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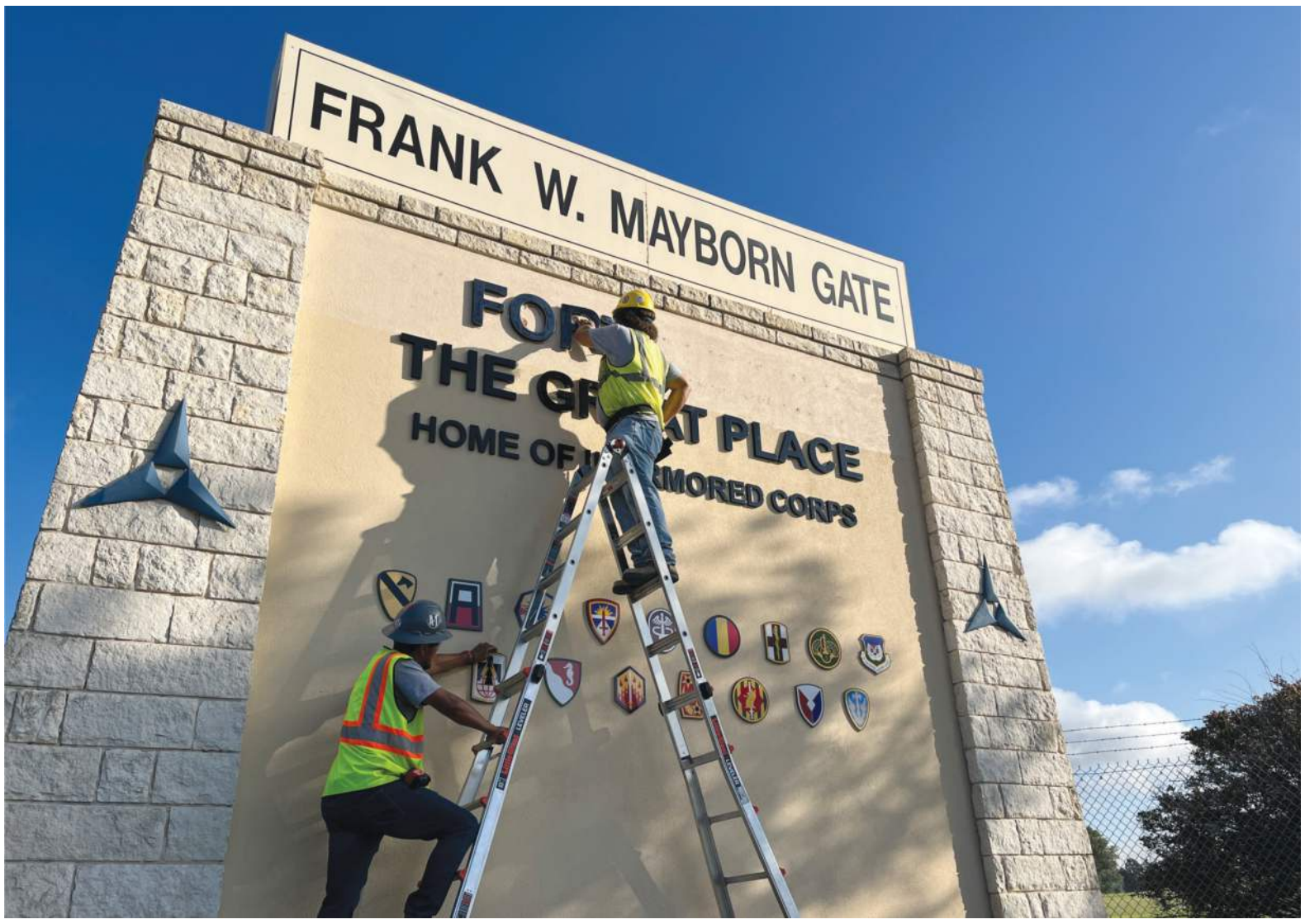


Hegseth orders rare, urgent meeting of generals and admirals » Page 4

STARS AND STRIPES

stripes.com

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ERIC FRANKLIN/U.S. Army

Contractors begin reinstalling the "Fort Hood" lettering at the Frank W. Mayborn Gate welcome sign June 24, as part of preparations for the Texas Army installation's redesignation back to Fort Hood.

Lingering reminders

Non-Confederate names gone from main gates but live on at posts

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

The name Fort Cavazos existed for only two years at the Army's massive central Texas base. But the Cavazos Connector, a shuttle bus looping daily around the recently redesignated Fort Hood, stands as a reminder of what was.

Fort Bragg's short-lived name, Fort Liberty, lives on in the Sunset Liberty March conducted each evening on the North Carolina post to honor all service members of the past.

At Fort Rucker in Alabama, the reminder is at the restaurant Big Mike's, which was rebranded when the base's name temporarily honored Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Novosel.

"CW4 Mike Novosel's legacy continues to inspire generations of aviators and soldiers, and his name will remain a guiding symbol of courage, commitment and excellence," the base said in a statement.

Each of nine installations affected by the whiplash name changes reflected similar sentiments as officials named and renamed installations to meet Defense Department policy while respecting the legacy and service of each namesake.

SEE LINGERING ON PAGE 8

US, NATO keep eyes on Russia in Adriatic

BY ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

ABOARD THE TCG ANADOLU — NATO allies taking part in an exercise this week are staying wary in case recent Russian incursions in the bloc's skies are followed by Kremlin shadowing at sea.

"In the strategic context, we're monitoring very closely with the (Russian) activities over the last few weeks to see if there is any additional activity," Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Andrew Priddy said Wednesday, the third day of exercise Neptune Strike.

No indications of Russian tails have been seen so far, but naval forces have their eye out for "any sign of Russian interaction, Russian observance, any Russian response to the activity that we're conducting," Priddy said.

The chief of staff for Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO, Priddy joined Turkish and Italian military officials on the amphibious assault ship Anadolu as it sailed in the Adriatic Sea off the coast of Italy near the city of Brindisi.

The third iteration of Neptune Strike this year started on Monday with the Anadolu Expeditionary Strike Group and Italian amphibious forces operating in the southern Adriatic along with the command-and-control ship USS Mount Whitney and the destroyer USS Roosevelt.

Two Turkish frigates and a submarine and the Italian amphibious assault ship ITS San Giorgio were among the vessels nearby.

Meanwhile, the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford is in the North Sea alongside ships and personnel

SEE ADRIATIC ON PAGE 8

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Poll: Streaming overtakes theaters for movie watchers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Americans are more likely to watch newly released movies from the comfort of their own homes instead of heading out to a theater, according to a new poll.

About three-quarters of U.S. adults said they watched a new movie on streaming instead of in the theater at least once in the past year, according to the survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, including about 3 in 10 who watched new movies on streaming at least once a month.

Meanwhile, about two-thirds of Americans said that they've watched a recently released movie in a theater in the past year, and only 16% said they went at least once a month.

The results suggest that, on the whole, American moviegoers are more likely to stream a film than see it in the theaters, a shifting tide that was only accelerated during COVID-19. Convenience and cost are both factors for many people who can't find the time or pay the increasingly high price.

There is some overlap between theatergoers and people who opt for streaming — 55% of U.S. adults have seen a new movie in a theater and skipped the theater in favor of streaming at least once in the past year — but only watching new movies on streaming is more common than only going to the theater.

The North American box office is currently up over 4% from last year, but the industry has struggled to reach pre-pandemic levels.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Sept. 26)	0.83
British pound (Sept. 26)	$1.31
Japanese yen (Sept. 26)	144.00
South Korean won (Sept. 26)	1,365.00

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3744
Britain (Pound)	1.3369
Canada (Dollar)	1.3917
China (Yuan)	7.1315
Denmark (Krone)	6.3872
Egypt (Pound)	48.1133
Euro	0.8558
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7793
Hungary (Forint)	335.27
Israel (Shekel)	3.3566
Japan (Yen)	149.44
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3051
Norway (Krone)	10.0066
Philippines (Peso)	58.25
Poland (Zloty)	3.65
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7462
Singapore (Dollar)	1.2931
South Korea (Won)	1,408.73
Switzerland (Franc)	0.7991
Thailand (Baht)	32.26
Turkey (NewLira)	41.4670

(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	7.25
Interest Rates Discount rate	4.09
Federal funds market rate	4.12
3-month bill	3.96
30-year bond	4.75

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is compiled from weather.com

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MILITARY

Air Force makes fitness assessment biannual

By Matthew Adams
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Air Force is making physical fitness assessments biannual for all airmen and introducing a 2-mile run as part of the service's fitness initiative in the new year, the Air Force announced Wednesday.

Beginning Jan. 1, the Air Force will pause all physical fitness testing to facilitate the updated program, the service said in a statement. The Air Force will begin testing airmen March 1 on the new standards. From March 1 to Aug. 31, all testing will be diagnostic to provide service members time to adapt. The Air Force will resume scoring official testing Sept. 1.

"These fitness changes are about having a healthy, ready force prepared to meet today's mission and the demands of the future fight," Gen. David Allvin, the Air Force chief of staff, said in a statement. "The updated model reflects our high standards for fitness and ensures our airmen have the tools they need to protect their long-term health."

The updated PFA features a 100-point scoring system across four categories — cardiorespiratory (50), waist-to-height ratio (20), muscle strength (15) and muscle core endurance (15).

Airmen who currently score 90 or higher out of a possible 100 points are allowed to test just once per year, a policy introduced in 2010 as an incentive for high performers.

Under the new guidelines, service members will be required to take the physical fitness assessment every six months regardless of their score, according to the statement.



Megan Shaner/U.S. Air Force

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brock Bergmann, a unit fitness program manager, monitors runners during a physical fitness assessment at the 148th Fighter Wing Duluth in Minnesota last year.

The current fitness assessment includes a cardiovascular component — either a 1.5-mile run or a 20-meter shuttle run introduced in 2022 — along with pushups and situps or approved alternatives.

All alternate exercises for cardiovascular, strength and endurance components remain an option for airmen during their assessment. Service members will be required to perform a 2-mile run during at least one fitness assessment per year, according to the announcement.

The updates also aim to correct pandemic-era policies that did not adequately prepare airmen for operational demands, an Air Force spokesperson said in June.

In 2020, amid COVID-19 restrictions, the Air Force removed waist circumference as a scored component of the fitness test and moved it to a standalone body composition program. At the time, officials said the change was permanent.

Since then, airmen have been required to schedule a separate waist measurement during their birth month in addition to completing their fitness assessments.

In February, the Air Force briefly updated its official fitness assessment scorecard to include waist circumference as a scored element but removed the category just days later without explanation.

The Air Force has not formally updated its fitness assessment guidance since 2022.

The fitness assessment announcement comes a week after the service launched its Culture of Fitness initiative which included 24-hour access to all fitness facilities and provides healthier dining options to service members.

Air Force Secretary Troy Meink in his memo wrote that the department found the traditional approach "has fallen short of fostering" the well-being of service members.

The Air Force has been making changes after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth in March ordered a review and enhancement of physical fitness standards.

NORAD tracks Russian bombers, fighters in Alaska air defense zone

By Joseph Ditzler
Stars and Stripes

North American Aerospace Defense Command intercepted four Russian aircraft Wednesday in the Alaska Air Defense Identification Zone, the command announced the following day.

NORAD tracked two Tupelov Tu-95 four-engine strategic bombers and two Sukhoi Su-35 air defense fighters in the zone, according to a news release.

NORAD said it dispatched an E-3 Sentry surveillance plane, four F-16 Fighting Falcons and four KC-135 aerial tankers to "positively identify and intercept" the Russians.

The Russian aircraft stayed in international airspace and did not enter American or Canadian sovereign airspace, according to the release.

"This Russian activity in the Alaskan ADIZ occurs regularly and is not seen as a threat," said NORAD.

The Russian presence in the air defense zone is the first since Aug. 26, when an Ilyushin Il-20 surveillance plane made a two hour and 20 minute flight near the western Aleutian Islands.

Russian aircraft made flights in the Alaska ADIZ four times in one week in August and two flights in July, one in April and two in February, NORAD said at the time.

Wednesday's incursions came one day after President Donald Trump on social media platform Truth Social did an about face on his position on Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"I think Ukraine, with the support of the European Union, is in a position to fight and win all of Ukraine back in its original form," Trump wrote.

Trump, questioned by a reporter Tuesday at the United Nations in New York, also said NATO countries should shoot down Russian military aircraft that violate their airspace, Japanese public broadcaster NHK reported Wednesday.

The air defense identification zone begins where sovereign airspace ends, usually 12 miles from the coast.

The zone is a defined stretch of international airspace where all aircraft are expected to identify themselves in the interest of national security.

NORAD recorded 12 flights into the zone by Russian planes last year.

"Since Russia resumed long-range aviation activities in 2007, the number of incursions fluctuates annually, but we have seen as many as 15 in one year to as low as zero," NORAD spokeswoman Canadian Armed Forces Capt. Rebecca Garand said in August.

Soldier convicted of attacks on women in Fort Hood barracks found dead in cell

By Rose L. Thayer
Stars and Stripes

A soldier sentenced to life in prison for attacking women in their rooms at Fort Hood was found dead in his cell last week at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., the Army said.



Clarke

Sgt. Greville Clarke, 32, is the first inmate to die at the military's only maximum security prison since 2019, said Maj. Travis Shaw, an Army spokesman.

He was found unresponsive in his cell Friday.

"Fort Leavenworth Fire and EMS were unable to resuscitate him, and he was pronounced deceased," Shaw said.

An investigation into Clarke's death is ongoing with the Army Criminal Investigation Division, which investigates all soldier deaths.

The Army did not provide a preliminary cause of death.

Clarke was convicted in April of more than two dozen crimes including attempted premeditated murder, rape and kidnapping for his attacks on women in the barracks that stretched over 18 months between 2021 and October 2022.

He did not attend his own court-martial proceedings and spent that time under constant surveillance by Bell County Jail staff out of concern that he would try to harm himself, according to information that was presented at the time in court.

MILITARY

Hegseth orders rare meeting of top officers

BY TARA COPP, DAN LAMOTHE, ALEX HORTON, ELLEN NAKASHIMA AND NOAH ROBERTSON
The Washington Post

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has ordered hundreds of the U.S. military's generals and admirals to gather on short notice — and without a stated reason — at a Marine Corps base in Virginia next week, sowing confusion and alarm after the Trump administration's firing of numerous senior leaders this year.

The highly unusual directive was sent to virtually all of the military's top commanders worldwide, according to more than a dozen people familiar with the matter. The directive was issued earlier this week, as a government shutdown looms, and months after Hegseth's team at the Pentagon announced plans to undertake a sweeping consolidation of top military commands.

In a statement Thursday, Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell affirmed that Hegseth "will be addressing his senior military leaders early next week," but he offered no additional details. Parnell, a senior adviser to the defense secretary, voiced no concerns about The Washington Post reporting on the meeting, scheduled for Tuesday in Quantico, Va.

There are about 800 generals and admirals spread across the United States and dozens of other countries and time zones. Hegseth's order, people familiar with the matter said, applies to all senior officers with the rank of brigadier general or above, or their Navy equivalent, serving in command positions and their top enlisted advisers.

Top commanders in conflict zones and senior military leaders stationed throughout Europe, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region are among those expected to attend Hegseth's meeting, said people familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to publicly discuss the issue. The order does not apply to top military officers who hold staff positions.

None of the people who spoke could recall a defense secretary ever ordering so many of the military's generals and admirals to assemble like this. Several said it raised security concerns.



EVAN VUCCI/AP

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has ordered hundreds of the military's generals and admirals to gather on short notice — and without a stated reason.

"People are very concerned. They have no idea what it means," one person said.

Two others expressed frustration that even many commanders stationed overseas will be required to attend. One said, this is "not how this is done."

"You don't call GOFOs leading their people and the global force into an auditorium outside D.C. and not tell them why/what the topic or agenda is," this person said, using an abbreviation for general officer or flag officer.

"Are we taking every general and flag officer out of the Pacific right now?" one U.S. official said. "All of it is weird."

The orders come as Hegseth has unilaterally directed massive recent changes at the Pentagon - including directing that the number of general officers be reduced by 20%, firing senior leaders without cause and a high-profile new order to rebrand the Defense Department as the Department of War.

Top administration officials also have preparing a new national defense strategy that is expected to make homeland defense the nation's top concern, after several years of China being identified as the top national security risk to the U.S. Some officials familiar with the order to travel said they thought that may come up.

Hegseth's directive in May to slash about 100 generals and admirals also has generated concern among top military leaders. He called then for a "minimum" 20% cut to the number of four-star officers — the military's top rank — on active duty and a corresponding number of generals in the National Guard.

There also will be another 10% reduction, at least, to the total number of generals and admirals across the force.



WYATT OLSON/Stars and Stripes

Richardson Theater on Fort Shafter, Hawaii, awaits an interior renovation to become headquarters for the U.S. Army's 3rd Multi-Domain Task Force.

Army to transform Hawaii theater into task force HQ

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The Army is gutting a historic theater on this base in Honolulu as it transforms the site into headquarters for the 3rd Multi-Domain Task Force.

Military officials and community leaders gathered Tuesday for a ceremony that marked the beginning of the transformation of Richardson Theater, built in 1948 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The theater's distinctive pink exterior will be preserved, while the interior will be stripped to make way for "a state-of-the-art, mission-critical facility," the Army said in a news release Tuesday.

"The new headquarters will include secure spaces for cyber, electronic warfare, intelligence, and long-range precision fire operations, ensuring the task force is equipped to meet the demands of the Indo-Pacific theater," the release states.

The $94.5 million renovation is expected to be complete in early 2029, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Honolulu District.

The 3rd Multi-Domain Task Force was stood up in 2022. Three task forces — the first at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., the second in Germany — were created to synchronize theater-level warfare in the domains of land, sea, air, space and cyber.

The new headquarters will "sustain the work we do, the partnerships we form, and the impact we strive to make — not just across the Indo-Pacific, but within this very community," 3rd task force commander Col. Wade Germann said during the ceremony, according to the release.

"Decades from now, this facility will tell the story of who we are and how we carried out our vision," Germann said, alluding to the theater's 77-year history.

The theater was named for Army Gen. Robert Richardson Jr., who was the World War II commander of U.S. Army Forces in the Pacific Ocean Areas and military governor of the territory of Hawaii.

The theater is "of the Art Moderne style with influences from the American Roadside architecture movement," according to the not-for-profit Historic Hawaii Foundation.

Art Moderne experimented and innovated with form and materials and led to movements such as Impressionism and Expressionism.

Richardson was used as a movie theater until 1987, after which it became home to the Army Community Theatre program, which no longer exists. The theater has been shuttered in recent years.

Army signs $639M contract for US production of 155 mm shells

BY BRADLEY LATHAM
Stars and Stripes

A new Army contract worth more than $639 million is the latest deal aimed at throttling up American production of artillery rounds primarily used by allies and partners with arsenals left over from the Soviet era.

Global Military Products, based in Tampa, Fla., won the bid to produce 155 mm high-explosive rounds in support of the Special Ammunitions and Weapons Systems program, a Defense Department statement Tuesday said.

The SAWS program buys munitions that are not intended for U.S. weapons systems and that are unavailable through standard Army supply chains.

The DOD has put extra emphasis on production of domestic and foreign 155 mm rounds amid shrinking stockpiles following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The U.S. has sent more than 3 million 155 mm shells to support Ukraine since the invasion, the State Department said in a statement in March.

In many cases, the shells are for weapons systems that date from the Cold War days but are still in use among European countries that once were part of a bloc dominated by the former Soviet Union.

The Army has also delivered tens of thousands of shells to Israel since its 2023 conflict with Hamas began, Stars and Stripes reported previously.

Work locations and funding under the contract with Global Military Products will be determined with each order, with an estimated completion date of July 10, 2027, according to the Tuesday statement.

Platforms that use the shells include the M777 Howitzer and the M109 Paladin.

In July, Army spokesman Steve Warren said the service is turning out 40,000 shells per month, up from around 15,000 per month in 2022. Defense officials have noted a production goal of 100,000 rounds per month by mid-2026.

Recent efforts to boost production of artillery rounds have included building new facilities in Arkansas and Iowa.

Tuesday's statement also included a contract award of nearly $120 million to Accurate Energetic Systems of McEwen, Tenn., for procurement of TNT, a primary component in the high-explosive rounds.

PACIFIC

China's 'nature reserve' called sovereignty ploy

Experts: Goal is to reinforce claim over contested Scarborough Shoal

BY ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

Beijing's recently announced plan to establish a nature reserve on a contested shoal in the South China Sea is really a form of "lawfare" aimed at establishing sovereignty, according to a pair of experts in international relations.

China's National Forestry and Grassland Administration unveiled plans on Sept. 11 for a "national nature reserve" on Scarborough Shoal, a maritime feature also claimed by Taiwan and the Philippines.

The shoal, known in China as Huangyan Dao, is 140 miles west of the Philippines, within its exclusive economic zone, and 500 miles southeast of Hong Kong.

Beijing proposed the plan as a means to conserve the Scarborough ecosystem, according to a Sept. 11 news release from China's State Council. The reserve would cover 14 square miles of the 58-square-mile shoal.

China's real motivation is establishing legal frameworks for asserting its claim on the shoal over other nations, the experts said.

"This is part of a long-term strategy to establish facts on the sea. We call it 'lawfare,' " Stephen Nagy, a professor of international studies at International Christian University's Tokyo Campus, said by email Wednesday.

Beijing may also be trying to overshadow its embarrassment from an Aug. 11 incident in which a Chinese warship collided with a Chinese coast guard vessel near the shoal, said Benjamin Blandin, a non-resident research fellow at the Korea Institute for Maritime Strategy.

Both experts agreed that Beijing's primary goal is reinforcing its claim over the island.

"Establishing and implementing a nature reserve serves as one of many sovereignty markers one country can use at sea," Blandin said by email Tuesday.

China and the Philippines have had maritime run-ins at Scarborough Shoal, where the two often accuse each other of dangerous maneuvering. Coast guard, naval and other government vessels routinely encounter one another near the shoal, spats that draw the attention of Philippine allies like the United States.

The Philippines "strongly rejected" China's announcement of a nature preserve, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs said in a Sept. 19 news release.

Marshall Louis Alferez, foreign affairs assistant secretary for maritime and ocean affairs, "reaffirmed the shoal as an integral part of Philippine territory over which the country exercises sovereignty and jurisdiction," the release states.

The Philippines asserted its "exclusive authority to establish environmental protection areas" over its territory in the release. Whether the Philippines can enforce that policy remains to be seen, said Nagy and Blandin.

"Manila doesn't have the military or coast guard power to push back against Beijing's actions here," Nagy wrote. "They can try but probably safer to ask the U.S., Japan or others to navigate these waters."

China's move may come at a cost, either financially or reputationally, Blandin said.

"[This] will only demonstrate — one more time — that every move China makes is intentional," he said. "In the present case, it might even be to their detriment as it was them who destroyed the corals and fauna (giant clams) with total disregard for the environment."

'A life remembered': Yokosuka honors sailors lost over past year

BY ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The solemn tolls of a ship's bell rang through Kosano Park on Thursday as volunteers read out the names of 176 sailors who died over the past year.

The ceremony — part of the Navy Gold Star Program's annual Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members — drew about 60 sailors and civilians, including 10 Gold Star family members, to pay their respects.

A group of 22 sailors in their summer whites took turns reading out the names, with a single bell toll following every five or six names.

"Each ring is a simple sound with a solemn meaning: A watch begun, a watch relieved, a life remembered," base commander Capt. Jonathan Hopkins told those attending. "Here in Yokosuka, the bell reminds us that no name is spoken alone. Its echo reaches every pier, every shop, every household in this community."



A sailor rings a ship's bell as the names of 176 sailors who died over the past year are read aloud Thursday.

Among the 176 names was Petty Officer 3rd Class Jose Antonio Rivera Lynch IV, an aviation boatswain's mate assigned to the aircraft carrier USS George Washington. He was declared dead in a presumed overboard accident on July 30.

In addition to those who died this year, five names were read to honor the Gold Star families in attendance: Cmdr. Frank Bivins, Chief Petty Officer Charles Findley, Chief Petty Officer Abraham Lopez, Petty Officer 2nd Class Adam Thomas and Chief Petty Officer Demond Walker.

"It's important that we stop and remember the lives lost, and it's in the remembrance that we can really appreciate life fuller," Hopkins told Stars and Stripes after the ceremony, adding that recognizing the Gold Star families who participated is especially important.

The ceremony, now in its 10th year globally, was mirrored at numerous Navy bases in the United States this month. In Japan, simultaneous events were held at Sasebo Naval Base and Naval Air Facility Atsugi, according to the Navy Gold Star Program's website.

Riho Findley, wife of Charles Findley, said holding the ceremony in an overseas location like Yokosuka is extremely important, especially for the families of sailors who don't live in the States.

"If there's no ceremony like this, people just forget," she said after the ceremony. "They're not here, but the least we can do is remember those people who sacrificed their lives for the country."

Her husband was one of 10 sailors who died aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS John S. McCain when it collided Aug. 21, 2017, with a Liberian-flagged tanker near Singapore. Two months prior, the USS Fitzgerald, another guided-missile destroyer, collided with a Philippine-flagged container vessel in an incident that killed seven sailors.



Sailors honor their counterparts who died over the past year during the Bells Across America ceremony at Yokosuka.



PHOTOS BY AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

Gold Star families pray Thursday during a Bells of Across America ceremony at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan.

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MILITARY

S. Korea looks into cellphone data breaches

BY TREVARES JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

The South Korean government is investigating a series of data breach reports at three of the country's largest cellphone service providers, companies that sell plans to U.S. military customers.

