute to global warming.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday called on the world's major tech firms to power data centers completely with renewables by 2030.

"A typical AI data center eats up as much electricity as 100,000 homes," Guterres said. "By 2030, data centers could consume as much electricity as all of Japan does today."

The plan includes a strategy to disincentivize states from aggressively regulating AI technology. It recommends that federal agencies "consider a state's AI regulatory climate when making funding decisions and limit funding if the state's AI regulatory regimes may hinder the effectiveness of that funding or award."

Trump's Repubican administration had supported a different proposal in Congress to block states from passing any AI laws for 10 years, but the Senate defeated it earlier this month.

There are sharp debates on how to regulate AI, even among the influential venture capitalists who have been debating it on their favorite medium: the podcast.

While some Trump backers, particularly Andreessen, have advocated an "accelerationist" approach that aims to speed up AI advancement with minimal regulation, Sacks has described himself as taking a middle road of techno-realism.

"Technology is going to happen. Trying to stop it is like ordering the tides to stop. If we don't do it, somebody else will," Sacks said on the "All-In" podcast.

# Obama hits back at Trump's 'treason' accusation over election

By Dave Goldiner
*New York Daily News*

Former President Barack Obama hit back Tuesday at President Donald Trump's accusation that his predecessor committed "treason" related to the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Hours after Trump falsely accused Obama of trying to rig the 2016 election, the ex-president's office said it had no choice but to publicly refute the claim.

"These bizarre allegations are ridiculous and a weak attempt at distraction," Obama's office said in a statement.

The 44th commander in chief's office debunked the claim that an intelligence report released last week by Trump Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard somehow amounts to new evidence against Obama or losing 2016 Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton.

The statement noted that neither Obama nor Clinton ever claimed that Russia succeeded in flipping votes from the Democrat to Trump's column in the election that catapulted him to the White House.

It pointed to a 2020 bipartisan report by the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee, led by then-chairman ex-Sen. Marco Rubio, that instead accused Russia of seeking to influence the election in Trump's favor.

"Nothing in the document issued last week undercuts the widely accepted conclusion that Russia worked to influence the 2016 presidential election but did not successfully manipulate any votes," Obama's office said.



JACQUELYN MARTIN/AP

**Former President Barack Obama talks with President-elect Donald Trump before the state funeral for former President Jimmy Carter in Washington on Jan. 9.**

The statement came soon after Trump erupted in a rant against Obama during an Oval Office meeting with Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos.

"They caught President Obama absolutely cold," Trump said. "They tried to rig the election and they got caught."

"It's time to go after people," he added. "Obama's been caught directly…He's guilty. This was treason."

Trump's outburst is seen by critics as an attempt to distract from negative attention regarding his relationship with late sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein and unanswered calls to release files related to the notorious pedophile's case.

Trump's right-wing MAGA base has been pushing for the administration to publicly bare Department of Justice files on the case even after Attorney General Pam Bondi said she wouldn't release any more information related to the sex-trafficking case.

Gabbard's report, released Friday, appears to be the latest effort to change the subject from Epstein.

It downplayed the extent of Russian interference in the 2016 election by highlighting Obama administration emails showing officials had concluded before and after the presidential race that Moscow had not hacked state election systems to manipulate votes in Trump's favor.

But Obama's Democratic administration never suggested otherwise, even as it exposed other means by which Russia interfered in the election, including through a massive hack-and-leak operation of Democratic emails by intelligence operatives working with WikiLeaks.

NATION

# Trump touts trade deal with Japan

## President shares Philippines has also accepted his lower tariff rate

*The Washington Post*

President Donald Trump said Tuesday he has clinched a trade deal with Japan, reducing the tariffs he had planned to impose on goods from a major trading partner as his deadline for negotiations nears.

Trump posted on his Truth Social social media site Tuesday evening that he would impose a 15% duty on Japanese imports, down from the 25% he threatened earlier this month.

In exchange, Trump said, Japan will remove trade barriers for U.S. auto and agricultural imports and will invest $550 billion in the United States, although the readout from Tokyo suggested this was more about financing than concrete plans to build factories.

The 15% rate also applies to automobiles and auto parts imported from Japan to the United States, down from the already imposed 25%, Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said in a news conference following Trump's post. The White House also confirmed the 15% auto rate, which is higher than the full rollback that Japanese officials had initially hoped to secure.

Earlier in the day, the White House shared some details of a separate trade deal with Indonesia, announced last week, under which the United States would charge a 19% tariff on imports. Trump had initially planned to impose a 32% tariff.

In Jakarta, Indonesia's top negotiator, Airlangga Hartarto, said a 19% tariff rate is competitive relative to neighboring countries. Trump announced a rate of 20% for nearby Vietnam earlier this month. Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia, which have yet to announce trade deals, face higher duties than that.




EUGENE HOSHIKO/AP

**A staff member distributes an extra edition of the Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper Wednesday, reporting that President Donald Trump announced a trade framework with Japan on Tuesday, in Tokyo. The headline reads "U.S., a 15% tax on goods imported from Japan."**

In another Truth Social post, Trump said the Philippines would agree to a deal with a 19% rate, down from 20%.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. confirmed the 19% rate in a briefing to reporters after meeting Trump in Washington, calling the reduction "a significant achievement."

Though Trump said the Philippines would impose zero tariffs on American products, Marcos said this would apply only to specific sectors, such as automobiles. The Philippines also plans to import more goods from the U.S., including pharmaceutical products, said Marcos.

Tariffs are taxes the government charges on imported goods, the cost of which are often transferred to consumers through higher prices.

Trump on April 2 announced sweeping import duties on dozens of countries in an event he dubbed "Liberation Day." But the White House rapidly pulled back from imposing those fees as global financial markets cratered, pausing the tariffs until July 9 and pledging negotiations for new deals.

Then, as that deadline drew near, Trump sent letters to the leaders of more than 20 countries threatening to impose revised tariff rates by Aug. 1 without new agreements.

On Tuesday evening, he hinted that another agreement with the European Union was in the offing. Trump has threatened to impose a 30% duty on EU imports beginning next month. "We have Europe coming in tomorrow and the next day, we have some other ones coming in," Trump said.

Trump said he was pleased with the talks with Japan. "I think maybe the largest deal in history with Japan, and that was done with Japan. They had their top people here, and we worked on it long and hard, and it's a great deal for everybody," he told legislators gathered in the East Room of the White House.

U.S. companies last year imported $148.4 billion worth of Japanese goods and exported roughly $79 billion to Japan, resulting in a trade deficit of $69.4 billion. That gap has remained roughly constant over the past decade.

Ishiba confirmed that Tokyo had agreed to accept more rice tariff-free from the United States. Under a World Trade Organization agreement, Japan has a "minimum access" system for rice imports, allowing up to 770,000 tons of rice to enter tax-free. The United States, already the biggest exporter of rice to Japan, will now be able to sell more to Japan, but Ishiba said Tokyo would decide what kind of rice and how much to accept from the United States.

# US president hints likely China trip as strains ease

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Tuesday said a trip to China might be "not too distant," raising prospects that the leaders of the world's two largest economies may meet soon to help reset relations after moving to climb down from a trade war.

Trump made the remarks while hosting Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. at the White House, where he praised the "fantastic military relationship" with Manila as the U.S. looks to counter China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

Yet, Trump still said the U.S. is "getting along with China very well. We have a very good relationship." He added that Beijing has resumed shipping to the U.S. "record numbers" of much-needed rare earth magnets, which are used in iPhones and other high-tech products like electric vehicles.

Widely speculated about since Trump returned to the White House, a summit between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping would be expected to stabilize — even for a short while — a difficult relationship defined by mistrust and competition.

Beijing believes a leader-level summit is necessary to steady U.S.-China relations and that Trump must be wooed because he has the final say on America's policy toward China, despite more hawkish voices in his Cabinet, observers say.

Beijing has not announced any travel plans for Vice Premier He Lifeng, who led trade negotiations in both Geneva and London on behalf of the Chinese government, but it is not unusual for China to make such announcements closer to a travel date.

# GOP propose naming Kennedy Center after Melania Trump

BY TRAVIS M. ANDREWS AND KARA VOGHT
*The Washington Post*

The Kennedy Center's Opera House could soon be called the "First Lady Melania Trump Opera House."

A Republican proposal would rename the second-largest theater in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts after the first lady, if legislation considered Tuesday by the House Appropriations Committee becomes law.

The first lady, following tradition, is an honorary chair of the Kennedy Center board. A spokesperson for Trump did not immediately respond for comment.

Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, proposed the amendment during a committee markup of the bill funding the Interior Department, the Environmental Protection Agency and related agencies for fiscal 2026. The committee adopted the measure by a vote of 33-25.

A bipartisan tone has predominated at the Kennedy Center, where crowds have often drawn in arts patrons from across the political spectrum. Its board of trustees members were generally split between Republicans and Democrats, until February, when President Donald Trump fired board members who had been appointed by President Joe Biden and replaced them with his own. The trustees then voted him in as president of the Kennedy Center board.

If it were to become law, the amendment would mark a further blurring of the center and the Trump administration. Four large portraits of the first and second couples now hang in the Hall of Nations.

During the hearing, Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, said Republicans had "snuck in, I think, something that is slightly divisive, which is renaming one section of the Kennedy Center after the family member of this administration."

The bill under consideration would provide $37 million in appropriations to the Kennedy Center, a 17% decrease from last year and in line with the president's budget proposal. But Pingree also pointed to the $250 million appropriated in the recent One Big Beautiful Bill Act to the center.

"The Republicans have now given the president six times the normal amount of money to run the Kennedy Center, carte blanche over who will be on the board, and how different parts of the Kennedy Center — perhaps the whole Kennedy Center itself — will be named, and this amendment confirms that," Pingree said.

The center's three major stages — the Eisenhower Theater, the Opera House and the Concert Hall — have never previously been renamed.

"This is an excellent way to recognize [Melania Trump's] support and commitment to promoting the arts, and I would encourage members to vote for this Republican en bloc amendment," said Simpson, chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee on interior, environment and related agencies.

NATION

# Conservatives gain influence on campuses

By Heather Hollingsworth
*Associated Press*

Ken Beckley never went to Harvard, but he has been wearing a crimson Harvard cap in a show of solidarity. As he sees it, the Trump administration's attacks on the school echo a case of government overreach at his own alma mater, Indiana University.

Beckley, a former head of the school's alumni association, rallied fellow graduates this spring in an unsuccessful effort to stop Gov. Mike Braun, a Republican, from removing three alumni-elected members from Indiana University's Board of Trustees and handpicking their replacements.

No government effort to influence a university — private or public — has gotten more attention than the clash at Harvard, where the Trump administration has frozen billions of dollars in federal funding as it seeks a series of policy changes. But far beyond the Ivy League, Republican officials are targeting public universities in several states with efforts seeking similar ends.



Josh Reynolds/For The Washington Post

**Harvard Yard is seen in Cambridge, Mass., in May.**

"What's happened nationally is now affecting Indiana," said Beckley, who bought Harvard caps in bulk and gives them to friends.

Officials in conservative states took aim at higher education before President Donald Trump began his second term, driven in part by the belief that colleges are out of touch — too liberal and loading up students with too much debt. The first efforts focused on critical race theory, which is focused on the idea that racism is embedded in the nation's institutions, and then on diversity, equity and inclusion programs.

Since Trump took office, officials in states including Indiana, Florida, Ohio, Texas, Iowa and Idaho increasingly have focused on university governance — rules for who picks university presidents and boards and how much control they exert over curriculums and faculty tenure.

As at Harvard, which Trump has decried as overly influenced by liberal thinking, those state officials have sought to reduce the power of faculty members and students.

"They've realized that they can take a bit of a step further, that they can advance their policy priorities through those levers they have through the state university system," said Preston Cooper, a senior fellow who studies higher education policy at the conservative American Enterprise Institute.

In Indiana, Braun said he picked new trustees who will guide the school "back in the right direction." They include an anti-abortion attorney and a former ESPN host who was disciplined because she criticized the company's policy requiring employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Braun's administration has ramped up scrutiny of hiring practices at colleges. Indiana's attorney general, Todd Rokita, has sent letters to the University of Notre Dame, Butler University and DePauw University questioning the legality of their DEI programs.

Butler, a private, liberal arts school in Indianapolis, was founded by an abolitionist in the decade leading up to the Civil War and admitted women and students of color from the start.

"I hope that Butler will uphold the standards they were founded on," said Edyn Curry, president of Butler's Black Student Union.

In Florida, the state university system board in June rejected longtime academic Santa Ono for the presidency at the University of Florida, despite a unanimous vote of approval by the school's own Board of Trustees. The unprecedented reversal followed criticism from conservatives about Ono's past support for DEI programs.

That followed the conservative makeover of New College of Florida, a small liberal arts school once known as the state's most progressive. After Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis appointed a group of conservatives to its governing board, many faculty left, including Amy Reid, who now manages a team focused on higher education at the free-expression group PEN America.

"When our students started organizing at New College, one of their slogans was 'Your Campus is Next,' " said Reid, who saw the gender studies program she directed defunded and then cut. "So no, we're not surprised when you see other states redefining what can be in a general education class, because we've seen it happen already."

The changes at several public universities are proceeding without battles of the kind seen at Harvard. In a standoff seen widely as a test of private universities' independence, Harvard has filed lawsuits against the administration's moves to cut its federal funding and block its ability to host international students.

In Iowa, new DEI restrictions are taking effect in July for community colleges. And the board that governs the state's three public universities is weighing doing something similar to Idaho, where a new law imposes restrictions on requiring students to take DEI-related courses to meet graduation requirements.

Historically, the Iowa board has been focused on big-picture issues like setting tuition rates and approving degree programs. Now, there's a perceived sense that faculty should not be solely responsible for academic matters and that the trustees should play a more active role, said Joseph Yockey, a professor at the University of Iowa College of Law and the former president of Iowa's faculty senate.

"What we started to see more recently is trustees losing confidence," Yockey said.

A new law in Ohio bans DEI programs at public colleges and universities and also strips faculty of certain collective bargaining rights and tenure protections.

There are few guardrails limiting how far oversight boards can change public institutions, said Isabel McMullen, a doctoral candidate at the University of Wisconsin who researches higher education.

"For a board that really does want to wreak havoc on an institution and overthrow a bunch of different programs, I think if a board is interested in doing that, I don't really see what's stopping them aside from students and faculty really organizing against it," McMullen said.

The state and federal initiatives have led to concern about an erosion of college's independence from politics, said Isaac Kamola, director of the Center for the Defense of Academic Freedom at the American Association of University Professors.

# Columbia University says students who protested have been suspended, expelled

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Columbia University announced disciplinary action Tuesday against students who participated in a pro-Palestinian demonstration inside the Ivy League school's main library before final exams in May and an encampment during alumni weekend last year.

A student activist group said nearly 80 students were told they have been suspended for one to three years or expelled. The sanctions issued by a university judicial board also include probation and degree revocations, Columbia said in a statement.