Two providers — SK Telecom and KT Corp. — reported incidents this month involving customer data hacking and micropayment scams, respectively, according to news releases Sept. 16 and Sept. 9 from the Ministry of Science and Information and Communication Technology.

Earlier this month, the ministry launched a probe into reports of large-scale customer data theft at KT Corp. and LG Uplus.

Together, they make at least four major telecom security incidents involving South Korean carriers this year.

In April, hackers had infiltrated SK Telecom's network and taken more than 10 gigabytes of SIM card data, the ministry announced in July.

KT, LG Uplus and SK Telecom operate kiosks and storefronts inside Army and Air Force Exchange Service facilities at Camp Humphreys, Osan Air Base and other U.S. military installations, where U.S. service members, Defense Department employees and their families purchase their local phone plans.

U.S. Forces Korea in April issued an advisory in the SK Telecom case but not for the more recent incidents involving SK Telecom, KT and LG Uplus, according to a review of the command's public advisories.

The ministry responded Sept. 16 to allegations that an international hacking organization had stolen SK Telecom customer data and sold it online, according to a news release that day.

In the KT case, the ministry established a joint public-private investigation team, headed by the director general for cyber security and network policy, to investigate an unauthorized micropayment incident involving KT subscribers, according to the Sept. 9 release.

Micropayment scams can result in a hacker tricking a service provider into transferring a customer's phone number to an unauthorized device, thereby gaining access to identity and financial information.

Tent hospital treats mock casualties during training in Japan

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

SEKIYAMA TRAINING AREA, Japan — A U.S. Army tent hospital treated more than 160 simulated casualties during Orient Shield, a nine-day trilateral exercise that wrapped up Wednesday in central Japan, according to the service.

Medical staff from the United States, Japan and Australia worked in the field hospital while troops carried out combat drills across Niigata, Kyoto, Hyogo, Chiba and Kanagawa prefectures on Honshu, Japan's largest island.

The exercise — long the largest bilateral event between the U.S. and Japanese armies — expanded this year to include Australian forces as the region contends with China's growing military power. About 1,200 Japanese, 700 American and 200 Australian troops participated.

Troops from the Missouri National Guard's 1st Battalion, 138th Infantry Regiment, Japan's Middle Army and Australia's 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, demonstrated mortar fire and maneuvers during a Sept. 19 media tour.

They also participated in practicing casualty evacuation to tent hospitals.

The largest facility was a 32-bed hospital that had been stored at Sagami General Depot, a U.S. Army post just outside Tokyo, said Lt. Col. Jennifer Wilson, commander of the 528th Field Hospital at Fort Bragg, N.C.



PHOTOS BY AKIFUMI ISHIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

Mock casualties arrive at a field hospital for treatment during the Orient Shield exercise at Sekiyama Training Area in Niigata, Japan, Sept. 19.



A patient role player is treated inside a field hospital during the Orient Shield exercise.



Mock casualties are taken to a field hospital for treatment during the exercise.

Wilson led reporters through the maze-like setup as ambulances arrived with mock patients. Role players lay on stretchers and were moved into operating rooms for treatment.

It was the first time the tent hospital had been used, said Master Sgt. Joshua Blair, the 528th's chief ward master. The facility is designed to move independently but for Orient Shield it was moved by commercial trucks.

"Once the equipment was on site, the hospital was fully functional in 48 hours," he said. "Tear down can be done a bit faster at 36 hours."

The hospital is classified as a Role 3 facility, the highest level of care available outside fixed hospitals.

Japanese troops set up Role 1 and Role 2 facilities, Blair said, while U.S., Japanese and Australian medical teams staffed each level of care. Surgeons and specialists from the three nations also participated.

Brig. Gen. Louise Martin, commander of the Australian army's 2nd Health Brigade, called the exercise a milestone in a Sept. 18 news release from the Australian Defence Department.

"Our strong trilateral partnership is an important pillar of regional security and crucial to collective deterrence in our region," she said.

German soldier says he was attacked by Russian speakers in Bavaria

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

A German soldier told authorities that two Russian-speaking men assaulted him as he got into his car in Sulzbach-Rosenberg earlier this week, according to an Oberpfalz police statement Wednesday.

The 19-year-old soldier was in uniform and about to head to work on Tuesday morning when one of the men opened the door and attacked him, the statement said. The second man joined in and kicked the soldier in the chest, police said.

After the soldier locked himself inside his car, the men fled, the statement said, adding that he was not injured in the assault. Authorities are seeking witnesses to the crime, which occurred at about 6 a.m. on Franz-Fischer-Strasse.

Sulzbach-Rosenberg is about eight miles from the U.S. Army base in Vilseck. The U.S. has tens of thousands of soldiers stationed throughout Bavaria, which also hosts the service's largest training center in Europe.

Based on the soldier's statement that the attackers spoke Russian, the investigation is being handled by Germany's Special Police for State Security, Oberpfalz police spokeswoman Melanie Bäumler said Wednesday in response to questions.

However, the soldier told authorities he doesn't know Russian and couldn't be sure that's the language the two men were speaking, Bäumler added.

The men were described as being about 30 years old and 6 feet tall with short dark hair. One of them had an older woman's bike with a luggage rack, police said.

One theory that investigators could look into is that the crime is related to the Russia-Ukraine war, Bäumler said.

NATO countries, including the United States and Germany, have been providing various forms of military support to Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion of the country in February 2022.

Ukrainian forces have also been trained by U.S. personnel in Germany.

Western countries' staunch backing of Ukraine has led to sabotage and espionage attempts throughout Europe that allies accuse Russia of sponsoring.

Stars and Stripes reporter Marcus Kloeckner contributed to this story.

MILITARY



RACHEL LANDERS/U.S. Navy

Navy Capt. Blake Burket, center left, and Rear Adm. Jeffrey Kilian, right, examine a construction project on Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, Guam, in December.

Navy awards $289M contract for communication facility on Guam

BY JANIQUA ROBINSON
Stars and Stripes

The Navy awarded a $289.7 million contract to a local conglomerate to build and outfit a communications facility at Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz on Guam, according to a recent announcement.

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command awarded the contract Monday to Core Tech-HDCC-Kajima LLC, of Tamuning.

The firm will install fiber communications cabling and build a consolidated communications facility and two warehouses at the base, according to information posted Tuesday on the Defense Visual Information Distribution System. The project's estimated completion date is March 2029.

NAVFAC Pacific solicited bids in November for a multistory, warehouse-style building with secure facilities at Blaz to support naval computer systems and telecommunications. It estimated the project would cost between $250 million and $500 million.

The command did not immediately respond to an email requesting further information after hours on Thursday. It was not clear if the contract award was directly connected to the bid solicitation last year.

The solicitation called for creation of a sensitive compartmented information facility, or SCIF, and an OSP Fiber Line SONET Ring — basically a network for synchronous data transmission over optical fibers.

Guam plays a central role as a communications hub and staging ground as the Defense Department prepares for a potential conflict in the Indo-Pacific.

"We are pleased to announce awarding this contract as the project significantly improves the overall effectiveness and productivity of Joint Region Marianas tenant commands," command spokesman Jimmy Miyamoto said in the release. "This investment is an important step forward ensuring the continued success and efficiency of our mission."

The communications contract is the latest in hundreds of millions of dollars in government funding flowing to the U.S. island territory as the Pentagon improves existing facilities and builds new ones, including an $8 billion missile defense system.

The Defense Department on Sept. 9 awarded a California defense contractor, Tutor Perini Corp., of Los Angeles, and its Guam unit, Black Construction Inc., a $181.1 million contract for work on one site of the Missile Defense Agency's Enhanced Integrated Air and Missile Defense system.

The system is designed to counter cruise, ballistic and hypersonic missiles that could be launched by China or North Korea.

Pentagon adds exemptions to flu shot rule

BY KONSTANTIN TOROPIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has stepped back from the policy that requires all troops to get the flu shot every year by introducing exemptions for reservists and proclaiming that the shot is only necessary in some circumstances for all service members, according to a document obtained by The Associated Press.

The memo, written by Deputy Defense Secretary Steve Feinberg on May 29 and sent to all the military services, says reserve troops now will need to be on active duty for 30 days or more before being required to get an annual flu shot. It also says the military will no longer be paying for reservists or National Guard members to get the vaccine on their own time.

News of the policy change, which has not been publicly announced by the Pentagon, comes as the Trump administration and its advisers have suggested changes to other vaccination guidance. An influential immunization panel that the administration updated to include anti-vaccine figures decided to not recommend the COVID-19 shot to anyone, while President Donald Trump used his platform to promote unproven and, in some cases, discredited ties between the pain reliever Tylenol, vaccines and autism.

At the Pentagon, the flu shot memo declared that "going forward, the Department will conserve its resources by requiring seasonal flu vaccination for service members only when doing so most directly contributes to readiness." However, the document is not clear about the changes because it later says the annual requirement for active-duty troops is still in effect.

While the memo was quietly sent months ago, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth drew attention to it Wednesday when he reposted a comment from an anonymous account that claimed they "won't be forced to get a flu shot this fall for the privilege of serving my state and country in the National Guard."

Officials in Hegseth's office did not answer questions on the conflicting nature of the memo or comment on the post he amplified.

The Trump administration also has offered back pay to former service members who refused the COVID-19 vaccine and were kicked out of the military under the Biden administration.

Those who declined the vaccination have been able to return to service since 2023, but only 113 of the more than 8,000 discharged service members had chosen to do so.

The back pay offer was intended to encourage more to reenlist but met with limited success. Two months later, Pentagon officials said only 13 people — all Army soldiers — had rejoined the military.

Navy finishes cleanup of WWII blimp hangar destroyed in fire

BY GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

The Navy has spent $129.8 million on the cleanup of the former World War II blimp hangar at the shuttered Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, destroyed almost two years ago by fire, the Pentagon said this week.

Workers for the Navy have hauled away more than 549 tons of twisted and charred metal from the wreckage, along with just under 77 tons of toxic waste, from the site in Southern California. Another 3,214 tons of nontoxic debris was removed from the charred wreck of the North Hangar, according to a tally by the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command.

Scott Anderson, environmental coordinator for the Base Realignment and Closure Program Management Office West in San Diego, said that 22 months after the fire, the Navy is crossing the finish line.

"We have completed all the required work, and we are now in the report preparation phase," Anderson said.

All that remains of what was once one of the largest wooden structures in the world are four remaining concrete hangar towers. Poised nearby, like a before-and-after portrait, is the intact South Hangar.

Tustin Mayor Austin Lumbard had criticized the speed of the initial phases of the cleanup in late 2023 and early 2024. But he said Tuesday the Navy has performed well during the long process.

"We commend the Navy for its diligent response and steadfast efforts throughout the Navy North Hangar Fire incident," Lumbard said. "The Navy's professionalism and commitment to making the community whole have been critical in assuring Tustin's recovery."

Built with 2 million board feet of Oregon Douglas Fir, the hangars were erected in 1942 to shelter anti-submarine blimps that patrolled the California coast in the months after the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

The blimp hangars were a community landmark as Orange County transitioned from farms to suburbs, with a population of almost 3.2 million by the 2020s.



U.S. Navy

The cleaned "footprint" of the North Hangar in July at the former Marine Corps Air Station Tustin in California.

MILITARY

Adriatic: Turkey touts contribution with largest warship

FROM PAGE 1

from Finland, Norway, and the U.K., among other countries.

The exercise includes more than 10,000 military personnel from 13 allied nations operating in the Mediterranean, Adriatic, Baltic and North seas, NATO said in a statement.

Priddy's comments come as NATO grapples with recent incursions by Russian drones in Poland and Romania as well as a breach of Estonian airspace by Moscow's fighter jets.

Those incidents have raised concerns about protecting NATO's eastern flank.

The violation of Polish airspace prompted NATO to create a new mission called Eastern Sentry in an effort to shore up defenses there.

Russia regularly keeps tabs on U.S. and NATO military exercises.

American and allied forces do the same when it comes to similar activities involving Russia.

But with last year's overthrow of Syrian strongman Bashar Assad, a longtime Kremlin stalwart in the Middle East, Russian military access to a strategic port in the country has been crippled.

"The loss of the base in Tartus has kind of significantly hampered the Russians' ability to operate in the Mediterranean," Priddy said.

Turkish assistance to Syrian rebels was crucial in bringing about the ouster of Assad, whose family had held power in the country for more than half a century.

Now, the key NATO ally is playing a leadership role in Neptune Strike.

A prominent part of that presence in the drill is the Anadolu, Turkey's largest warship.

The exercise offers Turkey an opportunity to demonstrate its amphibious capabilities and commitment to ensuring allies' security, said Rear Adm. Mevlut Savas Bilican, commander of the Anadolu Expeditionary Strike Group.

"We believe that we are making a huge contribution to NATO's posture in terms of (the) current security setup," Bilican said, adding that 1,000 Turkish personnel are taking part in the exercise.

The NATO statement said Neptune Strike is designed to demonstrate the alliance's ability to integrate sophisticated maritime strike capabilities and work effectively together.

The emphasis on amphibious operations allows allies to rehearse the capability and improve their ability to work together, Priddy said.

"There are significant choke points in the southern flank of NATO and the ability to have sea control from the land or to help dominate from the land into the sea, is an extremely important role of amphibious forces," he said.



PHOTOS BY ALISON BATH/Stars and Stripes

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Andrew Priddy, center, speaks with Turkish military officials Wednesday, while touring the amphibious assault ship TCG Anadolu in the Adriatic Sea during NATO's Neptune Strike drill.



The TCG Anadolu is a prominent feature in the Neptune Strike drill.

Lingering: Officials say former names still honored throughout bases

FROM PAGE 1

The renaming began under President Joe Biden with a congressional mandate to separate military assets from Confederate-rooted names. It followed a national reckoning with race that sprang from 2020 protests after George Floyd, a Black man, was killed by a white police officer in Minnesota.

New names were selected by a committee that listened to public comments and researched the history and missions of each of the nine Army bases and their surrounding communities to find appropriate people or ideas to recognize.

When President Donald Trump took office this year, he vowed to return to the old names despite the new law barring recognition of people who fought against the United States in the Civil War. To circumvent the law, the Pentagon identified veterans with the same last names as those with Confederate ties.

The name Fort Hood originated to honor Confederate general John Bell Hood. It returned this summer in honor of Col. Robert B. Hood, who earned the Distinguished Service Cross in World War I.



DARREN CINATL/U.S. ARMY /

The name Fort Cavazos existed for only two years at the Army's massive central Texas base, but a shuttle bus, the Cavazos Connector, looping daily around the base.

In between, the base honored Gen. Richard Cavazos, a Medal of Honor recipient from the Korean War who was born in Texas and commanded Fort Hood in the 1980s.

Aside from the shuttle bus, Fort Hood retained Cavazos' name at the post's mission training complex, which occurred in 2019.

"The Cavazos name on two on-post entities is a testament to the impact Gen. Richard E. Cavazos had on the Army and on Fort Hood itself," Lt. Gen. Kevin D. Admiral, commander of III Armored Corps and Fort Hood, said in a statement.

Among the other installations, Fort Pickett and Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia, Fort Benning in Georgia and Fort Bragg said there are no current buildings or streets that retained their former names of Barfoot, Walker, Moore and Liberty, respectively.

However, Lt. Gen. Harold "Hal" and Julia Moore continue to be remembered at Fort Benning through an award at Officer Candidate School that began in 2023. The Exchange building features the couple in an informational art piece, and their portrait hangs prominently in the post headquarters building, Fort Benning said in a statement.

Fort Pickett said final decisions are still underway on how to preserve and memorialize Col. Van T. Barfoot's legacy and contributions at the base.

Fort A.P. Hill will soon dedicate its visitor center to honor the base's former namesake, Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, an Army contract surgeon during the Civil War and the only woman ever awarded the Medal of Honor, according to the base.

Fort Polk renamed its Exchange store to honor Sgt. William Henry Johnson, a Medal of Honor recipient of World War I. A plaque at the building's entrance describes his service and that the entire base was renamed in his honor in 2023.

"The Exchange is the heart of our installation — a place where soldiers, families, retirees and veterans gather," Fort Polk officials wrote on social media announcing the change. "It now stands as a daily reminder of Sgt. Johnson's legacy: service before self and unwavering commitment to those beside you."

Fort Gordon in Georgia retained the name of President Dwight D. Eisenhower on its hospital while Fort Lee in Virginia kept the names of Lt. Gen. Arthur Gregg and Lt. Col. Charity Adams at the Gregg-Adams Club, on avenues and their associated gates, and in a conference room in the Combined Arms Support Command Headquarters.

"Their stories will remain vital parts of this installation and our museum collections," said Maj. Gen. Michelle Donahue, commander of the Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee, said during the redesignation ceremony this summer. "We are committed to ensuring their legacies are preserved and honored as they helped shape this post into the center of excellence it is today."

Each time the Army posts have changed names, it costs millions in new signage and manpower to locate and correct all instances where the names appear online or in written communication.

Congress may once again intervene, as an amendment attached to a pending defense policy bill in the House would block the reversal of the recommendations of the committee Congress created to remove Confederate-linked names in the first place. It has several hurdles to clear before it could reach final passage.

NATION

Agencies draft mass firings before shutdown

By Seung Min Kim
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House is telling agencies to prepare large-scale firings of federal workers if the government shuts down next week.

In a memo released Wednesday night, the Office of Management and Budget said agencies should consider a reduction in force for federal programs whose funding would lapse next week, are not otherwise funded and are "not consistent with the President's priorities." That would be a much more aggressive step than in previous shutdowns, when federal workers not deemed essential were furloughed but returned to their jobs once Congress approved government spending.

A reduction in force would not only lay off employees but eliminate their positions, which would trigger yet another massive upheaval in a federal workforce that has already faced major rounds of cuts this year due to efforts from the Department of Government Efficiency and elsewhere in the Trump administration.

Once any potential government shutdown ends, agencies are asked to revise their reduction in force plans "as needed to retain the minimal number of employees necessary to carry out statutory functions," according to the memo, which was first reported by Politico.



J. Scott Applewhite/AP

Capitol Police officers adjust security barriers around at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday.

This move from OMB significantly increases the consequences of a potential government shutdown next week and escalates pressure on Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

The two leaders have kept nearly all of their Democratic lawmakers united against a clean funding bill pushed by President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans that would keep the federal government operating for seven more weeks, demanding improvements to health care in exchange for their votes.

In statements issued shortly after the memo was released, the two Democrats showed no signs of budging.

"We will not be intimidated by your threat to engage in mass firings," Jeffries wrote in a post on X. "Get lost."

Jeffries called Russ Vought, the head of OMB, a "malignant political hack."

Schumer said in a statement that the OMB memo is an "attempt at intimidation" and predicted the "unnecessary firings will either be overturned in court or the administration will end up hiring the workers back."

OMB noted that it held its first planning call with other federal agencies earlier this week to plan for a shutdown. The budget office plays point in managing federal government shutdowns, particularly planning ahead of time. Past budget offices have also posted shutdown contingency plans — which would outline which agency workers would stay on the job during a government shutdown and which would be furloughed — on its website, but this one has not.

The memo noted that congressional Democrats are refusing to support a clean government funding bill "due to their partisan demands," which include an extension of enhanced health insurance subsidies set to expire at the end of the year, plus a reversal of Medicaid cuts that were included in Republicans' big tax and spending cuts law.

"As such, it has never been more important for the Administration to be prepared for a shutdown if the Democrats choose to pursue one," the memo reads, which also notes that the GOP's signature law gives "ample resources to ensure that many core Trump Administration priorities will continue uninterrupted."

White House: Trump's blast toward Russia is 'negotiating tactic'

By Michael Birnbaum and Natalie Allison
The Washington Post

UNITED NATIONS — President Donald Trump's furious rhetoric toward Russia is "a negotiating tactic" intended to pressure the Kremlin, a senior White House official said Wednesday, a day after the president stunned global policymakers and delighted Ukrainian leaders by embracing Kyiv's ambitions for a decisive defeat of Russia.

The president's apparent flip in favor of Ukraine's reconquering its full territory is a marker of Trump's frustration toward Russian President Vladimir Putin, the senior White House official said, a month after a red-carpet summit in Alaska between the two leaders yielded few concrete results.

But Trump was not signaling a major shift in U.S. policy toward Kyiv during a day at the U.N. General Assembly in which he met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the official said.

The U.S. president has long suggested that Ukraine will need to give up territory to end the war, so his declaration on Tuesday that Kyiv can "WIN all of Ukraine back in its original form" with the right support was a notable break.

But hours later, Secretary of State Marco Rubio told the U.N. Security Council that the war would end at a negotiating table, not the battlefield — a conventional restatement of existing U.S. policy that suggested that Trump's new approach was not being translated into practical action.

The senior White House official said that everything the president does is "from the lens of 'How can we make a deal?'"

Trump "has been very frustrated with Putin for a long time. He's sending a very strong message. Russia is a massive country with a massive economy — they have a war economy — and Ukraine has still been able to defend itself for nearly four years," the official said. "All he's saying is, look, if Putin doesn't want peace, let the fighting continue, and we're going to continue to sell weapons to NATO."

Trump, when asked whether he would support European countries' shooting down Russian warplanes if they violate NATO airspace, also said yes on Tuesday, an additional rattle of the saber from the U.S. leader.



Evan Vucci/AP

President Donald Trump meets Tuesday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Zelenskyy and other Ukrainian officials who met with Trump were delighted by the encounter, one senior Ukrainian official said. There was warmth between the two leaders — a far cry from February, when Trump booted Zelenskyy from the White House — and Trump displayed a detailed knowledge of the current battlefield situation, suggesting to the Ukrainians that he had been briefed, the official said.

Just weeks ago, the White House was suggesting that Ukraine needed to hand over strategically key territory to Russia, so Ukrainian officials recognize that Trump's attitudes may change.

But the senior Ukrainian official said even if there is no further practical action by Trump, his sharp and high-profile switch would give cover to other Republicans in Washington to take more pro-Ukrainian stances. Some pro-Trump Republican officials have held back full-throated support for Ukraine to avoid contradicting the president. Now, the Ukrainian official said, they might be more willing to engage, including on sanctions against Russia.

"This communication gives a very solid basis when you're speaking about the economic situation in Russia, when you're speaking about the actual military situation, when you're speaking about putting sanctions and pressure," the official said, noting that Russia expected to defeat Ukraine in three days but is facing a stagnated battlefield after nearly four years.

Addressing the General Assembly on Wednesday, Zelenskyy only briefly mentioned his meeting with Trump, describing it as "good."

The future of warfare is changing, he argued, pointing to drones, AI and nuclear weapons, and that was reason to fight back against Russia's invasion of Ukraine before Putin pushed the war "wider and deeper."

NATION

Trump, Erdogan discuss status of F-35 ban

By Aamer Madhani
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is holding talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the White House on Thursday and signaling that the United States might soon lift its hold on sales of advanced fighter jets to Ankara.

During Trump's first term, the U.S. removed Turkey, a NATO ally, from its flagship F-35 fighter jet program after Turkey purchased an air defense system from Russia. U.S. officials worried that Turkey's use of Russia's S-400 surface-to-air missile system could be used to gather data on the capabilities of the F-35 and that the information could end up in Russian hands.

Trump started his Oval Office meeting with Erdogan by offering hope that a resolution to the matter could be found during the leaders' talks.

"He needs certain things, and we need certain things, and we're going to come to a conclusion. You'll know by the end of the day," Trump said. The president added to Erdogan, "And I think you'll be successful with buying the things" you would "like to buy."

It was Erdogan's first trip to the White House since 2019. They forged what Trump has described as a "very good relationship" during his first White House term.



Alex Brandon/AP

President Donald Trump greets Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the White House on Thursday.

Over the years, U.S. officials have cited concerns about Turkey's human rights record under Erdogan and the country's ties with Russia. Tensions between Turkey and Israel, another important American ally, over Gaza and Syria have made relations difficult with Turkey at times.

Trump in remarks before reporters focused his concerns on Turkey's continued economic relationship with Russia.

Turkey has been one of the biggest buyers of Russian fossil fuel since the European Union announced in early 2023 it would boycott most Russian seaborne oil.

Since January 2023, Ankara has purchased more than $90 billion in Russian oil, coal and natural gas. Only China and India have bought more from Russia in that period.

"The best thing he could do is not buy oil and gas from Russia," Trump said of Erdogan.

Trump added that Erdogan is respected by both Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"I think he could have a big influence if he wants to," Trump said.

The push on Erdogan to become more engaged in pressuring Putin comes after Trump earlier this week said he believed Ukraine could win back all territory lost to Russia in the war. It was a dramatic shift from Trump's repeated calls for Kyiv to make concessions to end the war.

Erdogan has made clear he is eager to see the hold on F-35s lifted, telling Trump that he came prepared to "thoroughly discuss" the issue.

The Turkish president was even blunter in a television interview this week. "I don't think it's very becoming of strategic partnership, and I don't think it's the right way to go," Erdogan said in an interview this week on Fox News Channel's "Special Report with Bret Baier."

Democratic President Joe Biden's administration kept Erdogan, who has served as president since 2014 and was prime minister for more than a decade before that, at an arm's length during Biden's four years in office.

The reluctance to engage deeply was borne out of Turkey's record of democratic backsliding as well as Ankara's close ties to Moscow.

Trump sees Erdogan as a critical partner and credible intermediary in his effort to find ends to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

Amazon to pay $2.5B to settle claims it duped customers regarding Prime

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Amazon has reached a historic $2.5 billion settlement with the Federal Trade Commission, which said the online retail giant tricked customers into signing up for its Prime memberships and made it difficult for them to cancel after doing so.

The Seattle company will pay $1 billion in civil penalties — the largest fine in FTC history, and $1.5 billion will be paid to consumers who were unintentionally enrolled in Prime, or were deterred from canceling their subscriptions, the agency said Thursday. Eligible Prime customers include those who may have signed up for a membership via the company's "Single Page Checkout" between June 23, 2019, to June 23, 2025.

The Federal Trade Commission sued Amazon in U.S. District Court in Seattle two years ago alleging more than a decade of legal violations. That included a violation of the Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act, a 2010 law designed to ensure that people know what they're being charged for online.

Amazon admitted no wrongdoing in the settlement. It did not immediately respond to requests by The Associated Press for comment Thursday.

Amazon Prime provides subscribers with perks that include faster shipping, video streaming and discounts at Whole Foods for a fee of $139 annually, or $14.99 a month.

It's a key and growing part of Amazon's business, with more than 200 million members. In its latest financial report, the company reported in July that it booked more than $12 billion in net revenue for subscription services, a 12% increase from the same period last year.

That figure includes annual and monthly fees associated with Prime memberships, as well as other subscription services such as its music and e-books platforms.

The company has said that it clearly explains Prime's terms before charging customers, and that it offers simple ways to cancel membership, including by phone, online and by online chat.

"Occasional customer frustrations and mistakes are inevitable — especially for a program as popular as Amazon Prime," Amazon said in a trial brief filed last month.

But the FTC said Amazon deliberately made it difficult for customers to purchase an item without also subscribing to Prime. In some cases, consumers were presented with a button to complete their transactions — which did not clearly state it would also enroll them in Prime, the agency said.

Getting out of a subscription was often too complicated, and Amazon leadership slowed or rejected changes that would have made canceling easier, according to an FTC complaint.

Internally, Amazon called the process "Iliad," a reference to the ancient Greek poem about the lengthy siege of Troy during the Trojan war. The process requires the customer to affirm on three pages their desire to cancel membership.

The FTC began looking into Amazon's Prime subscription practices in 2021 during the first Trump administration, but the lawsuit was filed in 2023 under former FTC Chair Lina Khan, an antitrust expert who had been appointed by then-President Joe Biden.

3.8% pace of economy expansion in 2nd quarter surprises some

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An uptick in consumer spending helped the U.S. economy expand at a surprising 3.8% from April through June, the government reported in a dramatic upgrade of its previous estimate of second-quarter growth.

U.S. gross domestic product — the nation's output of goods and services — rebounded in the spring from a 0.6% first-quarter drop caused by fallout from President Donald Trump's trade wars, the Commerce Department said Thursday. The department had previously estimated second-quarter growth at 3.3%, and forecasters had expected a repeat of that figure.

The first-quarter GDP drop, the first retreat of the U.S. economy in three years, was mainly caused by a surge in imports — which are subtracted from GDP — as businesses hurried to bring in foreign goods before Trump could impose sweeping taxes on them. That trend reversed as expected in the second quarter: Imports fell at a 29.3% pace, boosting April-June growth by more than 5 percentage points.

Consumer spending rose at a 2.5% pace, up from 0.6% in the first quarter and well above the 1.6% the government previously estimated. Spending on services advanced at a 2.6% annual pace, more than double the government's previous estimate of 1.2%.

"The U.S. consumer remained a lot stronger than many thought, even in the midst of a stock market sell-off and a lot of trade uncertainty," Heather Long, chief economist at Navy Federal Credit Union, posted on social media.

A category within the GDP data that measures the economy's underlying strength came in stronger than previously reported as well, growing 2.9% from April-June, up from 1.9% in the first quarter and in the government's previous estimate. This category includes consumer spending and private investment, but excludes volatile items like exports, inventories and government spending.

But private investment fell, including a 5.1% drop in residential investment. Declining business inventories took more than 3.4 percentage points off second-quarter growth.

NATION

Motive in ICE facility shooting remains unclear

By Jamie Stengle and Jack Brook
Associated Press

DALLAS — For the second time in two weeks, a shooter on a rooftop inflicted death on the ground, this time at a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Dallas, where a detainee was killed and two others were critically wounded by the gunman, who then fatally shot himself.

The Department of Homeland Security said in a statement that shots were fired indiscriminately early Wednesday at the ICE building, including at a van in a gated entryway. The detainees were in the van. No ICE personnel were wounded.

The shooter was identified as 29-year-old Joshua Jahn by a law enforcement official who could not publicly disclose details of the investigation and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. Investigators had not determined the assailant's motive.



Julio Cortez/AP

Law enforcement agents look around the roof of an apartment building near the scene of a shooting at a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in Dallas on Wednesday.

FBI Director Kash Patel posted a photo on social media showing a bullet found at the scene with "ANTI-ICE" written on it. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem ordered more security at ICE facilities across the U.S., according to a post by the DHS on the social platform X.

The attack was the latest high-profile targeted killing in the U.S. It happened two weeks after conservative activist Charlie Kirk was killed by a shooter on the roof of a building at Utah Valley University and as heightened immigration enforcement has prompted a backlash against ICE agents and fear in immigrant communities.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association called the shootings "a stark reminder that behind every immigration case number is a human being deserving of dignity, safety and respect."

"Whether they are individuals navigating the immigration process, public servants carrying out their duties, or professionals working within the system, all deserve to be free from violence and fear," the group said in a statement.

Authorities have given few details about the shooting and did not publicly release the names of the victims or the gunman. The FBI said it was investigating the shooting as "an act of targeted violence."

The gunman used a bolt-action rifle, according to a law enforcement official who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Wisconsin Planned Parenthood pauses abortions amid funding cut

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin will stop scheduling patients for abortions starting next week as it works to find a way to provide the service in the face of Medicaid funding cuts in President Donald Trump's tax and spending bill, the nonprofit said Thursday.

The organization warned earlier this year that about half its clinics that provide abortion could be closed as a result of a ban on Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood for services other than abortion.

The measure was part of the tax and spending law Trump signed in July.

Initially, a judge said reimbursements must continue, but a federal appeals court this month said the government could halt the payments while a court challenge to the provision moves ahead.

Planned Parenthood services include cancer screenings and sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment. Federal Medicaid money was already not paying for abortion, but affiliates relied on Medicaid to stay afloat.

The remaining Planned Parenthood clinics in Louisiana — where abortion is banned — are scheduled to shut down at the end of this month.

Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin said in a statement that it is trying to see as many patients as possible between now and Tuesday. The federal law takes effect Wednesday.

It is not scheduling patients beyond that date and the organization believes the move will allow it to continue seeing other Medicaid patients. The organization said it was working with providers across the state to make sure patients are referred quickly and receive timely care.

"Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin will continue to provide the full spectrum of reproductive health care, including abortion, as soon and as we are able to," Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin President and CEO Tanya Atkinson said in the statement. "In the meantime, we are pursuing every available option through the courts, through operations, and civic engagement."

Family sues airline over crash with Army helicopter

The Washington Post

The family of one of the people who died in the fatal collision of an American Airlines regional jet and an Army Black Hawk helicopter near Washington is suing the carrier and its subsidiary PSA Airlines, alleging the parties failed to implement policies and procedures that could have prevented the crash.

The first federal lawsuit tied to the crash was filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia by the family of Casey Crafton, who was among the 64 passengers aboard American Eagle Flight 5342, which collided with an Army Black Hawk helicopter on Jan. 29 near Reagan National Airport.

In all, 67 people died in the crash.

"The Defendants knew, or should have known, that [Flight 5342] was transiting one of the busiest airspaces in the United States, and they knew, or should have known, that the airport approaches presented certain safety risks, specifically including the possibility of a mid-air collision," read the complaint. "… The Defendants' collective failures (for which they are jointly and severally liable) caused, and/or contributed, to the mid-air collision complained of herein, resulting in the tragic deaths of 67 individuals, specifically including Plaintiff's decedent, CASEY CRAFTON."

Crafton, 40, was returning home from a business trip to Wichita at the time of the crash.

In a statement, American Airlines said it has a "strong track record of putting safety … above everything else."

"Aviation safety requires multiple layers of compliance with detailed procedures, restrictions and operational standards across the full range of pilots and air traffic controllers," the carrier added. "Together, these layers have made the U.S. aviation industry the safest in the world. As the recent NTSB investigative hearing showed, Flight 5342 was on a routine approach to DCA when the Army helicopter — that was above the published helicopter route altitude — collided with it."

Also named in the suit are the Federal Aviation Administration and the U.S. Army.

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WORLD



ABDEL KAREEM HANA/AP

Palestinians survey the aftermath of an Israeli military strike on the Abu Dahrouj family home in Zawaida, central Gaza Strip, on Thursday.

Israeli continues strikes as Abbas vows no Hamas rule in Gaza Strip

Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — Israel struck houses and tents in central and southern Gaza on Thursday, crushing families inside and killing at least 17 Palestinians, including 10 children and three women, local health officials said, as international pressure for a ceasefire continued to grow.

On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, French President Emmanuel Macron told France 24 that his country had recognized a Palestinian state on the conviction it "is the only way to isolate Hamas," which has proved itself able to regenerate even after many of its leaders have been killed.

"Total war in Gaza is causing civilian casualties but can't bring about the end of Hamas," he said in the interview Wednesday. "Factually, it's a failure."

He said he had been lobbying President Donald Trump to press Israel again for a ceasefire. "You cannot stop the war if there is no path to peace," Macron added.

Some Israeli ministers in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government have pushed for annexing the occupied West Bank in response to international recognition of Palestinian statehood — a move that could effectively strip the Palestinian Authority of all civil and security powers in the territory.

Macron said such a move would be a red line for France, and "I think it's also a red line for the United States of America."

Neither the White House nor the State Department responded to requests for comment on Macron's statement.

Speaking over video after the United States revoked his visa, Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas told world leaders Thursday at the United Nations that his people reject the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel and pledged that the militant group would have no role in governing the Gaza Strip after war ends and must hand over its weapons to his administration.

"The dawn of freedom will emerge," Abbas said to his people.

Abbas told the U.N. General Assembly that Palestinians in Gaza "have been facing a war of genocide, destruction, starvation and displacement" by Israel.

Netanyahu has said he won't make any decisions until he returns from the United States, where he is to address the U.N. General Assembly on Friday and then meet with Trump in Washington.

In the early hours Thursday, an Israeli strike hit a tent and a house in the central town of Zawaida, killing at least 12 people, according to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the nearby city of Deir al-Balah.

On Monday, France, Andorra, Belgium, Luxembourg, Malta, and Monaco announced or confirmed their recognition of a Palestinian state in the hopes of galvanizing support for a two-state solution to the Mideast conflict.

Ex-France leader gets 5 years for conspiracy

Associated Press

PARIS — A Paris court on Thursday sentenced former French President Nicolas Sarkozy to five years in prison after finding him guilty of criminal conspiracy in an alleged scheme to finance his 2007 campaign with funds from Libya.

The historic ruling made Sarkozy the first former president of modern France sentenced to actual time behind bars. In a major surprise, the court ruled that the 70-year-old will be incarcerated despite his intention to appeal. It said the date of his imprisonment would be decided later, sparing the conservative leader the humiliation of being led from the packed courtroom in handcuffs.

The court found Sarkozy guilty of criminal association in a plot from 2005 to 2007 to finance his winning campaign with funds from Libya in exchange for diplomatic favors. It cleared him of three other charges including passive corruption, illegal campaign financing and concealing the embezzlement of public funds.

Sarkozy denounced the ruling.

"If they absolutely want me to sleep in prison, I will sleep in prison. But with my head held high. I am innocent. This injustice is a scandal," he said with his wife, the singer and model Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, at his side.

"I ask the French people — whether they voted for me or not, whether they support me or not — to grasp what has just happened. Hatred truly knows no bounds," he said.

The court described his behavior as "exceptionally serious" and said his involvement in efforts to raise campaign funds from Libya were "capable of undermining the citizen's trust in public institutions."

Analysis: Iran likely conducted secret ICBM test

BY JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran has likely carried out an undeclared missile test at its Imam Khomeini Spaceport, satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press showed, underlining Tehran's effort to maintain its weapons program despite the 12-day war with Israel in June.

Iran has not formally acknowledged last week's test at a pad that has hosted other launches by the country's civilian space program. A single lawmaker in Iran's parliament, however, claimed, without offering evidence, that Tehran tested a possible intercontinental ballistic missile.

The test and the claim raise concerns that Iran may be trying to expand the reach of its missiles as tensions remain high ahead of United Nations sanctions, which are likely to be reimposed this weekend over Tehran's nuclear program — as it also repairs missile sites that were struck by the Israelis.

"Israel's successes in the 12-day war against Iran's missile attacks reinforced for Tehran the importance of developing more ballistic missiles and qualitatively better versions of them," said Behnam Ben Taleblu, an analyst at the Washington-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies. The think tank has long been critical of Iran and has been sanctioned by Tehran.

"Consider this part of Tehran's efforts to build back better, and as quickly as possible," he added.

On Sept. 18, Iranian social media users posted images of the sky over Semnan province, showing what appeared to be a rocket's contrail at sunset. Iranian officials did not acknowledge what caused the contrail, nor did Iranian state media report on the incident.

Satellite photos taken prior to that by Planet Labs PBC show the circular pad at Imam Khomeini Spaceport — about 145 miles southeast of Iran's capital, Tehran, in Semnan — painted blue ringed with red, white and green lines — the colors of the Iranian flag.

But in satellite images since Sept. 18, the pad appeared discolored, though it wasn't fully clear until a more-detailed Planet image requested by the AP taken this Wednesday. That image shows significant scorch marks, the pattern of which resembled scorching seen at the pad following past launches. When rockets launch, the flames from their engines pour down onto pads.

Fabian Hinz, a research fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, who studies missiles, said the scale of the scorching suggested Iran launched a solid-fuel missile, as burning aluminum oxide particles cause such marks.

The north-south marks suggest a blast deflector being used as well to channel the flames, he said.

Iranian parliament member Mohsen Zanganeh, appearing on Iranian state television on Saturday, claimed that the Islamic Republic had launched an intercontinental ballistic missile last Thursday. He portrayed it as a sign of Iran's strength as it faces challenges from Israel and the West.

"We have neither abandoned (nuclear) enrichment, nor handed uranium over to the enemy, nor backed down from our missile positions," said Zanganeh, a member of parliament's budget committee from Iran's Khorasan Razavi province.

"The night before last we tested one of the country's most advanced missiles, which until now had not, so to speak, been trialed — and that test was successful," he said.

Zanganeh did not elaborate on where he got his information, nor did he provide any evidence to support his assertion.

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‘Surprise the bone’

Jumping packs enough force to maintain, strengthen skeleton

By Teddy Amenabar
The Washington Post

As you age, your bones generally start to weaken. You tend to lose bone mineral density, an indicator of bone strength, which makes you more prone to fractures in old age.

To maintain or even strengthen your bones, it helps to load the skeleton with enough force, researchers say. And, jumping around appears to provide this force.

“A little bit of jumping two or three times a week could go a long way in benefiting your bone health throughout your lifespan,” said Pam Bruzina, a professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at the University of Missouri.

Different forms of jumping can build bone density in the femoral neck, studies have found, which is one of the most fracture-prone parts of your hip joint. A meta-analysis of 18 trials on jumping with more than 600 participants found a 1.5% improvement in bone mineral density at the hip after a median of six months of jump training.

Walking — although it can be a great form of exercise in general — isn’t enough to build stronger bones, said Kerri Winters-Stone, an exercise physiologist and a professor at Oregon Health & Science University. The skeleton becomes accustomed to the loads we typically subject the body to.

“You have to surprise the bone,” she said. “You have to do something different.”

But there’s one caveat, Winters-Stone said. You need to have enough muscles around your legs, hips and back to support your joints when you jump.

Jumping for impact may not be safe for someone who’s frail or struggling with balance, said Emily Stein, the co-director for the Skeletal Health and Orthopedic Research Program at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York. And the benefit of jumping is “very small” when compared with the effect of medications for osteoporosis, she said.

“Exercise should not be viewed as an alternative to osteoporosis medications,” said Wendy Kohrt, a distinguished professor of medicine at the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus.

Jumping may also not be “well tolerated” by people dealing with joint pain, she said.

However, exercise is critical for maintaining bone health, researchers say. And jumping should be an effective way to create impact for the bones.

“But I just don’t think we know enough yet about what the best exercises are,” and there’s no definitive answer regarding how beneficial jumping may be, she said.

What studies have found

In one small randomized trial, 60 premenopausal women ages 25 to 50 jumped as high as possible, 10 or 20 times twice a day, with 30 seconds of rest between each jump. After four months of jumping six days a week, researchers found the participants in the two jumping groups improved bone mineral density in their hips.

And, in a 12-month clinical trial published in the scientific journal Bone, middle-aged men with low bone mass gained bone density after a year of jump or resistance training. One group of participants jumped for 20 to 30 minutes per session three times a week with 10 seconds of rest between every jump.

The bone responds best when “there’s a small rest between each loading cycle” — or between each jump, said Bruzina, the lead author of the study in Bone.

Months of jumping exercises for a 1% increase in bone density might sound like a lot of work for not a lot of benefit, said Jocelyn Wittstein, an associate professor of orthopedic surgery at Duke University School of Medicine. But the impact training is working against a natural decline, she said.

“Any intervention that slows that loss or mitigates it is better than nothing,” Wittstein said, and “any load-bearing activity on your legs is better than being sedentary.”

Ways to start jumping around

Bruzina said she’d tell friends and family to incorporate jumping exercises two or three times a week — “somewhere between 40 and 100 jumps” per session. The jumps can be in place, off a box or side to side, she said.

The key is to mix it up with “more of a load than your skeleton is used to,” Bruzina said. Then, slowly increase the intensity over time.

You want a “solid, full-footed landing before you go and jump again,” Winters-Stone said. The point of the jump is the impact when you land on the ground. It’s not the same as jumping rope because that’s minimizing contact with the ground “and we’re trying to maximize it,” she said.

“People just want clear instruction and actionable things they can do for their health,” Wittstein said. Last month, she uploaded video on Instagram of a drop-jump method used in a small study published in 2017. Her demonstration in her backyard has been viewed more than 900,000 times.

But improvements in bone density take time, researchers said. Any benefits of jumping or impact training would require at least six months to a year of training.

Before you add jumping exercises to your workout routine, start with a few months of resistance training to strengthen the muscles around your hip and spine, Winters-Stone said. These muscles will absorb some of the impact from the jump so the joints aren’t getting slammed.

To strengthen the muscles around the hip, practice squats and lunges, Winters-Stone said. Add overhead presses and rows to build muscles around the spine. Dead lifts will help beef up muscles around both the hip and spine.

If you’ve been diagnosed with osteoporosis, “any kind of rapid landing” could cause a fracture and you should only do jumping exercises under supervised instruction, said Belinda Beck, a professor of exercise physiology at Griffith University in Australia. Beck conducted a clinical trial that found a supervised, structured impact and resistance workout can improve bone strength in women with osteoporosis.


iStock

“I would not be telling somebody with osteoporosis to do jumping unsupervised,” Beck said. “It’s much more likely to cause an injury.”

Wittstein said she recommends people with osteoporosis consult their doctor first and begin with exercises that have less impact such as heel drops.

Pick up a sport where you’re jumping

Gymnasts and athletes who play basketball or volleyball tend to have higher bone density and one thing in common, Winters-Stone said. “They hit the ground a lot,” she said.

When we’re kids, playing outside — jumping out of trees or playing tag — loads the skeleton in a variety of ways, Winters-Stone said. And the more bone you build earlier in life, the better off you’ll be as you age.

The older we get, the less we twist, turn or move in different directions, Kohrt said. Sports such as tennis, pickleball or golf involve movements other than putting one foot in front of the other.

Cycling and swimming, by comparison, don’t provide the same ground impact, Stein said.

There are many benefits to both sports, but Stein tells patients to work in other exercises that have higher impact on their bones.

“Whatever you can do that’s going to stress the skeleton — whether it’s jumping or generating fairly high intensity muscle forces pulling on bone — those are the sort of activities that are going to keep bone responsive,” Kohrt said.

Typically, a person’s bone mineral density peaks in their late 20s or early 30s. But, Kohrt said, she believes older adults are still able to strengthen bones.

“I think the skeleton remains resilient to stress,” Kohrt said. “It will do whatever it can do to protect the skeleton against fracture.”

BOOKS

Literary mystery meets dystopian future

‘Atonement’ author looks back from 2119 in ‘What We Can Know’

By Jill Lawless
Associated Press

When novelists look to the future, the view is often grim. There are a lot more fictional dystopias than utopias.

Ian McEwan has good news and bad news about what lies ahead in “What We Can Know,” a book he calls “science fiction without the science.”

The British author’s 19th novel, published Tuesday in the U.S. by Knopf, is set in 2119 and follows a professor of literature researching a famed 21st-century poet and his circle.

So far, so cozy. But it’s a world in which nuclear war, pandemics, economic collapse and climate change — a period known as The Derangement — have halved the global population. The United States is a lawless land of feuding warlords. Nigeria is the global superpower. Inundated England has been reduced to a string of small island republics.

McEwan, 77, said that his working assumption is that humanity will “just scrape through” the next century of crises and catastrophes. The novel seeks “to look at the present through the rather envious eyes of someone in the future.”

Those eyes belong to Tom Metcalfe, an English academic studying the famous (fictional) poet Francis Blundy, and a legendary lost poem that he read aloud at a dinner party in 2014.

As dystopias go, it’s a gentle one. Tom sifts through reams of 21st-century social media detritus for nuggets of information gold that may lead to the missing poem. He later undertakes an adventurous journey with touches of “Treasure Island.”

To Tom, our era is a barely imaginable time of abundance, natural diversity and human folly.

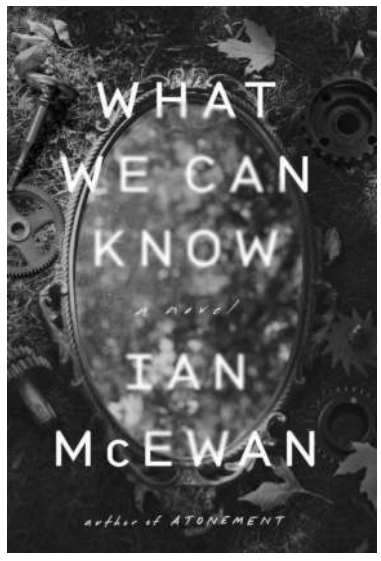
“What brilliant invention and boneheaded greed,” he says.

Readers may hear the author’s voice in the sentiment.

“There is something very reminiscent to me of the ninth century about contemporary life: passionately superstitious, even as we have extraordinary discoveries in biomedicine and in cosmology,” McEwan told The Associated Press. “At one point I describe the process of social media as if some medieval horde had run onto the wrong stage.”

Partway through the book, McEwan delivers a twist that dramatically shifts the reader’s perspective. It’s something he has done before, notably in 2001’s “Atonement” — his bestselling novel, which many consider his best.

The book’s second half delivers surprise, violence, betrayal and — another McEwan trademark — evidence of the “terrible things that perfectly ordinary people can do.”



McEwan said that he wants readers “to be, not disoriented, but just to pass through a different mirror turning the page from Part 1 to Part 2.

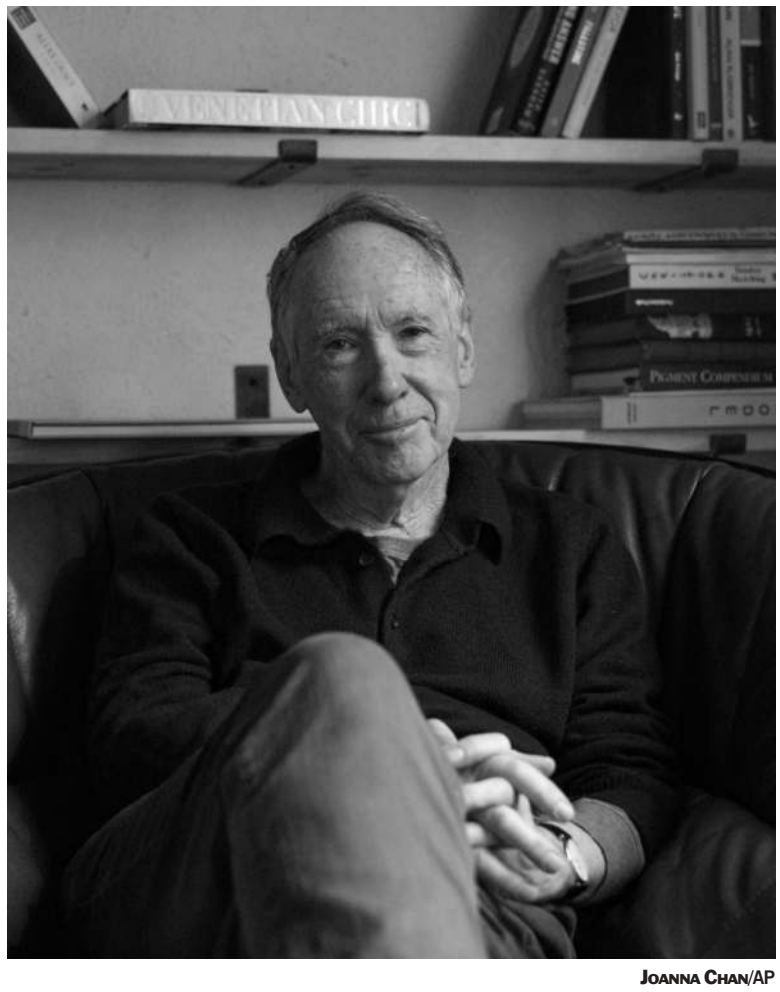
“I hope to bring the reader back to the title.”

McEwan says he’s not an “issues novelist,” although his books often touch on social problems and world affairs: the 2003 invasion of Iraq in “Saturday,” climate change in “Solar,” artificial intelligence in “Machines Like Me.”

In “What We Can Know,” humanity has wreaked havoc on nature. But McEwan says “this isn’t really a novel about climate change.