The action comes as the Manhattan university is negotiating with President Donald Trump's administration to restore $400 million in federal funding it has withheld from the Ivy League school over its handling of student protests against the war in Gaza. The administration pulled the funding, canceling grants and contracts, in March because of what it described as the university's failure to squelch antisemitism on campus during the Israel-Hamas war that began in October 2023.

Columbia has since agreed to a series of demands laid out by the Republican administration, including overhauling the university's student disciplinary process and adopting a new definition of antisemitism.

"Our institution must focus on delivering on its academic mission for our community," the university said Tuesday. "And to create a thriving academic community, there must be respect for each other and the institution's fundamental work, policies, and rules. Disruptions to academic activities are in violation of University policies and Rules, and such violations will necessarily generate consequences."

It did not disclose the names of the students who were disciplined.

Columbia in May said it would lay off nearly 180 staffers and scale back research in response to the loss of funding. Those receiving nonrenewal or termination notices represent about 20% of the employees funded in some manner by the terminated federal grants, the university said.

A student activist group said the newly announced disciplinary action exceeds sentencing precedent for prior protests. Suspended students would be required to submit apologies in order to be allowed back on campus or face expulsion, the group said, something some students will refuse to do.

"We will not be deterred. We are committed to the struggle for Palestinian liberation," Columbia University Apartheid Divest said in a statement.




Heather Khalifa/AP

**Protesters gather in support of Palestinians across the street from the main gates of Columbia University in May 21 in New York.**

# NATION




DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

**A vehicle sits on the sidewalk after ramming into a crowd of people waiting to enter a nightclub along a busy boulevard in Los Angeles early Saturday, injuring several people.**

## Man charged with attempted murder after 37 hurt as car rams crowd in LA

BY JAIMIE DING AND HALLIE GOLDEN
*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — The driver accused of ramming his car into a crowd outside a Los Angeles nightclub over the weekend was charged with 37 felony counts of attempted murder, prosecutors said Tuesday.

Fernando Ramirez, 29, was also charged with 37 felony counts of assault with a deadly weapon. If convicted, he could face multiple sentences of life imprisonment.

Ramirez is accused of intentionally driving his car onto the sidewalk as partygoers were leaving the Vermont Hollywood venue at the end of a reggae hip-hop event early Saturday. The motive for the attack, which injured 37 people, was still unknown.

A phone number for Ramirez could not be found in an online database search, and the public defender's office said they have not been appointed to represent him.

"When he drove that car onto that sidewalk, he aimed it at a whole sea of pedestrians," LA County District Attorney Nathan Hochman said in announcing the charges.

The car came to a stop after colliding with several food carts, which became lodged underneath the vehicle, and bystanders attacked the driver, police said. Injuries ranged from minor to serious fractures and lacerations, and some people were briefly trapped beneath the vehicle.

After fleeing the scene, Ramirez was later found to have been shot in the lower back, but authorities have not identified the suspected gunman. Officials said Tuesday they were still looking for the shooter.

"We understand that this brazen act has shaken the community and but for the good grace of God, this could have been a mass casualty incident" Hochman said. He added that eight people suffered "great bodily injury."

Among those injured, 23 people were taken to hospitals, said Ronnie Villanueva, Interim Fire Chief of the Los Angeles Fire Department.

Los Angeles Police Chief Jim McDonnell said "it's truly a miracle that no one was killed that day."

Ramirez has a criminal history that includes a battery and gang-related charge in 2014, an aggravated battery conviction for a 2019 attack on a Black man at a Whole Foods grocery store in Laguna Beach, Calif., and a domestic violence charge in 2021, records show.

# Envoy to visit Mideast in Gaza ceasefire push

BY ARNOUSH AMIRI AND MICHELLE L. PRICE
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's special envoy, Steve Witkoff, planned to head to the Middle East as the U.S. tries once again to reach a ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, the State Department's spokesperson said Tuesday.

Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce told reporters that Witkoff was going to the region with a "strong hope" that the U.S. can deliver a ceasefire deal as well as a new humanitarian corridor for aid distribution.

"I would suggest that we might have some good news, but, again, as we know, this could be a constantly changing dynamic," said Bruce, who didn't have other details about where Witkoff would be going or what he had planned.

Three U.S. officials said Witkoff is traveling to Europe this week to discuss a range of issues, including Gaza and the push for a ceasefire, but they had no details about Middle East stops and did not share where specifically Witkoff would travel to and when.

The officials were not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The State Department press office didn't respond to messages seeking more details on Witkoff's travel, and it wasn't immediately clear what his schedule would be this week.

A breakthrough in talks on a ceasefire deal has eluded the Trump administration for months as conditions worsen in Gaza. The territory had its deadliest day yet for aid-seekers in over 21 months of war, with at least 85 Palestinians killed while trying to reach food Sunday.



**Witkoff**

The Israeli army has said it fired warning shots, but says the reported death toll was greatly inflated. The United Nations' food agency accused Israeli forces of firing on the crowd of Palestinians seeking humanitarian aid.

Bruce said the incident that took place while civilians were trying to reach aid entering through the Zikim crossing with Israel is "absolutely horrible" and reinforced why the U.S. is pushing for a new humanitarian corridor to be created as part of any truce.

The sides have held weeks of talks in Qatar, reporting small signs of progress but no major breakthroughs. Officials have said a main sticking point is the redeployment of Israeli troops after any ceasefire takes place.

The U.S. plan calls for a 60-day truce, during which Hamas would release some hostages while Israel would free Palestinian prisoners and allow a surge of humanitarian aid into Gaza. During the 60 days, the sides are also to begin negotiations on a permanent end to the war.

## Smoking or oxygen machine led to deadly assisted-living home fire

*Associated Press*

FALL RIVER, Mass. — A fire that killed 10 people at a Massachusetts assisted-living facility was unintentionally caused by either someone smoking or an electrical issue with an oxygen machine, investigators said Tuesday.

The state's deadliest blaze in more than four decades has highlighted the lack of regulations governing assisted-living facilities that often care for low-income or disabled residents.

So far, investigators have remained mum on the possibility of criminal charges related to the fire at Gabriel House in Fall River, and declined to answer when asked during a Tuesday press conference.

The Massachusetts fire marshal, Jon Davine, said the presence of medical oxygen contributed to the fire's spread on the night of July 13. The blaze left some residents of the three-story building hanging out windows and screaming for help.

"Please, there's truly no safe way to smoke. But smoking is especially dangerous when home oxygen is in use," Davine told reporters on Tuesday.

Investigators are still collecting evidence on numerous aspects of the case, including whether the facility's sprinkler system worked as it should, said Thomas Quinn, the district attorney for Bristol County.

He told reporters there was no sign that electrical outlets, lights, heaters or cooking appliances sparked the fire.

The blaze began in a studio apartment on the second floor of the facility, where investigators found the remains of smoking materials, a battery-powered scooter and an oxygen concentrator. It's hard to know exactly what happened, Davine said, because the person who lived in the room was among the victims of the fire.

The district attorney's office identified the 10th victim as Halina Lawler, 70, on Monday. The victims of the fire ranged in age from 61 to 86.



RODRIQUE NGOWI/AP

**Flowers sit at a makeshift memorial in front of the Gabriel House assisted living facility, where a July 13 fire killed several people in Fall River, Mass.**

NATION

# Nuke agency breached in SharePoint hack

*Bloomberg News*

The U.S. agency responsible for maintaining and designing the nation's cache of nuclear weapons was among those breached by a hack of Microsoft Corp.'s SharePoint document management software, according to a person with knowledge of the matter.

No sensitive or classified information is known to have been compromised in the attack on the National Nuclear Security Administration, said the person, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly and asked not to be identified. The semiautonomous arm of the Energy Department is responsible for producing and dismantling nuclear arms. Other parts of the department were also compromised.

The agency referred questions about the attack to the Energy Department.

"On Friday, July 18th, the exploitation of a Microsoft SharePoint zero-day vulnerability began affecting the Department of Energy," an agency spokesman said in an email. "The department was minimally impacted due to its widespread use of the Microsoft M365 cloud and very capable cybersecurity systems. A very small number of systems were impacted. All impacted systems are being restored."

The NNSA has a broad mission, which includes providing the Navy with nuclear reactors for submarines and responding to radiological emergencies, among other duties. The agency also plays a key role in counterterrorism and transporting nuclear weapons around the country.

Hackers were able to breach the agency as part of a 2020 attack on a widely used software program from SolarWinds Corp. A department spokesperson said then that malware had "been isolated to business networks only."

Microsoft has blamed Chinese state-sponsored hackers for the attacks, which exploited flaws in its commonly used SharePoint document management software in a campaign that has breached governments, businesses and other organizations around the world. In some instances, the hackers have stolen sign-in credentials, including usernames, passwords, hash codes and tokens, Bloomberg reported earlier.

In addition to the Energy Department, the hackers have broken into systems belonging to national governments in Europe and the Middle East, the U.S. Education Department, Florida's Department of Revenue and the Rhode Island General Assembly.

The full extent of the damage isn't yet clear. The flaws apply to SharePoint customers who manage the software on their own networks, as opposed to on the cloud.

Microsoft, in a blog post Tuesday, identified two groups supported by the Chinese government, Linen Typhoon and Violet Typhoon, as leveraging flaws in the SharePoint software. Another hacking group based in China, which Microsoft calls Storm-2603, also exploited the SharePoint vulnerabilities, according to the blog.

# Trolls built from trash want to save humans from themselves

**BY TERRY CHEA**
*Associated Press*

WOODSIDE, Calif. — Nestled in forests around the world, a gentle army of giant wooden trolls want to show humans how to live better without destroying the planet.

The Danish recycle artist Thomas Dambo and his team have created 170 troll sculptures from discarded materials such as wooden pallets, old furniture and wine barrels.

Twelve years after he started the "Trail of a Thousand Trolls" project, his sculptures can be found in more than 20 countries and 21 U.S. states. Each year, Dambo and his team make about 25 new trolls, which stand up to 40 feet tall.

"I believe that we can make anything out of anything," said Dambo, speaking from his farm outside Copenhagen. "We are drowning in trash. But we also know that one man's trash is another man's treasure."

An installation of six sculptures called "Trolls Save the Humans" is on display at Filoli, a historic estate with 650 acres of forests and gardens in Woodside, about 30 miles south of San Francisco.



PHOTOS BY TERRY CHEA/AP

**People take pictures alongside a giant troll sculpture created by the Danish recycle artist Thomas Dambo and his team that's part of an installation of six sculptures called "Trolls Save the Humans" on display at the historic Filoli estate in Woodside, Calif.**



**A giant troll sculpture created by the Thomas Dambo and his team at Filoli.**

"They bring us back to be connected to the earth and to nature," said Jeannette Weederman, who was visiting Filoli with her son in earlier this month.

Dambo's trolls each have their own personality and story. At Filoli, the troll Ibbi Pip builds birdhouses, Rosa Sunfinger plants flowers and Kamma Can makes jewelry from people's garbage.

"Each of them has a story to tell," said Filoli CEO Kara Newport. "It inspires people to think of their own stories, what kind of creatures might live in their woods and make that connection to living beings in nature."

Dambo's trolls don't like humans because they waste nature's resources and pollute the planet. The mythical creatures have a long-term perspective because they live for thousands of years and have witnessed the destructive force of human civilizations.

But the six young trolls at Filoli have a more optimistic view of human nature.

They believe they can teach people how to protect the environment.

"They want to save the humans. So they do this by teaching them how to be better humans — be humans that don't destroy nature," said Dambo, 45, a poet and former hip-hop artist. "They hope to save them from being eaten by the older trolls."

# US home sales decline in June as prices increase to new heights

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes slid in June to the slowest pace since last September as mortgage rates remained elevated and national median sales prices hit unprecedented levels.

Existing home sales fell 2.7% last month from May to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.93 million units, the National Association of Realtors said Wednesday.

Sales were flat compared with June last year. The latest home sales fell short of the 4.01 million pace economists were expecting, according to FactSet.

Home prices increased on an annual basis for the 24th consecutive month. The national median sales price rose 2% in June from a year earlier to $435,300, an all-time high.

The U.S. housing market has been in a slump since early 2022, when mortgage rates began to climb from pandemic-era lows. Home sales fell last year to their lowest level in nearly 30 years.

So far this year, the average rate on a 30-year mortgage has remained relatively close to 7%, according to mortgage buyer Freddie Mac.

Homes purchased last month likely went under contract in May and June, when the average rate on a 30-year mortgage ranged from 6.76% to 6.89%. High mortgage rates can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, limiting their purchasing power. The trend is a key reason for why this year's spring homebuying season has been a bust.

"The second half of the year really depends on what happens with mortgage rates," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist.

The affordability constraints are limiting the activity of first-time buyers. They accounted for 30% of homes sales last month, unchanged from May. Historically, they made up 40% of home sales.

Home shoppers who can afford to buy at current mortgage rates or pay in cash are benefiting from more properties on the market.

There were 1.53 million unsold homes at the end of last month, down 0.6% from May, but up nearly 16% from June last year, NAR said. That's still well below the roughly 2 million homes for sale that was typical before the pandemic. However, June's month-end inventory translates to a 4.7-month supply at the current sales pace, up from a 4.6-month pace at the end of May and 4 months in June last year. Traditionally, a 5- to 6-month supply is considered a balanced market between buyers and sellers.

Homes for sale are staying on the market longer as sales remain in the doldrums. Properties typically remained on the market for 27 days last month before selling, up from 22 days in June last year, NAR said.

NATION

# US organ donation system is under scrutiny

## Disturbing reports of near-misses have caused lawmakers to hear testimony on current practices

By Lauran Neergaard
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. is developing new safeguards for the organ transplant system after a government investigation found a Kentucky group continued preparations for organ donation by some patients who showed signs of life, officials told Congress Tuesday.

While the organ removals were canceled, near misses that some lawmakers called horrifying should never happen. A House subcommittee asked how to repair trust in the transplant network for potential organ donors and families — some of whom have opted out of donor registries after these cases were publicized.

"We have to get this right," said Rep. Brett Guthrie, a Kentucky Republican who chairs the Energy and Commerce Committee and whose mother died waiting for a liver transplant.

"Hopefully people will walk away today knowing we need to address issues but still confident that they can give life," Guthrie said, adding that he will remain a registered organ donor.

The hearing came after a federal investigation began last fall into allegations that a Kentucky donation group pressured a hospital in 2021 to proceed with plans to withdraw life support and retrieve organs from a man despite signs that he might be waking up from his drug overdose. That surgery never happened after a doctor noticed him moving and moaning while being transported to the operating room — and the man survived.

Lawmakers stressed most organ donations proceed appropriately and save tens of thousands of lives a year. But the federal probe — concluded in March but only made public ahead of Tuesday's hearing — cited a "concerning pattern of risk" in dozens of other cases involving the Kentucky group's initial planning to recover someone's organs. The report said some should have been stopped or reassessed earlier, and mostly involved small or rural hospitals with less experience in caring for potential organ donors.