“The only way to write about climate change is not to,” McEwan said, as the weather outside his London home changed in an instant from sunshine to downpour. “To actually put at the center properly conceived characters and other issues and let the climate change matter simply be there as a given.

“It’s already a given. The last thing I want to do is warn people about it. No one needs any warning about it,” he said. “All that matters is your response to it.”



Joanna Chan/AP

Ian McEwan, British novelist and screenwriter, speaks to the press Sept. 12. McEwan says his working assumption is that humanity will “just scrape through” the next century of crises and catastrophes.

No time like today to join the ‘Thursday Murder Club’ fandom

By Chris Hewitt
The Minnesota Star Tribune

How pervasive is the “Thursday Murder Club” universe? Consider this: The fifth book in the bestselling series, “The Impossible Fortune” (out Sept. 30), includes a joke about an actor who stars in the movie version of the first book, which zipped to the top of Netflix playlists last month.

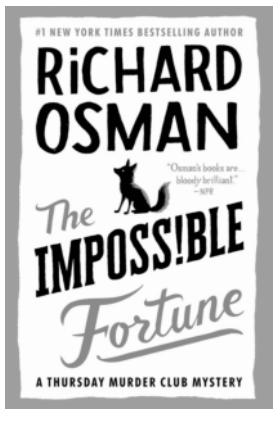
That Pierce Brosnan inside joke in “Impossible” was obviously planted as an Easter egg for fans of the movie based on the novel “The Thursday Murder Club,” which debuted in 2020 and has produced a sequel each year except 2024, when writer Richard Osman published a non-“Thursday” thriller called “We Solve Murders.”

If you’re not already a fan, here are a few factoids to help you feel like you’re part of the club:

What is the Thursday Murder Club?

The movie truncates the origins story of the four, who all live in a deluxe retirement community in England. They are led by canny former spy Elizabeth (played by Helen Mirren in the film) and also include scattered-but-surprisingly-insightful-about-people Joyce (Celia Imrie, who’s much less scattered in the film version), strongman Ron (Brosnan) and nerdy ex-psychiatrist Ibrahim (Ben Kingsley).

One of the treats of Osman’s books is his keen insight into the differences between these four, and how those differences make them an even stronger unit, almost like the “Avengers,” with calcium supplements instead of superpowers. Joyce, who narrates many of the chapters in all of the books, has a particularly charming point of view, which veers between being baffled by modern technology and intuiting exactly how crooks might think.



Their first case involved the death of one of the owners of their retirement community, so they were already on the scene and had inside info that helped them figure things out. Since then, Osman has skirted the “Murder, She Wrote”/is-anybody-still-alive-in-this-small-community syndrome by strengthening the club’s ties with both cops and robbers.

Do I need to read the books first?

Short answer: “Need” is a strong word, but maybe? Osman’s books — “Thursday,” “The Man Who Died Twice,” “The Bullet That Missed,” “The Last Devil to Die” and “Impossible” — are absolute delights. There’s a bit of violence, but the meat of the books is the relationships between the characters (also including those police officers and various relatives and miscreants).

Although Osman was a producer on the film, his books are better and they are significantly funnier, with several wry wisecracks per page.

Some mystery series are not especially adept at character growth, but Osman’s books are. Joyce and Ibrahim, in particular, have been through periods in which they have felt invisible, but both blossom over the course of the five books. Ibrahim probably has the smallest role in the first novel, for instance, but a key relationship he develops is at the center of the new one, “Impossible Fortune,” and it’s a hoot to see how the dynamic between him and a crimelord named Connie has shifted. When I watched the movie, it had been six years since I read the first book, so it was intriguing to recall that one person who is a major suspect in “Thursday” is now a key ally of the club.

Are all of the books good?

I wasn’t as wild about Osman’s non-“Thursday” book from 2024, but I have loved all five “Thursday” books. I will say that you’re more likely to appreciate them if you’re drawn in by the characters than if, for instance, you are a hard-core mystery fan.

Osman does a decent job with the puzzle aspects of the homicides that are solved in each of the books, but he sometimes gets bogged down in the details. That’s especially true of “Impossible,” in which the cryptocurrency-related murders are one of several plot threads that eventually wind together. I tend not to care if things get a little too twisty because the fun is in hanging with these people more than in the specifics of whodunit.

MOVIES

A more realistic experience of love

‘All of You’ stars, director discuss their rom-com-drama about close friendships between men, women

By Lindsey Bahr
Associated Press



APPLE TV+/AP

Brett Goldstein and Imogen Poots explore the question of whether your best friend is your soulmate in “All of You.”

Brett Goldstein might want to break your heart. Or at least give you a proper ugly cry.

In the new film “All of You,” now streaming on Apple TV+, audiences are presented with a sticky conundrum: What if your soulmate, and your best friend, were different people?

Reactions might differ about the choices Simon (Goldstein) and Laura (Imogen Poots) make in the film, which is a kind of rom-com-dram, if you will. But one thing Goldstein has noticed is that a lot of people who see it think that it’s about them.

“I think everyone has this friendship,” Goldstein said. “There’s someone in their life that is not their partner that they have a connection that feels more than friends, but what is that? What is love? And does it take away from the other? We just wanted to explore all of that over time.”

The idea came out of a getting to know you conversation with William Bridges, an Emmy winner for “Black Mirror” whose episodes include “USS Callister.” He co-wrote the film with Goldstein, and directed. At the time of the chat, Goldstein was single. Bridges was not. And Goldstein asked him if the woman he was seeing was “the one.” It got them thinking about the idea of a soulmate test, something that could just take all the guesswork, all the bad dates, all the lost time, out of the equation.

“All of You” begins with a moment of truth as Simon accompanies Laura, his best friend from university, on her way to take the test. He even pays for it, and soon enough she’s off making plans with a husband to be.

Though the film has a bit of a science fiction element to it, it’s decidedly less dystopian than a “Black Mirror” episode. Some, like Laura, take the test. Some, like Simon, try to do it the old-fashioned way. But many are left wondering if they made the right choice. The film is told linearly but skips over months and sometimes years in the saga of Laura and Simon.

“I was really conflicted, but I also felt great compassion for each of the characters,” Poots said. “All a person is the choices they make or don’t make, and I think that feelings and desire and love, these are completely out of your control. And I don’t think you can vilify a person for sort of having them. It’s just when they follow through, it obviously complicates things.”

Part of the equation involved making sure that Laura’s soulmate, and husband, wasn’t easy to dismiss. Not only did they write him as kind, loving and a good father, they also cast a handsome Scottish actor, Steven Cree, to play him.

“One thing we didn’t want to do that I think romantic comedies do a lot is they make the other guy boring or a (expletive)-head. So you’re going, ‘Oh, obviously not him,’” Goldstein said. “You have to kind of stack the odds against all of them because that is more real and it’s much more challenging, I think, for an audience because I think you are going, ‘I want this thing to happen, and I also don’t want this to happen.’”

“When Harry Met Sally” was a kind of unintentional touchstone in thinking about the idea of friendships between straight men and women that only became clear to them after they made the film. An even less intentional reference was “Atonement.” Unbeknownst to the filmmakers, they set a pivotal scene between Laura and Simon in the same cottage on the English Channel in East Sussex that Joe Wright used for his classic tearjerker.

While movie fans might bemoan the lack of the Nora Ephron-style romantic comedies of the 1990s on our screens, modern movies are grappling with the state of relationships in serious, satirical and genre-skewing ways, with films like “Materialists,” “Splitsville,” “All of You” and more. The distinction, Bridges said, is perhaps audiences today are craving stories not about aspirational, unattainable romance, but about love — however complicated and messy it might be.

“We have seen the movie where somebody runs to the train station at the end and confesses undying love and the movie ends and the idea is they live happily ever after. But I’m not quite sure that that’s the experience of love that a lot of people have,” Bridges said. “I think they’re looking for love stories rather than romance stories.”



Goldstein and Poots attend the premiere of “All of You” at The Whitby on Sept. 17 in New York.

CJ Rivera, Invision/AP

MUSIC

Q&A



MATT LICARI, INVISION/AP

Sarah McLachlan, photographed Sept. 16, hopes to promote healing with her "Better Broken" tour.

'Broken' but back

Sarah McLachlan talks Lilith Fair, her first new album in 11 years and, yes, that ASPCA commercial

BY MARIA SHERMAN
Associated Press

Sarah McLachlan's first album in more than a decade was supposed to be her last.

At least, it felt that way to her for a short while. Out Sept. 19, the release, titled "Better Broken," had been many years in the making. "It had been so long since I'd made a record," she told The Associated Press. "I kind of thought, maybe this is my last one." But working with a new team of collaborators reignited her enthusiasm for music discovery in the studio. These 11 tracks are the result — but they're not a swan song.

"Some of these songs are 14 years old. Some of them were written last year," she said. "I was a dance mom for a bunch of years, and I was also the principal fundraiser for my music schools ... Music took a backseat. So that's why it took 11 years."

Now, music has clutched the steering wheel. In November, she'll tour "Better Broken" across nine U.S. cities, beginning in Washington on Nov. 16 at The Anthem and ending Nov. 29 at Los Angeles' The Orpheum Theatre. She'll hit Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, Seattle and San Francisco as well.

"Music is very healing, and it has healed me over and over and over again," she said. With the "Better Broken" album and tour, she hopes her music can heal listeners, too, "in some small way. I hope it can lift them and connect them to their emotional worlds."

SEE BACK ON PAGE 17

MUSIC

Back: Finding way forward a recurring theme on album

FROM PAGE 16

In an interview with the AP, McLachlan discussed her new album, a Lilith Fair documentary and that ASPCA commercial.

Associated Press: What's the process of revisiting older material? Did it feel relevant to who you are — still?

McLachlan: "Better Broken" is the oldest song. And it actually became the title track for the record as well, just because of that sentiment of resiliency, and reclamation of self, and picking up the pieces after things fall apart and rebuilding yourself. You know, figuring out a new way forward, which seemed like a great, sort of recurring theme on the record.

There's a sense of hope that exists throughout the album.

I'm glad to hear you say that because I don't have a lot of objectivity about it. I mean, I feel hopeful after hearing it, even though there's some more heavy and intense subject matter. For me, music has always been this beautiful outlet, this therapy. It's so cathartic to write and be able to find a place to put it. I feel so much better after it. It's like medicine. So, I hope there's some hope in it.

I hear it in songs like "Rise," and the line about a woman's right to choose. It makes me wonder: Is this an exercise in humanity, or are you naturally an optimistic person?

I'm very optimistic. That optimism has been challenged a lot lately. But I believe in humanity. I believe in the good in people. And I believe in continuing to seek out the good in people. And I think if you stay open and curious in that manner, I think there's a lot of positive shifts that can continue to happen.

In addition to a new album and tour, you founded the legendary, all-women '90s festival Lilith Fair. A new documentary, "Lilith Fair: Building a Mystery — The Untold Story," details the tour. Several decades on, how do you view Lilith Fair's legacy?

We changed attitudes within the music business. We dispelled any myth that you can't put two women back-to-back on the radio or on stage. ... I think we created an amazing community for us, as women in the music business. I think we helped to create a safe space for fans.

And to show that when you lift each other up instead of tear each other down, you can create something beautiful. I think that's a really lasting legacy. And I think a really important message, perhaps even more important today.

And now I look at, you know, artists like Brandi Carlile, who are constantly championing women. Or Taylor Swift having women open up for her — Phoebe Bridgers and Boygenius and there are all these bands that, you know, are working together and supporting other women. I love that, and I feel like maybe we had a small hand in that.



SAMMY KOGAN, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Director Ally Pankiw, left, and Sarah McLachlan attend the Toronto International Film Festival's showing of "Lilith Fair: Building a Mystery" Sept. 13.

What would it take to revive Lilith Fair for the current moment? Could it exist in 2025?

I think it could. I think it'd be very dangerous. I think we'd have a target on our backs. And I think it would need to look different. It would need to be championed by someone who was coming up today. ... It needs some youthful energy.

For a certain population, you are inextricably connected to the ASPCA for its continued use of your song "Angel" in their commercials. What do you make of that reputation?

I'm grateful I did it. ... But that's my song. I retain ownership of that song. But yeah, I'm definitely aware that it brought me to a whole new fan base and changed the face of fundraising.

I wonder if people think of you as saintly.

I try and dispel any weirdness about that stuff. I'm just a normal person with a crazy job who has opportunities like that come across her desk. And, you know, I like feeling purposeful. I like being of service. It makes me feel good to think that I'm using my platform to do something good.

"Angel" is almost 30 years old. Has your relationship to it changed?

I've had so many people over the years tell me really intense stories about that song helping them through the loss of a parent, the loss of a child, contemplating suicide, pulling them back from the edge. And it is really intense periods in people's lives where my music has been a part of it. And it's helped them in some small way. So, for me, again, that's the best validation in the world as an artist.

REVIEW



BRIAN ZIFF/Atlantic Records

Cardi B reclaiming crown as icon, legend, mean girl

The seven years since Cardi B released her first album, "Invasion of Privacy," have seen a global pandemic, two contentious U.S. presidential elections and the rise of artificial intelligence that threatens to upend every facet of life.

In that time, the Bronx-born rapper has been busy, much more than the handfuls of songs she's released in the interim would suggest. She has had three children (with a fourth on the way); she's appeared in films, on competition shows and in a Super Bowl commercial; she hosted WWE's "SummerSlam," became creative director at Playboy and launched a booze-infused whipped cream brand; she's been TMZ fodder, turned court appearances into memes and compiled an impressive list of most-first-only-highest superlatives.

Despite staying firmly planted in the zeitgeist the entire time — she still lists her location on the site formerly known as Twitter as "In your mind rent free" — all of that was prelude to this moment, the release of her second album, "Am I the Drama?"

Whether Cardi B is, in fact, the drama, the villain and the cause of — and solution to — all of her own problems is beside the point. What is clear is that Cardi B is back on top of the rap world.

Never one for subtlety, Cardi starts "Am I the Drama?" with "Dead," a song that begins with a fake news report detailing a crime spree fantasy that has left bloggers, journalists and, "most chillingly," several female rappers in its deadly wake. Cardi quickly takes aim at the haters who have fought for her crown in absentia, switching up her flow and delivering both venom and vulnerability: "I cried three hundred days last year and none of y'all called me up / And like those tears that ran down my cheek, y'all 'bout to be salty as f---."

Much of the album is spent turning those tears into salt in the wound and in the earth, with Cardi doling out disses. While the targets of her scorn are mostly left to the imagination, the hits keep coming, from the increasingly specific jabs on "Magnet" to the litany of "We Are Not the Same" memes on "Imaginary Playerz": "If you did my numbers, y'all would pop champagne / If I did your numbers, I would hop out a plane."

One of the best facets of "Invasion of Privacy" was Cardi's ear for and versatility with different sounds drawn from hip-hop, R&B and Latin music. Much of the new album sticks with punchy, spooky trap, with outliers serving as welcome palette cleansers, from the twinkling ringtone of a beat on "Pick It Up" to the super soca of "Bodega Baddie."



Cardi B
Am I the Drama?
(Atlantic Records)

On "Imaginary Playerz," she borrows the beat and the flow of Jay-Z's "Imaginary Player" but makes it her own; there are lyrical nods to 2Pac and Juvenile, and she pays homage to the gone-too-young rapper OG Maco. Outside hip-hop, she samples Janet Jackson and has Lizzo rework, improbably, 4 Non Blondes' hit "What's Up?"

The middle third of "Am I the Drama?" is dedicated to Cardi B's most reliable source of drama: her on-again-off-again relationship with Migos member Offset. Cardi airs the pair's dirty laundry, mostly about his alleged infidelity, but seems more upset by the lying and the blown chances than the actual betrayal. Over beatless dancehall on "Man of Your Word," Cardi lets a nameless male voice stand in for Offset: "How many times can I say sorry and not mean it? How many times can I take my love for you as a weakness?"

But Cardi B is always looking forward, and on the songs that could be about her current beau, NFL player Stefon Diggs, she's breezy, lovesick and sex-obsessed as she duets with Selena Gomez, Kehlani and Lourdiz. And by the time she's making plans for her sexual revenge on the "Triggerman"-sampling "Outside," she delivers one of the album's best songs.

Like most albums in the streaming era, "Am I Drama?" suffers from some bloat; she breaks her string of women-only features by appending a Cash Cobain verse to "Better Than You," which the album would be better without. Some will question why "WAP" and "Up" — megahits from back in 2020 and 2021, respectively — were included, even as the album passed the hour mark.

Forget those and end your listening session with "Killin You Hoes," which bookends the album and finds Cardi "life livin,' wine sippin'" and "cosplaying white women." Her haters wanted less for her, but: "It's too late … I'm a whole success story."

— Chris Kelly
The Washington Post

VIDEO GAMES



Team Cherry photos

Hollow Knight: Silksong is the year's most anticipated game, but its difficulty has caused debate among fans.

Majestic but cruel

Hollow Knight: Silksong more difficult than anticipated

BY GENE PARK
The Washington Post

If a book is difficult to read, it doesn't necessarily diminish the work — it might just mean more effort is required of the reader. A reader may need to be familiar with the subject matter or genre, or maybe learn new facets of language.

The author has a responsibility to communicate, so there's a balance. I often think of books as a much closer parallel to video games than film, mostly because reading requires direct engagement and some measure of skill from the audience.

This is the struggle in evaluating Hollow Knight: Silksong. The year's most anticipated release, after years of teasing, is finally in our hands, and it is a much more difficult game than most expected. It created high-level platforming challenges that feed into intense battles. That is an unusually high amount of video game literacy to ask of the audience, especially after decades of modern games have dulled challenging game design. Yet millions awaited this game for years, and its release this month crashed online marketplaces across the industry.

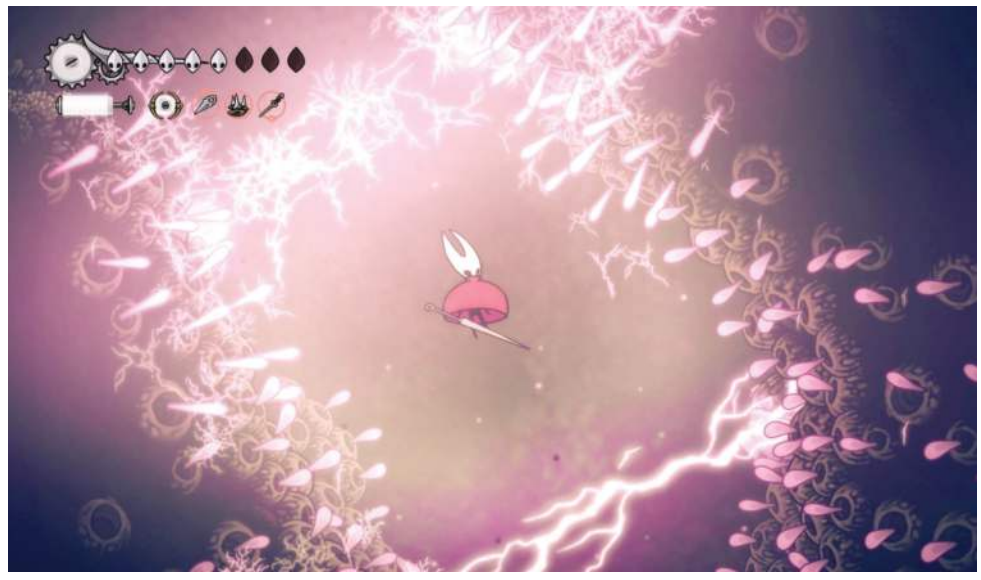
Like its predecessor and the Metroid series that inspired this game, Silksong takes place in a wide-open mazelike map. Sitting on benches serves as saved checkpoints, and they're strategically placed across the world. One can view benches as starting points of levels punctuated with battles, and suddenly the game feels like classic Castlevania, another inspiration for the series. This massive map seems like interconnected video game levels ripped from the 1980s. Silksong is like a book written in the language of ancient gamers, and I am one of them.

Still, the balance may have been thrown a bit too hard toward cruelty. Developer Team Cherry has already updated the game to be a bit more forgiving, a tacit acknowledgment that the game's trials cross the line into torment. Gantlets of tight platform jumping feel relentlessly unforgiving after losing repeatedly against gigantic, challenging enemies. The Dark Souls series is less exasperating because repeated attempts involve only combat, while Silksong asks for split-second timing to avoid enemies and pitfalls, amid navigating a confusing environment, just to get to a difficult fight.

It's fitting that so many of the game's most memorable fights are against dancers, since Team Cherry delightfully dances on the audience's nerves. For many, it's a pain point, but for me it's pleasure. Silksong is like a book written for a few people. While the credited development team has grown since the 2017 debut, Team Cherry is famously small, including its staff of playtesters. It's to their tremendous credit that the game performs flawlessly, but tunnel vision may explain the difficulty. This is a team that has admitted to walling itself off from the fans it has accumulated since 2017.

It's why as much as I highly rated this game, I can't recommend it to everyone. While I did not struggle with Silksong and finished the game in 40 hours (respectably quick, for such a large game), I recognize that it is probably more prohibitive than the famously difficult Elden Ring or its kin. Those games allow players to explore to gain power to eventually surpass any challenge. Silksong simply needs you to play better and faster across a wider variety of skills.

But there is a precise balancing act at play to guide players along. Protagonist Hornet may take more damage than the previous hero, but she also moves and hits faster, and you're expected to play into her strengths. Enemies telegraph attacks early enough to avoid them, while the platforming challenges train players on every movement ability to avoid damage.



Hollow Knight: Silksong demands precise skill in moving protagonist Hornet across dangerous environments like caves lined with lethal electricity.

New attack tools can even the playing field, especially when enemies crowd the screen. Other accessories offer boosts that could address certain player foibles. If you want to heal faster, or attack stronger or farther away, there are tools for that, too. The attack tools use up shards, gathered alongside rosary beads, the game's currency for purchasing items and maps. The high cost of items feeds into the game's compelling depiction of capitalism rooted in religion. Perhaps the game didn't need a "shard" economy to muddy the player's goals: The lack of free refills for tools leads to unnecessary and tedious grinding.

It's the storytelling that elevates this experience even above that of its predecessor, and that's largely due to Hornet. She begins as the captive of a new kingdom of bugs called Pharloom, and she intends to attack the towering Citadel and its religious institutions for answers. She meets every new face with curiosity and respect, but tricksters won't pull one over on her. She has a strong, stubborn sense of justice, and when she fumbles, she goes above and beyond to correct it. She is effortlessly confident and strong, characteristics spoken through Makoto Koji's performance. She grounds the game's made-up language with every breath and gasp to make this world seem more real.

The once-monochromatic series now explodes in color, and every frame is pulsing and flickering with hand-drawn motion, like a living sketch. Reaching the Citadel will feel like an enormous achievement as it crowns the enormous game world. Christopher Larkin's score was sparse in the first game, but now it explodes with majestic melodies.

Many players may not see the game's best features or reach its soulful conclusion, but that doesn't diminish the game. Living up to its name, Silksong spins a taut lattice, almost every thread in its right place. You may get stuck in its trap. Wrestle mightily against its binds, however, and you will be wrapped in shimmering brilliance.

Platforms: PC, Xbox One, Xbox Series X/S, PlayStation 4 and 5, Nintendo Switch and Switch 2

Online: hollowknightsilksong.com

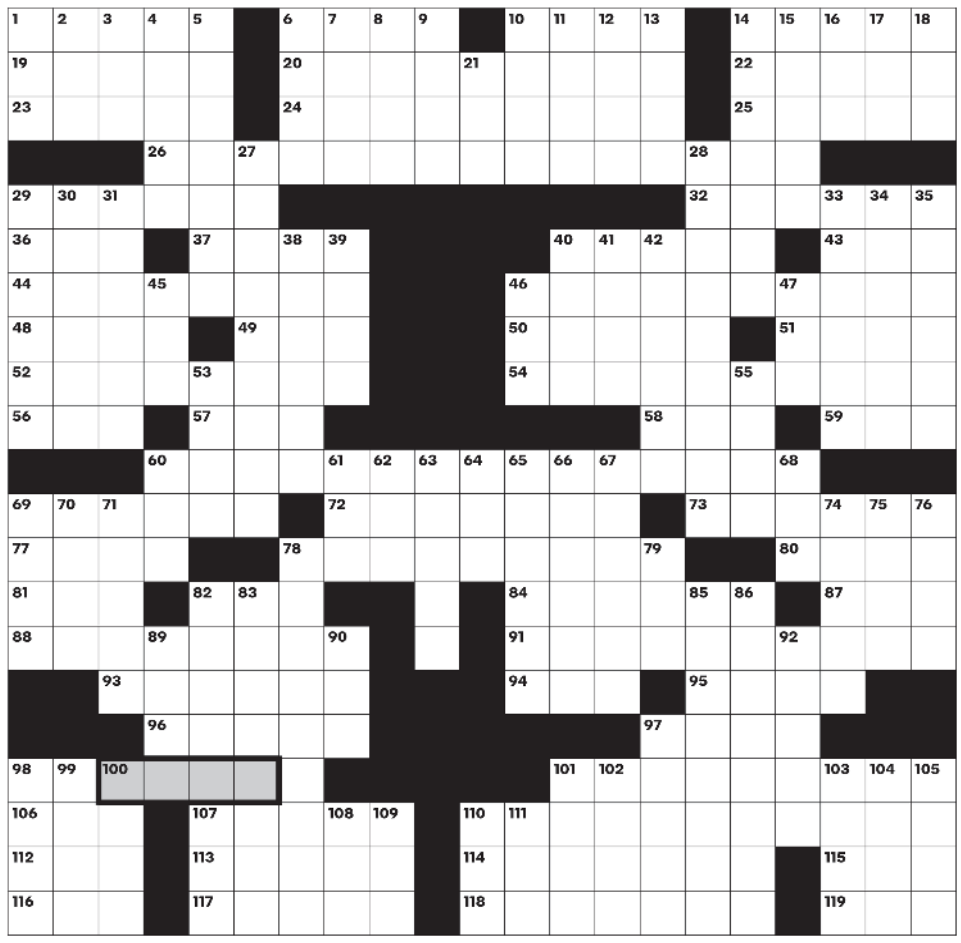
CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

BY DANIEL GRINBERG / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Daniel Grinberg, of Philadelphia, is a user-experience researcher for a consulting company. This is his ninth crossword for The Times since 2019. The unusual arrangements of black squares in the middle of the grid playfully hint at its theme. The shaded squares in the lower left and the three black squares under them represent a ''sign'' that's also part of the theme. — W.S.



ACROSS

1 New H.S. student
6 They're here today, gone tomorrow
10 Complete
14 Swanky Tokyo shopping district
19 Supplier of oxygenated blood
20 Very similar
22 Shaped like a kiwi fruit
23 Orange creature in an arcade game
24 Trees native to the Yukon
25 Young bucks, say
26 Supplier of 110-Across
29 Locale of the oracle of Apollo
32 Some tots' transports
36 Allhallows ____
37 Trees on the National Mall
40 Nintendo character with a long, sticky tongue
43 Emmy-winning actress Edebiri
44 Celebration dedicated to a saint
46 Vessel that infuses and pours
48 Italian for ''year''
49 Reason to atone
50 Lindsay who played both twins in 1998's ''The Parent Trap''
51 Monumental
52 Voice of 110-Across
54 Artist and co-creator of 91- and 110-Across
56 Confectioner said to have co-created Rocky Road ice cream
57 Liverpool's borders?
58 Bowie collaborator Brian
59 Key that a Mac lacks
60 1949 short that marked the first appearance of 91- and 110-Across
69 Left-wing activist movement
72 Sax who invented the saxophone
73 ____ horse
77 Emulate an owl
78 Closely tracking
80 Love letters?
81 Apropos
82 It pumps up the volume
84 What a queen may lay
87 ____ Wong, co-star of ''Always Be My Maybe''
88 Signature sound of 91-Across
91 Target of 110-Across
93 Partner of a pestle
94 Broadband connection, in brief
95 North Carolina college town
96 Eccentric
97 Personal trainer's count
98 ''That's useful information''
101 Unscheduled slots
106 P, to Pythagoras
107 DuBois's portrayer in the film ''A Streetcar Named Desire''
110 Devious character who's the subject of this puzzle
112 Company that once offered ''50 Free Hours'' CDs
113 Bert's best buddy
114 Supervised
115 Upper limit
116 ''Huh?'' in Honduras
117 Mercilessly mock
118 Part of Wayne's world?
119 Nonkosher sandwich, in brief

DOWN

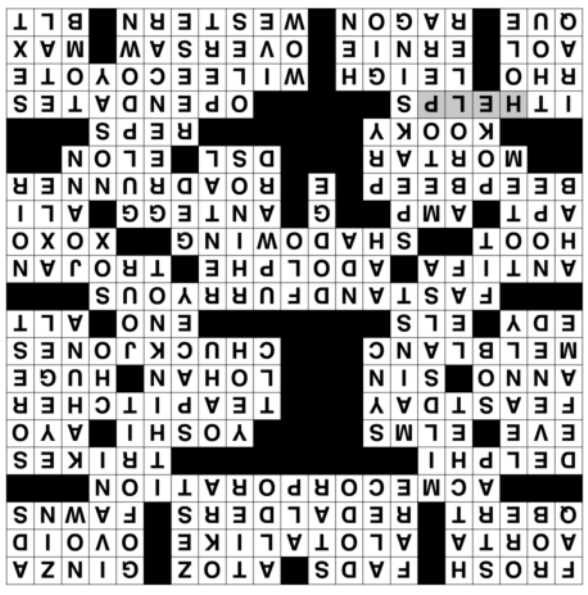
1 Page for online answers
2 Stick up
3 Source of minerals
4 Part of many purses
5 It's buried to make peace
6 Cost of a cab
7 Baldwin of ''The Boss Baby''
8 Imbecile
9 Overhead light?
10 Gucci who pioneered bamboo-handled handbags
11 Auditorium balcony, e.g.
12 Cajun cooking staple
13 Shaving on citrus desserts
14 ''You have my blessing''
15 Russian ruler nicknamed ''The Moneybag''
16 This very moment
17 Wine also known as Primitivo, familiarly
18 Purchased spots
21 View from St. Moritz
27 Certain taco topping
28 ''Uh-uh''
29 Run down
30 Tied up
31 With little excess
33 Big ____ Burger, fictional Hawaiian fast-food chain in ''Pulp Fiction''
34 Cream that's said to combat dark circles
35 Holding the biggest grudge
38 Prime retail area: Abbr.
39 Match up, as two devices
40 Oscar-winning Michelle
41 Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum site
42 Dazed and confused
45 ____ story
46 R&B group with the No. 1 hit ''Waterfalls''
47 Stand-up comic Margaret
53 It falls in the fall
55 Day, in Dijon
60 Be part of the crowd, with ''in''
61 ''That feels incredible!''
62 Silence-enforcing doc
63 Avoid, as a falling anvil
64 Spokeswoman in Progressive commercials
65 Rising
66 Some megafauna, informally
67 Summer cabin, maybe
68 ''Go ____!'' (Boston cheer)
69 Captain in a classic novel
70 ''Uh-uh''
71 Head over head?
74 Actress Pflug
75 Rod in a hot rod
76 Word after film or pinot
78 Vocally combine talking and crooning
79 H.S. diploma alternative
82 Tummy-toning tool
83 Renowned N.Y.C. venue for divas
85 Energy-saving vehicle
86 Guzzle
89 Raw fish dish
90 Be a buttinsky
92 Lack of a voice
97 Witherspoon of ''A Wrinkle in Time''
98 Modern locale of ancient Babylon
99 You, to Shakespeare
100 Ozone layer issue
101 Accented exclamations
102 Two-in-one shampoo and conditioner brand
103 Paris's Panthéon, for one
104 Latin list shortener, in brief
105 Risqué message
108 Italian architect Ponti
109 Nest builder
110 Awe
111 ''____ heard enough!''

GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE





SCIENCE

As temps rise, Americans turning to sweet treats

By Seth Borenstein
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Global warming in the United States is amping up the country's sweet tooth, a new study found.

When the temperature rises, Americans — especially those with less money and education — drink lots more sugary beverages and a bit more frozen desserts. That amounts to more than 100 million pounds of added sugar consumed in the nation a year, compared to 15 years earlier, according to a team of researchers in the U.S. and United Kingdom.

When temperatures go between 54 and 86 degrees, the amount of sugar the average American consumes goes up by about 0.4 grams per degree Fahrenheit per day, based on researchers tracking of weather conditions and consumers' purchases. At 54 degrees, the amount of added sugar for the average American is a little more than 2 grams. At 86 degrees, it's more than 15 grams.

Beyond that, appetites lessen and added sugar falls off, according to the study in Monday's Nature Climate Change.

"Climate change is shaping what you eat and how you eat and that might have a bad effect on your health," said study co-author Duo Chan, a climate scientist at the University of Southampton.

"People tend to take in more sweetened beverages as the temperature is getting higher and higher," Chan said. "Obviously under a warming climate that would cause you to drink more or take in more sugar. And that is going to be a severe problem when it comes to health."

The daily difference from higher temperatures doesn't amount to even a single candy bar for the average person. But it adds up over time and has a big effect, said University of California San Francisco endocrinology professor Dr. Robert Lustig, a specialist in pediatrics and obesity who wasn't part of the study.

Lustig wrote in an email that among poorer Americans, just one added can of sugary soft drink per day increases diabetes risk by 29% — and temperature-related thirst plays a big part in America's obesity epidemic.

The United States' average annual temperature has gone up about 2.2 degrees since 1895, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

To chart the impact on sugar consumption, researchers compared it to the American Heart Association recommendations: limiting daily intake to 36 grams for men and 25 grams for women.

The team then compared wind, precipitation and humidity records to the detailed purchase records of 40,000 to 60,000 American households from 2004 to 2019, not using any data after the pandemic hit. Then they looked at the nutritional information of the items bought. That allowed them to eliminate other factors to make a causal link and come up with a calculation for how much extra sugar is consumed per person per degree, said lead author Pan He, an environmental scientist at Cardiff University.

The researchers found that men consumed more sugary soft drinks, and that the amount of added sugar consumed during hot weather was several times higher for low- and very low-income families than for the wealthiest, the study found.



Joshua A. Bickel/AP

A study found as temperatures rise, Americans turn to sweet treats.

People who work outside drank more sugary drinks than those who work inside, and the same went for families where the head of the household was less educated. White people have the highest added sugar effect, while Asians showed no significant change in added sugar in the heat.

Lustig said sugary drinks are marketed and priced in a way to attract the poor, and in many disadvantaged communities the water tastes funny because of chemicals in them. Poor people are also less likely to have air conditioning and are more likely to work outside and need more hydration, Lustig and He said.

Scientists study the honks, thumps, grunts fish make

By Dino Grandoni, Emma Kumer and John Farrell
The Washington Post

The cow goes moo. The duck goes quack. The dog goes woof. And the fish goes ... what, exactly?

Toddlers aren't the only ones asking this question. Scientists are eavesdropping on fish to research and record the strange and subtle sounds they make underwater.

So far, they have captured a cacophony of thumps, honks, burps and grunts. And they hope that deciphering these sounds will not only improve our understanding of these aquatic creatures but also provide data needed to monitor and protect the health of coral reefs and other marine ecosystems.

Fish sounds are "less elaborate than birdsong, they're not as enchanting as humpback whale song," said Aaron Rice, a Cornell marine biologist who has helped build one of the world's largest collections of natural fish sounds. "They're acoustically less sophisticated, but they are significantly more diverse."

Reports of fish sounds are ancient. In the 4th century B.C., Aristotle recognized that fish emit "inarticulate sounds and squeaks" despite lacking a windpipe. During the Cold War, U.S. Navy biologists cataloged the clicks, creaks and croaks that fish make to distinguish them from enemy submarines.



Photos by Wikipedia

Blackbar soldierfish use special sonic muscles which pulse to vibrate the ribs and the swim bladders beneath.



Triggerfish have been reported to make sounds by slapping their pectoral fins on specialized scales and membranes.

But plummeting costs and technological advancements in underwater microphones and video cameras now allow scientists to record more fish sounds than ever. "The field has really continued to explode in recent years," said Audrey Looby, a University of Victoria fish ecologist who specializes in fish sounds.

When a birder hears a tweet, it's pretty easy to tell which individual avian is belting the tune. Simply find the one opening its beak and puffing its chest. But fish tend to make sounds quietly and inconspicuously. And underwater, it is much more difficult to detect the direction any sound is coming from.

"When you're on a reef, not only can't you hear, but even if you're very quiet and you can hear, you can't localize," said Marc Dantzker, a bioacoustician who founded the FishEye Collaborative, a nonprofit aiming to use passive acoustic monitoring to improve marine conservation. Rice is the organization's chief scientific adviser.

For the past three years, Dantzker and Rice have deployed 360-degree cameras in reefs off the coasts of Hawaii's Big Island and the Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao. The cameras are unmanned, so as not to disturb the fish. And they are paired with four microphones, picking up slight variations that help determine the source of a sound.

Most landbound vertebrates — including birds, frogs and people — push air in and out of their lungs to vocalize and communicate. Fish, without the luxury of air, have instead evolved a huge array of other techniques to make a ruckus.

Triggerfish, like those near Hawaii, have been reported to slap their pectoral fins on specialized scales and membranes.

In the Caribbean, glasseye snappers rattle their swim bladders, gas-filled organs that fish use to change their buoyancy. The raps from these chatty, nocturnal fish may be a form of social interaction.

Blackbar soldierfish use special sonic muscles stretching from the back of their heads to their ribs, which pulse to vibrate the ribs and the swim bladders beneath. These solitary, nocturnal fish hide in crevices during the day and chase away soldierfish that encroach on their hideouts.

Fish make sound for the same reasons terrestrial animals do: to find and keep mates and resources. "Birds do the same thing," Rice said. "Humans, ultimately, do the same things."

Rice and Dantzker's team watched hours of underwater footage to identify the unique prattle, trill and chirp made by 46 species in Curaçao and another 31 in Hawaii. The results from Curaçao were published last week in the journal Methods in Ecology and Evolution.

Looby, who was not involved in the study, said the recording technique is "the most cutting edge" in the field. "They're the furthest along development of being able to record fish sounds in the wild."

There is still more work to do to improve the process. It took two days of sitting in front of a computer to annotate an hour of footage, Dantzker and Rice said. They hope artificial intelligence will be able to do this tedious work faster, but it can't yet. The manual associations their team is currently making between the pictures and sounds of fish will be training data for a future AI program.

The pair continue to record, with plans to go to Indonesia and return to Curaçao, and they have developed a second-generation recording device, with 10 cameras and 20 hydrophones.

"For me, it's one of these inflection points in my career," said Rice, who has worked on birds and whales. "Going forward, I don't really want to do anything else."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Dem wins special election for congressional seat

AZ PHOENIX — Southern Arizona voters on Tuesday chose Adelita Grijalva to succeed her father, the late U.S. Rep. Raúl Grijalva, a progressive Democrat who represented the state for more than two decades in Congress.

She defeated Republican candidate Daniel Butierez in the 7th Congressional District, which hugs almost the entire length of Arizona's border with Mexico. The decisive win — early returns showed Grijalva with more than double the number of votes as her Republican opponent — will make Grijalva the first Latina to represent Arizona in Congress.

Grijalva retired from the Pima County Board of Supervisors and launched her bid for Congress shortly after her father's death in March. She will serve the final months of her father's term.

Officials lift evacuations after fire threat recedes

HI HONOLULU — Officials on the Hawaiian island of Maui lifted evacuation orders for residents living near a wildfire that broke out late Tuesday. Police had gone door-to-door evacuating residents and emergency sirens sounded before firefighters stopped the blaze's forward progress.

The fire, which grew to about 300 acres, was first reported at 1:30 p.m. near the north shore town of Paia, officials said. There was no containment estimate and no immediate information on what caused the fire.

Paia is a former sugar plantation town that has become popular with windsurfers. It is on the other side of the island from Lahaina, which was destroyed by a deadly wildfire in 2023.

Police shoot armed nude man, sparking inquiry

MA BOSTON — Police in Boston are investigating an officer-involved shooting, sparked by calls of a naked man with a knife who allegedly broke into a Beacon Hill business.

Officers responded to reports of a breaking-and-entering near the 1928 Beacon Hill restaurant, around 6 a.m. There, they encountered a naked man armed with a "large knife" in a rear alley, Boston Police Department Superintendent Paul McLaughlin said.

McLaughlin said three officers responded, with an officer attempting to use a Taser to subdue the man, "striking the suspect to no avail."

"Officers then discharged their department-issued firearms multiple times, striking the individual," McLaughlin said. "He was immediately given first aid by the officers on scene and immediately transported to a local hospital, where he is being treated for non-life-threatening injuries."



KRISTOPHER RADDER, THE BRATTLEBORO (VT.) REFORMER/AP

Getting the top shot

Lynn Pettit of Des Moines, Iowa, takes photos of the leaves from the top of Hogback Mountain in Marlboro, Vt., while traveling on Tuesday.

Landlord blocked from setting up encampments

MN MINNEAPOLIS — A judge has granted a temporary restraining order against Minneapolis landlord Hamoudi Sabri, blocking him from setting up homeless encampments on his properties.

A large encampment Sabri established on a parking lot he owns on East Lake Street was the site of a mass shooting last week that left one woman dead and six others injured.

The city, which has already demolished and cleared the encampment, has sued Sabri, saying the site was "a public health nuisance" and violated city and state ordinances. Among the issues with the encampment were rotting garbage, lack of water and sewage disposal, and hazardous drug paraphernalia, such as discarded needles, city attorneys said.

Hennepin County Judge Thomas Conley had granted an interim order last week and told the city and Sabri to meet Monday to discuss a possible resolution. However, they weren't able to agree on the amount of time to extend discussions.

On Tuesday, Conley issued a temporary restraining order saying Sabri could not have a homeless encampment on any property he owns in Minneapolis "until further order of the court."

'Sandy Hook' message left; bus driver charged

NC KING — A school employee left a handwritten message mentioning "Sandy Hook Elementary" and a shooter near a school door, leading to a shelter-in-place and criminal charges, authorities in North Carolina said.

The message was found on the sides of a wooden block wedging open an exterior door at King Elementary School in King on Sept. 15, according to a Monday news release from the King Police Department.

In addition to "Sandy Hook Elementary," Susan Heflin Carter is also accused of writing "Shooter's Accomplice Block" on the piece of wood, police said.

Carter, 64, of Tobaccoville, was criminally charged with disorderly conduct "by disruption of the teaching of students of a public educational institution," according to authorities.

Carter worked as a bus driver at King Elementary School, Stokes County Schools Superintendent Dr. Brad Rice confirmed in astatement Tuesday.

Carter, who was hired by the district in January 2016, has been fired, Rice said.

Twenty first-grade students and six staff members were killed in a shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., on Dec. 14, 2012.

Carter is accused of leaving the message on the wooden block "as a commentary" against leaving doors open, according to WGHP.

Man sentenced for series of arsons, firebombings

CA OAKLAND — A California man was sentenced Tuesday to nearly 20 years in prison for committing a series of arsons and firebombings last year at University of California, Berkeley and the Oakland federal building, prosecutors said.

Casey Robert Goonan, 35, of Oakland and Pleasant Hill, previously pleaded guilty to one count of maliciously damaging or destroying property used in or affecting interstate commerce by means of fire or an explosive, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

On June 1, 2024, Goonan placed a bag containing six Molotov cocktails underneath the fuel tank of a marked University of California Police Department patrol car parked near UC Berkeley, prosecutors said. Goonan lit the bag on fire and the flames spread to the patrol car, according to prosecutors. The incident was caught on camera.

On June 11, 2024, Goonan also tried to firebomb the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Oakland, prosecutors said. Goonan set other fires at the UC Berkeley campus on June 1, June 13 and June 16, 2024.

Prosecutors said Goonan acknowledged that the arsons and firebombings were inspired by Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel, and that he called on others to damage property on Bay Area college campuses in support of Palestine.

Coast Guard evacuates ill man from cruise ship

NJ ATLANTIC CITY — A military crew aboard a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter rescued a 73-year-old man who suffered a medical episode on a Carnival Cruise Line ship Monday night, authorities said.

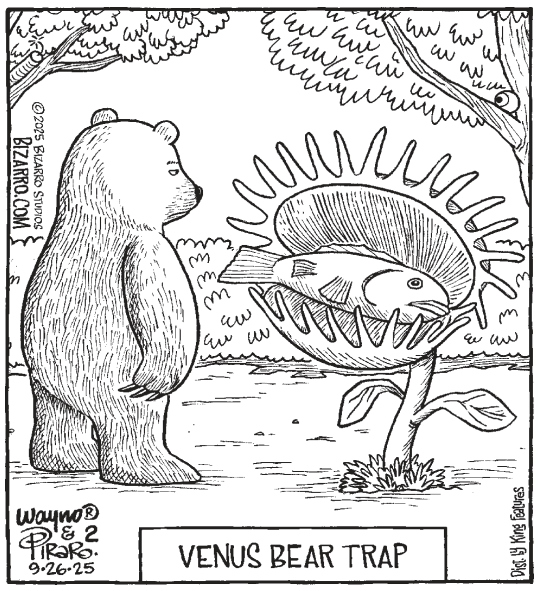
Authorities received a report shortly after 10 p.m. of a man in need of medical attention aboard the Venezia cruise ship, according to the Coast Guard.

The distress call was made about 30 miles off the coast of Atlantic City, N.J. A Coast Guard helicopter landed near the Venezia around 11:35 p.m. and transported the passenger to an Atlantic City hospital.

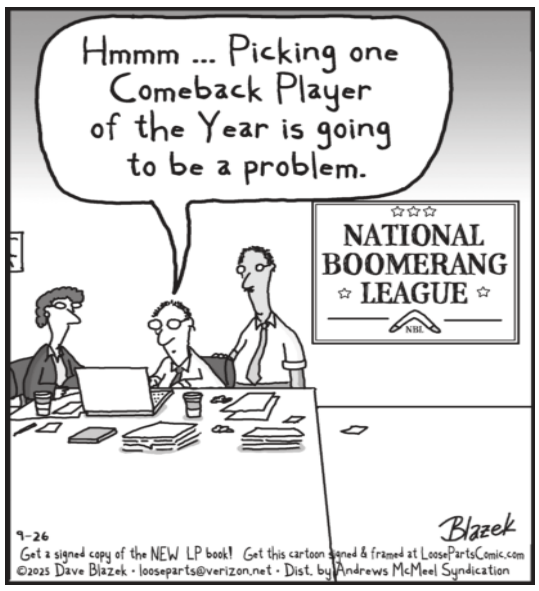
According to the Venezia's itinerary, the ship left New York City at 4 p.m. on Monday for a cruise to the Eastern Caribbean.

From wire reports

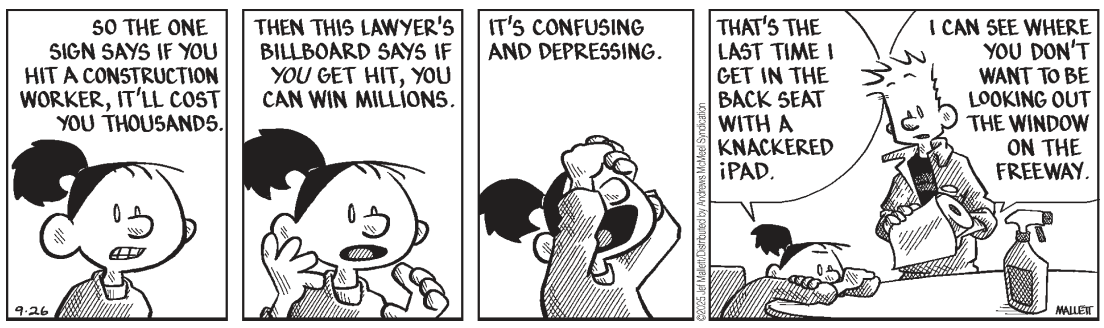
Bizarro



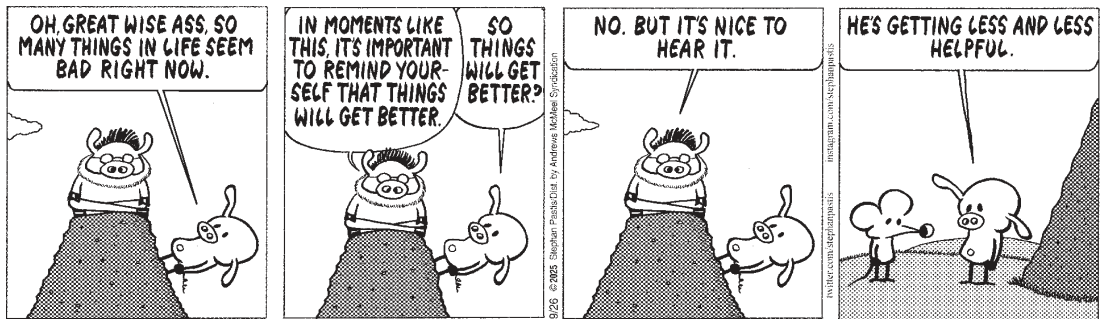
Loose Parts



Frazz



Pearls Before Swine



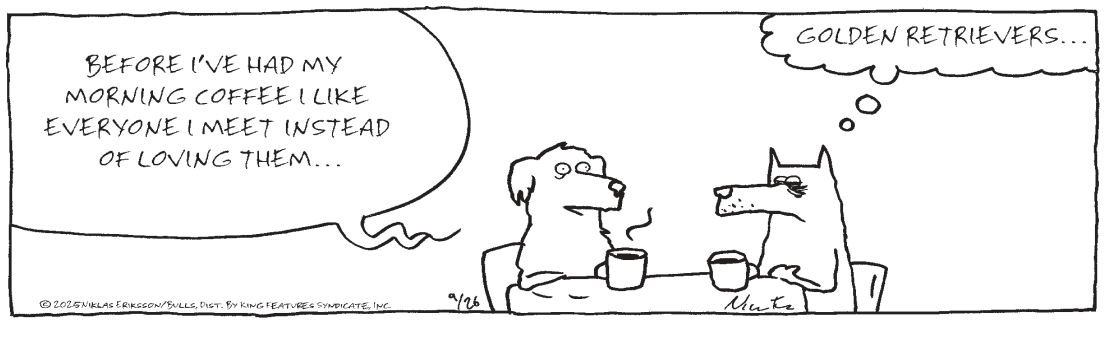
Non Sequitur



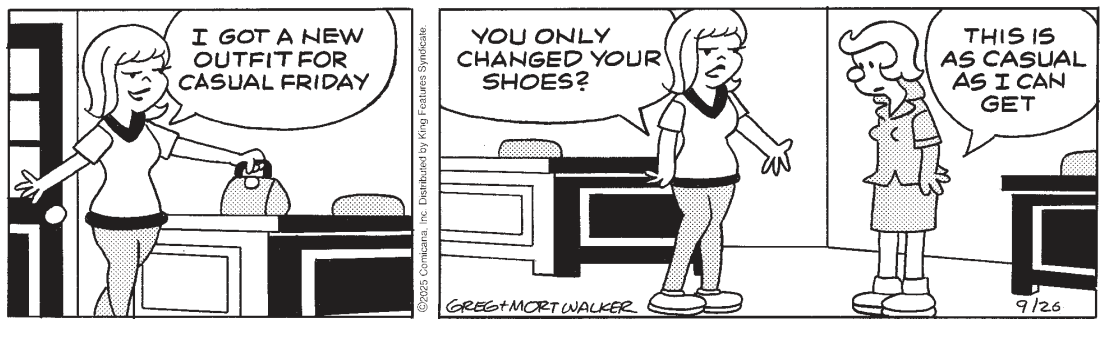
Wumo



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			16					■	17			
18						■	19	20		■	■	■
■	■	■	21			■	22			23	24	25
26	27	28			■	29			■	30		
31				■	32			■	33			
34			■	35			■	36				
37			38			■	39			■	■	■
■	■	■	40			■	41			42	43	44
45	46	47		■	48	49						
50				■	51				■	52		
53				■	54				■	55		