The Kentucky organ procurement organization, or OPO, has made changes and the national network is working on additional steps. But notably absent Tuesday was any testimony from hospitals — whose doctors must independently determine a patient is dead before donation groups are allowed to retrieve organs.

Here's a look at how the nation's transplant system works.

■ **There's a dire need for organ donation.**

More than 100,000 people are on the U.S. transplant list and about 13 a day die waiting, according to the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network.

Only about 1% of deaths occur in a way that allows someone to even be considered for organ donation. Most people declared dead in a hospital will quickly be transferred to a funeral home or morgue instead.



Mark Humphrey/AP

**Surgical instruments are arranged during an organ procurement surgery.**

■ **How the U.S. organ transplant system is set up.**

Several groups are involved in every transplant: the hospital caring for someone dead or dying; the 55 OPOs that coordinate recovery of organs and help match them to patients on the waiting list; and transplant centers that decide if an organ is the right fit for their patients.

Adding to the complexity, two government agencies — the Health Resources and Services Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services — share regulatory oversight of different parts of the donation and transplant process.

■ **How deceased donation works.**

Most organ donors are brain-dead — when testing determines someone has no brain function after a catastrophic injury. The body is left on a ventilator to support the organs until they can be retrieved.

But increasingly organs are donated after circulatory death, called DCD — when people die because their heart stops. It usually happens when doctors determine someone has a nonsurvivable injury and the family withdraws life support.

■ **Donation groups don't provide hands-on patient care.**

Hospitals are required to alert their area OPO to every potential donor who is declared brain-dead or once the decision to withdraw life support is made. The OPOs by law can't participate in that decision and "we are not even in the room at that time," said Barry Massa of Kentucky's Network for Hope.

During the following days of preparation, hospital employees continue caring for the patient — while the donation team talks with the family about the process, gathers hospital records showing the patient is eligible, requests tests of organ quality, and make arrangements with transplant centers to use them. Once the hospital withdraws life support and the heart stops beating there's a mandatory wait — five minutes — to be sure it won't restart. When the doctor declares death, the organ retrieval process can begin.

Organs are only considered usable if death occurs relatively quickly, usually up to about two hours. Sometimes that takes much longer and thus the organs can't be used — and HRSA's Dr. Raymond Lynch told Congress that doesn't necessarily mean anything was done wrong. Still, he said HRSA is investigating reports of possible mistakes elsewhere.

"This is a technically demanding form of care" that requires "good collaboration between the OPO and the hospital," he said.

■ **What happens next.**

At issue is how doctors are sure when it's time to withdraw life support from a dying patient — and the delicate balance of how OPOs interact with hospital staff in preparing for donation once death occurs.

In May, HRSA quietly ordered the U.S. transplant network to oversee improvements at the Kentucky OPO and to develop new national policies making clear that anyone — family, hospital staff or organ donation staff — can call for a pause in donation preparations any time there are concerns about the patient's eligibility.

Lynch said the government now wants more proactive collaboration from OPOs to give hospital staff "a clear understanding" of when to at least temporarily halt and reevaluate a potential donor if their health status changes.

Kentucky's Massa said his group only received HRSA's reports this week — but that after learning about last fall's allegations, it made some changes. Massa said every hospital doctor and nurse now gets a checklist on caring for potential donors and how to pause when concerns are raised — and anyone can anonymously report complaints.


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WORLD

# Anti-corruption law spurs outcry from Ukrainians

By Illia Novikov
*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukrainian activists called for more protests Wednesday against a law they say weakens the country's anti-corruption watchdogs, following the first major demonstration against the country's government in more than three years of war. The legislation has also drawn rebukes from European Union officials and international rights groups.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, under pressure as the change threatened to endanger his public support at a critical time in the war, convened the heads of Ukraine's key anti-corruption and security agencies Wednesday morning in a response to the outcry against his decision to approve the new law that was passed by Parliament.

"We all hear what society says," Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram after the meeting. But he insisted the new legal framework was needed to crack down harder on corruption.

He said all government agencies agreed to work constructively and respond to public expectations for fairness and effectiveness. A detailed joint action plan is expected within two weeks, aimed at addressing institutional weaknesses, removing legal hurdles, and ensuring justice across the board, he said.

Thousands of people gathered in the capital and other cities across Ukraine on Tuesday evening to urge Zelenskyy to veto the controversial bill. After Zelenskyy approved it, activists called on social media for another demonstration in the center of Kyiv at 8 p.m. Wednesday.

The legislation tightens government oversight of two key anti-corruption agencies. Critics say the step could significantly weaken the independence of those agencies and grant Zelenskyy's circle greater influence over investigations.

Fighting entrenched corruption is crucial for Ukraine's aspirations to join the EU and maintain access to billions of dollars in Western aid in its fight against Russia's three-year invasion.

"Limiting the independence of Ukraine's anti-corruption agency hampers Ukraine's way towards the EU," German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul warned Wednesday in a post on X

The Ukrainian branch of Transparency International criticized Parliament's decision, saying it undermines one of the most significant reforms since what Ukraine calls its Revolution of Dignity in 2014, and damages trust with international partners. It accused authorities of "dismantling" the country's anti-corruption architecture.

Zelenskyy has been the international face of Ukraine's determination to defeat Russia's all-out invasion, and his domestic troubles are an unwelcome diversion from the war effort.

Zelenskyy said the new law clears out "Russian influence" from the fight against corruption and ensures punishment for those found guilty of it, after what he said were yearslong delays in criminal proceedings involving huge amounts of money.

He didn't provide examples of what he said was Russian interference.

Russian officials relished Zelenskyy's difficulties. Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova mocked Zelenskyy's claim of Russian infiltration into the anti-corruption agency, noting sarcastically that "they might just as well pull a couple of bears out of the corner."

Delegations from Russia and Ukraine were set to meet in Istanbul on Wednesday for their third round of direct talks in two months, the Kremlin and Ukrainian officials said. The meeting wasn't expected to make progress on ending the war and would likely focus on exchanges of prisoners of war.

The legal changes in Ukraine would grant the prosecutor general new authority over investigations and cases handled by the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office.




ALEX BABENKO / AP

**Protesters chant while holding banners that read "I stand for you, and for those who are on the frontline," "Do you want it like in Russia", "Stop robbing our future" during a Tuesday protest against a law targeting anti-corruption institutions in central Kyiv, Ukraine.**

# Israel blamed for 1K Gaza aid-seeker deaths since May

*Associated Press*

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — More than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since May while trying to get food in the Gaza Strip, mostly near aid sites run by an American contractor, the U.N. human rights office said Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Israeli strikes killed 25 people across Gaza, according to local health officials.

Desperation is mounting in the Palestinian territory of more than 2 million, which experts say is at risk of famine because of Israel's blockade and nearly two-year offensive. A breakdown of law and order has led to widespread looting and contributed to chaos and violence around aid deliveries.

Israel accuses Hamas of siphoning off aid — without providing evidence of widespread diversion — and blames U.N. agencies for failing to deliver food it has allowed in. The military says it has only fired warning shots near aid sites. The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, an Israeli-backed American contractor, rejected what it said were "false and exaggerated statistics" from the United Nations.

The Gaza Health Ministry, which is part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals, said Tuesday that 80 children have died from starvation since the beginning of the war, while 21 adults have since Sunday. The ministry only recently began tracking deaths from malnutrition in adults.

The deaths could not be independently verified, but U.N. officials and major international aid groups say the conditions for starvation exist in Gaza.

Israel eased a 2½-month blockade in May, allowing a trickle of aid in through the longstanding U.N.-run system and the newly created GHF. Aid groups say it's not nearly enough.

# UN court: Climate change inaction could violate international law

By Molly Quell
*Associated Press*

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — The United Nations's top court in a landmark advisory opinion Wednesday said countries could be in violation of international law if they fail to take measures to protect the planet from climate change, and nations harmed by its effects could be entitled to reparations.

Advocates immediately cheered the International Court of Justice opinion on nations' obligations to tackle climate change and the consequences they may face if they don't.

"Failure of a state to take appropriate action to protect the climate system ... may constitute an internationally wrongful act," court President Yuji Iwasawa said during the hearing. He called the climate crisis "an existential problem of planetary proportions that imperils all forms of life and the very health of our planet."

The non-binding opinion, which runs to over 500 pages, was hailed as a turning point in international climate law.

Notably, the court said a "clean, healthy and sustainable environment" is a human right. That paves the way for other legal actions, including states returning to the ICJ to hold each other to account as well as domestic lawsuits, along with legal instruments like investment agreements.

The case was led by the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu and backed by more than 130 countries.

All U.N. member states including major greenhouse gas emitters like the United States and China are parties to the court.

Climate activists had gathered outside the packed court with a banner that read: "Courts have spoken. The law is clear. States must ACT NOW." Afterward, others emerged laughing and hugging.

After years of lobbying by vulnerable island nations who fear they could disappear under rising sea waters, the U.N. General Assembly asked the ICJ in 2023 for an advisory opinion, an important basis for international obligations.

A panel of 15 judges was tasked with answering two questions: What are countries obliged to do under international law to protect the climate and environment from human-caused greenhouse gas emissions? Second, what are the legal consequences for governments when their acts, or lack of action, have significantly harmed the climate and environment?

In the decade up to 2023, sea levels rose by a global average of around 1.7 inches, with parts of the Pacific rising higher still.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Judge pauses state's ban on school DEI programs

**MS** JACKSON — A Mississippi law that bans diversity, equity and inclusion programs from public schools and universities was temporarily blocked by a federal judge Sunday.

U.S. District Judge Henry Wingate approved the request for a temporary restraining order brought by a group of plaintiffs, including the Mississippi Association of Educators.

The plaintiffs also requested a preliminary injunction, a longer-term order that would prevent the law from being enforced while litigation plays out in court.

The temporary restraining order will stay in place until Wingate rules on the request for preliminary injunction.

"Suppressing constitutional speech through vague prohibitions and the specter of financial retribution does not serve the public good — it undermines it," the ruling reads.

## Ex-NYPD commissioner sues mayor for $10M

**NY** NEW YORK — New York City's former interim police commissioner has filed a $10 million defamation claim against Mayor Eric Adams for reportedly suggesting he was mentally unfit for the job of top cop.

The filing comes less than a week after the ex-commissioner, Thomas Donlon, sued Adams and his top deputies, accusing them of operating the department as a criminal racket that rewarded unqualified loyalists and punished whistleblowers. Donlon said he was sidelined for trying to clean up the corruption.

After that lawsuit was filed, Adams privately told members of a nonprofit business advocacy group at a meeting that he'd fired Donlon, 71, from his brief stint as commissioner last fall because he was "rapidly deteriorating mentally," according to attendees. Donlon cited news reports about those comments in his legal claim.

## Alligator Alcatraz lawsuit said filed in wrong court

**FL** MIAMI — Florida's top emergency official asked a federal judge on Monday to resist a request by environmentalists to halt an immigration detention center known as Alligator Alcatraz in the middle of the Florida Everglades because their lawsuit was filed in the wrong jurisdiction.

Even though the property is owned by Miami-Dade County, Florida's southern district is the wrong venue for the lawsuit since the detention center is located in neighboring Collier County, which is in the state's middle district. Decisions about the facility also were made in Tallahassee and Washington, Kevin Guthrie, executive director for the Florida Division of Emergency Management, said in a court filing.

"And all the detention facilities, all the buildings, and all the paving at issue are sited in Collier County, not Miami-Dade," Guthrie said.

Environmental groups filed a lawsuit in Florida's southern district last month, asking for the project being built on an airstrip in the heart of the Florida Everglades to be halted because the process didn't follow state and federal environmental laws. A virtual hearing was being held Monday on the lawsuit.



DONAVAN BARRIER, (MICHIGAN CITY, IND.) LA PORTE COUNTY HERALD-DISPATCH/AP

# This is the way for the best photo

**Members of the 501st Legion take photos with Star Wars fans at the community health fair hosted last week by HealthLinc Michigan City in Michigan City, Ind.**

## Man pleads guilty in grocery store shooting

**AR** LITTLE ROCK — An Arkansas man changed his plea to guilty Monday in the shooting at a grocery store last year that killed four people and injured 11 others, including two police officers.

Travis Eugene Posey, 45, pleaded guilty to four counts of capital murder and 11 counts of attempted capital murder in the June 2024 shooting, according to his attorney. Gregg Parrish, executive director of the Arkansas Public Defender Commission, said Posey's sentencing is set for Aug. 4.

Parrish declined to comment further. The shooting occurred last year at the Mad Butcher grocery store in Fordyce, a city of about 3,200 people located 65 miles south of Little Rock.

## Mamdani visiting Uganda during mayoral campaign

**NY** NEW YORK — New York City Democratic mayoral nominee Zohran Mamdani is visiting his native country of Uganda to celebrate his recent marriage, taking a short break from the campaign trail ahead of the November election.

Mamdani announced the visit in a video posted to social media on Sunday and said he would return to the city by the end of July.

The trip comes as Mamdani, a 33-year-old member of the state Assembly, is facing a crowded field of opponents in the city's general election, including former Gov. Andrew Cuomo and incumbent Mayor Eric Adams, who are both running as independent candidates.

## Mountain lion bites child on popular park trail

**WA** PORT ANGELES — A mountain lion bit a 4-year-old who was walking with their family over the weekend on a popular trail in Olympic National Park in Washington state, park officials said Monday.

The child was injured during Sunday's attack and flown to a trauma center in Seattle for treatment, according to a statement from the National Park Service.

The attack by a mountain lion fitted with a tracking collar was near an overlook on Hurricane Ridge, a popular mountain area with expansive views.

The attack was reported to rangers around 3:15 p.m. on Sunday and paramedics and park staff traveled to the injured child, according to the National Park Service.

Rangers immediately started searching for the cougar and by Monday, park staff had "dispatched the animal," the statement said using a term that generally refers to killing an animal.

## Man charged over fires set to 11 NYPD vehicles

**NY** NEW YORK — A man with a history of arrests at pro-Palestinian protests was charged Monday with setting fire to 11 New York City police vehicles last month.

Jakhi McCray, 21, of Brooklyn pleaded not guilty to arson in U.S. District Court.

A criminal complaint unsealed Monday said McCray was recorded on surveillance video scaling a fence to a private lot for reserve New York Police Department vehicles in Brooklyn's Bushwick neighborhood shortly before 1 a.m. on June 12. A police officer arrived about a half hour later to find the vehicles on fire and the suspect fleeing through a hole in the fence, it said.

The complaint said a lighter and a pair of sunglasses containing McCray's fingerprints were found at the scene, along with fire starters that had been placed under some undamaged vehicles. Police estimated the replacement cost of the vehicles at $800,000.

McCray's attorney, Ron Kuby, said his client, whom he described as an activist, was ordered released on the arson charge but remained in police custody on a separate misdemeanor count in Manhattan.

After the vehicles were torched, Mayor Eric Adams suggested the suspect was connected to protests in Los Angeles, New York and elsewhere over the Trump administration's immigration enforcement agenda.

From The Associated Press

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# OPINION



HANNAH KANTNER/U.S. Navy

**The Nimitz-class aircraft carriers USS Nimitz and USS Carl Vinson operate in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility earlier this month.**

# Why US dominance at sea is shrinking

BY PETER DE MENOCAL, MARGARET LEINEN AND JOHN RICHARDSON
*The Washington Post*

There is a wall display in the Port Office overlooking the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's dock on the southern tip of Cape Cod. Old and yellowing, it quietly speaks volumes after more than 90 years.

The display shows wavy lines traced on mimeograph paper above handwritten notes from a crewman aboard the USS Guitarro. It was sent to the institution after one of the submarine's World War II deployments. "The ENG. officer is happy to be able to forward this card because it means we were able to 'walk away' from this one," the note reads.

Those fading lines map changes in temperature with depth — data recorded by a bathythermograph, or BT, an instrument built at Woods Hole by Allyn Vine. Developed in the 1930s to study how sound travels through seawater, the BT found new and urgent purpose during wartime. It became a hidden advantage for U.S. naval forces, one of many provided by ocean science, that enabled surface ships to detect submarines more precisely and helped submariners such as those aboard the Guitarro escape by diving beneath sharp thermoclines — sudden changes in temperature at depth — that could bend or block sonar.

Another defining moment for ocean science came in June 1944. In the final hours before the D-Day invasion, a small team of oceanographers and meteorologists that included Walter Munk, a legendary scientist at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, advised Allied commanders to postpone the landing for 24 hours. Their analysis of wave behavior, wind patterns and tides in the English Channel predicted a brief window of favorable conditions that allowed thousands of troops to land on the beaches of Normandy in one of the most consequential operations in modern history. Had the invasion occurred just one day earlier, conditions probably would have doomed it to failure.

Neither the BT nor marine forecasting began as military technologies. They were products of ocean science — which is aimed at understanding, not fighting. But in both cases, that understanding helped win a war and usher in an era of unprecedented prosperity.

Today, we face a new era of strategic uncertainty and increasingly complex operational challenges, both above and below the waves. But the lesson remains: National security depends on our ability to observe, understand and anticipate the ocean environment — an ability that will be severely hampered if the Trump administration succeeds in reducing or eliminating key programs and offices spread across the federal government in next year's budget.

Modern naval operations also rely on real-time, high-resolution environmental data. Knowing how sound propagates, where currents flow, or how ice forms and moves can determine success or failure, especially in environments such as the Arctic, where rapid warming is transforming the strategic landscape.

For now, the United States enjoys a distinct advantage in undersea technologies and maritime operations. No other nation operates on, above or beneath the ocean with greater reach, capability or experience. Our integrated fleet of submarines, research vessels, sensors and unmanned systems is unmatched. But that advantage is shrinking.

Other nations are investing aggressively in marine research, infrastructure and technology. China in particular is deploying autonomous platforms and fielding new research vessels and icebreakers at a pace the United States has not matched. These investments are not just scientific — they are strategic and will shape the balance of power on the world's oceans for decades to come.

Despite this, federal investment in ocean science remains disproportionately small. In recent years, it has accounted for less than 0.2% of federal discretionary spending, and current proposed cuts would reduce that even further. Those cuts include a 42% reduction in Office of Naval Research support for basic academic-sponsored research, a 64% cut to the National Science Foundation's ocean sciences division, and elimination of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. If they are implemented, we risk falling behind in a race we cannot afford to lose.

The United States is, and has always been, a maritime nation. From the earliest days of commerce and exploration, our security, economy and identity have been tied to the sea. Today, more than 90% of global trade travels by ship, and more than 95% of international data flows through seafloor fiber-optic cables. Our way of life depends on secure, reliable access to the maritime domain — above and below the surface.

But to lead at sea, we must understand the sea.

Our leadership depends on a renewed national commitment to ocean science, which means treating ocean observation systems as critical infrastructure.

It means fully funding agencies such as the Office of Naval Research, the NSF and NOAA. It means expanding observing networks, investing in autonomous systems, modernizing the academic research fleet, and ensuring that both scientific and military operators have access to the most advanced tools to explore and understand the ocean.

Institutions such as Woods Hole, Scripps and many others have long provided the backbone of U.S. ocean leadership. When Woods Hole researchers developed the BT, they sought knowledge, not weapons. When Walter Munk and Allied scientists forecast maritime conditions for D-Day, they sought precision, not battle. But in both cases, their work changed the course of history.

Today, we must carry that mindset forward. Investing in ocean science is not just about curiosity — it is about ensuring our future readiness, resilience and national security.

Peter de Menocal is president and director of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Margaret Leinen is director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography and vice chancellor for marine sciences at the University of California at San Diego. John Richardson, a retired Navy admiral, was chief of naval operations and director of strategy and policy at the U.S. Joint Forces Command.

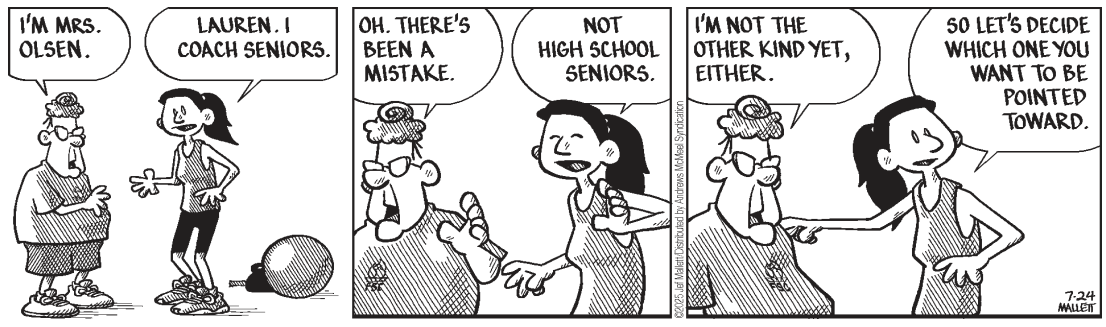
## Bizarro



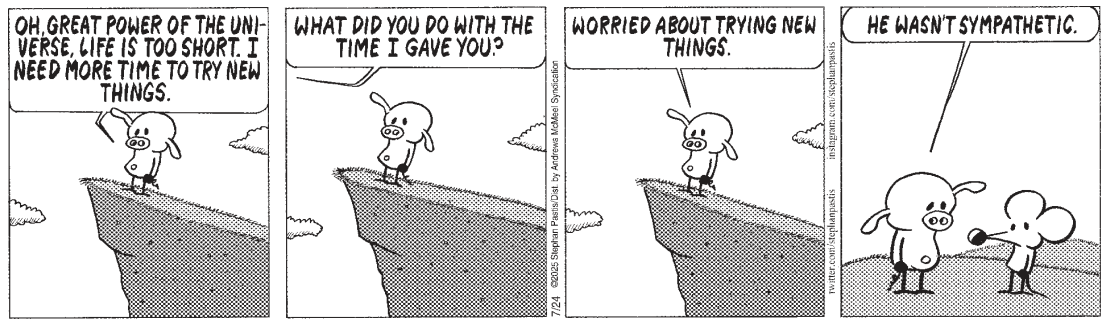

## Loose Parts



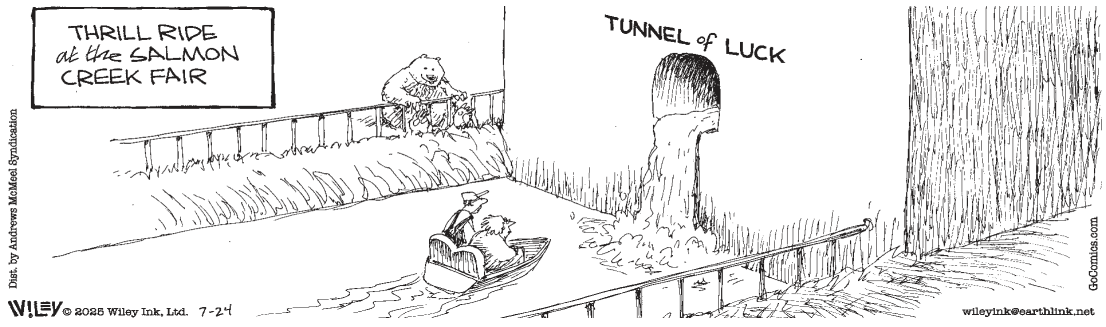

## Frazz



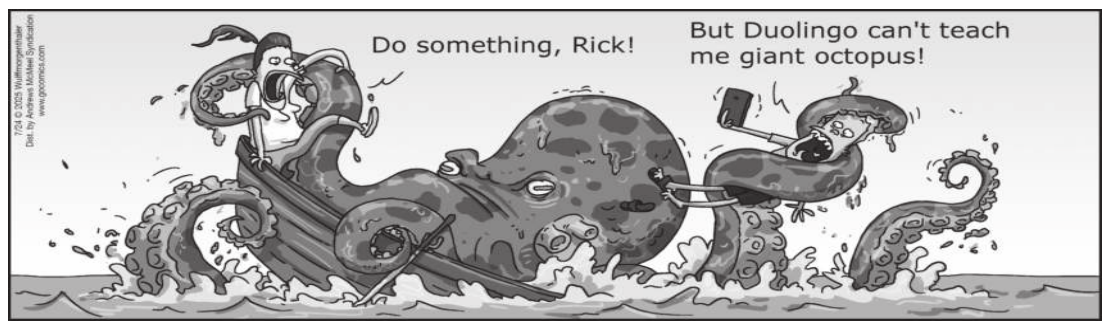

## Pearls Before Swine



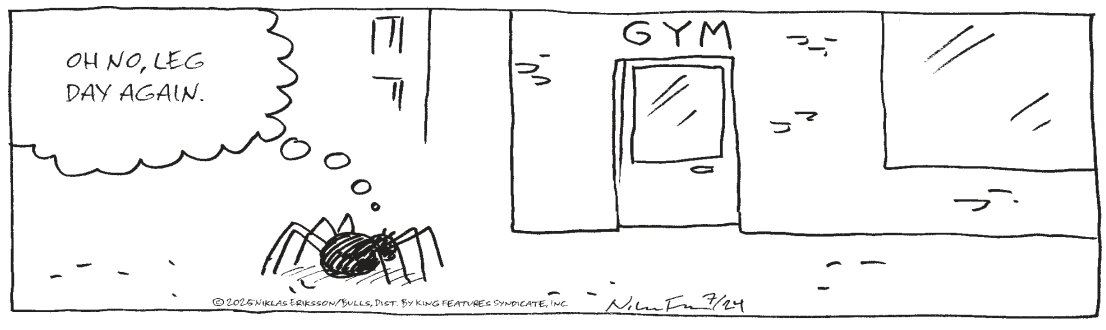

## Non Sequitur



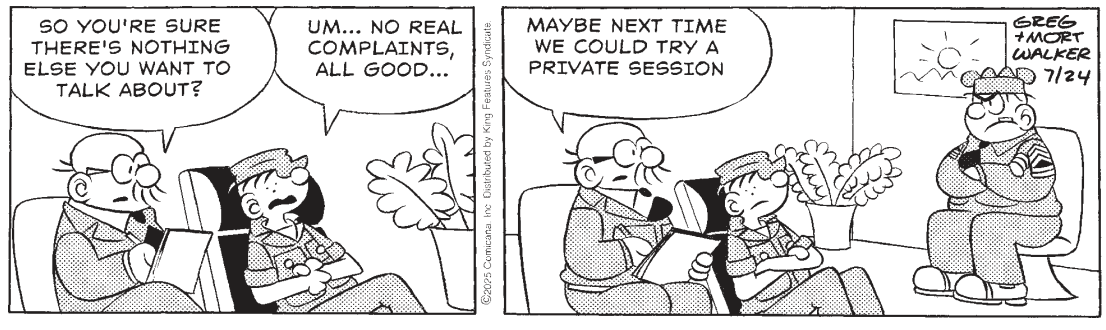

## Wumo



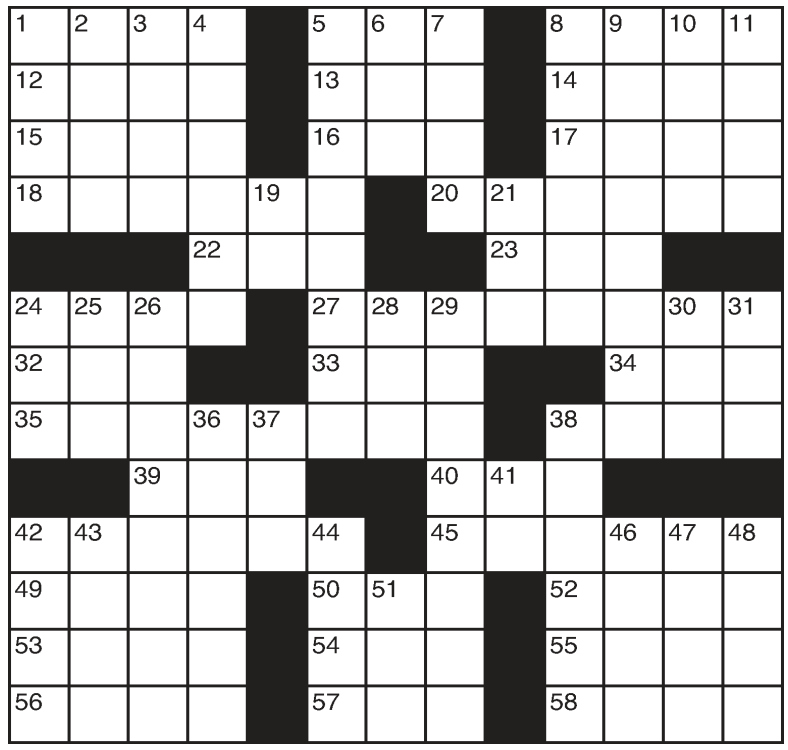

## Carpe Diem




## Beetle Bailey




## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



### ACROSS

1 Skye caps
5 Select, with "for"
8 Biblical verb
12 Writer Wiesel
13 Swiss canton
14 Italian money
15 Verdi heroine
16 Kayo count
17 A/C measures
18 Bee attacks
20 Sunglasses
22 URL suffix
23 Greek vowel
24 French cleric
27 Italian liqueur
32 Goose egg
33 King, in Cannes
34 Time line period
35 Cooling drink
38 Aspiring atty.'s exam
39 Comics cry
40 Ecol. watchdog
42 Rome's — Way
45 Ladle
49 Indigent
50 Ruckus
52 Ocean motion
53 Poker type
54 — Diamond Phillips
55 Gymnast Korbut
56 Start of Idaho's motto
57 Crumb carrier
58 Begged

### DOWN

1 Herbal drinks
2 Landed
3 Calf-length
4 Date with a medium
5 Hornswoggle
6 Opposite of "post-"
7 Metal boxes
8 Candidates' face-off
9 Renders obsolete
10 Verifiable
11 "Bonanza" son
19 "Scram!"
21 — Majesty
24 Singer DiFranco
25 Paper Mate rival
26 Censor
28 Homer's bartender
29 Ventilated
30 La-la lead-in
31 Granola morsel
36 Eccentric
37 Alias letters
38 Portable PC
41 Circle ratio
42 Church section
43 Cookware
44 "The Lion King" lion
46 Tablet
47 Rim
48 Peruse
51 Mafia boss

### Answer to Previous Puzzle

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | A | G | I | ■ | F | A | Y | ■ | U | R | G | E |
| I | R | O | N | ■ | E | R | A | ■ | L | O | A | D |
| R | O | O | F | D | E | C | K | ■ | N | O | P | E |
| A | N | N | A | N | ■ | ■ | S | E | A | M | E | N |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | N | A | S | H | ■ | A | R | M | ■ | ■ |
| P | A | R | T | ■ | P | A | R | R | ■ | A | M | A |
| E | G | O | ■ | Z | U | B | I | N | ■ | T | A | I |
| W | O | O | ■ | O | N | I | T | ■ | S | E | A | L |
| ■ | ■ | T | E | N | ■ | T | E | A | K | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| T | A | B | L | E | T | ■ | ■ | B | A | L | T | O |
| A | L | E | S | ■ | R | O | O | S | T | E | R | S |
| K | L | E | E | ■ | A | L | F | ■ | E | G | A | L |
| E | A | R | S | ■ | Y | E | T | ■ | R | O | M | O |

## 7-24 CRYPTOQUIP

TBQPXQO PL OUQUDBPU HLEU GXAXGUQGH, PFU CLQO-YXCCUG TBGXQO YXDGH XQAUHPUG XQ PFU HPLDN EBDNUP.