ACROSS

1 CNN founder Turner
4 Author — Neale Hurston
8 "Pygmalion" writer
12 Altar in the sky
13 Autobahn auto
14 "— nome" ("Rigoletto" aria)
15 Don in Cooperstown
17 "Beetle Bailey" dog
18 Have at
19 Sch. near Topeka
21 Tank filler
22 Plays the ukulele
26 Ancient Mexican
29 Born
30 Scot's refusal
31 Pastoral greetings
32 Sashimi fish
33 Blaze
34 Away from WSW
35 Under the weather
36 Ravi's instrument
37 Dwell
39 Salt Lake athlete
40 German article
41 Like most pretzels
45 Coffee
48 "Dusk in Autumn" poet Sara
50 Apiece
51 57, in old Rome
52 Bar bill
53 Tropical tuber
54 Desires
55 Golfer Ernie

DOWN

1 "I did it!"
2 Messes up
3 Calendar squares
4 High signs?
5 Lustrous gems
6 Seminary subj.
7 Soviet premier Kosygin
8 Use elbow grease on
9 Bowler, e.g.
10 Louvre collection
11 Romance
16 Wise ones
20 Sault — Marie
23 One
24 Kate of "The Martian"
25 Crystal gazer
26 Pt. of U.S.A.
27 Region
28 Low digits
29 Stanley Cup org.
32 In an attentive way
33 Meadow
35 Chemical suffix
36 Equilibrium
38 The Gem State
39 Olympic track legend Bolt
42 London gallery
43 Israeli carrier
44 Society newbies
45 Lustrous black
46 Motorist's org.
47 TiVo precursor
49 Night before

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

9-26

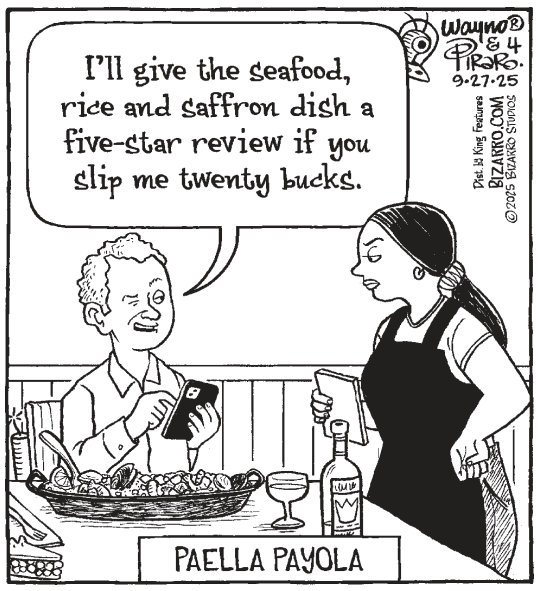
CRYPTOQUIP

Z M D Q H , K X M Q Z L M F T D U V CMMFDUV ILWI PKA'XM WFQMWHP XDGDIMH YLDUW KQ YWTRKHDW RMCKQM: WGDW XA.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT DO YOU THINK OYSTERS, SNAILS AND TURTLES COULD TALK AND TAKE PICTURES WITH? SHELLPHONES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals V

Bizarro



Loose Parts



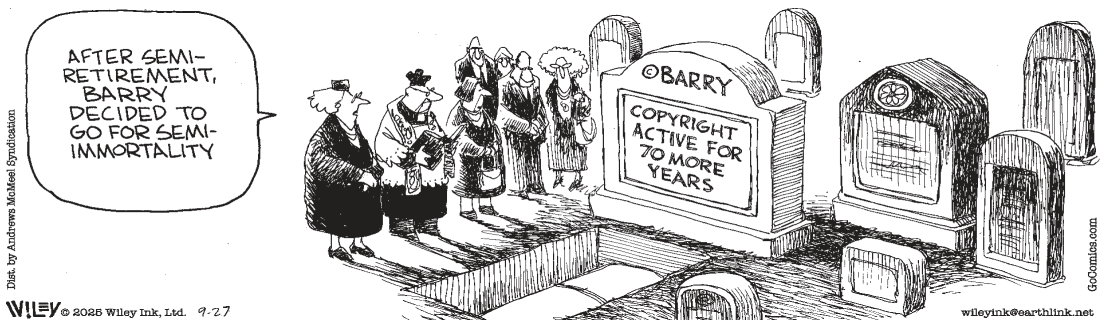
Frazz



Pearls Before Swine



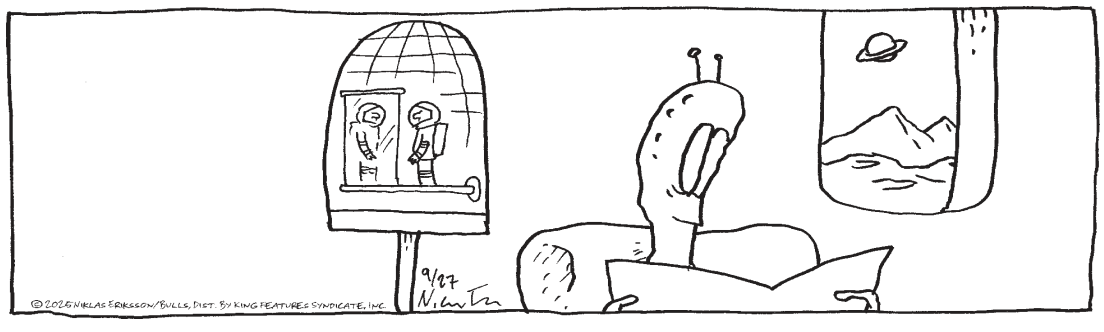
Non Sequitur



Wumo



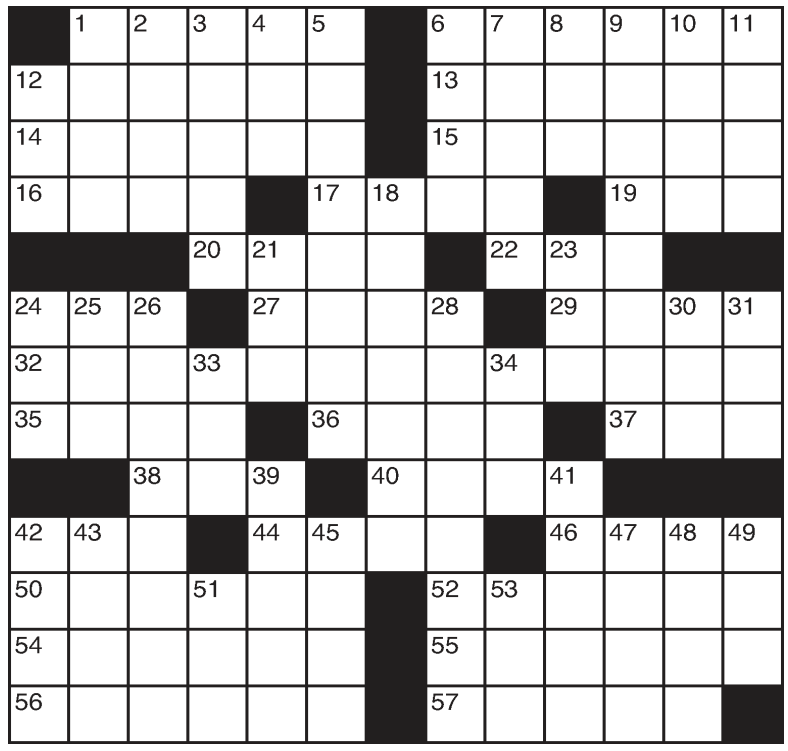
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

1 Accord maker
6 In tatters
12 "The Bathers" painter
13 Too
14 In the thick of
15 — Harris, Joe Biden's Vice President
16 Villa d'—
17 Hosp. areas
19 Actor Beatty
20 Couch
22 Danson of "Cheers"
24 Genesis vessel
27 Bar bills
29 Mideast gulf
32 2016 Ben Affleck action thriller
35 Skiing legend Lindsey
36 Forum wear
37 "What was I thinking?"
38 Poetic contraction
40 Easy targets
42 Winter bug
44 Trucker with a handle
46 Thus
50 Parish leader
52 Secretary of State after Albright
54 Turkey's capital
55 Made level
56 Trifling
57 Brother of Moses

DOWN

1 Shortens a jacket, say
2 Taking action
3 Protuberances
4 Insult
5 Discovery at a dig
6 Video-streaming brand
7 Sailor's cry
8 Jewel
9 Pop's pop
10 "Legally Blonde" role
11 Couple
12 "Norma —"
18 Last car
21 Non-Rx
23 "Mangia!"
24 Off-roader (Abbr.)
25 Plato's P
26 Bluegrass State
28 Edible pod
30 Rock producer Brian
31 To the — degree
33 Blackbird
34 Snooze
39 Disdain
41 Waste conduit
42 Dorm alternative
43 Comedian Jay
45 Boast
47 Gambling city
48 Hidden valley
49 Vintage
51 — chi
53 Eggs

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

9-27

CRYPTOQUIP

QDBBNQHMW JND IAVA NM R ENB-YAUAY DMHUAVQHEJ VNIHMW EARK, KHWOE JND VATAHUA R QTDYYAV-QOHB?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WEIRD, OVERWHELMING FEELING THAT YOU'VE ALREADY VISITED CHINA OR CAMBODIA BEFORE: ASIA VU.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals P

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Jacqueline Smith

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OPINION

Trump should fix the UN, not just grandstand

By John R. Bolton
Special to The Washington Post

Balking escalators and recalcitrant teleprompters are compelling metaphors for the United Nations. On Tuesday, they gave President Donald Trump the excuse to vent the sort of personal grievances that so often preoccupy him. I have walked up that stopped U.N. escalator a time or two but never grasped its metaphysical significance.

But Trump's more substantive grievances about the U.N. were also on full display in his speech to the General Assembly. Some of them were even accurate, although obscured by repeated unscripted digressions from his prepared text. Trump's rhetorical fog aside, with the U.N. turning 80 years old, now is precisely the right moment to focus on the U.N.'s failings — and even to start imagining some remedies.

When asked whether America should withdraw from the organization, Jeane Kirkpatrick, President Ronald Reagan's formidable ambassador to the U.N., told me she had responded, "No, it's not worth the effort." Her insight was that, flawed as so much of the U.N. system is, America had enough equities at stake that it did not have the luxury of ignoring what happened in New York, Geneva, Vienna and other U.N. cities. Instead, Washington had to set priorities: minimize damage from large swaths of the organization; use what is beneficial to U.S. national interests; and withdraw from what was unsalvageable.

The U.N. universe is a vast array of assemblies, agencies and programs — its very size, redundancy and institutional inertia forming part of the problem. Talking broadly about "the U.N." doesn't even begin to describe the complex and often frustrating reality.

The U.N.'s key political decision-making bodies are all but hopelessly broken. The General Assembly has almost never had a coherent purpose other than offering a backdrop for authoritarian leaders to practice their rhetoric. And the Security Council is as gridlocked now as during the height of the Cold War. Disputes among its five permanent members mean that truly important issues are addressed elsewhere and brought to the council only for a splash of U.N. holy water — if they're brought at all.

All too many U.N. peacekeeping operations continue endlessly as part of the problems they were created to solve. In the Middle East, the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization lumbers on as it has since 1949, as does its contemporary, the U.N. Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan. In the Western Sahara, for a more recent example, the Security Council has failed to provide the self-determination referendum for the Sahrawi people promised in 1991. The list could go on.

Although the 1990s collapse of Soviet communism briefly brought hope that things would improve, that hope soon proved forlorn. The vitality shown in response to Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait was a one-time phenomenon, remembered fondly but not repeated. The New York headquarters sees a lot of process but precious little product. As one British diplomat put it, the U.N. is a bureaucracy, not an activity.

The situation is different, however, in at least some of the U.N.'s specialized agencies and programs, often those voluntarily funded rather than financed through assessed (that is to say, compulsory) contributions. Such agencies have well-defined, technical mandates and, if they avoid politicization, can and do perform important functions. Consider the International Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal; the International Maritime Organization in London; the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna; and the World Intellectual Property Organization, the International Telecommunications Union and the World Meteorological Organization, all in Geneva.

Agencies such as UNESCO never had a clear mandate and thrived on anti-American and anti-Western controversies. Reagan was right to boldly withdraw the United States from the agency in 1984. Similarly, the World Health Organization showed its vulnerability to politicization during the coronavirus pandemic and suffered accordingly. But several U.N. programs have done important work over many years. Consider UNICEF and the World Food Program, both often led by Americans, and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. All are funded voluntarily, and all provide important humanitarian assistance in international crises. Others, such as the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, have failed badly.

Meanwhile, huge organizations such as the World Bank Group, technically affiliated with the U.N., deserve scrutiny and enormous reform or retrenchment, especially given their programmatic overlap with various U.N. components and regional development banks.

To make a lasting impact, hard work will be required. Washington will need to assess the merits of each of the agencies that make up the ungainly U.N. system. The system is resilient — it knows how to theatrically gasp at any insults hurled its way while continuing to do business as usual. Drive-by speeches, even those of Trumpian duration, just come and go, like all the other hot air that has coursed through U.N. headquarters for decades.

John R. Bolton was ambassador to the United Nations under President George W. Bush and national security adviser under President Donald Trump.

Making a political donation shouldn't be this dangerous

By Dara Lindenbaum
The Washington Post

Many Americans don't realize that a small political contribution can result in their home address being posted online. In some cases, this reporting requirement poses real safety risks.

I worry about that — especially because my agency, the Federal Election Commission, oversees the requirement that gives rise to these risks.

I worry about someone using donor information to facilitate the kind of harassment of poll workers and election workers that we've seen in recent election cycles.

I worry about a victim of domestic violence escaping an abusive relationship and relocating to a trusted family member's home, only to be tracked down using her donor data — or a divorce attorney who assists that victim meeting the same fate.

I worry about an aggrieved student with a history of violence using political contribution data to find the home of a teacher or professor who gave them a failing grade.

I worry about a woman who withholds her address from a man she meets on a dating app suddenly being confronted when he uses the federal donor database to track her down.

At the root of these easily imaginable scenarios — and countless others — is the Federal Election Campaign Act's requirement that the FEC publish on its website the mailing address of any person who contributes $200 or more to any political committee. If a person uses an intermediary platform such as ActBlue or WinRed, a donation of even a single dollar will trigger the reporting requirement.

Congress should amend the relevant provisions of the act to eliminate the requirement that the FEC publish individual contributors' street names and numbers on public disclosure reports. Congress should continue to require that political committees report full addresses to the FEC — but limit the FEC's public disclosure to a contributor's name, city, state, ZIP code, occupation and employer.

Some Americans have jobs, such as law enforcement, that make the publication of their home address an obvious security threat. Other individuals, such as major donors or celebrities, are already cautious about public knowledge of their home address, and are counseled by paid advisers to instead disclose only a work address or other mailing address. But an ordinary person making a political contribution probably doesn't think about whether their address might be used against them.

Nor did the authors of the law that created this problem. FEC disclosure rules date to the 1970s — long before the existence of the internet as we know it. Back then, accessing donor information required physically visiting the FEC's office and paging through paper files. While that might have raised a safety issue of its own, the logistical barriers to obtaining that information were so high that the concerns were minor. With today's technology, someone's name, employer and home address are just a few keystrokes away.

This isn't a novel idea. California and Texas both require political committees to report the addresses of donors to their respective state campaign finance authorities, but they also require that street names and numbers not appear online. These two states — often on opposite ends of the political spectrum — show that bipartisan solutions are possible. My proposal to adopt this approach has received a unanimous recommendation by the FEC.

By continuing to collect and report full mailing address information, the FEC would still be able to track contributors and ensure compliance with contribution limits and other restrictions. These changes would not affect the public availability of candidates' and elected officials' addresses, which are disclosed by state and local election offices.

Transparency remains essential. The public has a right to know who is funding political campaigns, especially as campaign spending continues to grow. But Americans shouldn't have to risk their personal safety to participate in democracy.

Dara Lindenbaum is a Democratic commissioner on the Federal Election Commission.

SCOREBOARD/WNBA

DEALS

Wednesday's transactions

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
American League

CHICAGO WHITE SOX — Placed OF Mike Tauchman on the 10-day IL and RHP Wikelman Gonzalez on the 15-day IL, both retroactive to Sept. 21. Recalled RHP Jonathan Cannon from Charlotte (IL). Claimed OF Derek Hill off waivers from Miami.

CLEVELAND GUARDIANS — Placed 1B David Fry on the 10-day IL. Recalled RF Johnathan Rodriguez from Columbus (IL).

DETROIT TIGERS — Optioned 3B Jace Jung to Toledo (IL). Recalled OF Justyn-Henry Malloy from Toledo (IL).

TORONTO BLUE JAYS — Agreed to terms with RHP Seojun Moon.

National League

ATLANTA BRAVES — Sent RHP Connor Seabold outright to Gwinnett (IL).

CHICAGO CUBS — Reinstated RHP Daniel Palencia from the 15-day IL. Optioned LHP Jordan Wicks to Iowa (IL).

COLORADO ROCKIES — Reinstated RHP Zach Agnos and LHP Luis Peralta from the 15-day IL and INF Warming Bernabel from the 7-day concussion IL. Placed RHP Roansy Contreras on the 15-day IL. Optioned LHP Ryan Rolison and C Drew Romo to Albuquerque (PCL).

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Reinstated RHP Roki Sasaki from the 15-day IL. Placed RHP Kirby Yates on the 15-day IL, retroactive to Sept. 21.

MIAMI MARLINS — Recalled OF Joey Weimer from Jacksonville (IL). Placed OF Dane Myers on the 10-day IL.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS — Designated LHP Bruce Zimmermann for assignment. Recalled RHP Carlos Rodriguez from Nashville (IL).

NEW YORK METS — Reinstated CF Tyrone Taylor from the 10-day IL. Designated CF Jose Siri for assignment.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES — Reinstated INF Edmundo Sosa from the 10-day IL. Designated INF Donovan Walton for assignment.

SAN DIEGO PADRES — Optioned RHP Ron Marinaccio to ACL Padres. Reinstated RHP David Morgan from the 15-day IL.

TEXAS RANGERS — Placed OF Wyatt Langford on the 10-day IL. Placed OF Sam Haggerty on the 60-day IL. Selected the contract of OF Billy McKinney from Round Rock (PCL).

BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association

CHARLOTTE HORNETS — Waived G Terrell Brown Jr.

DALLAS MAVERICKS — Waived G D'Moi Hodge.

DETROIT PISTONS — Waived G Quincy Olivari.

MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES — Waived G C.J. Fulton.

FOOTBALL
National Football League

BALTIMORE RAVENS — Released RB D'Ernest Johnson and WR Anthony Miller. Signed DL Taven Bryan and DL Josh Tupou to the practice squad.

CLEVELAND BROWNS — Placed OT Dawand Jones on injured reserve. Signed OT Thayer Munford to the active roster from the New England practice squad.

DENVER BRONCOS — Signed DB A.J. Woods and FB Adam Prentice.

DETROIT LIONS — Signed DL Quinton Jefferson. Signed TE Ross Dwelley from the practice squad.

GREEN BAY PACKERS — Signed G/C Lecitus Smith.

HOUSTON TEXANS — Signed DB Zion Childress to the active roster off the Dallas practice squad. Signed WR Quintez Cephus.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Placed CB Jakorian Bennett, WR Darius Cooper and LB Nolan Smith on injured reserve.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Re-signed WR Tim Jones to the practice squad. Waived DE Alex Williams.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — Signed OL Royce Newman and TE Gee Scott to the practice squad.

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — Placed QB Hunter Dekkers on the practice squad injured list. Signed WR Kevin Austin Jr.

NEW YORK GIANTS — Signed LB Tomon Fox.

NEW YORK JETS — Signed RB Lawrance Toafili.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES — Signed S Marcus Epps, TE Cam Latu and CB Parry Nickerson to the active roster. Placed CB Jakorian Bennett, WR Darius Cooper and OLB Nolan Smith on injured reserve. Signed LB Lance Dixon, DB Eli Ricks and WR Quez Watkins to the practice squad.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Released CB Derrick Canteen. Signed DBs Robert Beal and William Bradley-King and DB Jaylen Mahoney to the practice squad.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Placed TE Robbie Ouzts on injured reserve. Signed S D'Anthony Bell from the practice squad. Waived S Jerrick Reed.

AP SPORTLIGHT

Sept. 26

1961 — The New York Yankees' Roger Maris ties Babe Ruth's 34-year-old single-season record with his 60th home run, off the Baltimore Orioles' Jack Fisher.

1981 — Nolan Ryan of the Astros becomes the first player to pitch five no-hit, no-run games. This one is a 5-0 win over the Los Angeles Dodgers in Houston.

2021 — The United States regains the Ryder Cup, beating Team Europe 19-9 at Whistling Straits in Haven, Wisc.

2004 — San Francisco's 34-0 loss at the Seattle Seahawks ends a record 420-game streak of not being shut out for the 49ers.

PRO SOCCER

MLS

Western Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
San Diego FC	17	8	6	57	56	38
Vancouver	16	6	8	56	57	32
Minn. United	15	7	9	54	51	36
LAFC	14	7	8	50	57	37
Seattle	12	9	9	45	52	45
Austin FC	12	10	8	44	33	37
Portland	11	10	10	43	39	41
Colorado	11	14	6	39	41	52
FC Dallas	9	11	10	37	45	49
Houston	9	13	9	36	40	49
San Jose	9	14	8	35	56	58
Real Salt Lake	10	16	4	34	32	45
St Louis City	7	17	7	28	39	52
Sporting KC	7	18	6	27	45	63
LA Galaxy	4	17	9	21	37	61

Eastern Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	18	7	6	60	50	33
Cincinnati	18	9	4	58	47	39
Inter Miami CF	16	6	7	55	64	46
Charlotte FC	17	12	2	53	51	42
NYC FC	16	10	5	53	46	39
Orlando City	14	7	9	51	58	43
Nashville	15	11	5	50	52	38
Columbus	13	7	11	50	51	47
Chicago	13	11	6	45	57	53
New York	12	12	7	43	45	40
New England	8	15	8	32	39	45
Toronto FC	5	13	12	27	30	37
Atlanta	5	13	12	27	37	55
D.C. United	5	16	10	25	29	58
CF Montréal	5	17	9	24	29	55

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

Wednesday's games

Miami 4, New York City FC 0
Portland 1, Vancouver 1, tie

Saturday's games

Miami at Toronto FC
CF Montréal at Charlotte FC
Philadelphia at D.C. United
Atlanta at New England
New York City FC at New York
Columbus at Chicago
Houston at Nashville
Los Angeles FC at St Louis City
Minnesota at Colorado
Austin FC at Real Salt Lake
Sporting Kansas City at LA Galaxy
FC Dallas at Portland
San Jose at San Diego FC
Vancouver at Seattle

Sunday's game

Orlando City at Cincinnati

Tuesday, Sept. 30

Chicago at Miami

NWSL

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Kansas City	17	2	2	53	40	10
Washington	10	4	7	37	33	27
Gotham FC	8	6	7	31	28	18
Portland	8	6	7	31	30	24
San Diego	8	6	7	31	29	25
Seattle	8	7	6	30	26	25
Orlando	8	8	5	29	25	22
North Carolina	7	7	7	28	27	30
Houston	7	9	5	26	25	30
Louisville	7	9	5	26	27	34
Angel City	6	9	6	24	28	35
Bay FC	4	10	7	19	23	31
Utah Royals FC	4	11	6	18	20	35
Chicago	2	10	9	15	25	40

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

Friday's games

Chicago at Kansas City
Portland at Gotham FC
Orlando at San Diego

Saturday's games

Angel City at Louisville
Utah Royals FC at Bay FC

Sunday's games

Houston at Washington
North Carolina at Seattle

PRO BASKETBALL

WNBA Playoffs

Semifinals
Best-of-five
x-if necessary
Minnesota 1, Phoenix 1

Minnesota 85, Phoenix 69
Phoenix 89, Minnesota 83, OT
Friday: at Phoenix
Sunday: at Phoenix
x-Tuesday: at Minnesota

Indiana 1, Las Vegas 1

Indiana 89, Vegas 73
Las Vegas 90, Indiana 68
Friday: at Indiana
Sunday: at Indiana
x-Tuesday: at Las Vegas

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Schedule

Thursday's game
SOUTH

Army (1-2) at East Carolina (2-2)

Friday's games
SOUTH

Florida St. (3-0) at Virginia (3-1)

FAR WEST

TCU (3-0) at Arizona St. (3-1)
Houston (3-0) at Oregon St. (0-4)