**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** WHEN BUYING SHORT SKIRTS AT A CLOTHING OUTLET, MAKE SURE THEY COME WITH A MINI-BACK GUARANTEE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals H

FACES

# Metal legend Osbourne dies

## Black Sabbath singer known for dark persona and deeds, but also being doting reality TV dad

BY MARK KENNEDY
*Associated Press*

Ozzy Osbourne, the gloomy, demon-invoking lead singer of the pioneering band Black Sabbath who became the throaty, growling voice — and drug-and-alcohol ravaged id — of heavy metal, died Tuesday, just weeks after his farewell show. He was 76.

"It is with more sadness than mere words can convey that we have to report that our beloved Ozzy Osbourne has passed away this morning. He was with his family and surrounded by love. We ask everyone to respect our family privacy at this time," a family statement from Birmingham, England, said. In 2020, he revealed he had Parkinson's disease after suffering a fall.

Either clad in black or bare-chested, the singer was often the target of parents' groups for his imagery and once caused an uproar for biting the head off a bat. Later, he would reveal himself to be a doddering and sweet father on the reality TV show "The Osbournes."

Black Sabbath's 1969 self-titled debut LP has been likened to the Big Bang of heavy metal. It came during the height of the Vietnam War and crashed the hippie party, dripping menace and foreboding. The music was dense and angry, and marked a shift in rock 'n' roll.

The band's second album, "Paranoid," included such classic metal tunes as "War Pigs," "Iron Man" and "Fairies Wear Boots." The song "Paranoid" only reached No. 61 on the Billboard Hot 100 but became in many ways the band's signature song. Both albums were voted among the Top 10 greatest heavy metal albums of all time by Rolling Stone magazine readers.

"Black Sabbath are the Beatles of heavy metal. Anybody who's serious about metal will tell you it all comes down to Sabbath," Dave Navarro of the band Jane's Addiction wrote in a 2010 tribute in Rolling Stone. "There's a direct line you can draw back from today's metal, through Eighties bands like Iron Maiden, back to Sabbath."

Sabbath fired Osbourne in 1979 for his legendary excesses, like showing up late for rehearsals and missing gigs.

Osbourne reemerged the next year as a solo artist with "Blizzard of Ozz" and the following year's "Diary of a Madman," both hard rock classics that went multiplatinum and spawned enduring favorites such as "Crazy Train," "Goodbye to Romance," "Flying High Again" and "You Can't Kill Rock and Roll."

Osbourne was twice inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame — once with Sabbath in 2006 and again in 2024 as a solo artist. He won five Grammys in the course of his life.



AP

**Ozzy Osbourne sings with Black Sabbath in 1997 during an Ozzfest concert in East Rutherford, N.J. Osbourne died Tuesday at age 76.**

The original Sabbath lineup reunited for the first time in 20 years in July for what Osbourne said would be his final concert. "Let the madness begin!" he told 42,000 fans in Birmingham.

Osbourne embodied the excesses of metal. His outlandish exploits included relieving himself on the Alamo, snorting a line of ants off a sidewalk and, most memorably, biting the head off the live bat that a fan threw onstage during a 1981 concert. (He said he thought it was rubber.)

He started an annual tour — Ozzfest — in 1996 after he was rejected from the lineup of what was then the top touring music festival, Lollapalooza. Ozzfest has gone on to host such bands as Slipknot, Tool, Megadeth, Rob Zombie, System of a Down, Limp Bizkit and Linkin Park.

Osbourne's look changed little over his life. He wore his long hair flat, heavy black eye makeup and round glasses, often wearing a cross around his neck. In 2013, he reunited with Black Sabbath for the dour, raw "13," which reached No. 1 on the U.K. Albums Chart and peaked at No. 86 on the U.S. Billboard 200.

Osbourne is survived by his wife, Sharon, and his children.

# 'The Osbournes' radically changed Ozzy's image and reality television

*Associated Press*

There was Ozzy before "The Osbournes" and Ozzy after "The Osbournes."

For much of his life, the Black Sabbath founder and legendary heavy metal frontman was known to much of the public as a dark purveyor of deeds ranging from decadent to Satanic.

But with the debut of his family reality show on MTV, the world learned what those closer to him already knew: Ozzy Osbourne was soft and fuzzy under the darkness.

During its relatively short run from 2002 to 2005, "The Osbournes" became a runaway hit and made stars of his wife Sharon and kids Jack and Kelly. But more than that, it made a star of the domesticated version of Ozzy Osbourne, and in the process changed reality TV.

In 2025, when virtually every variety of celebrity has had a reality show, it's hard to see what a novelty the series was. MTV sold it as television's first "reality sitcom."

"Just the idea of the Black Sabbath founder... as a family man seems strange," David Bauder of the Associated Press wrote when "The Osbournes" premiered. On the show, Osbourne was "sweetly funny — and under everything a lot like the put-upon dads you've been seeing in television sitcoms for generations."

Danny Deraney, a publicist who worked with Osbourne and was a lifelong fan, said of the show, "You saw some guy who was curious. You saw some guy who was being funny. You just saw pretty much the real thing. ...

"People loved him. He became so affable to so many people because of that show. As metal fans, we knew it. We knew that's who he was. But now everyone knew."

Reality shows at the time, especially the popular competition shows like "Survivor," thrived on heightened circumstances. For "The Osbournes," no stakes were too low.

They sat on the couch. They ate dinner. The now-sober Ozzy sipped Diet Cokes, and urged his kids not to indulge in alcohol or drugs when they went out. He struggled to find the History Channel on his satellite TV. They feuded with the neighbors because, of all things, their loud music was driving the Osbournes crazy.



AP

**Ozzy Osbourne kisses wife Sharon in 2016.**

"You were seeing this really fascinating, appealing, bizarre tension between the public persona of a celebrity and their mundane experiences at home," said Kathryn VanArendonk, a critic for Vulture and New York Magazine.

What was maybe strangest about the show was how not-strange it felt. The two Ozzies seemed seamless rather than contradictory.

"You're realizing that these things are personas, and that all personas are these, like, elaborate complex mosaics of like who a person is," VanArendonk said.

# 'Buckingham Nicks' reissue coming in fall

*From wire reports*

They're not going their own way anymore. After much speculation, Fleetwood Mac's Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham announced Wednesday the reissue of "Buckingham Nicks," more than 50 years after the release of their only full-length album as a duo.

Since its initial release in 1973, "Buckingham Nicks" has never been reissued and is not currently available on streaming platforms.




The remastered version arrives Sept. 19 via Rhino Records' high-fidelity series and was sourced from the original analog master tapes. The album will also receive a CD and digital release for the first time, and the opening track, "Crying in the Night," was available to stream Wednesday.

Buckingham and Nicks were in their early- to mid-20s during the making of their album.

The reissue announcement was foreshadowed by cryptic Instagram posts last week.

"Buckingham Nicks" was released one year before the two joined Fleetwood Mac, and was met with little commercial success. But it did attract the attention of Mick Fleetwood, who invited Buckingham to join Fleetwood Mac. Buckingham in turn insisted Nicks come, too. The two, then a couple, became the central faces, voices and songwriters of the group for the four decades that followed.

## 'South Park' creators strike deals worth $2B

"South Park" creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone scored two blockbuster deals that will pay their production company at least $2 billion over five years — ranking their pacts among the richest in television history.

Paramount Global secured the show's exclusive global streaming rights for $300 million a year, bringing Kenny, Kyle, Stan and Cartman to the company's digital service, Paramount+, for the first time in the U.S. About half of that sum will go to the "South Park" creators through a joint venture they co-own with Paramount.

Paramount separately extended Stone and Parker's overall production deal for their firm, Park County. As part of that pact, Park County will receive a minimum of $250 million a year through 2030 to make at least 50 new "South Park" episodes, according to two people familiar with the deal but not authorized to speak publicly.

# SCOREBOARD/OLYMPICS

## DEALS

### Tuesday's transactions

**BASEBALL**
**Major League Baseball**
**American League**

**ATHLETICS** — Recalled RF Colby Thomas from Las Vegas (PCL). Recalled LF Carlos Cortes from Las Vegas. Placed CF Denzel Clarke on the 10-day IL retroactive to July 21. Placed 3B Max Muncy on the 10-day IL.

**BALTIMORE ORIOLES** — Sent C Adley Rutschman to Norfolk (IL) on a rehab assignment. Sent C Chadwick Tromp to Aberdeen (SAL) on a rehab assignment. Recalled OF Dylan Carlson from Norfolk (IL). Optioned INF Luis Vazquez to Norfolk

**BOSTON RED SOX** — Agreed to terms with SSs Henry Godbout and Mason White and LHPs Myles Patton and Dylan Brown on minor league contracts contracts.

**CHICAGO WHITE SOX** — Reinstated RHP Davis Martin from the 15-day IL. Optioned RHP Wikelman Gonzalez to Charlotte (IL).

**CLEVELAND GUARDIANS** — Sent RHP Shane Bieber to Lake County (ML) on a rehab assignment.

**DETROIT TIGERS** — Sent RF Kerry Carpenter to Toledo (IL) on a rehab assignment.

**HOUSTON ASTROS** — Placed RHP Lance McCullers Jr. on the 10-day IL retroactive to July 20. Recalled RHP Nick Hernandez from Sugar Land (PCL).

**KANSAS CITY ROYALS** — Designated RF Tyler Gentry for assignment. Sent 2B Michael Massey to Omaha (IL) on a rehab assignment. Acquired C Julio E. Rodriguez from the Seattle Mariners in exchange for cash considerations. Optioned RHP Andrew Hoffmann to Omaha. Selected the contract of LHP Rich Hill from Omaha.

**MINNESOTA TWINS** — Designated C Jair Camargo for assignment. Acquired C Jhonny Pereda off waivers from the Athletics and optioned him to St. Paul (IL).

**NEW YORK YANKEES** — Sent RHP Yerry De los Santos to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (IL) on a rehab assignment.

**SEATTLE MARINERS** — Agreed to terms with LHP Kade Anderson. Agreed to terms on a minor league contract.

**TAMPA BAY RAYS** — Acquired and activated RF Stuart Fairchild from the Atlanta Braves in exchange for cash considerations. Sent LF Richie Palacios to Durham (IL) on a rehab assignment. Placed RHP Manuel Rodríguez on the 60-day IL. Placed 2B Brandon Lowe on the 10-day IL retroactive to July 20.

**TEXAS RANGERS** — Agreed to terms with SS Gavin Fien on a minor league contract. Agreed to terms with RHP Carl Edwards Jr. on a minor league contract.

**TORONTO BLUE JAYS** — Sent RHP Paxton Schultz on a rehab assignment to Buffalo (IL).

**National League**

**LOS ANGELES DODGERS** — Reinstated RHP Alexis Diaz. Placed LHP Tanner Scott on the IL.

**MIAMI MARLINS** — Placed CF Derek Hill on the 10-day IL. Recalled 2B Jack Winkler from Jacksonville (IL).

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Sent LHP Rob Zastryzny to Nashville (IL) on a rehab assignment.

**NEW YORK METS** — Placed LHP Brandon Waddell on the 15-day IL, retroactive to July 19. Reinstated LF Starling Marte from the 10-day IL. Designated RHP Chris Devenski for assignment. Activated RHP Rico Garcia. Agreed to terms with LHP Dylan Brown. Optioned LF Jared Young to Syracuse (IL). Recalled RHP Justin Garza from Syracuse. Optioned RHP Kevin Herget to Syracuse. Sent RHP Paul Blackburn on a rehab assignment to Syracuse (IL).

**PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES** — Placed RHP Joe Ross on the 15-day IL retroactive to July 21. Recalled RHP Alan Rangel from Lehigh Valley (IL). Agreed to terms with RHP Gage Wood.

**PITTSBURGH PIRATES** — Signed RHP Seth Hernandez to a minor league contract.

**SAN DIEGO PADRES** — Optioned RHP Alek Jacob to El Paso (PCL). Optioned RHP Bryan Hoeing to El Paso. Recalled RHP Stephen Kolek and LHP Kyle Hart from El Paso.

**SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS** — Optioned RHP Tristan Beck to Sacramento (PCL). Recalled RHP Carson Seymour from Sacramento. Optioned RHP Hayden Birdsong to Sacramento. Recalled RHP Sean Hjelle from Sacramento.

**WASHINGTON NATIONALS** — Selected the contract of LHP Konnor Pilkington from Rochester (IL). Optioned RHP Mason Thompson to Rochester. Transferred OF Dylan Crews from the 10-day IL to the 60-day IL.

**BASKETBALL**
**National Basketball Association**

**HOUSTON ROCKETS** — Signed G Josh Okogie to a contract.

**LOS ANGELES LAKERS** — Signed G Marcus Smart to a contract.

**Women's National Basketball Association**

**CHICAGO SKY** — Signed G Marquesha Davis to a seven-day contract.

**CONNECTICUT SUN** — Released G/F Haley Peters. Signed G/F Haley Peters to a seven-day contract.

**PHOENIX MERCURY** — Released G Kiana Williams. Signed G Kiana Williams to a seven-day contract.

**FOOTBALL**
**National Football League**

**ARIZONA CARDINALS** — Signed CB Will Johnson to a rookie contract.

**BUFFALO BILLS** — Signed WR David White and TE Matt Sokol to contracts. Released P Jake Camarda and WR Kelly Akharaiyi. Activated DE Landon Jackson. Placed T Spencer Brown and C Sedrick Van Pran-Granger on the active/PUP list. Placed TE Dawson Knox on the active/NFI list.

**CAROLINA PANTHERS** — Released LB Josey Jewell. Signed TE Tyler Mabry. Placed NT Bobby Brown on the active/NFI list.

**CHICAGO BEARS** — Signed LB Tanoh Kpassagnon and CB Tre Flowers to contracts. Activated Jahdae Walker and RB Ian Wheeler from the active/NFI list. Waived DB Alex Cook and DL Jereme Robinson.

**CINCINNATI BENGALS** — Waived DT Dante Barnett. Placed HB Zack Moss on the active/NFI list.

**CLEVELAND BROWNS** — Waived WR Jalen Gill. Placed WR David Bell on the active/NFI list. Placed DT Mike Hall Jr. and QB Deshaun Watson on the Active/PUP list.

**DALLAS COWBOYS** — Signed DE James Houston to a contract. Released DE Luiji Vilain. Placed DB Josh Butler, CB Trevon Diggs, LB DeMarvion Overshown and DB Shavon Revel on the Active/PUP/NFI lists.

**GREEN BAY PACKERS** — Signed OL Zach Tom to a four-year contract extension. Signed K Mark McNamee to an international pathway program contract. Signed WR Will Sheppard to a contract.

**JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS** — Placed DT Maason Smith on the active/PUP list.

**LAS VEGAS RAIDERS** — Signed S Jamal Adams, WR Phillip Dorsett, G Antonio Mafi, WR Seth Williams and DB JT Woods to contracts. Waived DB Mello Dotson, WR Zakhari Franklin, LB Jailin Walker and WR Key'Shawn Smith.

**LOS ANGELES CHARGERS** — Signed RB Nyheim Hines. Waived T Savion Washington.

**LOS ANGELES RAMS** — Signed QB Dresser Winn.

**MIAMI DOLPHINS** — Signed OL Daniel Brunskill to a contract. Waived QB Blaine Gabbert. Placed OL Liam Eichenberg and TE Darren Waller on the active/PUP list. Placed S Ifeatu Melifonwu on active/NFI list.

**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS** — Placed TEs Taysom Hill and Foster Moreau on the active/PUP list. Waived TE Dallin Holker. Placed DB Tyrann Mathieu on the reserve/retired list.

**NEW YORK GIANTS** — Signed S K'Von Wallace to a contract. Placed RH Eric Gray and T Andrew Thomas on the active/PUP list. Placed LB Victor Dimukeje on the active/NFI list. Waived DB Anthony Johnson.

**NEW YORK JETS** — Waived T Obinna Eze.

**PHILADELPHIA EAGLES** — Signed DE Ogbo Okoronkwo to a contract. Signed DT Jacob Sykes. Waived DE K.J. Henry and RB Lew Nichols.

**SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS** — Signed WR Equanimeous St. Brown to a contract.

**TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS** — Placed WR Chris Godwin, OL Tristan Wirfs, Sua Opeta and Silas Dzansi and OB Michael Pratt on the active/PUP list. Placed LB Anthony Walker and DL Desmond Watson on the active/NFI list.

**TENNESSEE TITANS** — Placed CB L'Jarius Sneed and C Lloyd Cushenberry on the active/PUP list. Placed EDGE Lorenzo Carter on the reserve/retired list. Signed LB Femi Oladejo to a rookie contract.

**WASHINGTON COMMANDERS** — Released RB Michael Wiley. Signed OLB Von Miller to a one-year contract.

**SOCCER**
**Major League Soccer**

**MINNESOTA UNITED** — Loaned D Devin Padelford to St. Louis CITY SC for the remainder of the 2025 season. In exchange for the loan, Minnesota United has received St. Louis' natural third-round pick in the 2026 MLS SuperDraft.

**National Women's Soccer League**

**HOUSTON DASH** — Signed F Clarissa Larisey from Crystal Palace FC.

**WASHINGTON SPIRIT** — Loaned F Emma Gaines-Ramos to Tampa Bay Sun FC (USL Super League).

## AP SPORTLIGHT

**July 24**

**1976** — John Naber, of the United States, becomes the first swimmer to break the 2-minute barrier in the 200-meter backstroke at the Olympics in Montreal.

**1979** — The Boston Red Sox's Carl Yastrzemski hits his 400th home run.

**1998** — Tour de France riders, angered by the drug scandal that has dominated the event, protest by delaying the start of racing for two hours. Armin Meier, a member of the Festina team who was kicked off the tour the previous week, admits to a French radio station that he used a banned drug.

**2005** — Lance Armstrong wins his seventh consecutive Tour de France. All of his titles are stripped in 2012 for doping.

**2008** — Nancy Lieberman makes a one-game appearance for the Detroit Shock after the 50-year-old Hall-of-Famer signed a seven-day contract earlier in the day. Lieberman, finishes with two assists and two turnovers, surpassing her own record as the oldest player in WNBA history. Lieberman played at age 39 in 1997 while playing for the Phoenix Mercury.

**2014** — Baltimore Ravens running back Ray Rice receives a two-game suspension from the NFL following his offseason arrest for domestic violence. The six-year veteran was arrested following a Feb. 15 altercation in Atlantic City, N.J., with then-fiancee Janay Palmer.

## PRO BASKETBALL

### WNBA

**Eastern Conference**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| New York | 16 | 6 | .727 | — |
| Atlanta | 13 | 10 | .565 | 3½ |
| Indiana | 12 | 12 | .500 | 5 |
| Washington | 11 | 12 | .478 | 5½ |
| Chicago | 7 | 16 | .304 | 9½ |
| Connecticut | 3 | 19 | .136 | 13 |

**Western Conference**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minnesota | 21 | 4 | .840 | — |
| Phoenix | 15 | 7 | .682 | 4½ |
| Seattle | 14 | 10 | .583 | 6½ |
| Las Vegas | 12 | 11 | .522 | 8 |
| Golden State | 10 | 12 | .455 | 9½ |
| Los Angeles | 9 | 14 | .391 | 11 |
| Dallas | 7 | 17 | .292 | 13½ |

**Tuesday's games**

Los Angeles 93, Washington 86
Minnesota 91, Chicago 68
New York 98, Indiana 84
Dallas 87, Seattle 63
Las Vegas 87, Atlanta 72

**Wednesday's game**

Atlanta at Phoenix

**Thursday's games**

Las Vegas at Indiana
Los Angeles at Connecticut
Seattle at Chicago

**Friday's games**

Las Vegas at Minnesota
Phoenix at New York
Dallas at Golden State

## PRO SOCCER

### MLS

**Western Conference**

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| San Diego FC | 13 | 7 | 4 | 43 | 47 | 32 |
| Vancouver | 12 | 5 | 6 | 42 | 39 | 26 |
| Minn. United | 11 | 5 | 8 | 41 | 40 | 27 |
| Seattle | 10 | 6 | 7 | 37 | 37 | 33 |
| LAFC | 10 | 5 | 6 | 36 | 39 | 27 |
| Portland | 9 | 7 | 7 | 34 | 32 | 32 |
| Colorado | 8 | 10 | 6 | 30 | 30 | 36 |
| Austin FC | 8 | 8 | 6 | 30 | 17 | 24 |
| San Jose | 7 | 9 | 8 | 29 | 46 | 42 |
| Real Salt Lake | 8 | 11 | 4 | 28 | 24 | 29 |
| Houston | 7 | 11 | 6 | 27 | 30 | 39 |
| FC Dallas | 6 | 10 | 7 | 25 | 32 | 41 |
| Sporting KC | 6 | 11 | 6 | 24 | 36 | 42 |
| St Louis City | 4 | 13 | 6 | 18 | 23 | 38 |
| LA Galaxy | 3 | 14 | 7 | 16 | 28 | 48 |

**Eastern Conference**

| | W | L | T | Pts | GF | GA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cincinnati | 15 | 6 | 3 | 48 | 39 | 31 |
| Nashville | 14 | 5 | 5 | 47 | 42 | 25 |
| Philadelphia | 14 | 5 | 5 | 47 | 40 | 23 |
| Columbus | 12 | 4 | 8 | 44 | 40 | 33 |
| Inter Miami CF | 12 | 4 | 5 | 41 | 49 | 34 |
| Orlando City | 10 | 6 | 8 | 38 | 43 | 32 |
| Charlotte FC | 11 | 11 | 2 | 35 | 41 | 39 |
| NYC FC | 10 | 8 | 5 | 35 | 30 | 26 |
| New York | 9 | 9 | 6 | 33 | 39 | 35 |
| Chicago | 9 | 9 | 5 | 32 | 44 | 40 |
| New England | 6 | 10 | 7 | 25 | 30 | 32 |
| Toronto FC | 5 | 12 | 6 | 21 | 25 | 30 |
| Atlanta | 4 | 11 | 8 | 20 | 27 | 43 |
| D.C. United | 4 | 13 | 7 | 19 | 20 | 45 |
| CF Montréal | 3 | 15 | 6 | 15 | 20 | 45 |

**Note:** Three points for victory, one point for tie.

**Saturday, July 19**

Charlotte FC 3, Atlanta 2
Columbus 2, D.C. United 1
Chicago 2, CF Montréal 0
Orlando City 2, New England 1
Miami 5, New York 1
FC Dallas 3, St Louis City 0
Philadelphia 1, Houston 1, tie
New York City FC 1, Sporting KC 1, tie
Nashville 1, Toronto FC 0
Seattle 3, San Jose 2
Cincinnati 1, Real Salt Lake 0
LA Galaxy 3, Los Angeles FC 3, tie
Minnesota 1, Portland 1, tie
Vancouver 1, San Diego FC 1, tie

**Friday's games**

Orlando City at Columbus
CF Montréal at New England
New York City FC at FC Dallas
LA Galaxy at Houston
Portland at Los Angeles FC
Nashville at San Diego FC

**Saturday's games**

Cincinnati at Miami
Seattle at Atlanta
Toronto FC at Charlotte FC
Austin FC at D.C. United
Colorado at Philadelphia
New York at Chicago
Minnesota at St Louis City
San Jose at Real Salt Lake
Sporting Kansas City at Vancouver

# USOPC policy bars transgender women from participating

*Associated Press*

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee has effectively barred transgender women from competing in women's sports, telling the federations overseeing swimming, athletics and other sports it has an "obligation to comply" with an executive order issued by President Donald Trump.

The new policy, announced Monday with a quiet change on the USOPC's website and confirmed in a letter sent to national sport governing bodies, follows a similar step taken by the NCAA earlier this year.

The USOPC change is noted obliquely as a detail under "USOPC Athlete Safety Policy" and references Trump's executive order, "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports," signed in February. That order, among other things, threatens to "rescind all funds" from organizations that allow transgender athlete participation in women's sports.

U.S. Olympic officials told the national governing bodies they will need to follow suit, adding that "the USOPC has engaged in a series of respectful and constructive conversations with federal officials" since Trump signed the order.

> **"Our revised policy emphasizes the importance of ensuring fair and safe competition environments for women."**
>
> letter from USOPC to national sport governing bodies

"As a federally chartered organization, we have an obligation to comply with federal expectations," USOPC CEO Sarah Hirshland and President Gene Sykes wrote in a letter. "Our revised policy emphasizes the importance of ensuring fair and safe competition environments for women. All National Governing Bodies are required to update their applicable policies in alignment."

The USOPC oversees around 50 national governing bodies, most of which play a role in everything from the grassroots to elite levels of their sports. That raises the possibility that rules might need to be changed at local sports clubs to retain their memberships in the NGBs.

Some of those organizations — for instance, USA Track and Field — have long followed guidelines set by their own world federation. World Athletics is considering changes to its policies that would mostly fall in line with Trump's order.

A USA Swimming spokesman said the federation had been made aware of the USOPC's change and was consulting with the committee to figure out what changes it needs to make. USA Fencing changed its policy effective Aug. 1 to allow only "athletes who are of the female sex" in women's competition and opening men's events to "all athletes not eligible for the women's category, including transgender women, transgender men, nonbinary and intersex athletes and cisgender male athletes."

The nationwide battle over transgender girls on girls' and women's sports teams has played out at both the state and federal levels as Republicans have portrayed the issue as a fight for fairness in athletics. More than two dozen states have enacted laws barring transgender women and girls from participating in certain sports competitions.

The NCAA earlier this year changed its participation policy for transgender athletes to limit competition in women's sports to athletes assigned female at birth. That change came a day after Trump signed the executive order intended to ban transgender athletes from girls' and women's sports.

Female eligibility is a key issue for the International Olympic Committee under its new president, Kirsty Coventry, who has signaled an effort to "protect the female category." The IOC has allowed individual sports federations to set their own rules at the Olympics — and some have already taken steps on the topic.

Stricter rules on transgender athletes — barring from women's events anyone who went through male puberty — have been passed by swimming, cycling and track and field. Soccer is reviewing its eligibility rules for women and could set limits on testosterone.

# MLB

ROUNDUP

# Mariners snap Brewers' win streak

## Raleigh's 39th HR is only run of game

*Associated Press*

SEATTLE — Cal Raleigh hit his major league-leading 39th home run of the season, Logan Gilbert tossed 6 ⅓ shutout innings and the Seattle Mariners snapped the Milwaukee Brewers' 11-game winning streak, 1-0 on Tuesday night.

Raleigh, who hadn't homered since July 11 against the Detroit Tigers, received an elevated fastball from Brewers right-hander Nick Mears (1-3) and hit it well past the right field wall.

The switch-hitting catcher, who won the All-Star Home Run Derby, provided all the offense on an evening headlined by the pitchers.

Gilbert (3-3) carried a perfect game bid into the fifth inning, and ended up yielding just two singles. The right-hander racked up 10 strikeouts against no walks while needing only 86 pitches to make it into the seventh inning, departing to a standing ovation.

Brewers' rookie sensation Jacob Misiorowski was similarly brilliant. The righty struck out seven batters across 3 ⅔ innings, yielding three hits while walking one. It wasn't until Misiorowski departed that the Mariners finally pushed a run across and set up closer Andrés Muñoz for his 22nd save of the season.



LINDSEY WASSON/AP

**The Mariners' Cal Raleigh rounds the bases after hitting a HR against the Milwaukee Brewers during the sixth inning Tuesday in Seattle.**

**Phillies 4, Red Sox 1:** Philadelphia's Cristopher Sanchez allowed four hits in a complete-game victory, Max Kepler and Kyle Schwarber homered and host Philadephia beat the Boston.

Sanchez (9-2) allowed two hits in the fourth inning and largely cruised through the other eight innings for his third career complete game. He retired the first nine he faced before Rob Refsnyder led off the fourth inning with a home run.

The Phillies provided Sanchez with an early four-run lead.

**Guardians 6, Orioles 3:** Angel Martínez had three hits, José Ramírez homered and host Cleveland defeated Baltimore for their fourth win in five games since the All-Star break.

Ramirez drove a 94.4 mile fastball near the top of the strike zone into the right-field seats off Baltimore's Brandon Young (0-5) in the first inning.

Cleveland starter Joey Cantillo (2-0) did not allow a hit until the fifth inning, when Ramón Urías led off with a base hit down the left-field line.