Saturday's games
EAST

Louisville (3-0) at Pittsburgh (2-1)
Penn (1-0) at Lehigh (4-0)
Cornell (0-1) at Yale (1-0)
Duke (2-2) at Syracuse (3-1)
Georgetown (2-2) at Columbia (0-1)
Norfolk St. (1-3) at Wagner (0-4)
New Haven (2-2) at Duquesne (1-3)
Delaware St. (3-1) at Sacred Heart (3-1)
Dartmouth (1-0) at CCSU (2-2)
Holy Cross (0-4) at Fordham (0-4)
LIU Brooklyn (1-3) at Stonehill (1-3)
Albany (NY) (1-3) at New Hampshire (2-2)
Towson (2-2) at Bryant (2-2)
Morgan St. (1-3) vs. Miles (0-1) at Indianapolis
California (3-1) at Boston College (1-2)
Rice (3-1) at Navy (3-0)
Uconn (2-2) at Buffalo (2-2)
Merrimack (2-2) at Stony Brook (1-3)
NC A&T (1-3) at Maine (0-4)
Princeton (0-1) at Lafayette (3-1)
William & Mary (2-2) at Villanova (1-2)
Utah (3-1) at West Virginia (2-2)
Brown (1-0) at Harvard (1-0)
St. Francis (Pa.) (0-4) at Bucknell (2-2)
Oregon (4-0) at Penn St. (3-0)

SOUTH

Georgia Tech (4-0) at Wake Forest (2-1)
Utah St. (3-1) at Vanderbilt (4-0)
Morehead St. (2-2) at Presbyterian (4-0)
Georgia Southern (2-2) at James Madison (2-1)
Howard (3-1) at Richmond (2-2)
Utah Tech (1-3) at Austin Peay (2-2)
Hampton (1-3) at Elon (2-2)
Alabama St. (2-1) at Florida A&M (1-2)
Alabama A&M (3-1) at Bethune-Cookman (1-3)
Arkansas St. (1-3) at La.-Monroe (2-1)
LSU (4-0) at Mississippi (4-0)
W. Carolina (1-3) at Campbell (1-3)
Furman (2-1) at Samford (0-4)
Tennessee (3-1) at Mississippi St. (4-0)
Tennessee Tech (3-0) at Tennessee St. (1-2)
Texas Southern (0-3) at MVSU (0-3)
Mercer (2-1) at ETSU (2-2)
The Citadel (1-3) at Chattanooga (1-3)
Nicholls (1-3) at E. Kentucky (1-3)
Liberty (1-3) at Old Dominion (2-1)
SC State (2-2) at Charleston Southern (0-4)
Middle Tenn. (1-3) at Kennesaw St. (2-2)
Jackson St. (2-1) at Southern U. (1-3)
UT Rio Grande Valley (4-0) at SE Louisiana (2-2)
Jacksonville St. (2-2) at Southern Miss. (2-2)
SE Missouri (1-3) at UT Martin (0-4)
Memphis (4-0) at FAU (1-2)
Virginia Tech (1-3) at NC State (3-1)
Alabama (2-1) at Georgia (3-0)
Kentucky (2-1) at South Carolina (2-2)
Marshall (2-2) at La.-Lafayette (1-3)

MIDWEST

Rutgers (3-1) at Minnesota (2-1)
Stetson (1-3) at Dayton (2-1)
Bowling Green (2-2) at Ohio (2-2)
Cincinnati (2-1) at Kansas (3-1)
Southern Cal (4-0) at Illinois (3-1)
UCF (3-0) at Kansas St. (1-3)
Marist (2-1) at Butler (2-2)
E. Michigan (1-3) at Cent. Michigan (2-2)
South Dakota (2-2) at N. Dakota St. (3-0)
Mercyhurst (1-3) at S. Dakota St. (3-0)
Lindenwood (Mo.) (2-2) at Miami (Ohio) (0-3)
Indiana (4-0) at Iowa (3-1)
Akron (1-3) at Toledo (2-2)
UCLA (0-3) at Northwestern (1-2)
San Diego St. (2-1) at N. Illinois (1-2)
E. Illinois (1-2) at W. Illinois (1-3)
Rhode Island (4-0) at W. Michigan (1-3)
W. Kentucky (3-1) at Missouri St. (2-2)
Arizona (3-0) at Iowa St. (4-0)
Umass (0-3) at Missouri (4-0)

SOUTHWEST

South Alabama (1-3) at North Texas (4-0)
Notre Dame (1-2) at Arkansas (2-2)
Baylor (2-2) at Oklahoma St. (1-2)
Auburn (3-1) at Texas A&M (3-0)
Tulane (3-1) at Tulsa (2-2)
Ark.-Pine Bluff (1-2) vs. Alcorn St. (0-3) at Memphis, Tenn.
Abilene Christian (2-2) at Incarnate Word (1-3)
NC Central (3-2) at East Texas A&M (0-3)
Prairie View (2-2) vs. Grambling St. (3-1) at Dallas
Cent. Arkansas (1-3) at Lamar (2-1)
McNeese St. (1-3) at Stephen F. Austin (2-2)
Louisiana Tech (3-1) at UTEP (1-3)

FAR WEST

Idaho St. (1-3) at N. Colorado (2-2)
Ohio St. (3-0) at Washington (3-0)
Hawaii (3-2) at Air Force (1-2)
E. Washington (1-3) at Montana St. (2-2)
St. Thomas (Minn.) (2-1) at San Diego (2-2)
New Mexico St. (2-1) at New Mexico (2-1)
N. Arizona (3-1) at Portland St. (0-4)
Appalachian St. (2-1) at Boise St. (2-1)
Washington St. (2-2) at Colorado St. (1-2)
San Jose St. (1-2) at Stanford (1-3)
West Georgia (4-0) at S. Utah (1-3)
Cal Poly (2-2) at Sacramento St. (2-2)
Weber St. (2-2) at UC Davis (2-1)
BYU (3-0) at Colorado (2-2)
Idaho (2-2) at Montana (3-0)



JOHN LOCHER/AP

Aces head coach Becky Hammon speaks with an official during Game 2 in a playoff semifinal against the Indiana Fever on Tuesday in Las Vegas.

Aces' Hammon slams refs' calls after win over Fever in Game 2

BY MARK ANDERSON
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Aces coach Becky Hammon said before Tuesday's 90-68 victory over the Fever that evened the WNBA playoffs semifinal series at a game apiece that Las Vegas couldn't "tip-toe into a bar fight" with Indiana.

The Aces made their presence literally felt, continuing what is becoming an early trend in this series that neither side is particularly happy about.

"The physicality's out of control for sure," Hammon said. "You can bump and grab a wide receiver in the NFL for those first five yards, but you can do it in the W for the whole half court. You put two hands on somebody, it should be an automatic foul. The freedom of movement? There's no freedom. I'm not saying we're not fouling, too. I'm not saying that. I'm saying it's out of control."

Complaints about officiating has been a season-long issue with players and coaches throughout the league saying the referees let too much go.

It's not even just this season. Lynx coach Cheryl Reeve ripped the officials after Minnesota lost the deciding Game 5 of last year's WNBA Finals to the Liberty over a foul call that benefited New York and helped force overtime.

"Most of my assistants come from the NBA, and they're like this does not fly in the NBA," said Hammon, who also spent seven years in that league as an assistant coach with the San Antonio Spurs. "There would be fights. We just have very well-mannered women that can get to the next play."

Fever coach Stephanie White also wasn't pleased with how Tuesday's game was called, though her complaint was a little different. She pointed to the 41 total fouls, 22 on Las Vegas and 19 on Indiana. But the Aces took 21 free throws compared to 15 for the Fever.

"It's hard for us to find flow when there's a foul called every 10 seconds," White said. "I mean, it just really is. When they're at the free throw line, we can't get up and down the floor, and that's a challenge. They were much more aggressive and physical defensively, and we didn't counter that with our off-ball actions or our back cuts."

Indiana has kept its season alive despite contending with a number of serious injuries, including a season-ender to Caitlin Clark. Lexie Hull went into Game 2 questionable with a back injury, but she played and scored 15 points. Hull wore a brace when not on the floor.

"It feels like a physical game every game," Hull said. "It feels like it's been a physical season. But I've been on the ground a little bit more this series so far. We just keep getting back up."

Beyond the physical part of the series, Hammon was also miffed she felt compelled to use a challenge in the first quarter on an out-of-bounds call Las Vegas had successfully overturned. She said one of the other two officials should have helped referee Jeff Wooten make the correct call.

"I shouldn't have to use a challenge on something that went off your head, and I'm sure every coach would agree," Hammon said. "Like, that's maddening. If Steph had to use her challenge in the first five minutes, that's not ideal, especially on an out-of-bounds call, which I feel is probably the easiest call to get right."

MLB

Raleigh hits 60th HR, M's win AL West

By Andrew Destin
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Only fitting that it was Cal Raleigh who catapulted Seattle to its first AL West championship in 24 years Wednesday night.

The switch-hitting catcher launched two more homers to give him a major league-best 60 this season, and the streaking Mariners clinched the fourth division crown in the franchise's 49-year history with a 9-2 victory over the Colorado Rockies.

"To do it in this fashion, on this night, in front of these fans, mom and dad, obviously, was really cool," Raleigh said.

The lone big league team that's never been to a World Series, Seattle last won the AL West in 2001 when it set an American League record with 116 wins — thanks in large part to a prolific rookie season from new Hall of Famer Ichiro Suzuki.

But similar to that team, winning the division this year required more than a record-setting performance from one player. In addition to Raleigh, the 2025 Mariners had four other All-Stars: outfielders Randy Arozarena and Julio Rodríguez, as well as right-hander Bryan Woo and closer Andrés Muñoz.

"Really proud of the guys here," said Raleigh, the seventh big league player to reach 60 homers in a season. "It's 20-plus years since we've done something like this, and it's special. It's special to this group, to this organization, to the city."

Even with that All-Star quintet, Seattle entered the July 31 trade deadline just six games over .500. President of baseball operations Jerry Dipoto felt compelled to add to a team that entered August 4½ games back of the division lead, and did so in a meaningful way.

The Mariners acquired slugging third baseman Eugenio Suárez and multi-talented first baseman Josh Naylor from the Arizona Diamondbacks, and getting ahold of both has proven to be quite the shrewd move.



Ryan Sun/AP

Mariners catcher Cal Raleigh is dunked during a postgame interview by shortstop J.P. Crawford after the team's win against the Colorado Rockies to win the AL West on Wednesday in Seattle.

Wild Card glance

American League

	W	L	Pct	WCGB
z-New York	90	68	.570	+5
Boston	87	71	.551	+2
Detroit	85	73	.538	—
Houston	84	74	.532	1

National League

	W	L	Pct	WCGB
z-Chicago	89	69	.563	+8
z-San Diego	87	72	.547	+5½
New York	81	77	.513	—
Cincinnati	80	78	.506	1
Arizona	80	78	.506	1

z-clinched playoff berth

Wednesday's games

Boston 7, Toronto 1
Cleveland 5, Detroit 1
Athletics 6, Houston 0
Chicago Cubs 10, N.Y. Mets 3
Milwaukee 3, San Diego 1
Pittsburgh 4, Cincinnati 3, 11 innings
L.A. Dodgers 5, Arizona 4, 11 innings

Since the deadline, Seattle has gone 31-17, won 16 of its last 17 and clinched a playoff spot Tuesday thanks to some late-game heroics from Naylor.

It hasn't just been a potent Mariners lineup — one which entered Wednesday's game with the third-most homers in the majors — that has powered the club back to the postseason for the first time since 2022.

Despite injuries to the likes of right-handed starters George Kirby, Bryce Miller, Logan Evans and Logan Gilbert, Seattle's rotation has held together. Veteran right-hander Luis Castillo has been steady and available all season, while Woo broke out in a big way during his first All-Star campaign.

"When you look at this team, the depth of our lineup, the depth of our pitching, the bullpen," manager Dan Wilson said, "we've got incredible guys here."

Woo leads all Mariners pitchers in wins, innings pitched, strikeouts and WAR. He didn't take his next turn in the rotation, however, as his scheduled Thursday night start against the Rockies was skipped due to pectoral tightness, Seattle general manager Justin Hollander said Tuesday.

Regardless of Woo's health, it won't be easy for the Mariners in October. Still looking for its first pennant, the franchise has never made it further than the AL Championship Series in five postseason appearances.

But as Seattle has proven all season, it is hardly a one-dimensional club, even if Raleigh has drawn ample headlines with his propensity for the longball. Instead, it's a deep team with plenty of camaraderie and a handful of starting pitchers who would be aces on other teams.

"We care about each other, truly," Rodríguez said. "We would die for each other every single day. It means a lot for a team to be able to be like that."

Judge ties record with 50 homers for 4th time

By Ronald Blum
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge put himself in some rare company while lifting the Yankees into a share of the AL East lead for the first time in 3½ months.

Judge became just the fourth player to reach 50 home runs four times and, just like last year, he followed by hitting No. 51 in the same game.

"If you sit back and admire it, then you're going to stop your momentum," Judge said after he drove in four runs to lead New York over the Chicago White Sox 8-1 on Wednesday night. "Hopefully I have a long career here and we do some special things that we can talk about at the end."

The Yankees (90-68) have won seven of eight, moving a season-high 22 games over .500 and getting to 90 wins for the seventh time in the last eight full seasons. New York, which hadn't been in first place since before play July 3, is tied with Toronto atop the AL East with four games left — though the Blue Jays hold the tiebreaker. Toronto led by five games with 11 remaining but has lost six of seven.



Frank Franklin II/AP

Yankees captain Aaron Judge celebrates with teammates after hitting a home run during the eighth inning against the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday in New York.

"All across Major League Baseball it's been a crazy 10 days, two weeks," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said.

A day after New York clinched its 60th postseason berth and eighth in nine years, Judge joined Babe Ruth (1920, '21, '27, '28), Mark McGwire (1996-99) and Sammy Sosa (1998-2001) as the only hitters with four 50-homer seasons.

Judge drove a 96.6 mph sinker from Jonathan Cannon (4-10) into the Yankees bullpen in right-center field for a 3-1 lead in the second inning.

"Obviously made a mistake to the best hitter in the game and punished me for it," Cannon said. "He hits everything."

Judge followed Trent Grisham's two-run homer in the eighth with a solo shot off Cam Booser on a fastball for his 46th multi-homer game, matching Mickey Mantle for New York's second-most behind Ruth's 68.

Scoreboard

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
z-New York	90	68	.570	—
z-Toronto	90	68	.570	—
Boston	87	71	.551	3
Tampa Bay	77	81	.487	13
Baltimore	74	84	.468	16

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	86	72	.544	—
Detroit	85	73	.538	1
Kansas City	79	79	.500	7
Minnesota	68	90	.430	18
Chicago	58	100	.367	28

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Seattle	89	69	.563	—
Houston	84	74	.532	5
Texas	80	78	.506	9
Athletics	75	83	.475	14
Los Angeles	71	87	.449	18

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Philadelphia	93	65	.589	—
New York	81	77	.513	12
Miami	77	81	.487	16
Atlanta	75	84	.472	18½
Washington	65	94	.409	28½

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Milwaukee	96	63	.604	—
z-Chicago	89	69	.563	6½
Cincinnati	80	78	.506	15½
St. Louis	78	81	.491	18
Pittsburgh	69	89	.437	26½

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
z-Los Angeles	89	69	.563	—
z-San Diego	87	72	.547	2½
Arizona	80	78	.506	9
San Francisco	78	81	.491	11½
Colorado	43	115	.272	46

x-clinched division
z-clinched playoff berth

Wednesday's games

Washington 4, Atlanta 3
Milwaukee 3, San Diego 1
Tampa Bay 6, Baltimore 2
Cleveland 5, Detroit 1
Pittsburgh 4, Cincinnati 3, 11 innings
Philadelphia 11, Miami 1
N.Y. Yankees 8, Chicago White Sox 1
Boston 7, Toronto 1
Chicago Cubs 10, N.Y. Mets 3
Texas 4, Minnesota 2
L.A. Angels 3, Kansas City 2
L.A. Dodgers 5, Arizona 4, 11 innings
Seattle 9, Colorado 2
San Francisco 4, St. Louis 3
Athletics 6, Houston 0

Thursday's games

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

Friday's games

St. Louis (Mikolas 8-10) at Chicago Cubs (TBD)
Minnesota (Ryan 13-9) at Philadelphia (Nola 4-10)
Chicago White Sox (Gómez 3-3) at Washington (Cavalli 3-1)
Baltimore (Rogers 9-2) at N.Y. Yankees (TBD)
Tampa Bay (Houser 8-4) at Toronto (Bieber 3-2)
Detroit (TBD) at Boston (TBD)
Texas (Leiter 9-10) at Cleveland (Cecconi 7-6)
N.Y. Mets (Sproat 0-1) at Miami (Alcantara 10-12)
Pittsburgh (Keller 6-15) at Atlanta (Wentz 5-6)
Cincinnati (Littell 10-8) at Milwaukee (Priester 13-2)
Houston (Alexander 4-2) at L.A. Angels (Hendricks 8-10)
Arizona (Gallen 13-14) at San Diego (TBD)
L.A. Dodgers (TBD) at Seattle (Kirby 10-7)
Kansas City (Cameron 9-7) at Athletics (Morales 4-2)
Colorado (Márquez 3-15) at San Francisco (McDonald 0-0)

RYDER CUP

Verbal jabs grow ahead of opening tee

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. — The opening tee shot still two days away, the gamesmanship at the Ryder Cup began Wednesday when European captain Luke Donald took a few subtle jabs on pay-for-play during his speech at the opening ceremony.

"We're fueled by something money cannot buy," Donald said.

Europe, 1 up.

And then U.S. captain Keegan Bradley made the first bogey of these matches when he spoke of being around the 17th green at Brookline in 1999 for one of the biggest moments in Ryder Cup history, only to mistakenly say Justin Rose — not Justin Leonard — made the 45-foot putt.

Europe, 2 up.

The actual golf doesn't start until Friday morning at rowdy Bethpage Black. More than 5,000 fans who attended the ceremony made their presence felt with constant chants of "U-S-A!" and a smattering of boos for the Europeans. The strongest booing was when both captains thanked New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, who attended the ceremony.

Donald is the first European to be captain in consecutive Ryder Cup matches since Bernard Gallacher (1991-95). He was polished in Rome, using perfect Italian in a short message to the fans, and he was equally distinguished in sending a clear message on what this week is all about.



LINDSEY WASSON/AP

United States captain Keegan Bradley delivers opening remarks at the the opening ceremonies for the Ryder Cup golf tournament Wednesday on the Bethpage Black course in Farmingdale, N.Y.

Europe has practically owned the Ryder Cup in the modern era that dates to 1979, and it has built a legacy that has equipped its team with supreme confidence.

"The American team is rightly proud of their heritage, but so are we," Donald said. "Our European legacy is rooted in resilience, in togetherness and in proving people wrong. Time and again, we've shown that when we come together as one with a shared purpose, we can achieve remarkable things."

Donald wasted little time in bringing money into the conversation, saying the Ryder Cup "is not about prize money or world ranking points. It's about pride."

The Americans have received $200,000 to donate to charity since 1999. This year the charity amount is $300,000, along with a $200,000 stipend. The American players have said from the start they would be donating the entire $500,000 to charities in their communities.

Still, that was ample ammunition for Europeans to say they didn't need compensation to compete for a 17-inch gold trophy, suggesting it was an example of why the Ryder Cup meant more to them than the Americans.

Europe has won 10 of the last 14 times against American teams that typically look stronger on paper in terms of world ranking and major championships. It now tries to win for the fifth time on U.S. soil. The Americans have not won in Europe in 32 years.

"We didn't come here just to be a part of the show. We came here to earn our place in Ryder Cup folklore," Donald said. "We're not just playing to win, we're playing for each other and for every young golfer back home who dreams about one day representing Team Europe.

"We know it won't be easy. Winning away never is," Donald said. "The toughest roads lead to the greatest rewards."

Bradley, who had to wait for the chants to die, spoke mainly about his own history as the New England son of a PGA professional — his aunt, Pat Bradley, is an LPGA Tour great in the World Golf Hall of Fame — who played at St. John's and played at Bethpage Black when his teammates were restricted to Nos. 3 through 14 on the other side of Round Swamp Road.

It's been a long two years since Europe trounced the Americans in Rome. It's been a long three days waiting for Friday.

Ryder Cup

US vs. Europe
AFN-Sports
1 p.m. Friday CET
8 p.m. Friday JKT

Morning Foursomes Matches
Afternoon Four-Ball Matches
1 p.m. Friday CET
8 p.m. Friday JKT

Morning Foursomes Matches
Afternoon Four-Ball Matches
6:30 p.m. Sunday CET
1:30 a.m. Monday JKT

Singles Matches

As 12 players get ready, Scheffler sets standard as No. 1

BY DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. — Scottie Scheffler has been the standard everyone is chasing for the last 856 days. That's how long he has been No. 1 in the world, the longest stretch in golf for anyone since Tiger Woods.

Now he is just one of 12 at the Ryder Cup. His matches at Bethpage Black count no more than anyone else, whether it's Patrick Cantlay or Harris English or Bryson DeChambeau.

"At the end of the day, it's just all about going and winning your point," Justin Thomas said Tuesday. "All of us are very happy that he's on our team this week so we don't have to try to figure out how to beat him in an individual tournament. It's nice that he's on our side.

"No, he's just viewed as one of the 12. And we're all one and the same, I'd say."

It was like that for Scheffler when he was world No. 1 at Marco Simone two years ago, and he failed to win a match by going 0-2-2. That included being on the losing end with Brooks Koepka in the shortest match in Ryder Cup history. Ludvig Aberg and Viktor Hovland won in 11 holes.

Americans at No. 1

There isn't a great history for No. 1 players in the Ryder Cup, at least on the American side. Dustin Johnson was at the top of his game when he went 1-4-0 in Paris.

As for Woods, he didn't have a winning record until his fifth Ryder Cup, in 2006 at The K Club in Ireland, when he went 3-2-0 as the Americans lost by nine points.

None of this matters to Scheffler. Very little does when it comes to golf. His credo has been to show up at the first tee — Bethpage Black, Royal Portrush, Muirfield Village — knowing he has done everything possible to be ready. And then go compete.

"Should the expectations of me be different than any other player? I don't really think about that kind of stuff," Scheffler said. "I truly don't think about expectations or anything like that. That's wasted space in my brain."

But there always seemed to be a burden for Woods. He was never really just one of 12 because of his status as a modern-day legend.



ROBERT BUKATY/AP

The United States' Scottie Scheffler tries to get his ball out of the bunker on the 11th hole during a practice for the Ryder Cup on Tuesday in Farmingdale, N.Y., at Bethpage State Park's Black Course.

A European win over Woods counted as one point. Motivationally, it felt like two.

Finding right partner

There was also the issue of finding Woods a good partner for foursomes and fourballs. He played with 10 players in his first four Ryder Cup appearances.

Scheffler has had six partners — three each for the Presidents Cup and Ryder Cup — though he and Russell Henley appeared to be a good fit last year at Royal Montreal in the Presidents Cup and are likely to be together at Bethpage Black.

"I think we have 12 guys that are all equal. I don't think one player is more important than another. I think that is something that is through our team room," Scheffler said. "I'd like to think that I'm not difficult to pair with people. I'd like to think of myself as someone that's a nice guy and easy to get along with.

"I've had different partners over the years and have had some success. I would definitely not put myself in that category."

American inexperience

Scheffler is a leader of the U.S. team by his sheer stature in the game, even if he doesn't see it that way. This is only his third Ryder Cup. Then again, Thomas is the most experienced American and this is only his fourth appearance.

It's a young U.S. team by experience — the 12 players have combined to play in 15 Ryder Cups. Scheffler is among six players on the last team in Rome.

"I don't think it can be understated how difficult of a week Rome was for us. I think we could have done better, for sure," he said. "That wasn't how I expected the week to go. I think we learned from it, and we're as prepared as ever this time."

NFL



MIKE ROEMER/AP

Green Bay Packers defensive end Micah Parsons celebrates after a home game against the Detroit Lions on Sept. 7. Despite his expectations, Parsons and the Cowboys experienced a messy parting.

Packers' Parsons expects applause in Dallas return

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Micah Parsons says he expects to get a warm reception from Dallas Cowboys fans Sunday night when the superstar edge rusher faces his former team for the first time since the Green Bay Packers acquired him.

"I think Dallas loves me," Parsons said Wednesday. "I think they're going to give me a good round of applause. There's no hard feelings there, at least from me."

Parsons attempted to downplay Sunday night's matchup as much as he possibly could, considering his contract dispute with the Cowboys (1-2) and subsequent trade to Green Bay was one of the biggest NFL stories of the summer.

Now he's back at AT&T Stadium for one night trying to help the Packers beat his old team. Parsons figures to get plenty of cheers from at least one section of the stadium, since he still owns a suite that will be filled Sunday with his friends and relatives.

"I just feel like it's just going to be another game for me," Parsons said. "Obviously got a lot of ties there, but I think the atmosphere is going to be great. I kind of know what a (Dallas)-Green Bay game looks like — and I know the fanbase is going to be pretty rowdy, so I'm just excited for a competitive matchup in Sunday night prime football."

Green Bay Packers (2-1)
at Dallas Cowboys (1-2)
AFN-Sports
2:15 a.m. Monday CET
9:15 a.m. Monday JKT

Parsons had at least 12 sacks each of his four seasons in Dallas. He has 1½ sacks his first three games in Green Bay, and the attention he gets from opposing offenses creates opportunities for all the Packers' other pass rushers.

Parsons still keeps in touch with plenty of Cowboys. He says he checks in with cornerback Trevon Diggs at least once a week and that he recently tried to boost the spirits of wide receiver CeeDee Lamb, who left the Cowboys' 31-14 loss to the Chicago Bears on Sunday with a high ankle sprain.

Speaking earlier this week about this matchup, Parsons noted how sacking Dak Prescott would be "painful" because he considers the Dallas quarterback a mentor.