**Pirates 8, Tigers 5:** Spencer Horwitz, Bryan Reynolds and Tommy Pham each had three hits and two RBIs, and Pittsburgh hit eight doubles in a home victory over Detroit.

Horwitz hit a two-run double in the second inning to open the scoring. Reynolds had RBI singles in the third and sixth and Pham doubled in a run in the sixth as the Pirates increased their lead to 8-3.

Mitch Keller (4-10) allowed three runs and six hits in six innings.

**Marlins 4, Padres 3:** Rookie Agustín Ramírez had two hits and scored two runs, and host Miami held on to beat San Diego.

Miami starter Edward Cabrera (4-4) scattered five hits and struck out six over 5 ⅔ innings of one-run ball.

**Nationals 6, Reds 1:** Josh Bell hit his 13th home run, Jacob Young and CJ Abrams contributed RBI doubles during the decisive fifth inning, and host Washington defeated Cincinnati.

Riley Adams' bases-loaded single produced the final three runs an inning later.

**Rays 4, White Sox 3:** José Caballero had two hits and two RBIs and Tampa Bay scored all their runs in the second inning before holding on for a home win over Chicago.

Tampa Bay's Drew Rasmussen allowed two runs on three hits over four innings, walking one and striking out five. Edwin Uceta (7-2) picked up the win with two scoreless innings of relief.

**Yankees 5, Blue Jays 4:** Ben Rice hit a tiebreaking home run in the ninth inning, Jazz Chisholm Jr. and Cody Bellinger also homered and visiting New York beat Toronto.

Rice connected off Blue Jays closer Jeff Hoffman (6-3) for his 15th home run as the Yankees snapped a five-game losing streak against Toronto.

Ian Hamilton (2-1) got one out for the win and Devin Williams finished for his 15th save in 16 chances.

**Mets 3, Angels 2:** Francisco Alvarez hit a tying homer in his second game back from the minors and Ryne Stanek retired Mike Trout with two runners aboard for the final out as host New York rallied to beat Los Angeles.

Brandon Nimmo capped a three-run fifth inning with a go-ahead single, and Frankie Montas (3-1) won his third straight start. Juan Soto threw out a runner at home plate from right in the first.

**Giants 9, Braves 0:** Rafael Devers was error free in his first career start at first base and added two hits and an RBI as San Francisco snapped a season-worst six-game skid with an road win over Atlanta.

San Francisco starter Landen Roupp (7-6) gave up four hits and a walk with six strikeouts in five scoreless innings.

Devers doubled to lead off the fifth and scored on a single by Willy Adames to make it 5-0. Wilmer Flores hit a three-run home run in the seventh.

**Rangers 6, Athletics 2:** Jacob deGrom struck out nine and allowed a leadoff homer in six solid innings, and Corey Seager, Marcus Semien and Adolis García homered as host Texas beat the Athletics.

Garcia's homer in the fourth inning tied it and Texas went ahead to stay in the sixth on Semien's 364-foot shot off the foul pole in left field that required replay review to be confirmed.

Seager's 3-run shot highlighted a four-run seventh.

**Cubs 6, Royals 0:** Matthew Boyd pitched seven crisp innings for his 11th win, and Chicago spoiled Rich Hill's return to the majors with a home win over Kansas City.

Boyd (11-3) gave up four hits, struck out six and walked one in winning his fifth straight start. The left-hander retired the first eight Royals batters and didn't allow a hit until Nick Loftin led off the fifth with a line single.

Hill (0-1) allowed three runs and six hits in five innings. The left-hander threw 90 pitches (55 strikes), walking two and striking out one.

**Rockies 8, Cardinals 4:** Ryan McMahon hit a three-run home run, Bradley Blalock allowed two runs in 5 ⅓ innings pitched and host Colorado beat St. Louis.

Blalock (1-2) earned the win, giving up eight hits, a walk and a hit-by-pitch. Mickey Moniak hit a solo shot off Cardinals starter Erick Fedde (3-10) in the first, Adael Amador hit a two-run double in the second and McMahon's homer in the third gave the Rockies a 6-0 advantage.

Nolan Arenado and Masyn Winn each had an RBI in the fourth and Brendan Donovan's double drove in Victor Scott II in the seventh. Jordan Walker hit a two-out double and scored on a pinch-hit double by Yohel Pozo to make it 7-4 in the eighth.

**Astros 3, Diamondbacks 1:** Framber Valdez pitched seven effective innings for his 10th straight win, Brice Matthews hit his third homer in two games and visiting Houston rallied to beat Arizona.

Valdez (11-4) allowed a run and seven hits to match Detroit's Tarik Skubal.

Arizona loaded the bases in the ninth, but Bryan King struck out Blaze Alexander and induced Jose Herrera into a game-ending double play for his first save.

**Twins 10, Dodgers 7:** Royce Lewis and Christian Vazquez each drove in three runs as visiting Minnesota beat Los Angeles.

Lewis had a runs-scoring fielder's choice in the second inning, a bases-loaded walk in the sixth, and a run-scoring grounder in the seventh that brought in two more runs.

Shohei Ohtani had a two-run shot for the Dodgers, who ended a six-game home losing streak Monday.

## Scoreboard

### American League

**East Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Toronto | 59 | 42 | .584 | — |
| New York | 56 | 45 | .554 | 3 |
| Boston | 54 | 49 | .524 | 6 |
| Tampa Bay | 53 | 49 | .520 | 6½ |
| Baltimore | 44 | 56 | .440 | 14½ |

**Central Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Detroit | 60 | 42 | .588 | — |
| Cleveland | 50 | 50 | .500 | 9 |
| Minnesota | 49 | 52 | .485 | 10½ |
| Kansas City | 49 | 53 | .480 | 11 |
| Chicago | 36 | 66 | .353 | 24 |

**West Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Houston | 59 | 42 | .584 | — |
| Seattle | 54 | 47 | .535 | 5 |
| Texas | 52 | 50 | .510 | 7½ |
| Los Angeles | 49 | 52 | .485 | 10 |
| Athletics | 42 | 61 | .408 | 18 |

### National League

**East Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Philadelphia | 58 | 43 | .574 | — |
| New York | 58 | 44 | .569 | ½ |
| Miami | 47 | 53 | .470 | 10½ |
| Atlanta | 44 | 56 | .440 | 13½ |
| Washington | 41 | 60 | .406 | 17 |

**Central Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chicago | 60 | 41 | .594 | — |
| Milwaukee | 60 | 41 | .594 | — |
| Cincinnati | 52 | 50 | .510 | 8½ |
| St. Louis | 52 | 50 | .510 | 8½ |
| Pittsburgh | 41 | 61 | .402 | 19½ |

**West Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Los Angeles | 59 | 43 | .578 | — |
| San Diego | 55 | 46 | .545 | 3½ |
| San Francisco | 53 | 49 | .520 | 6 |
| Arizona | 50 | 52 | .490 | 9 |
| Colorado | 25 | 76 | .248 | 33½ |

**Tuesday's games**

Philadelphia 4, Boston 1
Tampa Bay 4, Chicago White Sox 3
Cleveland 6, Baltimore 3
Pittsburgh 8, Detroit 5
N.Y. Mets 3, L.A. Angels 2
N.Y. Yankees 5, Toronto 4
Texas 6, Athletics 2
Chicago Cubs 6, Kansas City 0
Seattle 1, Milwaukee 0
Houston 3, Arizona 1
Minnesota 10, L.A. Dodgers 7
Washington 6, Cincinnati 1
Miami 4, San Diego 3
San Francisco 9, Atlanta 0
Colorado 8, St. Louis 4

**Wednesday's games**

Detroit at Pittsburgh
L.A. Angels at N.Y. Mets
Kansas City at Chicago Cubs
Houston at Arizona
Milwaukee at Seattle
Minnesota at L.A. Dodgers
Baltimore at Cleveland
Boston at Philadelphia
N.Y. Yankees at Toronto
Chicago White Sox at Tampa Bay
Athletics at Texas
Cincinnati at Washington
San Diego at Miami
San Francisco at Atlanta
St. Louis at Colorado

**Thursday's games**

Baltimore (Morton 5-8) at Cleveland (Allen 6-8)
Toronto (Lauer 5-2) at Detroit (Olson 4-3)
Athletics (Severino 3-11) at Houston (TBD)
Seattle (Evans 3-3) at L.A. Angels (Kikuchi 4-6)
San Diego (Darvish 0-2) at St. Louis (Gray 9-4)

**Friday's games**

Colorado at Baltimore
Philadelphia at N.Y. Yankees
L.A. Dodgers at Boston
Tampa Bay at Cincinnati
Toronto at Detroit
Chicago Cubs at Chicago White Sox
Atlanta at Texas
Athletics at Houston
Cleveland at Kansas City
Washington at Minnesota
Seattle at L.A. Angels
Miami at Milwaukee
Arizona at Pittsburgh
San Diego at St. Louis
Washington at Minnesota
N.Y. Mets at San Francisco

# TENNIS/COLLEGE FOOTBALL



NICK WASS/AP

**Venus Williams celebrates her win over Peyton Stearns during a match at the Citi Open on Tuesday in Washington, D.C. Williams, 45, became the second-oldest woman to win a tour-level singles match.**

## 'No limits for excellence'

### At 45, Venus Williams' historic win resonates for many

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — There are plenty of reasons why this particular victory by Venus Williams in this particular tennis match — just one of hundreds — resonated with so many folks.

That she's 45, for one thing. Only one woman, Martina Navratilova, has ever won a tour-level singles match while older; her last victory came at 47 in 2004.

That Williams hadn't entered a tournament anywhere in 16 months.

That she needed surgery for uterine fibroids.

And when asked Tuesday night after beating her 23-year-old opponent, Peyton Stearns, 6-3, 6-4 at the DC Open what message others might take away from that performance and that result, Williams was quick to provide an answer.

"There are no limits for excellence. It's all about what's in your head and how much you're able to put into it. If you put in the work mentally, physically, and emotionally, then you can have the result," she said. "It doesn't matter how many times you fall down. Doesn't matter how many times you get sick or get hurt or whatever it is. If you continue to believe and put in the work, there is an opportunity, there is space, for you."

Williams has been winning at tennis for decades. Her pro debut came when she was 14. Her first Grand Slam title came at Wimbledon in 2000, less than a month after her 20th birthday.

She accumulated four major singles trophies before Stearns was born and eventually wound up with seven, five at Wimbledon and two at the U.S. Open, plus another 14 in women's doubles — all with her sister Serena — and two in mixed doubles.

"I have so much respect for her to come back here and play, win or lose. That takes a lot of guts to step back onto court, especially with what she's done for the sport," said Stearns, who is ranked 35th and won NCAA singles and team titles at the University of Texas. "You have a lot behind you. You have accomplished a lot. And there is a lot of pressure on her and to kind of upkeep that at this age. So massive credit to her for that."

There were challenges along the way for Williams, none more public than the diagnosis in 2011 of Sjögren's syndrome, an energy-sapping auto-immune disease that can cause joint pain.

More recent was the pain from fibroids — noncancerous growths — and shortly before the DC Open, Williams said: "Where I am at this year is so much different (from) where I was at last year. It's night and day, being able to be here and prepare for the tournament as opposed to preparing for surgery."

As thrilled as the spectators — "Who I love, and they love me," Williams said — were to be able to watch, and pull, for her under the lights Tuesday, other players were rather excited about it, too.

"I commend her so much for being out here," said Taylor Townsend.

Naomi Osaka's take: "She's, like, the queen. There's a royal air around her."

"She's one of the best athletes of all time," Frances Tiafoe said. "Her and her sister, they're not only great for the women's game, not only great for women's sports, but they are so iconic."

Yet, there were some on social media who wondered whether it made sense for the tournament to award a wild-card entry to Williams instead of an up-and-coming player.

DC Open chairman Mark Ein said it took him about two seconds to respond "Of course" when Williams' representative reached out in April to ask whether a spot in the field might be a possibility.

A reporter wanted to know Tuesday whether Williams took any satisfaction from proving doubters wrong.

"No, because I'm not here for anyone else except for me. And I also have nothing to prove. Zip. Zero. I'm here for me, because I want to be here," she said. "And proving anyone wrong or thinking about anyone has never gotten me a win and has never gotten me a loss."

## ACC commissioner: Stability ahead after lawsuits, uncertainty

BY AARON BEARD
*Associated Press*

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Jim Phillips stood in the same spot Tuesday morning that he did exactly one year earlier as he officially opened the Atlantic Coast Conference's preseason football media days.

Only now, the message and tone is far different.

The league has successfully quelled a rebellion in the form of the lawsuits by member schools Clemson and Florida State, which represented a threat fueling doomsayers' chatter about the league's long-term stability. Instead, the settlement that ended the legal fight spawned a new revenue-distribution model set to benefit the league's biggest brands. There was also ESPN's extension on its long-running partnership with the league.

And that sends the ACC into the 2025-26 sports season with the closest thing to peace as a college landscape churning with constant change can muster.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Phillips described recent months as "the restabilization of a great league that went through a very bumpy period." He also talked about working to "make this a league that teams want to be in, not have to be in" at the start of the revenue-sharing era.

"We're as healthy of a league as we've ever been based on having to go through some really tough moments," Phillips told the AP.

"I give our presidents/board credit for it, and I give our ADs a ton of credit for it as well. ... So we've moved away from some of the legal issues that we've had and now we've been able to work on things that I think have been put on the backburner."

A summer earlier, FSU, Clemson and the league were entangled in a crossfire of lawsuits over the ACC's ability to charge hundreds of millions of dollars in exit fees for schools that leave for another league.

That came amid the backdrop of the ACC's financial conundrum. The league annually posts record revenue hauls ($711.4 million for 2023-24, with football-playing members receiving nearly $45 million). It also keeps lagging behind the Big Ten ($928.1 million revenue, $63.1 million payout) and Southeastern Conference ($839 million, $52.6 million), though it ranks firmly third among the Power Four leagues ahead of the Big 12 ($493.8 million, $39.5 million).

Had the Clemson or FSU lawsuits proceeded, there was potential that a ruling might defang the league's exit fees. Or its grant-of-rights deal, signed by all ACC schools to give the conference control of their media rights — and the TV money that comes with them — as a deterrent to moving elsewhere.

Either could have triggered more teams to exit and chase revenue elsewhere, with the 2024 disintegration of the Pac-12 offering a worst-case harbinger.

The stakes were clear last summer when Phillips took an assertive stance in promising the league would fight "as long as it takes." He now touts a successful "reconciliation" and what he calls "a really good story about the ACC."

"People had various opinions about how unstable it was — I never felt ever that it was going to lose its way or anything like that," Phillips said. "It was never going to have the demise that I had heard that may happen. I never believed that for a second.

"But you have a staff that you're dealing with. You have other schools that you're dealing with. So to me, part of my responsibility was to be incredibly level and strong and unwavering about (how) we would get to the place that we're experiencing now, where we have stability."