Parsons also had kind words for Dallas' offensive linemen. Parsons said they were "like brothers to me" and talked about the way he took them under his wing.

"It's funny because I spent all training camp helping these guys and teaching them how to block me, just things like that," Parsons said.

Cowboys left tackle Tyler Guyton says Parsons did indeed help him quite a bit.

"I kind of looked up to him for guidance, and he showed me a lot," Guyton said. "We battled a little bit, and got better from it."

They'll be battling again Sunday with much more at stake. And once the game kicks off, Parsons believes all the talk surrounding his messy exit from Dallas will fade to the background.

"Once the game (starts), ain't no one talking about the trade," Parsons said. "We're talking about winning the football game."

Jones revives career, Colts are not surprised

BY MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Daniel Jones looks like a different quarterback in Indianapolis.

He's been accurate, efficient and is unbeaten through three games. His teammates and coaches rave about his work ethic, and Jones seems unfazed by his seemingly sudden success.

Yes, Jones appears to be blossoming into the franchise player the New York Giants expected after drafting him No. 6 overall in 2019 and again when they signed him to a four-year, $160 million contract extension in 2023. But it took three NFL stops in less than 12 months for Jones to find the right fit.

"Every single time I call him I'm like 'Hey bro' — because we do dinner on Thursdays," receiver Michael Pittman Jr. said. "And every single time, he's like 'Yeah, I'm on the way. I just had to break down these last couple looks.' I'm like, 'Bro, take a break.' But that's just who he is, and I think his hard work is showing up on Sundays."

Something certainly has changed for the 28-year-old former Duke star.

Last fall, his career was at a crossroads. He was throwing nearly as many interceptions as TD passes, was being sacked nearly three times per game and had won just three of his previous 16 starts before getting benched by the Giants and asking for his release.

Jones wound up with Minnesota but never took a snap for the playoff-bound Vikings. Then in March, the first-time free agent took a one-year, $14 million deal from Indy in part because he knew he had a legitimate chance to beat out Anthony Richardson for the starting job and revive his career.

Three games into the season, it looks as if Jones made the right move.

Indianapolis Colts (3-0)
at Los Angeles Rams (2-1)
AFN-Sports2
10:00 p.m. Sunday CET
5:00 a.m. Monday JKT

His completion rate, 71.6%, is easily on pace to be a career high, his 816 yards passing rank third in the NFL, and he's the first quarterback in the Super Bowl era to throw and run for three scores without committing a turnover in the first three games of a season. He's played so well, the "Indiana Jones" nickname has been tossed around, too.

Jones believes the time he spent working with quarterback Sam Darnold and coach Kevin O'Connell in Minnesota last season helped him fine-tune that component of his game.

Jones' solid play combined with an Indy defense that has forced five turnovers has Indy leading the league with a plus-five turnover differential and the rebuilt offensive line has allowed a league-low two sacks.

It's a combination that has Indy off to its best start since going 14-0 in 2009 and atop the AFC South for the second straight week.

Their next test comes Sunday at the Los Angeles Rams (2-1), and the only real question is whether Jones can continue to play the best ball of his career for another 14 games?

But Jones refuses to look that far ahead or even at his impressive early season stats. Instead, he's focused on the one number that truly matters to him.

"It's the wins," he said.



JOHN AMIS/AP

Quarterback Daniel Jones been accurate and efficient in three games with the Colts, things he was not in his time with the Giants.

NFL

Scoreboard

American Conference

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	3	0	0	1.000	102	71
New England	1	2	0	.333	60	68
Miami	0	3	0	.000	56	97
N.Y. Jets	0	3	0	.000	69	93

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Indianapolis	3	0	0	1.000	103	56
Jacksonville	2	1	0	.667	70	51
Houston	0	3	0	.000	38	51
Tennessee	0	3	0	.000	51	94

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Cincinnati	2	1	0	.667	58	91
Pittsburgh	2	1	0	.667	72	77
Baltimore	1	2	0	.333	111	96
Cleveland	1	2	0	.333	46	68

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
L.A. Chargers	3	0	0	1.000	70	50
Denver	1	2	0	.333	68	64
Kansas City	1	2	0	.333	60	56
Las Vegas	1	2	0	.333	53	74

National Conference

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	3	0	0	1.000	77	63
Washington	2	1	0	.667	80	57
Dallas	1	2	0	.333	74	92
N.Y. Giants	0	3	0	.000	52	83

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Tampa Bay	3	0	0	1.000	72	66
Atlanta	1	2	0	.333	42	59
Carolina	1	2	0	.333	62	53
New Orleans	0	3	0	.000	47	90

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Detroit	2	1	0	.667	103	78
Green Bay	2	1	0	.667	64	44
Minnesota	2	1	0	.667	81	56
Chicago	1	2	0	.333	76	93

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
San Francisco	3	0	0	1.000	59	49
Arizona	2	1	0	.667	62	51
L.A. Rams	2	1	0	.667	73	61
Seattle	2	1	0	.667	88	47

Thursday's game

Seattle at Arizona

Sunday's games

Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh at Dublin
Carolina at New England
Cleveland at Detroit
L.A. Chargers at N.Y. Giants
New Orleans at Buffalo
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay
Tennessee at Houston
Washington at Atlanta
Indianapolis at L.A. Rams
Jacksonville at San Francisco
Baltimore at Kansas City
Chicago at Las Vegas
Green Bay at Dallas

Monday's games

N.Y. Jets at Miami
Cincinnati at Denver

Thursday, Oct. 2

San Francisco at L.A. Rams

Sunday, Oct. 5

Minnesota vs. Cleveland at London
Dallas at N.Y. Jets
Denver at Philadelphia
Houston at Baltimore
Las Vegas at Indianapolis
Miami at Carolina
N.Y. Giants at New Orleans
Tampa Bay at Seattle
Tennessee at Arizona
Detroit at Cincinnati
Washington at L.A. Chargers
New England at Buffalo
Open: Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Chicago, Green Bay

Monday, Oct. 6

Kansas City at Jacksonville

Thursday, Oct. 9

Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants

Sunday, Oct. 12

Denver at N.Y. Jets
Arizona at Indianapolis
Cleveland at Pittsburgh
Dallas at Carolina
L.A. Chargers at Miami
L.A. Rams at Baltimore
Seattle at Jacksonville
San Francisco at Tampa Bay
Tennessee at Las Vegas
Cincinnati at Green Bay
New England at New Orleans
Detroit at Kansas City

Ravens DT Madubuike ruled out

Harbaugh worried about injury that could weaken defensive line as season goes on

By Noah Trister
Associated Press

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — Baltimore will again be without defensive lineman Nnamdi Madubuike when it faces Patrick Mahomes and Kansas City this weekend.

Madubuike was out Monday night with a neck injury, and the Ravens lost 38-30 to a Detroit team that rushed for 224 yards.

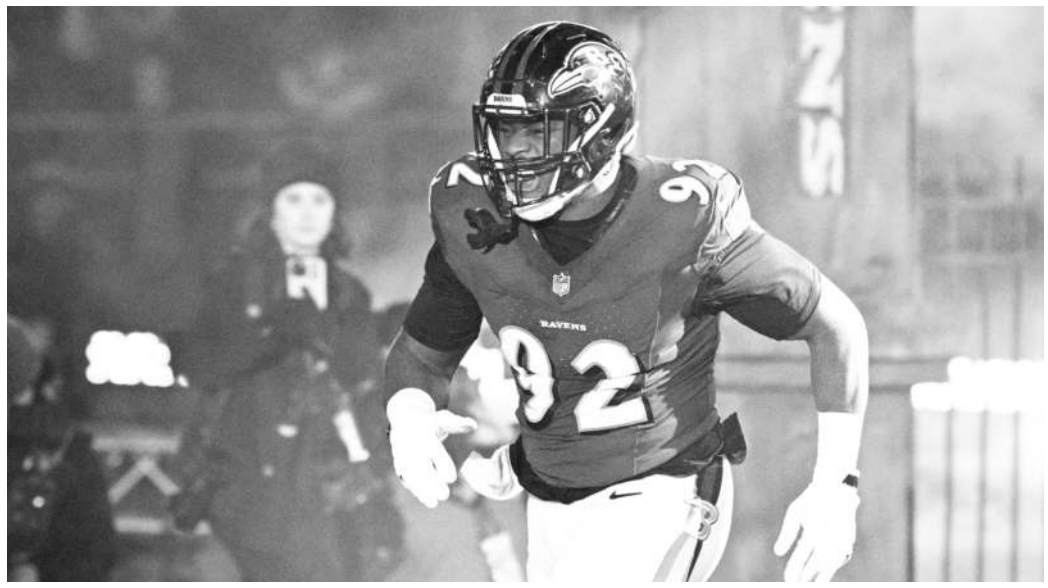
Now coach John Harbaugh has wasted no time ruling the 27-year-old lineman out for this weekend as well — and everything about the ailment sounds ominous.

"I would say I am concerned about it, but I'm not really in a position to comment on it right now — haven't been given the OK to comment on it at this point," Harbaugh said. "He's not going to play this week, I can tell you that. We're going to have to see going forward, when they know what they need to know."

Madubuike is in the second year of a four-year contract extension. He's had 30 sacks in five-plus seasons, and his absence against the Lions — along with Kyle Van Noy's hamstring injury — left Baltimore with a very limited pass rush. The Ravens had a 57-game sack streak snapped.

If Madubuike's injury keeps him out long term, Baltimore (1-2) may be in a position where it needs to trade for help on the interior defensive line. The Ravens signed defensive tackles Taven Bryan and Josh Tupou to the practice squad Wednesday. Bryan started six games for Indianapolis last season. Tupou played three games for Baltimore in 2024.

The Ravens had a walk-through type of practice Wednesday, then released participation estimates. In addition to Madubuike, defensive tackles Travis Jones (knee) and Broderick Washington (ankle) were listed as not participating. None of that is encouraging after Baltimore allowed the third-most yards rushing in



Nick Wass/AP

Baltimore Ravens defensive tackle will miss at least a second game Sunday with a neck injury.

franchise history and most in a game since 2017.

"We'll be OK. We'll be fine. There's a lot of real simple things that we didn't do very well at times," Harbaugh said. "We'll have the same play, really against the same defense two different times. One time it's no gain because we're pretty much exactly where we're supposed to be. And another time, we're not where we're supposed to be."

Detroit's offensive line can be a tough matchup for anyone, and at the beginning of the game, the Lions set the tone with impeccable pass protection that gave Jared Goff plenty of time to throw. As the game wore on, the running game became more of a factor.

"I think part of it's just trying to do too much sometimes," Harbaugh said. "Sometimes you try to do more than our job, and that's not really required."

Detroit had an 18-play, 98-yard scoring drive that took 10:48 off the clock in the first half. The Ravens rebounded from that, and the game was tied at 21 when Baltimore pinned the Lions back on their 4 late in the third quarter.

What followed was another TD drive that went almost the entire length of the field, although this one didn't take nearly as long.

The key play was a run by David Montgomery on second-and-10 that went for 72 yards to the Ravens 13.

"Playing with a little more, just calmness and belief in the whole structure and the 10 guys around you. Then also tackling in the back end," Harbaugh said. "Those runs, they shouldn't go to what they did. Those runs should be tackled 8, 10 yards if they break through the line."

Mayfield, Fangio excited for Bucs-Eagles matchup

By Rob Maaddi
Associated Press

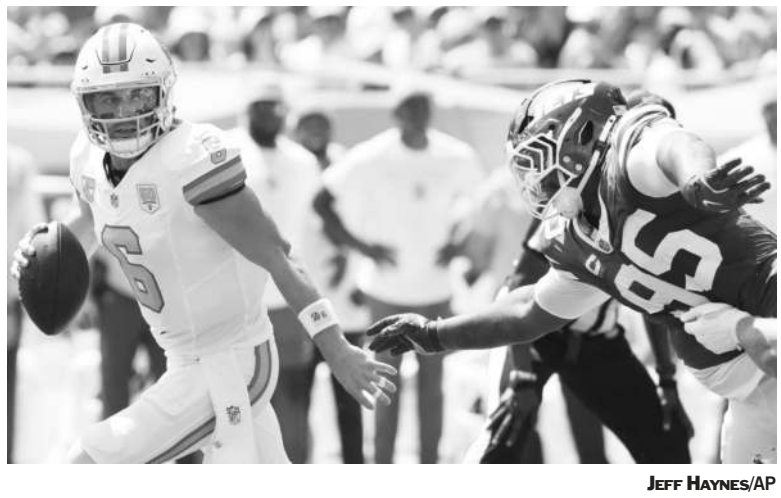
TAMPA, Fla. — Baker Mayfield's remarkable turnaround in Tampa Bay is no surprise for Philadelphia defensive coordinator Vic Fangio.

The veteran coach has admired Mayfield from afar, watching the 2018 No. 1 overall pick become one of the NFL's top quarterbacks after bouncing from the Browns to the Panthers to the Rams in 2022 before joining the Buccaneers.

"The quarterback is playing really good. He's a scrambler," Fangio said this week. "I've always liked Mayfield. I think he's a good quarterback. Why these teams that had him didn't keep him, I don't know. But GMs make mistakes, just like coaches do."

Mayfield and Fangio face off Sunday when Tampa Bay hosts the reigning Super Bowl champion Eagles in a battle between two of the NFL's six undefeated teams after three weeks.

Mayfield said Wednesday that he's only had small interactions with Fangio, but the admiration is mutual.



Jeff Haynes/AP

Buccaneers quarterback Baker Mayfield avoids pressure from New York Jets defensive tackle Quinnen Williams on Sunday in Tampa, Fla.

"Guys that have been on the same staff as him, everybody calls him Uncle Vic," Mayfield said. "Apparently, everybody loves playing for him. Respect the guy tremendously. He leads, calls the game well. It'll be a good matchup for us."

Mayfield may have some help on the way. All-Pro left tackle Tristan Wirfs and wide receiver Chris Godwin are nearing a return while other key players have been sidelined.

Star wideout Mike Evans won't play because of a hamstring injury. Backup tight end/fullback Ko Kieft was placed on injured reserve with a season-ending leg injury. The offensive line already lost right guard Cody Mauch for the season and right tackle Luke Goedeke is on injured reserve.

Even Mayfield was limited in practice Wednesday with a sore biceps on his throwing arm.

Both Mayfield and coach Todd Bowles called Kieft a "tone-setter."

"He was probably our toughest player (or) one of our toughest three players on the team because he was our tone-setter, offensively," Bowles said. "He did a lot of things in the room from a blocking standpoint. So, we have to try and run the ball different ways without him. That was a huge loss for us."

Getting Wirfs back would be a major boost for the offense. Center Graham Barton moved to left tackle to replace Wirfs and left guard Ben Bredeson went to center.

The Buccaneers dominated Philadelphia in a 33-16 victory at home in Week 4 last year. The offense racked up 445 yards against Fangio's defense. Since that loss, the Eagles are 19-1 with the only loss coming in a game where Jalen Hurts was injured in the first quarter.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Headliners, undercard all intriguing

By Eric Olson
Associated Press

Four matchups between Top 25 teams headline the Week 5 schedule, and at least a half-dozen other games involving ranked teams are also intriguing.

The only meeting of top-10 teams happens Saturday night when No. 3 Oregon visits No. 6 Penn State for a Big Ten showdown.

The Ducks beat the Nittany Lions in the 2024 Big Ten championship game, and Penn State was the media's preseason pick to win the title in 2025. Neither team will have been tested until they square off Saturday night in Happy Valley.

Oregon has outscored its opponents by an average of 51-9, its closest game a 20-point road win against Northwestern in their Big Ten opener. The Nittany Lions have won their first three games by an average of 44-6 and no opponent has come closer than 34 points.

Look out for big plays, or a lack of them. The Ducks are among the national leaders with 31 plays of at least 20 yards. Penn State has allowed just two through three games.

The Southeastern Conference has co-main events: No. 17 Alabama travels to No. 5 Georgia, and No. 4 LSU goes to No. 13 Mississippi.

This meeting will look different than their last, with Ty Simpson quarterbacking the Crimson Tide's offense and Gunner Stockton at signal-caller for the Bulldogs.



Rogelio V. Solis/AP

Mississippi quarterback Trinidad Chambliss follows a teammate's block of Tulane safety Joshua Moore on Saturday. Chambliss stepped in for an injured Austin Simmons, and the Rebels have thrived.

The Crimson Tide bounced back from a Week 1 upset loss to Florida State with a pair of convincing wins. Georgia's lowest ranking of the season was No. 6 after an uninspiring win against Austin Peay.

It'll be a pivotal test for both teams and an opportunity to make a statement on the national stage.

LSU has maintained top-five status throughout the regular season, while Ole Miss has steadily risen after entering the season at No. 21.

The Rebels have found success under two quarterbacks this year. Backup Trinidad Chambliss has thrived while stepping in for injured starter Austin Simmons and will start against the Tigers, whose 17th-ranked defense has allowed only 9.5 points per game.

The other Top 25 game has No. 21 Southern California at No. 23 Illinois for a game that lost some luster following Indiana's 53-point demolition of the Illini.

The week's undercard is really good, too.

Washington, 3-0 and a winner of 22 straight at home, hosts No. 1 Ohio State. Auburn, which won a four-overtime thriller against Texas A&M last year, goes on the road to play the No. 9 Aggies. No. 14 Iowa State goes for a second straight 5-0 start when it plays Arizona at home.

No. 15 Tennessee heads to Mississippi State, which at 4-0 already has doubled its 2024 win total. No. 22 Notre Dame is at Arkansas for the first meeting between the teams. No. 24 TCU, which has its first regular-season ranking since 2022, visits defending Big 12 champion Arizona State.

No. 21 USC (4-0)
at No. 23 Illinois (3-1)
AFN-Sports2
6 p.m. Saturday CET
1 a.m. Sunday JKT

No. 1 Ohio State (3-0)
at Washington (3-0)
AFN-Atlantic
9:30 p.m. Saturday CET
4:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

No. 4 LSU (4-0)
at No. 13 Mississippi (4-0)
AFN-Sports2
9:30 p.m. Saturday CET
4:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

Arizona (3-0)
at No. 14 Iowa State (4-0)
AFN-Atlantic
1 a.m. Sunday CET
8 a.m. Sunday JKT

Mobile



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COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Georgia will rely on Branch's explosive play vs. Alabama

By Maura Carey
Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. — Nearly three weeks ago, after No. 5 Georgia beat Austin Peay 28-6 in a game that didn't feel much like a win, quarterback Gunner Stockton felt like he needed answers. How can the offense maximize explosive plays, the kind that will be essential in SEC competition?

Stockton may have found the answer in Week 3, when the Bulldogs delivered a 44-41 overtime win against No. 15 Tennessee. Junior transfer Zachariah Branch played a key role, catching a team-high five passes for 69 yards, a touchdown and hauling in the two-point conversion to force overtime.

Through three games, Branch leads Georgia with 181 receiving yards and two touchdowns. His two scores came on nearly identical plays — short screen passes taken 30+ yards to the house. It might not have been the deep shot downfield Stockton envisioned, but when Branch reached a top speed of 21.4 mph on his 36-yard touchdown in Week 3, it was hard to describe as anything but explosive.

No. 17 Alabama (2-1)
at No. 5 Georgia (3-0)
AFN-Sports2
1:30 a.m. Sunday CET
8:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

Kirby Smart likes what he's seen out of the junior transfer from USC.

"Zachariah's been great," Smart said Monday. "He's a hard worker. He practices every day, regardless of what touches he gets. He's never been a me guy. He just wants to win, and he's willing to do whatever it takes."

Smart isn't the only one who's taken notice. No. 17 Alabama, who the Bulldogs host Saturday night, has circled Branch on the scouting report. Linebacker Deontae Lawson knows how important it is to minimize the wide receiver from the start.

"Branch is explosive," Lawson said. "I think he has all of their explosive plays this year, he was definitely explosive at USC last year. You can't let him get going, you have to stop him in his tracks. If he gets going then it's going to be a big play. We want to limit that for sure."

Branch's speed and versatility will be needed Saturday night. Smart is 1-6 against the Crimson Tide. His sole triumph came at the end of the 2021 season, when Georgia was crowned national champions. The Bulldogs are 0-1 against Alabama with Kalen DeBoer at the helm, losing 41-34 in Tuscaloosa last September.

It won't be an easy task for Stockton, Branch and Co. against a strong Crimson Tide defense, which has held opponents to an average of 108 passing yards per game — the lowest in the SEC.

"They've got a lot of moving parts, a lot to prepare for," Smart said. "They have different coverages, they mix man and zone well, but their physicality is the biggest thing. At the point of attack, they're really physical and they play really hard. I think they have a really good defense and they're well coached."

With Alabama's secondary in mind, Georgia may need to lean on the run to spark the offense. But whether highly targeted or relied on for blocking, Branch is prepared to bring 100% effort every snap, aiming to spark the explosive play required to beat the Tide.

"I try to affect the game as much as possible every single play, whether I'm getting the ball or not," Branch said. "If I'm not getting the ball, I have to block. I'm not going to just be out there just being a player on the field. I'll try to affect the game in a positive way for my team as much as I can."



George Walker IV/AP

Georgia wide receiver Zachariah Branch celebrates a touchdown during the first half against Tennessee on Sept. 13 in Knoxville, Tenn.

Big: Expectations remain high for top teams in conference

FROM PAGE 32

ship. And Penn State's lone loss last season before the conference championship was to the Buckeyes in early November, but the Nittany Lions went all the way to the CFP semifinals.

This season, Oregon, Ohio State (the current No. 1) and Penn State (3-0) are again expected to be the Big Ten's top teams, with perhaps all three again making the CFP field.

As for the conference's other big games to circle on the calendar, the Nittany Lions will play at the Buckeyes on Nov. 1. Penn State has another tough test a week later Nov. 8 against current No. 11 Indiana. And Ohio State faces a challenge in the regular-season finale against Michigan at the Big House.

After visiting the Nittany Lions, Oregon gets a bye week before hosting the Hoosiers. The Ducks and Buckeyes don't meet during the regular season this year.

Certainly Indiana can't be counted out. This past weekend it routed then-No. 9 Illinois 63-10 for the team's first win over a top 10 foe in five years. It visits Oregon on Oct. 11.

"I don't know," Hoosiers coach Curt Cignetti said about his team's potential. "I mean, you guys control all that stuff. I just gotta get them ready. And then we all play our games and see where it shakes out at the end of the year."



Jay LaPrete/AP

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day, center, is not letting the high caliber of his team's opponents get to him, insisting that the Buckeyes are sticking to a certain standard in their play no matter who they face.

So far, the Big Ten has four undefeated teams after four games: USC, Indiana, Maryland and Oregon. There are also three 3-0 teams: Ohio State, Penn State and Washington.

Seven of the league's teams are ranked. In addition to the Ducks, Buckeyes, Nittany Lions and Hoosiers, Illinois fell to No. 23 with the loss to Indiana, Michigan is No. 19 and the Trojans are No. 21.

No. 6 Oregon (4-0)
at No. 3 Penn State (3-0)
AFN-Sports
1:30 a.m. Sunday CET
8:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

Ultimately, at least for Ohio State, opponents and "Big Games" are secondary. If the Buckeyes are playing the right way, the wins will come, coach Ryan Day said.

"We want to play a certain way. And when that's met, we know it's met. When we're playing to our standard, we know what that looks like. So we hold ourselves to our standard, not our opponents. And so whether it's practice or a game, it doesn't matter who we're playing. It's about how we play," Day said. "And then we grade ourselves on that, trying to identify what the issues are regardless of the opponent. And then we go from there."

SPORTS



Homecoming

Green Bay's Parsons excited for return to Dallas after trade ›› NFL, Page 28

COLLEGE FOOTBALL



AJ MAST/AP

Penn State running back Nicholas Singleton is tackled by Oregon's Kobe Savage during last year's Big Ten championship game. This week's game will have national implications.

Big game in the Big Ten

Matchup between No. 3 Penn State, No. 6 Oregon could impact CFP

BY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

Week Five in the Big Ten brings a big test at the top.

Sixth-ranked Oregon visits No. 3 Penn State in the annual White Out game Saturday.

A lot can happen between now and December, but barring a complete meltdown by either team, the game could have conference championship and College Football Playoff implications.

For Ducks coach Dan Lanning, though, the game will simply be a good indication where Oregon (4-0, 1-0) is at after four games.



Franklin



Lanning

"I think we'll get a really good gauge of that when we play Penn State. It's a team that's obviously extremely talented," Lanning said. "I feel good about our team, I really like our team. This will be a good environment for us to go play in. We're going to be playing people that have a lot of talent, as well as a good scheme on both sides of the ball. It'll be a real challenge for us."

It's also a rematch of last year's Big Ten championship game, which the Ducks won 45-37.

There's a lot of hoopla surrounding the game. It's just the second White Out game involving top 10 teams, with the only other one in 2018 when No. 4 Ohio State beat the ninth-ranked hosts. ESPN's Game Day will be on hand and there's an effort to bring the biggest crowd ever to Beaver Stadium.

It's already the hottest ticket in town.

"I get these text messages from people I haven't talked to for I don't know how long," Penn State coach James Franklin said. "They're talking about all these other topics. I'm like, 'All right, get to the point.' The answer is no. You've waited until the last minute to request tickets."

The excitement is somewhat reminiscent of last year's big midseason conference matchup, when the Buckeyes were ranked No. 2 and came to Eugene to face third-ranked Big Ten newcomer Oregon. The Ducks announced their conference arrival in a big way, downing Ohio State 32-31.

Oregon went on to roll undefeated through the season but the good fortune ran out in the CFP quarterfinals, losing the rematch to the Buckeyes 41-21 at the Rose Bowl.

Proving that even a loss — or two — may not mean much difference in the end, Ohio State went on to win the national champion-

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