JACOB KUPFERMAN/AP

**Atlantic Coast Conference commissioner Jim Phillips, left, presents the ACC championship trophy to Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney after the Tigers beat SMU last December in Charlotte, N.C.**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

# Paths: New coaches draw on experience as teammates with Eagles

FROM PAGE 24

with helping him get the job at Delaware State.

"I love Andy Reid to death, man," Jackson said. "He's a great dude. Being able to have relationships with guys like that … I feel like in my eyes he's top five all-time coaches to ever coach this game.

"I can't overburden him as well, too, because he's got a job. He just lost to our Eagles, and I know that was bitter for him, too, and I'm sure he's trying to figure out how the heck to beat the Eagles now."

Vick, who last played with Pittsburgh in 2015, said he finds himself daily reaching back into the memory bank to something Reid or Mike Tomlin, or Dan Reeves did or said.

"Andy's just so encouraging," Vick said. "He just believes that I'm going to be able to get it done, that I'm going to do well. As men, as father figures, you're always going to tell your son, 'You're going to do great.' … I've always had coaches who can see things in me that I couldn't see, the same way I see things that they probably can't see."

The past seven months have been filled with firsts for Vick, whose coaching experience before Norfolk State consisted of an offensive coordinator role in the Alliance of American Football and an internship with Reid in Kansas City, in which he worked with quarterbacks. Asked what he's learned since being hired in December, Vick said: "I learned that I could do it. It's always the fear of the unknown, the things that you don't know, the things that you step into."

Jackson, whose playing days ended with Baltimore in 2022, has what is probably a taller task than Vick. His Hornets won just one game in each of the past two seasons. They again are picked to finish at the bottom of the MEAC this season.

"We're the underdogs, and that's how we want it," Jackson said.

Jackson also credited Deion Sanders with paving the way for he and Vick, though Sanders had a bit more coaching experience at the high school level before taking over at Jackson State, another HBCU, in 2020, a job he quickly parlayed into a power conference gig at Colorado.

"The red carpet's already been laid, and it's just on us to follow it," Jackson said.

It's a walk he can share with Vick.

"Something he may be going through is something I'm going through, and we got to figure out how we navigate through this thing because we're not like the Georgias or Oregons or these big schools," said Jackson, who was an offensive coordinator at a California high school last year.

"At the end of the day, we've got to deal with what we have to deal with. That's nothing to cry about. We know what we stepped into, and we have a head down, chin up mentality, chest out, and we're going to attack everything."

As for Vick, he hopes the future includes "winning MEAC championships."

"I can't look into the future, even though I'm a future guy and I like looking into the future," he said. "I just can't see that far. I got to control what I can control, and I want my time with them to be filled with love, laughter and coaching."

And not counting the days.




MIKE CAUDILL/AP

**Michael Vick is introduced as head coach by, from left, Bishop Kim Brown, Norfolk State President Javaune Adams-Gaston and Director of Athletics Dr. Melody Webb at a press conference Dec. 23 in Norfolk, Va.**




DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

**At the Big Ten media days, commissioner Tony Petitti indicated the league still wants multiple automatic qualifiers for the College Football Playoff, putting it in conflict with the Southeastern Conference.**

# Big Ten, SEC headed toward showdown over CFP format

BY EDDIE PELLS
*Associated Press*

LAS VEGAS — The Big Ten commissioner doubled down on the league's preference for multiple automatic qualifiers in the next version of the College Football Playoff on Tuesday, increasing the likelihood of a showdown with the Southeastern Conference when the format for 2026 is decided.

At the league's football media days, Tony Petitti said any change that adds at-large bids and increases the discretion and role of a selection committee — a format the SEC and others have shown a preference for — "will have a difficult time getting support of the Big Ten."

Petitti also bolstered the idea of a weekend's worth of conference play-in games for some of the four automatic bids that would go to the Big Ten in its preferred version of a 16-team playoff. He said the league favored this even though the games could put some of the Big Ten's top-seeded teams in jeopardy of being shut out of the CFP.

The likely slate for that would include a league title game between Nos. 1 and 2 and play-in games involving the 3-6 seeds.

"There are 18 members in the Big Ten, you have 17 possible opponents and you play nine," Petitti said. "There's a lot of discrepancy. Let alone making comparisons across leagues, there's a lot of issues about how you compare teams inside the Big Ten. … Where we came down is we were willing to take that risk."

Indiana coach Curt Cignetti, whose team earned the 10th seed in last year's playoff but lost 27-17 to Notre Dame, echoed the commissioner's thoughts and pointed out that Ohio State finished fourth in the conference last season and went on to win the national title.

If "you want to put the best teams in the playoffs, give the best leagues the AQ, but make them earn it with play-in games," Cignetti said.

Though there is a Dec. 1 deadline for expanding the playoff for 2026, Petitti said he wouldn't put any firm date on it. That echoed a sentiment SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey voiced earlier this month when he said the 12-team format, which went into effect last season and offers automatic spots to five conference champions, could stay in place until the two leagues can agree.

Petitti said recent meetings between Big Ten and SEC athletic directors have produced good results on a variety of topics, and he expects another such summit would do the same.

"The goal would be to bring people back together, have a conversation about what we think works, then kind of go from there," he said.

## Holding the cards

The Big Ten and SEC will ultimately decide the new format, with input from the Atlantic Coast and Big 12 conferences, along with Notre Dame and the five smaller conferences that are part of the system.

At his conference's media days, ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips said his preference was a format with five automatic bids and the rest at-large, which is also what Big 12 Commissioner Brett Yormark has said his league favors.

"Fairness and access should also be part of the equation," Phillips said Tuesday in Charlotte, N.C., while backing the work of the selection committee that would have a bigger role with up to 11 at-large selections to sort through.

## Regular-season games

Conferences currently earn $4 million for every team they place in the playoff, and that number could grow, which adds to the stakes of how the next version of the playoff takes form.

Embedded in the debate is the nine-game conference slate the Big Ten plays vs. eight for the SEC. That extra non-conference game, some believe, gives SEC teams a chance to bolster their schedules, which then adds value to any calculation the committee would consider in determining at-large bids.

Illinois athletic director Josh Whitman portrayed a Big Ten that is unified around the format of nine regular-season conference games, a new round of play-in games and something like four automatic spots in a 16-team playoff going to both the SEC and Big Ten.

"It means you're going to have probably eight or nine, maybe ten schools that are jockeying for the fifth and sixth spots as you get into November," Whitman said. "It's so cool, when you just think about what it would mean for our fan bases and the enthusiasm around those games."

# NFL/NASCAR

# Carroll upbeat as first Raiders camp opens

By Mark Anderson
*Associated Press*

HENDERSON, Nev. — Pete Carroll was excited because, well, he's Pete Carroll.

He was in the Raiders' media room Tuesday answering reporters'questions, but much of his mind was on a team meeting just more than an hour away.

"I can't wait to kick this thing off and get rolling," Carroll said.

This is familiar territory for Carroll, something he missed after a year off from coaching. Now in Las Vegas, he will try to revive a Raiders franchise still striving to return to its former glory before it came to a sudden halt after appearing in the Super Bowl in the 2002 season.

That effort began in earnest Wednesday morning when the Raiders opened training camp, and Carroll isn't lowering the bar for a team coming off a 4-13 season.

"We are going to win a bunch of games," Carroll said. "I can't even imagine anything else. I've been winning 10 games a year for 20 years or something. I mean, what are my expectations? We are going to win a bunch, and I don't care who hears that.

"It ain't about what anybody hears. It's about what we do, and so that's why expectations are really high. The standards need to be so that the expectations can be met. We'll see what happens."

Carroll hopes to follow the gameplan he took to Seattle in 2010. The Seahawks finished 7-9 in each of Carroll's first two seasons before recording double-digit wins eight of the following nine years.

That run included back-to-back Super Bowl appearances — a 35-point rout of Denver and a memorable and heartbreaking oh-so-close loss to New England.

Before that, Carroll turned USC into one of the nation's dominant programs that included the 2003 and 2004 national championships, the first shared with LSU.

"You either have a philosophy or you don't, and we got one," Carroll said. "We got beliefs and principles that guide us, so I'm not altering those much. I'm staying true to what we know and what's been successful for us."



JOHN LOCHER/AP

**Las Vegas head coach Pete Carroll, known for his energetic style, aims to revive the Raiders after their 4-13 season. They opened training camp on Wednesday.**

Part of Carroll's confidence can be traced to last year when he was off the sidelines after the Seahawks forced him out.

"The last year was really valuable to me," Carroll said. "The perspective that you have when you're in the middle of it is different than when you can step away. The opportunity for clarity ... was so obvious to me, so I saw things differently, and I felt like I learned a lot of things and took in a lot and have altered my expectations of what we're able to do and how we need to go about getting better and doing things more proficiently in all areas."

He could be enjoying retirement, but jumped at the chance to coach again when the Raiders called. Carroll turns 74 on Sept. 15, and the NFL's oldest active coach doesn't look ready to slow down.

A 1 p.m. team meeting isn't something just to get through, but in typical Carroll fashion to attack with gusto.

"We've got to find ourselves," Carroll said. "We got to figure out who we are, and that needs to be guided well. So it starts with me, and then the coordinators through the position coaches have to do a tremendous job of figuring out what they can bring us with the players that we have. It's a big process. It might sound kind of loosey goosey on that thought, but this is a specific science to me.

"It's a fascinating process, it really is. I'm really pumped about getting in the middle of it."

Raiders sign Adams, other free agents

The Raiders signed safety Jamal Adams, who played in five games and started three last season with Tennessee and Detroit. He made first- or second-team AP All-Pro from 2018-20. Adams has started 83 of 85 career games, making 50 tackles, 21 1/2 sacks, 50 tackles for loss, four interceptions and 36 passes defended.

Four others also signed — wide receiver Phillip Dorsett II, guard Atonio Mafi, wide receiver Seth Williams and safety JT Woods.

No timetable for Wilkins

Carroll said he didn't know when defensive tackle Christian Wilkins, placed on the physically unable to perform list because of a difficult recovery from a broken foot, will return to practice. He can be activated at any time in preseason off the PUP list once medically cleared.

"We have to sort of wait out," Carroll said.

Defensive end Malcolm Koonce is back after missing all of last season because of a torn ACL.

"We're going to look after him, make sure that we do it right and breaking him in, but he's ready to go," Carroll said.

# NASCAR to run street races at Naval Base Coronado next June

By Jenna Fryer
*Associated Press*

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR will hold a street race on Naval Base Coronado in Southern California next June as a replacement for its downtown Chicago event that ran the last three years.

The move to the San Diego area does not eliminate a return to Chicago, where NASCAR will still maintain an office and effort an eventual return, perhaps as early as 2027.

But the shift next year will allow NASCAR to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Navy by hosting all three of its national series over a three-day weekend on June 19-21.

"As part of our nation's 250th anniversary, we are honored for NASCAR to join the celebration as we host our first street race at a military base, Naval Base Coronado," Ben Kennedy, executive vice president and chief venue and racing innovations officer, said Wednesday. "NASCAR San Diego Weekend will honor the Navy's history and the men and women who serve as we take the best motorsports in the world to the streets of Naval Base Coronado."

It will be NASCAR's second street race in the sport's history, following the three-year run in Chicago, and first on an active military base. The course layout is not complete but is expected to be around 3 miles.

NASCAR has seen Auto Club Speedway close after the 2023 race.

It built a temporary short track inside Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum from 2002 through 2024 but moved that event to North Carolina.

Kennedy, who has been bullish on new endeavors for his family business, was the brains of the races at the Coliseum, Chicago, this year's visit to Mexico City and now next year in San Diego, a venture the Navy is excited about.




ERIN HOOLEY/AP

**Drivers race through the streets of Chicago during the NASCAR Cup Series race on July 6. A race on Naval Base Coronado in Southern California next June replaces the downtown Chicago event.**

"NASCAR embodies the very best of the American spirit through speed, precision and an unyielding pursuit of excellence," Navy Secretary John C. Phelan said. "Hosting a race aboard Naval Air Station North Island, the birthplace of naval aviation, it's not just a historic first, it's a powerful tribute to the values we share: grit, teamwork and love of country.

"From the flight deck to the finish line, this collaboration reflects the operational intensity and unity of purpose that define both the United States Navy and NASCAR."

The base is known as the "West Coast Quarterdeck" and is a consortium of nine Navy installations that stretch from San Clemente Island 50 miles off the coast of Long Beach to the Mountain Warfare Training Facility 50 miles east of San Diego.

NASCAR named Amy Lupo, who has been with the series since 2021 and helped launch the Coliseum, as president of the race.

She spent more than 20 years at ESPN expanding the X Games when she lived in San Diego early in her career. She still lives in Southern California.

# SPORTS

**Cooled off**

Raleigh's 39th homer helps Mariners end Brewers' 11-game win streak ›› MLB, Page 20

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

# Traveling parallel paths

## Vick, Jackson share adjustment to becoming MEAC head coaches



By Jeff Neiburg
*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

BALTIMORE — Michael Vick may have stumbled into a new motto Tuesday morning. The new Norfolk State football coach was asked about his eagerness to get to his first game as a head coach, which still is more than a month away.

"Don't count the days. Make them count," Vick said.

"I don't know where that just came from."

Call it the latest lesson in a time when new things are coming frequently to Vick, the former Eagles quarterback who was hired by Norfolk State, near his hometown, Newport News, Va., in December.

Tuesday was another new experience during the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference's media day. Normally held at a hotel in Norfolk, Va., this year's event was at the Baltimore Ravens' M&T Bank Stadium. The six-school conference, comprised of historically Black colleges and universities, has more media attention than ever, thanks to Vick and fellow first-year coach DeSean Jackson, who took the job at Delaware State not long after Vick was hired at Norfolk.

The former Philadelphia Eagles are walking a parallel path as first-year head coaches, and they said they're rooting for each other every week except the week of Oct. 30, when Delaware State hosts Norfolk State in a game at Lincoln Financial Field, where Jackson and Vick played together for five seasons.

"It's a brotherhood that we have. He was one of the best quarterbacks I played with," said Jackson, who caught 13 touchdown passes from Vick's left arm. "The relationship that we have, regardless of us going at it, Norfolk State and Delaware State, that's still my brother. But game week, it's going to be heated. At the same time, it's good, friendly competition. I'm praying for his success, and just as well he's praying for my success."

Said Vick, whose Spartans are coming off a 4-8 season: "I'll be rooting for him each and every week except for that one week, and that's going to be really cool. For us to have this opportunity, you have to take it seriously. You've got to be committed. And that's what we talked about.

"Coaching DeSean, helping DeSean, teaching DeSean, I feel like I'm ready. And in talking to him, I feel like he's ready as well. Playing quarterback, you kind of see everything through a different lens. I think DeSean is going to see things through the same lens in due time."

For now, both new coaches are relying a little bit on their pasts as they navigate their new world. Both said they talked with former coaches like Andy Reid to help guide them. Jackson credited Reid

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MIKE CAUDILL, LEFT, AND JOSE F. MORENO, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/AP, TNS

**Michael Vick, left, and DeSean Jackson were hired during the offseason as the new head football coaches at Norfolk State and Delaware State, respectively.**

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